

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1185

Introduced by HONORABLE LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Constitution declares as an explicit policy that the State shall establish, maintain, and ensure adequate social services in the fields of education, health, housing, employment, welfare, and social security to guarantee the enjoyment by the people of a decent standard of living.

It is indeed a sad, but nevertheless, true commentary made by many of our countrymen that, notwithstanding the constitutional mandate above-cited, which is intended for the benefit of all citizens of the State, many of our tribal communities continue to live in squalor or in less than satisfactory habitat. In their present state, we can find them in various regions of our country, without any appreciably substantial changes in their style or standards of living. The benefits of improved health care, education, housing and recreation seem to have escaped them and are enjoyed only by the major ethnic groups. This oversight on the part of the government may best be illustrated by the fact that our tribal communities are still considered oddities in our social structure, rarely attaining higher education, without safe and secure homes and sometimes even nomadic; in short, left at the mercy of nature rather than consciously and substantially aided by the State. This should not be the case, for they too have a right to be entitled to the mantle of protection of the Constitution in the same manner accorded to members of the major ethnic groups.

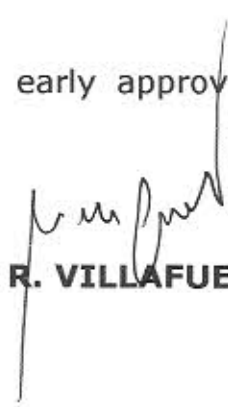
Our ethnic minorities deserve the same degree of encouragement and help from the State to enable them to develop and reap the benefits of progress without, however, destroying their distinctive cultures and cherished traditions in the process.

This bill therefore, seeks to remedy this gap by prescribing the establishment of pilot tribal communities in each and every region in the Philippines which shall serve as model human settlements that will adhere, to the extent practicable, to their cultures and traditions while providing at the same time, the basic conveniences of modern living such

as health, education, livelihood and recreation facilities, but structured such that they adhere to architectural and engineering designs that, to the extent practicable, maintain the integrity of their customs and practices.

Under this bill, it is envisioned that with the government's encouragement and support, these pilot tribal communities to be established shall introduce the basic amenities necessary for decent living and simultaneously preserve and enhance their culture and tradition. It is believed that with the introduction of these model human settlements, the beneficent experiences to be gained by tribal residents therein, shall be an incentive and serve as an inspiration for other members of our society to replicate these Pilot Tribal Communities.

In view of the merits of this proposed bill, its early approval is earnestly requested.



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AN ACT TO PRESCRIBE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOT TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN EACH AND EVERY REGION IN THE PHILIPPINES WHICH SHALL SERVE AS MODEL HUMAN SETTLEMENTS THAT WILL ADHERE, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, TO THE CULTURE, CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS OF SUCH TRIBAL COMMUNITIES, WHILE PROVIDING THE BASIC CONVENIENCES OF CONTEMPORARY LIVING STANDARDS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy.** It is the policy of the State to
2 establish, maintain and ensure adequate shelter, education, health,
3 employment, welfare and other social services to national tribal
4 communities and towards this end, the State shall establish pilot tribal
5 communities in order to extend to such tribal communities the benefits
6 now being enjoyed by the other cultural sectors of the Philippines, while
7 endeavoring to preserve and enhance the distinctive culture, customs and
8 traditions of such tribal communities located in the various regions of the
9 country.

10 **SEC. 2. Implementation of Policy.** In order to preserve and
11 enhance the culture, customs and traditions of specific tribal communities

1 in the Philippines, the Department of Land Reform, directly and/or
2 through any of its attached agencies, in coordinating with the Presidential
3 Commission on Indigenous Peoples, shall establish a pilot tribal
4 community in each and every region of the country that shall be selected
5 for the purpose, which shall serve as model projects for replication after
6 their socio-economic viability, appropriateness and practicability have
7 been demonstrated; provided, however, that the Department of Land
8 Reform shall endeavor to establish at least one pilot tribal community for
9 each distinct tribal community.

10 **SEC. 3.** The Department of Land Reform, directly and/or through
11 any of its attached agencies is hereby authorized to acquire by purchase,
12 grant, donation or any other mode of acquisition, such adequate and
13 appropriate sites as may be necessary to implement this Act and shall
14 cause to be prepared such suitable and distinctive plans, architectural and
15 engineering designs for the pilot tribal communities which shall be
16 reflective of the culture, customs and traditions of the tribal community in
17 whose behalf the pilot tribal community shall be established.

18 **SEC. 4.** In every pilot tribal community to be established, there shall
19 be integrated facilities for health, education, and the recreation, the
20 design, function and services of which shall, to the extent practicable,
21 blend and harmonize with the environmental setting adopted for the
22 project.

23 **SEC. 5.** The Department of Land Reform, in coordination with the
24 Presidential Commission on Indigenous Peoples, shall issue the necessary

1 rules and regulations with respect to the conditions regarding the
2 occupancy of these pilot tribal communities by the members of the tribes
3 concerned.

4 **SEC. 6.** The amount necessary for the establishment and
5 construction of such pilot tribal communities as herein authorized shall be
6 funded out of the appropriations authorized for the Department of Land
7 Reform, or any supplemental or special budgets chargeable from lump
8 sum appropriations contained in the General Appropriations Act or from
9 grants that may be obtained from local or foreign institutions, or from
10 philanthropic persons or entities.

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

Approved,