

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 204

Introduced by HONORABLE LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill reenacts House Bill No. 233 which was approved by the 14th Congress of the House of Representatives on 11 June 2008 and was transmitted to and received by the Senate on 17 June 2008.

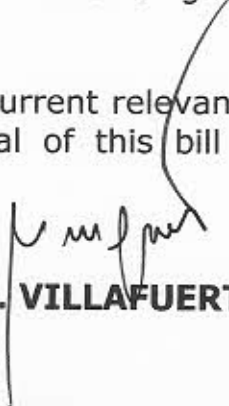
The denudation and inordinate exploitation of our forests has been a subject of serious concern of government, such that elementary and high school graduates are encouraged to plant a specified minimum number of trees every year as a condition for graduation.

Nevertheless, tree planting has not been given the importance that it deserves by way of setting aside a specific day every year to be dedicated to tree planting and to celebrate Arbor Day.

This bill proposes the revival of Arbor Day in the Philippines not necessarily as a national holiday for commemoration of the day, but seeks to vest in the local government units the responsibility for celebrating Arbor Day as an annual event.

The origin of Arbor Day dates back since the last century as a day for tree planting when standing trees were deemed insufficient for beautification and ecological purposes. In recent years, Arbor Day has been made the occasion for emphasizing the importance of conservation of forest resources. The date declared for Arbor Day has, however, been made flexible from place to place to permit local authorities to select an appropriate date, according to the proper time for planting and the budgetary requirements shall allow for specific trees and other plants that are sought to be planted according to the peculiar needs of a given locality.

Considering the significance of Arbor Day and the current relevance of giving impetus to forest conservation, early approval of this bill is earnestly requested.


LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

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**AN ACT TO PROVIDE THE REVIVAL OF ARBOR DAY BY VESTING IN
PROVINCIAL, CITY AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS WITH
THEIR COMPONENT BARANGAYS THE RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR CELEBRATING THE DAY FOR TREE PLANTING AS AN
ANNUAL EVENT**

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

1 **SECTION 1.** In order to emphasize the imperative necessity for
2 maintaining proper ecological balance, for encouraging the beautification
3 of communities and creating more healthful environments, it is hereby
4 mandated that all provinces, cities and municipalities with their
5 component barangays shall be required to revive, by appropriate
6 proclamation of their respective local chief executives, an Arbor Day at an
7 appropriate fixed date every calendar year as shall be deemed suitable
8 according to the proper time and season for planting trees in the
9 respective provinces and their respective component municipalities or
10 cities concerned. Although adoption of uniform dates for every province
11 and its component municipalities and the cities shall be encouraged,
12 varying dates for Arbor Day celebrations may be permitted in order to

1 afford flexibility in planning and implementing tree-planting programs to
2 adjust to the proper time and period of the year most suited to the trees
3 selected to be planted, and as local budgetary allotments shall allow.

4 **SEC. 2.** In implementing the intents of this Act, there shall be
5 created in every province, city and municipality an Arbor Day Celebrations
6 Committee, the composition of which shall be selected or designated by
7 the local chief executive concerned. The members of said committee shall
8 preferably consist of officers based in the locality, representing, but not
9 limited to:

- 10 a. The local sanggunian;
- 11 b. The local Environment and Natural Resources Office;
- 12 c. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources;
- 13 d. The Department of Education;
- 14 e. The Department of the Interior and Local Government;
- 15 f. The Department of Agriculture;
- 16 g. The Department of Agrarian Reform;
- 17 h. The Department of Public Works and Highways;
- 18 i. The Department of Tourism;
- 19 j. The Philippine National Police;
- 20 k. The Armed Forces of the Philippines;
- 21 l. The Philippine Coconut Authority;
- 22 m. Civic organizations;
- 23 n. Youth organizations;
- 24 o. Liga ng mga barangays; and

1 p. Media associations.

2 **SEC. 3.** In order to assure active participation of students, out-of-
3 school youths and employees of the government and private sectors, the
4 Arbor Day designated every calendar year by each and every local
5 government unit may be declared as a public holiday and such declaration
6 may be embodied in the appropriate proclamation that local chief
7 executives are in this Act authorized to do.

8 **SEC. 4.** The local sanggunian shall promulgate the rules and
9 regulations, including the allocation of resources pertinent to the
10 implementation of this Act at their respective local government level. For
11 information and monitoring purposes, the respective local government
12 units shall submit to the Department of the Interior and Local
13 Government (DILG), copy furnished the Department of Environment and
14 Natural Resources (DENR), the official date of the specified Arbor Day.

15 **SEC. 5.** The DILG, in coordination with the DENR, shall promulgate
16 the rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this
17 Act.

18 **SEC. 6.** This Act shall take effect immediately upon its approval.

Approved,