

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
Fourth Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5757

Introduced by Representative **Ma. Milagros "Mitos" H. Magsaysay**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It has been constantly reported by many agencies, including the World Bank that the forest reservation in the Philippines has been diminishing, so much so that if it is not arrested, the adverse effect of denudation will wreck havoc on our country and people. We have witnessed disasters in other provinces and island provinces when people abused and misused the utilization of land.

One way of protecting our land and eventually the environment is the protection and propagation of our forests, which are gifts from God, and therefore should not be abused.

The province of Zambales, the virgin forest lands therein, needs the preservation of such gifts from God and this bill has been drafted precisely to protect and preserve its forest and other protected areas.

Early passage of this bill is therefore earnestly sought by the undersigned.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ma. Milagros H. Magsaysay".

HON. MA. MILAGROS H. MAGSAYSAY

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**AN ACT FIXING THE SPECIFIC LIMITS OF FOREST LANDS AND
ALIENABLE AND DISPOSABLE LANDS WITHIN THE PROVINCE OF
ZAMBALES**

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

Section 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known and cited as “Forest Limits Act for the Province of Zambales.”

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. – it is the policy of the State to conserve, protect, and develop the forest resources of the country in order to attain ecological balance, preserve valuable ecosystems, prevent environmental degradation, and promote sustainable development for the present and succeeding generations. To achieve these ends, Section 4 of Article XII of the 1987 Constitution mandates Congress to determine by law the specific limits of forestlands and national parks, marking clearly their boundaries on the ground.

Section 3. What Constitutes the Permanent Forestlands. – The permanent forestlands shall be as follows: (a) all lands of the public domain already classified as forestland per existing land classification maps issued by the DENR, (b) all permanent forest reserves proclaimed as such by the President or declared by Congress through law, and (c) such areas within the unclassified lands of the public domain which may hereafter be classified as forestland by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) pursuant to this Act.

Section 4. Guidelines for Ground Delineation of the Specific Forest Limits. – Immediately upon the effectivity of this Act, the DENR shall undertake the actual ground survey and verification of the specific forest limits using as basis all existing Land Classification (LC) maps, the latest forest cover data of the NAMRIA from its satellite imagery interpretations, and other available and reliable sources of information.

Section 5. Boundaries to be Clearly Marked. – The permanent forest line shall be establish and clearly marked on the ground by concrete monuments at certain fixed distances, visible cut lines, signboards, and uniformity-spaced distinctive trees maintained at all times between the concrete monuments.

Section 6. Permanency of the Specific Forest Limits. – The permanent forestlands established pursuant to this Act shall not be diminished or reduced except by an Act of Congress. The DENR, in coordination with all agencies and branches of the government,

shall see to it that the forest cover and vegetation therein shall be protected, preserved and enhanced.

Section 7. Sub classification of the Permanent Forestlands. - The permanent forestlands shall be further sub classified as follows: (a) protection forest and (b) production forests. After due consultation with the local government units (LGUs) concerned communities, and other stakeholders, the DENR shall undertake the sub classification of the permanent forestlands.

Section 8. Zambales National Parks. - The reservation for national parks and protected areas in the province of Zambales shall be respected and protected and shall not be adversely affected by the provisions of this act.

Section 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within three (3) months from the effectivity of this act, the DENR Secretary shall issue the corresponding Implementing Rules and Regulations for the effective implementation of this act.

Section 10. Appropriations.- The Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources shall include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the initial funding of which shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Department and thereafter included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 11. Separability Clause. - If any portion of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions not affected thereby.

Section 12. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, letters of instruction, executive order, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 13. Effectivity.- This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes first.

Approved.