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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Thirteenth Congress
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 3230

Introduced by HONORABLE LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bicol Region has a very rich cultural heritage, a part of which has overflowed beyond regional boundaries into the mainstream of national traditions. This culture is living and dynamic as amply proved by the Bicolanos who have made their marks in letters, in music, and the performing arts.

Despite its contribution to the culture of the country, however, and the natural love of the Bicolanos for music, literature and the arts, there is not a single forum within the region where this endearing trait of the Bicolanos can find expression.

Cultural affairs in Bicol are at present held in gymnasiums, school yards, or other premises where the acoustics and other appointments are hardly suitable for listening to music or enjoying a well-staged play. Worse, the air of improvisation which pervade these gatherings, inhibit attendance of a greater number of audiences and more creative involvement on the part of the artists who feel they are neglected by the government, despite the Constitutional Mandate that arts and letters are under the patronage of the state.

To remedy this deplorable situation, the present bill proposes to establish a Bikol Cultural Center in the Provincial Capitol Complex in the Capitol Town of Pili in the province of Camarines Sur, which shall contribute the land in which the center will be constructed.

The creation of this center will not only provide the artists of the region with a presentable venue for their creations; it will, moreover, symbolize for them the government's concern for their endeavors.

For these reasons, the approval of this measure is earnestly urged.



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AN ACT
CREATING THE BIKOL CULTURAL CENTER, DEFINING ITS
OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. In the implementation of the constitutional mandate that arts and letters shall be under the patronage of the State, there is hereby authorized to be established the Bikol Cultural Center, hereinafter referred to as the Center, within the Capitol Complex in the Capital Town of Pili, in Camarines Sur.

SECTION 2. The Center shall have the following objectives and functions:

- a) To awaken the consciousness of Bicolanos to their culture and heritage, and to encourage them to participate or provide assistance in its preservation, enhancement and development;
- b) To create and cultivate public awareness in, and appreciation of, distinctive Bikol arts in various fields, and to identify and promote the Bicol Region's contributions to national cultural development;

- c) To discover, develop and assist talents, connected with cultural pursuits and provide greater opportunities and incentives for individual self-expression in and collective promotion of, cultural projects and programs;
- d) To encourage the organization and promotion of cultural groups, associations, societies or councils, and the holding or staging of cultural exhibitions, performances, tours, and other related or similar activities;
- e) To construct, establish, operate and maintain edifices, public parks and other facilities for the holding of musical shows and festivals, theatrical presentations, art exhibitions, or for the holding of conferences, symposia, seminars, concerts, and other cultural activities.

SECTION 3. The Sangguniang Panglalawigan of the Province of Camarines Sur, with the approval of the Governor, shall by appropriate resolution, vest in a governing Board of Trustees the conduct and operation of the programs and activities of the Center. The Trustees of the Center, shall be not less than nine (9), but not more than fifteen (15) in number who shall be appointed by the Governor of the Province of Camarines Sur, under such qualification standards as are prescribed by the Sangguniang Panglalawigan, for a term of office not exceeding three (3) years. No member of the Board of Trustees shall serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

By appropriate resolution, the Sangguniang Panglungsod of the Province of Camarines Sur, with the approval of the Governor, shall prescribe the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees of the Center including their honoraria for actual attendance at meetings.

SECTION 4. The Provincial Governor of Camarines Sur shall provide the land that shall be necessary for the Center to construct and establish the Center, its ancillary offices and facilities, as well as the annual operating expenses that the Center shall require to carry out its objectives and functions.

The Center shall be exempt from all forms of taxation whatsoever. Accordingly, all donations to the Center shall be

exempt from gift taxes, and any equipment, articles or goods that it may import, or receive by way of grants or purchase, from foreign sources, shall be exempt from duties and other imposts.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall incorporate in the General Appropriations Act, and/or from other sources as the President of the Philippines may authorize, as start-up construction fund for the Center the sum of thirty million pesos (P30,000,000.00), which shall be earmarked and disbursed to the Center for the construction and establishment of its main facilities for the administration of the Center and as the venue for holding of its cultural activities, in accordance with its objectives and functions, as provided in this Act. The Provincial Government of Camarines Sur shall provide a supplemental budgetary allocation for the capital outlays and the management and operating expenses of the center.

SECTION 5. The center shall, within ninety (90) days from and after the end of every calendar year, submit an annual report of its activities for the preceding year and its proposed programs for the incoming year. This annual report or such other reports as may be required by the Sangguniang Panglungsod of the Province of Camarines Sur shall be submitted to and through the Governor of the Province and to the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

SECTION 6. This Act shall take immediate effect upon its approval.

APPROVED,