

**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City**

**SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session**

House Bill No. 5124



Introduced by Representative ESTRELLITA "GING" B. SUANSING

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Immaculate Conception Parish Church and the Municipality of Nampicuan, Nueva Ecija have been bestowed a great blessing when the Holy Face of Manoppello — the veil “no human hands have made” and believed to miraculously bear an imprint of Christ’s face¹ — was formally enshrined in said church on September 15, 2014.

Radyo Veritas reported that Fr. Carmine Cucinelli, Rector of the Shrine and Basilica of the Holy Face of Manoppello in Italy, has chosen the aforementioned church to be the center of devotion of the Holy Face of Manoppello in the country.²

The Holy Face has been housed for the last 500 years in the Capuchin Convent³ in Abruzzo, Pescara. Pope Benedict XVI’s visits in the Shrine in the early days of his Papacy have drawn thousands of pilgrims to the small community. These Papal visits called unprecedented attention to the Veil’s major significance in the history of Jesus Christ’s life on Earth.

With the enthronement of the Holy Face of Manoppello at the Immaculate Conception Parish Church in Nampicuan, it is anticipated that thousands of pilgrims, devotees, and tourists will flock the small town.

This bill, therefore, aims to declare the Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Sanctuary of the Holy Face of Jesus, in the municipality of

¹ Manoppello veil enshrined in Nueva Ecija Town by *Raymind A. Sebastian*. September 22, 2014. www.cbcnews.com.

² Holy Face of Jesus of Manoppello, pormal na iniluklok sa Immaculate Conception Parish, Nampicuan, Nueva Ecija by *Arnel Pelaco*. September 17, 2014. www.veritas846.ph.

³ Manila awaits the Holy Face of Jesus from Manoppello, Italy by *Matey Alberto*. September 4-10, 2014. *Las Vegas Asian Journal*. www.asianjournal.com

Nampicuan, province of Nueva Ecija, as a pilgrimage site and tourist destination, mandating the Department of Tourism and its attached agencies, in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways, and in consultation with the local government units of Nampicuan, to come up with a comprehensive development plan for the improvement of the Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Sanctuary of the Holy Face of Jesus, all areas attached to it, and all roads leading to and from it.

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


ESTRELLITA "Ging" B. SUANSING
1st District, Nueva Ecija

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House Bill No. _____

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AN ACT

**DECLARING THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH CHURCH,
SANCTUARY OF THE HOLY FACE OF JESUS, IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF
NAMPICUAN, PROVINCE OF NUEVA ECIJA AS A PILGRIMAGE SITE AND
TOURIST DESTINATION, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. The Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Sanctuary of the Holy Face of Jesus, in the Municipality of Nampicuan, Province of Nueva Ecija is hereby declared a pilgrimage site and a tourist destination. As such, it shall be accorded with priority development by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and other concerned agencies subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of pilgrimage sites and tourist destinations.

SECTION 2. The DOT, in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and other concerned agencies of the government shall, immediately after the approval of this Act, prepare a development plan involving the construction, installation, and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure that shall improve the overall feature of the area thereby ensuring the accessibility and security of the pilgrims and tourists; *Provided*, That the said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the historical significance of the area.

SECTION 3. The DOT and its attached agencies shall take immediate steps in implementing the tourist development plan that will suit the needs of the Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Sanctuary of the Holy Face of Jesus, and shall incorporate the same in its overall development plans and programs for national implementation.

SECTION 4. The DOT, in consultation with the local government unit of Nampicuan, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SECTION 5. The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be charged against the internally generated funds of the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and/or the appropriations in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,