

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 497



Introduced by **Hon. Rodolfo G. Biazon**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The word "Museum" conjures images of artifacts, antiques, valuable paintings, and the like. Such a restricted notion or view of a museum does not give the Filipino a correct picture of our National Museum. One would be surprised to learn that the National Museum has several divisions, with concerns and interests so diverse yet all pertaining to our national heritage.

Botany, anthropology, archaeology, zoology, geology, museum education, and cultural properties are the seven (7) divisions that comprise the National Museum. Given the sacred task of undertaking research, education and preservation of our culture, the National Museum explores our country's land and water in search of new, undiscovered, plants, animals, and things, whether tangible or otherwise, that are indigenous to us. Thus, it has scientists in its employ to research, verify and authenticate its finds from such a huge scope.

To present the artifacts, paintings, or "collection" that it safeguards, the National Museum has nineteen (19) regional museums scattered throughout the country. Ten (10) of these, regrettably, need immediate rehabilitation. The scant resources that the museum receives does not allow the simultaneous repair of these branches though, with the bare eye, one can see the weakness of the structures, the traces of termite infestation, and other indications of damage that are more critical than peeling and fading paint.

Though Republic Act No. 8492 gave the National Museum its permanent home and gave provisions for funding, specifically sec. 23 which created the Museum Endowment Fund, the two government agencies, the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), that were supposed to contribute to this Fund has been quite remiss in complying with the law. Even sec. 26 which is supposed to give the museum a measure of financial relief through the creation of a revolving fund, has yet to be enjoyed by the museum.

Imagine the horrifying thought of losing priceless artifacts just because we had to scrimp on security, or the degeneration of works of art by our national artists due to increased humidity brought about by decreased air conditioning. The nominal savings brought about by excessive frugality cannot replace what may forever be lost. Aside from dripping pipes

and unpaid electricity bills, the museum faces a host of problems – not quite unlike a boat staying afloat despite massive leaks.

It is not only proper but high time that an institution that safeguards the heritage of our nation should be given the financial capability and independence to carry out its mandate.

In order that this may come into fruition, this bill seeks to authorize the National Museum to use part of its income to augment its operational requirements of its operations.

Due to the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly requested.



RODOLFO G. BIAZON
Representative
Lone District, Muntinlupa City

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AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED EIGHTY-FOUR HUNDRED NINETY-
TWO, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL MUSEUM ACT

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

SECTION 1. Section 26 of Republic Act No. 8492 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 26. *[Revolving Fund]* **USE OF INCOME.** – The **NATIONAL MUSEUM IS AUTHORIZED TO USE ITS** income [of the Museum] not exceeding the amount of [Two] **FIVE** Million Pesos [(P2,000,000)] **(P5,000,000) ANNUALLY** derived from the proceeds of the sales of reproductions, cultural items, publications, creation, restoration, conservation, identification, [authentication,] earnings from planetarium programs, **ENTRANCE FEES**, and other auxiliary services [shall be constituted as a revolving fund for the use of the Museum.] **TO AUGMENT THE OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE MUSEUM SUCH AS, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:**

26.1 UPGRADING AND MODERNIZATION OF COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES;

26.2. REPAIR AND REHABILITATION OF STRUCTURES AND FACILITIES THAT HOUSE ITS OFFICES, COLLECTIONS AND ACQUISITIONS;

26.3 UPDATE ITS INSURANCE PAYMENTS;

26.4. INCREASE THE LEVEL OF SECURITY IT CURRENTLY EMPLOYS; AND

26.5. FUND EXPENSES INCURRED IN THE REPRODUCTION/ACQUISITION OF CULTURAL ITEMS,

PUBLICATIONS, CREATIONS, RESTORATION AND CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS, PLANETARIUM PROGRAMS AND OTHER AUXILIARY ACTIVITIES, SUBJECT TO THE SUBMISSION OF A SPECIAL BUDGET PURSUANT TO SECTION 35, CHAPTER V, BOOK VI OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 292: *PROVIDED*, THAT NO AMOUNT OF SAID INCOME SHALL BE USED TO FUND PERSONAL SERVICES EXPENDITURES."

Sec. 2. *Implementing Rules.* – Within one hundred twenty (120) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Director of the National Museum shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

Sec. 3. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to this Act are hereby considered repealed and/or amended accordingly.

Sec. 4. *Separability Clause.* – If any section or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 5. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,