

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Thirteenth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3254

Introduced by Honorable Catalino V. Figueroa

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare the Municipality of Catbalogan, Province of Samar as a tourist spot.

Tourism is one of the major dollar-earning industries of the country. The tourism boom during the 80's was due to the numerous tourist spots that have been developed and made accessible to tourists, local and foreign alike. In fact, the government has launched a massive tourism development program called "Wow, Philippines" to help strengthen the economy of the country.

In the Province of Samar, there are a number of tourist spots but they are yet to be developed. One of these is the Municipality of Catbalogan. It is the capital town of the province and is a major trade area in Samar. It is the main hub of business especially by people coming from the surrounding island towns, from neighboring towns and even from Eastern Samar.

A bill has been filed by this representation for the conversion of Catbalogan into a component city of Samar. Also, another bill was also filed for the continued construction of the airport in order to facilitate easier access to the Municipality of Catbalogan, in particular and the Province of Samar, in general. It should be noted that many of those who travel by air via Tacloban City are from the province. The construction of a cultural and historical center bill has also been filed recently.

In Catbalogan, one can find the obelisk that features the major historical events of the province. They are depicted in the four sides of the structure. They are: the arrival of the first Jesuit missionaries in 1596, the Rebellion of Agustin Sumoroy in 1649, the decree of Queen Isabella in 1840 declaring Samar as an independent province no longer under the jurisdiction of Cebu nor Leyte and the victims in the Balangiga Massacre in 1901. This historical landmark is located in front of the Capitol Building. Aside from this, there are many other features that make Catbalogan ripe to become a tourist zone.

This town is truly God-gifted. Catbalogan is where you find Maqueda Bay – a major breeding ground of fish in the country.

Catbalogan is where one can experience the *Mangirisdá* Festival. The capital town has grown from a small fishing village to the province's premier fish port and market. To celebrate the blessings from the bounty of the sea, fisher folk and their families sing and dance in the streets of Catbalogan carrying a

cornucopia of sea harvests – crabs, shrimps, fish, stingrays, seashells and seaweeds. All these, together with their tools, are offered to San Bartolome, the town's patron saint.

One can go to Catbalogan by plane via Tacloban City traversing through the San Juanico Bridge and the well-built Maharlika Highway. By bus, it is seventeen hours away from Manila. Being Samar's premier town, Catbalogan's declaration as a tourist spot would create more jobs for its populace. Thus, economic growth in the area would be enhanced. Furthermore, it would promote the growth and tourism industry and help project a good image of our province and country locally and internationally.

Hence, approval of this bill is earnestly requested.



CATALINO V. FIGUEROA

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**AN ACT
DECLARING THE MUNICIPALITY OF CATBALOGAN,
PROVINCE OF SAMAR AS A TOURIST SPOT,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.**

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

SECTION 1. The Municipality of Catbalogan, Province of Samar is hereby declared a Tourist Spot and shall be accorded priority development by the Department of Tourism.

SECTION 2. The Philippine Tourism Authority, in consultation with the Department of Public Works and Highways, shall prepare, within one year from the approval of this Act, a tourism development plan for the Municipality of Catbalogan, Province of Samar. The development plan shall provide for the construction and installation of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure as shall encourage tourism in the area and shall be submitted for final approval to the Department of Tourism prior to its implementation.

SECTION 3. Upon the approval by the Department of Tourism of the tourism development plan for the Municipality of Catbalogan, Province of Samar, it shall take immediate steps to expedite the implementation thereof and, for the purpose, shall incorporate the same in the Department's overall tourism development program for the ensuing calendar year.

SECTION 4. The amount necessary for the development of the Municipality of Catbalogan, Province of Samar as a tourist zone and for the construction and installation of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure shall be charged to the appropriations for the Department of Tourism under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the operation and maintenance of the tourist zone shall be included in the annual budget of the Municipality of Catbalogan.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,