

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

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7156



Introduced by Rep. Anna Katrina M. Enverga

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Tourism plays a significant role in the social, economical, cultural and environmental development of society. It contributes to sustainable development of the country. It creates jobs and opportunity for people to increase their income and improve their living conditions. Today, tourism industry is one of the world's fastest growing economic sectors and largest employer of manpower of the country.

Republic Act No. 9593 otherwise known as "The Tourism Act of 2009" declares tourism as an indispensable element of the national economy and an industry of national interest and importance, which must be harnessed as an engine of socio-economic growth and cultural affirmation to generate investment, foreign exchange and employment, and to continue to mold an enhanced sense of national pride for all Filipinos.

This bill seeks to declare the Islands surrounding Lamon Bay and Polillo Strait in the 1st District of Quezon Province namely Polillo islands and its adjoining island municipalities of Patnanungan, Panukulan, Jomalig and Burdeos, including Balesin Island, and Cagbalete island, as a tourism zone.

Lamon Bay is a rich fishing ground and the home to various living corals, it's biodiversity truly reflects the beauty of a tropical paradise that our country boasts of. The chains of exotic islands connecting the Pacific Ocean surrounding Lamon Bay are

boat trips away from Real port, Dinahican port, and Mauban port. Any of these Islands are the perfect destination for breathtaking white sand beaches, fishing, surfing and diving.

On the northern side of Lamon Bay is Polillo group of islands or POGI as the locals call it. There are 27 islands that compose the POGI. The five (5) main islands of POGI are Polilio, Burdeos, Panukulan, Patnanungan and Jomalig. The largest main island is **Polillo**, home to the famous, luxurious **Balesin Island Resort**. Grazed by long white sandy beaches, Polilio has potential for the perfect getaway for those seeking adventures. Its underwater wilderness is home to diverse marine species perfect venue for snorkeling and diving and its protected forests are home to endemic animals.

The Minasawa Game Refuge and Bird Sanctuary, an islet where threatened birds live and thrive is also worth to be visited.

Burdeos is another undiscovered tropical paradise. There is a pearl farm in Puting Bato and Ikulong island. Mysterious caves surround the place for tourists to admire. The town also boasts of undeveloped waterfalls, mangrove forests in Bakaw Bakaw island and rich aquatic resources just waiting to be explored. Secluded and unknown to many is Minasawa Island— a game refuge and bird sanctuary where bird species such as the nutmeg imperial pigeon, black-naped oriole, rufous night heron, and swifts are found.

Panukulan has tourist spots with historical importance (Hook Bay and Pinagbanderahan). This island municipality is a good place for scientific discovery. Gumatong Marine Reserve in the northern part of Panukulan is a marine protected area being used for scientific study. There are watershed areas that house rich biodiversity and island endemic species. This is the perfect place for deep sea fishing.

Patnanungan, Quezon is another main island in Polillo Group of Islands. It has also a long coastline of beaches, Pulang Lupa and Leira's Beach are the places worth visiting. In the near future, a major land development company will built a gateway resort to exclusive Balisin Island Resort with hotels, recreational facilities and airport of international standards.

Jomalig is one of the smallest and farthest island municipalities of Quezon Province. Despite it's location, it is widely visited for it's golden sand and turquoise waters. Also rich in marine life, the charm of this town is its coastline of golden sand filled with pine trees and sprinkles of sand bars.

Cagbalete Island, also located in Lamon Bay fronting the Pacific Ocean is another paradise in the province of Quezon. It is surrounded by white sand and like Jomalig island is lined with pine trees. This island is under the jurisdiction of the municipality of Mauban, Quezon.

This proposed measure seeks to provide the necessary support to such efforts of the municipal governments of Polillio, Burdeos, Panukulan, Patnanungan, Jomalig and Mauban by declaring their islands as an ecological-tourism area. Promoting efforts for environmental protection, making the tourism industry a major source of livelihood and a means of generation of employment for the municipalities

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



ANNA KATRINA M. ENVERGA

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**AN ACT DECLARING POLILLO GROUP OF ISLANDS AND CAGBALETE ISLAND
IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEZON A TOURISM ZONE**

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

SECTION 1. This Act hereby declares the Polillo Group of Islands of Polillo, Burdeos, Panukulan, Patnanungan and Jomalig and Cagbalete Island in the municipality of Mauban all in the Province of Quezon as national tourism zone.

SECTION 2. The Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and other concerned agencies of the government, shall, within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, prepare the development plan involving the construction, installation and/or maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure which shall enhance tourism in the said group of islands; *Provided, That* said development shall ensure the preservation, protection and enhancement of the natural features, historic significance and cultural heritage of the tourism zone, while providing sustainable economic opportunities for the local community.

SECTION 3. The Department of Tourism (DOT) shall take immediate steps to implement the said development plan and incorporate the same in the Department's overall tourism development program for the ensuing calendar year.

1 **SECTION 4.** The Department of Tourism (DOT) and its attached agencies may provide
2 necessary technical and financial assistance for the development of tourism
3 infrastructure and skills development in the local government while endeavoring,
4 when practicable, to promote the tourism zones both locally and internationally.

5 **SECTION 5.** The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in coordination
6 with the Department of Tourism (DOT), shall set forth in place the necessary
7 construction and/or improvement of roads and other infrastructure upon the
8 promulgation of this Act and incorporate in its infrastructure program.

9 **SECTION 6.** The Department of Tourism (DOT) and the concerned local government
10 units shall create a forum by which the private sector, nongovernment organizations
11 and other interest groups, can interact with one another and the government to create
12 an atmosphere that shall encourage investment, and the development of a culture of
13 tourism.

14 **SECTION 7.** The Department of Tourism (DOT) shall likewise promulgate the
15 necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

16 **SECTION 8.** This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days of completion of its
17 publication.

18 *Approved,*