

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 336

Introduced by HONORABLE LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill reenacts House Bill No. 235 which was approved by the 14th Congress of the House of Representatives on 29 April 2008 and was transmitted to and received by the Senate on 05 May 2008.

Botanical gardens as mechanisms for botanical research, preservation of plant species, and experimentation in the propagation of new or rare tropical flora and as educational facility for the study of botanical science are well recognized purposes which governments in many countries have supported.

In Southeast Asia, botanical gardens were established since the last century by European governments in their colonial possessions, and such botanical gardens have since been continued and maintained even when the colonial countries gained their independence. For instance, the Botanical Garden of Indonesia in Bogor, West Java was started in 1817 in an area covering 88 hectares and is now considered one of the world's most beautiful gardens with its vast collection of spectacular tropical plants. Singapore's Botanical Garden, established in 1859 is now considered one of the historically important areas for basic botanical research. As of the present time, the United States contains the most numerous and most influential scientifically-oriented botanical gardens. The concept has since spread in Latin America and even in Africa. In modern practice, a botanical garden of less than 15 hectares is considered small.

What this bill seeks to establish in the Bicol Region is a very modest botanical garden conceived as a starting point for achieving experience in the mechanisms, methodology and systems for operating and maintaining a botanical garden, with provisions for setting-up small satellite gardens later on, as and when finances so warrant. If the facilities of a botanical garden are set-up within landscaped spaces, it can be recognized not only for its aesthetic values but also for its recreational and tourism purposes as well.

A botanical garden can also be a source of information and knowledge that could be of interest to agriculture, to the extent that the commercial possibilities of new plant species are experimented upon; it could also be of interest to medical science to the extent that medicinal plants are cultivated; and in general, its contribution to botanical science and to collectors of rare plants cannot be overemphasized.

As a supportive institution to agricultural colleges, as an area of rest and recreation and as a location for field trips for students and for horticulturists, all these justify the introduction of a botanical garden as envisioned in this bill.

There is always a time to begin something new in our country, even if such a concept has already been tried and tested elsewhere in the world and it is for this reason that this bill has been presented for consideration.

In view of the foregoing explanation, early approval of this bill is requested.



LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

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**AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE BIKOL BOTANICAL GARDEN IN THE
PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1.** There is hereby established, within the territorial
2 jurisdiction of the Province of Camarines Sur, a botanical garden to be
3 known as the "Bikol Botanical Garden". It shall be located in the
4 Mount Curry National Park in the Municipality of Pili and occupy an area
5 of at least twenty-five (25) hectares to be determined and delineated
6 by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and
7 its facilities shall be built within landscaped spaces in order to create a
8 park-like recreational environment dedicated to botanic research,
9 experimental planting, collection of study specimen, and the teaching
10 and dissemination of botanic knowledge.

11 **SEC. 2.** The Bikol Botanical Garden shall have open-air plantings,
12 living plant collections housed in greenhouses either for conservation,
13 teaching or seasonal public display, and herbarium houses for
14 specimens.

1 To the extent practicable as space and technical requirements may
2 allow, the Bikol Botanical Garden may have an arboretum for trees and
3 shrubs; a bamboo setum, pinetum; medicinal plants setum; flowering
4 and ornamental plants setum; aquatic plants setum; palm setum;
5 fernery; and orchidarium.

6 The facilities shall be built within a five-year period, depending
7 upon the availability of funds provided by the Provincial Government of
8 Camarines Sur, national government assistance, and donations and
9 grants from local or foreign sources.

10 Satellite gardens may be established elsewhere in a municipality
11 or city within the Province of Camarines Sur, either in an urban or rural
12 setting or both, depending upon the type of soil, topography or climatic
13 conditions required to cultivate or maintain plants intended or suitable
14 for such satellite gardens, and depending upon such appropriate
15 cooperative arrangements as may be agreed upon with the other local
16 governments within the Province of Camarines Sur.

17 **SEC. 3.** The buildings for its officials and staff, the library, and
18 facilities for conferences, seminars, workshops and audio-visual
19 presentations shall be built within a three-year period.

20 **SEC. 4.** The Bikol Botanical Garden shall endeavor to maintain a
21 system for the classification of plants for various utilitarian purposes;
22 adopt a program for botanical expeditions to augment its collections;
23 undertake studies and experiments on the commercial cultivation of
24 otherwise wild species of certain plants, arrange for exchanges with

1 other botanical gardens or collectors of plant samples or specimens it
2 may have or with other plants or specimens it seeks to have; cultivate
3 medicinal plants found in the Bicol Region or elsewhere; and establish
4 linkages with agricultural schools and other institutions interested in
5 botanical science.

6 **SEC. 5.** The Provincial Government of Camarines Sur shall, by
7 purchase or expropriation or by grants from the national government
8 or through donation from other governmental or private philanthropic
9 sources, provide or arrange to provide the lands suitable for
10 establishing the Bikol Botanical Garden and any satellite gardens
11 referred to in this Act.

12 The Provincial Government of Camarines Sur shall provide the
13 necessary capital outlays and operating expenses required to maintain
14 the botanical garden to be established under this Act.

15 **SEC. 6.** In the implementation of this Act, the Department of
16 Environment and Natural Resources and other agencies of the national
17 government shall extend technical assistance to the Provincial
18 Government of Camarines Sur.

19 **SEC. 7.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,