

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3492



INTRODUCED BY HONORABLE CHERYL DELOSO-MONTALLA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

After its eruption 1995, Mount Pinatubo which is situated in the Province of Zambales, redefined its physical appearance. The once fierce volcano is now host to a number of attractions that make it one of the most visited spots by both local and foreign tourists. In addition to the natural beauty exuded by the volcano, the rich soil is a veritable source of nutrient suitable for high value crops and other farm produce.

With these attributes of Mount Pinatubo, the issue of sustainability of the tourism and agricultural potential of the volcano comes to mind. As of today, little to none is being done not only to promote ecotourism in the area without disregarding the impact of human invasion in the rich ecosystem of Mount Pinatubo. It is also noteworthy to state that little to none is being made to ensure the practice of responsible agriculture in the area in order to harness the full potential of the rich volcanic soil of Mount Pinatubo.

In view of this, this bill proposed to declare Mount Pinatubo as an ecotourism zone that shall be governed by a composite body that will ensure the sustainability of the agri-ecotourist spot.

It is in this light that this bill is being filed and immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


CHERYL DELOSO MONTALLA
Representative
2nd District, Zambales

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AN ACT
DECLARING MT. PINATUBO IN ZAMBALES AS AN ECOTOURISM ZONE,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared the policy of the state to promote a sustainable ecotourism industry to attract local and foreign tourists while making them aware of the urgent need to preserve the blessings of nature.

SECTION 2. Mt. Pinatubo Ecotourism Zone. Mount Pinatubo is hereby declared an ecotourism zone. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall, within 90 days after the approval of this Act, make an inventory of the existing flora and fauna in Mt. Pinatubo that shall serve as the basis for a master plan that will be developed for the purpose of this Act.

SECTION 3. Mt. Pinatubo Ecotourism Governing Board. For the purpose of Section 2 of this Act, an ecotourism governing board, to be known as the Mt. Pinatubo Ecotourism Governing Board, is hereby created. The board shall be composed of the Representative of the Second District of Zambales who shall act as chair, the Secretaries of the Department of Tourism and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources or their duly authorized representatives, a member of a non-government organization whose advocacy is environmental preservation, a member of the academe, a representative of the business sector, a representative of the private sector and the local chief executives of municipalities where Mt. Pinatubo is situated. The governing board shall prepare the rules and regulations necessary for the full implementation by the concerned local government units of the provisions of this Act and shall, as the need arises, amend, modify or revise such rules and regulations to meet the needs of changing times.

SECTION 4. Mt. Pinatubo Ecotourism Master Plan. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Tourism (DOT) shall, within 120 days from approval of this Act, develop a master plan to be approved by the President of the Republic of the Philippines upon the recommendation of the governing board.

SECTION 5. Appropriation. The amount necessary for the initial implementation of the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the unappropriated balance of the budget of the DOT for the first year. Subsequently, a yearly appropriation for the effective implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act of the Republic of the Philippines.

SECTION 6. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, rules, regulations, executive orders, presidential decrees or any other issuance contrary to or inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.* If any provision or part of this Act may be declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions which are not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved,