

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 00000 79



Introduced by REP. ANTHONY G. DEL ROSARIO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to enhance the tourism industry by promoting Volunteer Tourism (Volun-Tourism) in the Philippines.

Travelling for some people means visiting a famous city for a taste of food and culture. Scenic destinations are top priority for most travellers. But others seek a more profound purpose such as giving back and offering practical help to the community where a tourist spot is located. Such is *volun-tourism*.

"*Volun-tourism*" is a combination of volunteerism and tourism. It is a new concept in the travel industry wherein people are given the opportunity to travel, enjoy and at the same time involve themselves in a worthy and charitable cause. It is becoming a popular concept among travellers around the world. Tourists no longer just limit themselves to mere sight-seeing but prefer to immerse in local culture and engage in socially relevant activities. This is the spirit of volun-tourism — reciprocity for a balance mix of service and tourism-related activity.

The proposed measure seeks to achieve the following: a) increase foreign tourist arrivals particularly attracting those who are in search of volunteer activities; b) encourage domestic tourists to take part in tourism initiatives; c) provide venue for tourists to share their knowledge and expertise to improve or rehabilitate some of the country's tourism sites; and d) facilitate sustainable tourism development in every municipality.

For many years, the government has used strategies to help the Philippine tourism industry. However, there is a need to establish more effective programs and projects related to tourism.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


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AN ACT
ENHANCING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY BY PROMOTING VOLUNTEER TOURISM
(VOLUN-TOURISM) IN THE PHILIPPINES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. **Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Philippine Volunteer
Tourism Act.*”

SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – The State declares tourism as an
indispensable element of the national economy and an industry of national interest and
importance to generate investment, foreign exchange and employment, and to continue
to enhance the sense of national pride for all Filipinos.

Towards this end, the State shall continuously ensure the development of
Philippine tourism by providing appropriate attention and support for the growth of the
industry and promoting a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible,
participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable and ethically and socially equitable
for all.

SEC 3. **Volunteer Tourism Program.** – The Volunteer Tourism (Volun-Tourism)
Program is hereby established in the Department of Tourism with the aim of immersing
foreign and local tourists in activities involving the improvement of the livelihood,
conservation of the environment and restoration of the heritage of the Philippines.

The Volun-Tourism Program shall have the following objectives:

- a) Encourage activities and programs which will promote awareness of the
program and at the same time preserve the country's diverse cultures and heritage;

b) Promote activities geared towards environmental protection, conservation and restoration and develop responsible tourism program as a strategy for environmentally sound and community-participatory tourism programs, enlisting the participation of local communities, and ensuring full enjoyment of the benefits of tourism by the communities;

c) Facilitate sustainable tourism development in every locality and provide venue for tourists to share their knowledge and expertise to improve and rehabilitate some of the country's tourism sites; and

d) Encourage the participation of local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs), peoples' organizations (POs) and the private sector in initiating programs for tourism development.

SEC. 4. *Activities Under Volun-tourism.* – Volun-Tourism may be classified under any of the following:

a) *Environment* – Volunteer activities which are aimed to raise environmental awareness and conservation;

b) *Livelihood* – Volunteer activities which are geared towards an experiential trips of tourists to the countryside by living and working with local communities to help residents therein to become economically productive; and

c) *Heritage* – Volunteer activities which are focused to preserve and restore historical sites, and to allow travellers to learn to appreciate the history and culture of the different communities.

SEC. 5. *Volun-Tourism Destinations.* – Volun-Tourism destinations shall include all tourism destinations in the Philippines and such other places in the country which are suitable according to the objectives of the program.

SEC. 6. *Coordination and Support.* – The regional offices of the Department of Tourism (DOT) shall coordinate with the local tourism offices and tour operators of every province, city or municipality on the proper implementation of the Volun-Tourism Program.

SEC. 7. **Reports.** – In order to monitor and ascertain the economic and social impact of the programs, all LGUs which cater to Volun-Tourism Program shall periodically report to the Department of Tourism through its regional offices on the status of their tourism programs, tourist arrivals and tourism enterprises, among others.

SEC. 8. **Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged to the appropriations for the Department of Tourism. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the continued operation and promotion of the Volun-Tourism Program shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Tourism shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 10. **Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,