

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH (16TH) CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2816**



Introduced by Hon. Joseph Gilbert F. Violago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Nueva Ecija has always been proud of its historical role in our nation's struggle for freedom and independence from our colonizers and its nationalist patriots namely Mamerto Natividad, Mariano Llanera, Pantalion Valmonte and Manuel Tinio, and more, of its current tag as the "rice granary" of the country and as one of the top leading producers of onions, garlic, mango, calamansi and vegetables.

In June 2008, it has also received the title: "Milk Capital of the Philippines" as Nueva Ecija, the largest province of Central Luzon, gathers more milk from both cows and carabaos or water buffaloes than any other place in the Philippines.

Aside from its premiere educational and research institutions, it also prides itself with many historical and tourism spots and colorful festivals (Taong Putik, Licab, Baybayanting, Tanduyong, Araquo, rice festivals, Tsinelas, etc.), it is a giant waiting to be crowned as the next industrial, investments and transport hub in Central and Northern Luzon because of its sterling human resources, vast land resources and its strategic location and proximity to Clark, Pampanga and Manila.

Mineral deposits like copper and manganese in General Tinio, Carranglan, and Pantabangan, and stories that the hills and mountains of Carranglan and Palayan City have gold, unfortunately, had lured many scrupulous and irresponsible miners in the province, with their operations threatening to destroy more of the province's natural resources, its two big watersheds, the land's fertility and the integrity of its forests, wildlife, rivers, streams and ricefields.

To protect and save lives and the environment and the immensely huge potentials of Nueva Ecija, amidst its fast increasing role in the economic growth of the country and of the nation's food security, it is necessary to declare the entire province as a mining-free zone.

In view of these considerations, approval of this proposed measure is earnestly sought.


HON. JOSEPH F. VIOLAGO
Representative
2ND District, Nueva Ecija

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH (16TH) CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2816**

Introduced by Hon. Joseph Gilbert F. Violago

AN ACT
DECLARING THE ENTIRE PROVINCE OF NUEVA ECIIJA
A MINING-FREE ZONE

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

SECTION 1. *Statement of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. Towards this end, the State shall protect the people and the environment in entire Province of Nueva Ecija from the adverse effects of mining.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of the Entire Province of Nueva Ecija as a Mining-Free Zone.* - The whole Province of Nueva Ecija is hereby declared a mining-free zone and all mining operations in the Province of Nueva Ecija are hereby prohibited.

For the purpose of this Act, mining shall refer to the extraction of valuable minerals or other geological materials from the earth and shall include such mining activities as exploration, feasibility, development, utilization and processing and large-scale quarry operations involving cement raw materials, marble, granite, sand and gravel construction aggregates: *Provided, however,* That the quarrying of gravel and sand for projects directly undertaken by agencies of the national government or by the provincial government for basic services such as, but not limited to, roads and bridges, school buildings, water and energy utilities and similar public works, is exempted from the coverage of this Act, subject, however, to the requirements of existing mining and environment laws.

SEC. 3. *Penal Provisions.* - Any person, employee or employment agency who shall violate the provisions of this Act shall be penalized with imprisonment of at least six (6) years but not more than twelve (12) years and a fine of at least One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00). If the violator is a corporation or association, the president and the manager/s of said corporation or association, or its agent or representative in the Philippines, in case of a foreign corporation or association, shall be held liable.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within three (3) months following the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.* - If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,