

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 4433

Introduced by **HON. ROZZANO RUFINO B. BIAZON**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The word “Museum” conjures images of artifacts, antiques, valuable paintings, and the like. Such a restricted notion or view of a museum does not give the Filipino a correct picture of our National Museum. One would be surprised to learn that the National Museum has several divisions, with concerns and interests so diverse yet all pertaining to our national heritage.

Botany, anthropology, archaeology, zoology, geology, museum education, and cultural properties are the seven (7) divisions that comprise the National Museum. Given the sacred task of undertaking research, education and preservation of our culture, the National Museum explores our country’s land and water in search of new, undiscovered, plants, animals, and things, whether tangible or otherwise, that are indigenous to us. Thus, it has scientists in its employ to research, verify and authenticate its finds from such a huge scope.

To present the artifacts, paintings, or “collection” that it safeguards, the National Museum has nineteen (19) regional museums scattered throughout the country. Ten (10) of these, regrettably, need immediate rehabilitation. The scant resources that the museum receives does not allow the simultaneous repair of these branches though, with the bare eye, one can see the weakness of the structures, the traces of termite infestation, and other indications of damage that are more critical than peeling and fading paint.

Though Republic Act No. 8492 gave the National Museum its permanent home and gave provisions for funding, specifically sec. 23 which created the Museum Endowment Fund, the two government agencies, the PAGCOR and PCSO, that were supposed to contribute to this Fund has been quite remiss in complying with the law. Even sec. 26 which is supposed to give the museum a measure of financial relief through the creation of a revolving fund, has yet to be enjoyed by the museum.

While we laud the noble objectives of Administrative Order No. 103 of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, this representation strongly feels that an institution that safeguards the heritage of our nation, should be spared from the implementation of this measure. Imagine the horrifying thought of losing priceless artifacts just because we had to scrimp on security, or the degeneration of works of art by our national artists due to increased humidity brought about by decreased air conditioning. The nominal savings brought about by excessive frugality cannot replace what may forever be lost.

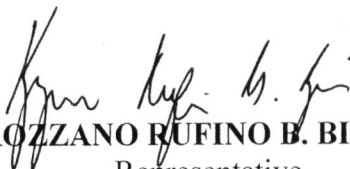
Of course, such problems have not been brought about by the austerity program of this government – only exacerbated by it. On top of dripping pipes and unpaid electricity

bills, the museum faces a host of problems – not quite unlike a boat staying afloat despite massive leaks.

To give the museum a reprieve from being constantly inundated by mundane problems, this representation proposes to amend the charter of the National Museum by increasing the amount it is supposed to be able to use as a revolving fund, from two to five million pesos.

It is prayed that our colleagues will find wisdom in this proposal and find it in their hearts to help preserve our heritage. This is a legacy that they will be proud to have been a part of.

For these reasons, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly requested.


ROZZANO RUFINO B. BIAZON
Representative
Lone District, Muntinlupa City

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AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED EIGHTY-FOUR HUNDRED
NINETY-TWO, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL MUSEUM ACT

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

Section 1. Section 26 of Republic Act No. 8492 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 26. *Revolving Fund.* – A PORTION OF [T]he income of the Museum IN [not exceeding] the amount of FIVE [Two] Million Pesos [(P2,000,000)] (P5,000,000) derived from the proceeds of the sales of reproductions, cultural items, publications, creation, restoration, conservation, identification, authentication, earnings from planetarium programs, and other auxiliary services shall be constituted as a revolving fund for the use of the Museum.

EVERY FIVE YEARS AFTER THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY SHALL ADJUST THIS AMOUNT TO REFLECT THE CHANGE IN THE VALUE OF THE CURRENCY.

IN THE FIRST YEAR OF EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, THE MUSEUM SHALL SPEND THE AMOUNT NECESSARY, SUBJECT TO GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT RULES AND PROCEDURES, TO UPGRADE AND MODERNIZE THEIR COMMUNICATION FACILITIES; IN THE SECOND AND THIRD YEARS, ITS TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES. THE MUSEUM SHALL ALSO SPEND THE AMOUNTS NECESSARY, FOR THE FIRST TEN (10) YEARS OF THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, TO REPAIR AND REHABILITATE THE STRUCTURES AND FACILITIES THAT HOUSE ITS OFFICES, COLLECTIONS AND ACQUISITIONS, TO INCREASE THE LEVEL OF SECURITY IT CURRENTLY EMPLOYS, AND TO UPDATE ITS INSURANCE PAYMENTS. ANY AMOUNT IN EXCESS SHALL BE USED FOR ITS OTHER OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE CONCERNS.

Section 2. A new Section 37 is hereby inserted after section 36 and the subsequent sections accordingly renumbered:

“SEC. 37. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS. – THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM SHALL PROMULGATE THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS NECESSARY FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT.”

Section 3. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Director of the National Museum shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act not later than six (6) months after its effectivity.

Section 4. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.