

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

H.B. No. 7024



Introduced by HON. LORD ALLAN JAY Q. VELASCO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The province of Marinduque, dubbed as the "Heart of the Philippines", is a heart-shaped island in the Southern Tagalog Region. Coincidentally, the island is also the geographical center of the archipelago and a stone marker marks its significance in Philippine geography.

To signify that it is the geographical center of the Philippine archipelago, a marker has been fixed in what is known as the Luzon Datum of 1911 or Station Balanacan. This piece of stone marker is located on top of a hill that locals call *Mataas na Bundok* or Mt. Mataas in Barangay Hinanggayon, town of Mogpog. It is the primary geodetic reference or origin of all geological surveys in the Philippines which means all maps and surveys made in the country use the Luzon Datum as a reference point.

In other countries, their geographic centers have become tourist attractions due to their creative initiative to build large stone monuments in these centers. Examples of these countries are Japan, India, Taiwan, Australia and the United States of America.

With this current global trend of setting up monuments in their respective geographic centers, it is the right time to convert the Luzon Datum of 1911 into a modern day tourist spot. As such, the development of a large stone monument in the Luzon Datum is feasible and beneficial, as it will help this country's tourism and will also identify that the Luzon Datum is a significant geographical point in the Philippine archipelago.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allan Jay Q. Velasco', written over a horizontal line.

HON. LORD ALLAN JAY Q. VELASCO
Representative, Lone District of Marinduque

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**AN ACT DECLARING THE LUZON DATUM LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY
OF MOGPOG, PROVINCE OF MARINDUQUE A TOURIST SPOT AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. The Luzon Datum in the Municipality of Mogpog, Province of Marinduque is hereby declared as a tourist spot. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourist spots. The DOT shall prioritize the establishment of a tourist center to be known as the Luzon Datum Tourist Center.

SEC. 2. Within six (6) months after the approval of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and concerned agencies of the government, shall prepare a tourism development plan involving the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure as shall encourage tourism in the area: *Provided, That* said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural beauty and historical significance thereof.

SEC. 3. The DOT shall take immediate steps to implement the development plan and incorporate the same in its tourism development program for the ensuing calendar year.

SEC. 4. The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and from internally-generated funds of the DOT.

SEC. 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DOT shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its proper implementation.

SEC. 6. This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,