

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 948



Introduced by **MAGDALO Party List Representatives Gary C. Alejano**
and Francisco Ashley L. Acedillo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is one of the countries known for its rich natural resources. The country's caves specifically set our resources apart from any other places because of its exceptional resources such as the so-called dripstones. A dripstone is a collective term for stalagmites and stalactites – a kind of a precious mineral which takes hundred of years to form.

Unfortunately, recent news showed that some of these stalagmites and stalactites, which should remain inside the confines of a cave, are now being sold in the country. This immediately called the attention of advocates of the environment and the general public who witnessed the alarming scenario.

Republic Act No. 9072, otherwise known as the “National Cave Resources Management and Protection Act”, has been put forward in 2001 to protect and conserve these resources. However, this law does not have a provision regarding the importation and exportation of the country's cave resources.

This bill seeks to amend R.A. 9072 by adding a subsection prohibiting the exportation and/or the importation of stalagmites and stalactites. This bill recognizes the importance of the country's cave resources and deems it important to put the import/export of the same into a halt before it turns into large-scale basis.

In view of the foregoing, passage of this measure is earnestly requested.



GARY C. ALEJANO



FRANCISCO ASHLEY L. ACEDILLO

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AN ACT
PROHIBITING THE IMPORTATION AND EXPORTATION OF STALACTITES AND
STALAGMITES, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED
9072, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL CAVE RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION ACT

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

1 **SECTION 1.** Section 3 of Republic Act No. 9072, otherwise known as the "National
2 Cave Resources Management and Protection Act," herein referred to as The Act, is amended to
3 read as follows:

4 "SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall
5 be defined as follows:

6 a) "Cave" means any naturally occurring void, cavity, recess or system of
7 interconnected passages beneath the surface of the earth or within a cliff or
8 ledge and which is large enough to permit an individual to enter, whether
9 or not the entrance, located either in private or public land, is naturally
10 formed or man made. It shall include any natural pit, sinkhole or other
11 feature which is an extension of the entrance. The term also includes cave
12 resources therein, but not any vug, mine tunnel, aqueduct or other
13 manmade excavation.

14 b) "Cave resources" includes any material or substance occurring naturally in
15 caves, such as animal life, plant life, including paleontological and

archaeological deposits, cultural artifacts or products of human activities, sediments, minerals, speleogems and speleothems.

c) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

d) "Speleogem" means relief features on the walls, ceilings and floor of any cave or lava tube which are part of the surrounding bedrock, including but not limited to anastomoses, scallops, meander niches, petromorphs and rock pendants in solution caves and similar features unique to volcanic caves.

e) "Speleothem" means any natural mineral formation or deposit occurring in a cave or lava tube, including but not limited to any stalactite, stalagmite, helictite, cave flower, flowstone, concretion, drapery, rimstone or formation of clay or mud.

f) "Significant Cave" refers to a cave which contains materials or possesses features that have archaeological, cultural, ecological, historical or scientific value as determined by the DENR in coordination with the scientific community and the academe.

G) "CALCITE" REFERS TO:

a) THE MOST COMMON FORM OF NATURAL CALCIUM CARBONATE A WIDELY DISTRIBUTED MINERAL KNOWN FOR THE BEAUTIFUL DEVELOPMENT AND GREAT VARIETY OF ITS CRYSTALS;

b) A MINERAL THAT DISSOLVES WITH MOST FORMS OF ACID.

H) "STALACTITE" REFERS TO:

a) AN ICICLE-SHAPED MASS OF CALCITE ATTACHED TO THE ROOF OF A LIMESTONE CAVERN;

b) MINERALS HANGING FROM THE CEILINGS OF CAVERNS THAT COMMONLY EXHIBIT A CENTRAL TUBE OR THE TRACE OF A FORMER TUBE WHOSE DIAMETER IS THAT OF A DROP OF WATER HANGING BY SURFACE TENSION;

c) IN ITS SIMPLEST FORM, A THIN-WALLED STONE STRAW, AND THESE FRAGILE FORMS MAY REACH LENGTHS OF 0.5 M (20 INCHES) OR MORE WHERE AIR CURRENTS HAVE NOT SERIOUSLY DISTURBED THE GROWTH.

I) "STALAGMITE" REFERS TO:

a) A CONE OF CALCITE RISING FROM THE FLOOR OF A CAVERN;

b) MATERIALS THAT GROW UP ON THE BOTTOM OF A CAVERN FROM THE SAME DRIP-WATER SOURCE OF THAT OF THE STALACTITES, THE MINERAL FROM WHICH IS DEPOSITED AFTER THE WATER DROPLET FALLS ACROSS THE OPEN SPACE IN THE ROCK.

J) "DRIPSTONE" REFERS TO:

a) A COLLECTIVE TERM FOR STALAGMITES AND STALACTITES, SINCE THEY ARE OFTEN FOUND IN PAIRS, THE STALAGMITE BEING FORMED AS A RESULT OF FURTHER EVAPORATION AND PRECIPITATION FROM SOLUTION AFTER THE TRICKLE OF WATER FALLS FROM THE STALACTITE AND STALAGMITE;

b) MINERAL FORMS OFTEN FOUND IN CAVES;

c) A KIND OF MINERAL THAT TAKES HUNDREDS OF YEARS TO BE FORMED".

1 **SEC. 2.** Section 7 of The Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

2 “Sec. 7. Prohibited Acts. - The following shall be considered Prohibited Acts:

- 3 a) Knowingly destroying, disturbing, defacing, marring, altering, removing, or
4 harming the speleogem or speleothem of any cave or altering the free
5 movement of any animal or plant life into or out of any cave;
6 b) Gathering, collecting, possessing, consuming, selling, bartering or exchanging
7 or offering for sale without authority any, cave resource; and
8 c) Counselling, procuring, soliciting or employing any other person to violate
9 any provisions of this Section.

10 D) IMPORTING AND/OR EXPORTING OF STALAGMITES AND
11 STALACTITES AND OTHER MINERALS THAT FORM PART OF THE
12 CAVE RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY”.

13
14 **SEC. 3. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act shall at any time be found to
15 be unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not affected by such declaration shall
16 remain in full force and effect.

17
18 **SEC. 4. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, rules or regulations inconsistent with the
19 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

20
21 **SEC. 5. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following
22 its complete publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,