

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

House Bill No. 4443

Introduced by HON. TRANQUILINO B. CARMONA, M.D.

“AN ACT MANDATING FOR THE CREATION OF A LOCAL TOURISM OFFICE IN EVERY LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT, DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

Explanatory Note:

The Philippine tourism industry is now fast growing. Its emerging substance on economic contribution to the national wealth is a factual basis that the country shall develop its potential by tapping all the resources necessary for the expansion or development, particularly the creation of new projects and programs that will draw in more investors for this industry and lure tourists to come in to spend a holiday or to see the wonders of the country.

While the national government is gaining its thrusts on tourism, the local government units (LGUs) are not seriously involved in this undertaking through a specific mandate entailing their role and active participation on tourism agenda.

Each local government unit owns diverse tourism potentials that are just waiting to be tapped. The impact of the tourism industry is not only financial viability but also has proven as a potent device for a socio-economic development in the countryside. If these LGUs are given the leverage to chart their own destiny and the opportunity to mold their corresponding competence, there is no doubt that they can stand on its own and can address what is best under the minimum intervention of the central government authorities.

The institutionalization of the local tourism office will further strengthen the drive on tourism business related thrusts and industry for it connects the local and the national governments. It will stand as the forum for information on and/or the avenue for policies, rules and regulations on tourism related activities.

This approach surely opens the line for an efficient and improved tourism marketing systems between the national and local governments, and for private sectors to innovate, craft and produce attractive measures that will lure tourists, local and foreign, to come to their respective places.

With the mandatory creation of the local tourism office within the local government units, the execution, implementation of tourism programs, projects, policies, laws, rules and regulations can be more efficient and effective, being now participated in by the LGUs through their corresponding local tourism offices.

TRANQUILINO B. CARMONA, M.D.
First District of Negros Occidental

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

Section 1. *Title.* This Act shall be known as the “Local Tourism Office Act of 2004.”

Section 2. *Policy.* It is a declared policy that the State shall provide for a more responsive and accountable local government structure instituted through a system of decentralization whereby local government units shall be given more powers, authority, responsibilities and resources, particularly by mandating for the creation of a local tourism office as an avenue for growth and extended local responsibility in the field of tourism affairs within the local government unit.

Section 3. *Mandatory Creation.* There shall be created a Tourism Office in all Provinces, Cities and Municipalities.

Section 4. *Qualifications.* No person shall be appointed tourism officer unless he is a citizen of the Philippines, a resident of the local government unit concerned, of good moral character, a holder of a college degree preferably in tourism, hospitality management, public administration, development studies, management, or other related courses with special training in tourism programs and management from a recognized college or university, and a first grade civil service eligible or its equivalent. He must have experience in tourism operations and development projects, promotions, tourism management and its related functions and activities for at least five (5) years in the case of the provincial or city tourism officer, and three (3) years in the case of municipal tourism officer.

The appointment of the tourism officer shall be mandatory for the provinces, cities and municipalities.

Section 5. *Powers and Duties.* This office shall have the following powers, duties and responsibilities: -

(1) The tourism officer shall take charge of the office for the development, management and operation of all tourism and promotion programs and affairs of the local government unit concerned and shall:

(a) Formulate measures for the consideration of the sanggunian, and provide technical assistance and support to the governor or mayor, as the case may be, in carrying out measures to ensure the delivery of basic services and provision of facilities through the

development of tourism programs and projects, and in providing access to such services and facilities;

(b) Develop plans and strategies and, upon approval thereof by the governor or mayor, as the case may be, implement the same, particularly those which have to do with the promotions of the tourist attractions, sites, products, programs, principles and methods in the operations thereof, which the governor or mayor is empowered to implement and which the sanggunian is empowered to provide for under this Code;

(c) In addition to the foregoing duties and functions, the tourism officer shall:

(i) Endeavour to establish tourism related activities within their locality;

(ii) Extend or assist in the organization of tourism business related associations and organizations;

(iii) Provide technical and other forms of assistance to existing tourism business establishments, associations, cooperatives or organizations to enhance their viability as an economic enterprise and social organization or sector;

(iv) Assist the tourism related business establishments, associations, cooperatives or organizations in establishing linkages with government agencies and non-government organizations involved in the promotion and integration of all concepts pertaining to the current tourism development and generation, taking into account the livelihood of the people and other community activities;

(d) Be in the frontline in the enforcement of laws, policies and programs on tourism, organization of tourism associations, cooperatives and groups, rehabilitation of or the viability-enhancement, particularly during and in the aftermath of man-made and natural calamities and disasters, to aid in their survival and, if necessary employ subsequent rehabilitation of these entities to sustain its participation on tourism related ventures or business;

(e) Recommend to the sanggunian, and advise the governor or mayor, as the case may be, on all other matters relative to tourism and promotions, programs and projects, the development and viability-enhancement of the sectors on tourism production and development, in order to improve the livelihood and quality of life of the inhabitants; and

(f) Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.”

Section 6. *Mandate.* The Department of Interior and Local Government, as well as the Department of Tourism are hereby mandated to formulate rules and guidelines relative to the implementation of this Act.

Section 7. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, acts, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or part or parts thereof which are inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or deemed modified.

Section 8. *Separability Clause.* If, for any reason or reasons, any part or parts of this Act shall be held to be unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 9. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect immediately upon approval thereof.

Approved.