

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 7216



Introduced by REP. RENE L. RELAMPAGOS
First District, Bohol

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare the Loon Upthrust located at the Municipality of Loon, Province of Bohol a Tourism Enterprise Zone.

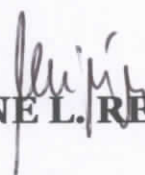
As the earth shook Bohol on October 15, 2013, it gave rise to a new land: an upliftment from the shores of eighteen (18) barangays in two municipalities. The geological phenomenon known as 'upthrust' consists of 458.01 hectares divided as follows: 417.71 hectares in the Municipality of Loon and 40.3 hectares in the Municipality of Maribojoc, Province of Bohol.

The new land form has enormous tourism-development potentials. The Municipality of Loon, a thirty-minute drive from the capital Tagbilaran City, is strategic in terms of location and resources. Loon hosts the Catagbacan Port groomed as an international cruise ship port and a priority by the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) and the Department of Tourism (DOT). Viewed together with the recent opening of direct flights to and from Korea and the incoming opening of the Bohol-Panglao International Airport, the establishment of the Loon Upthrust Tourism Enterprise Zone (Loon Upthrust TEZ) could not be more timely.

In fact, the uplifted flat reef has been included in the development plan that identifies the area as a potential geological tourism attraction under the Loon Enterprise Zone which was recently approved by the Regional Development Council. Eventually, Loon will be established as one of the flagship Tourism Enterprise Zones in the Philippines by the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA).

Earlier, the Sangguniang Bayan of Loon passed an ordinance establishing the Loon Coastal Geomorphic Conservation Park at the uplifted intertidal zone with the view of developing a Development Master Plan that balances protection to environment, preservation of the geological monument, economic development and tourism promotion in the area.

For the above considerations, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


RENE L. RELAMPAGOS

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AN ACT
DECLARING THE LOON UPTHrust IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LOON,
PROVINCE OF BOHOL, A TOURISM ENTERPRISE ZONE AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Loon Upthrust Tourism Enterprise Zone Act of 2018”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote tourism that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable and equitable for local communities.

It is also hereby declared policy of the State to pursue the acceleration of economic, social and political development of local government units (LGUs) through the establishment of special development and administrative areas in suitable and strategic locations in order to attract local and foreign tourists that will generate employment and investment opportunities for local communities while ensuring environment protection and preservation of the area.

SECTION 3. Loon Upthrust Tourism Enterprise Zone. – The uplifted flat reef as a result of the 7.2 magnitude earthquake on October 15, 2013 found in Barangays Canhangdon Occidental, Biasong, Basac, Napo, Cogon Norte, Moto Norte, Moto Sur, Lintuan, Basdacu, Pig-ot, Tangnan, Cuasi, Tontonan and Song-on in the Municipality of Loon, Province of Bohol, is hereby declared a tourism enterprise zone known as the “Loon Upthrust Tourism Enterprise Zone” or the Loon TEZ.

The development of the Loon TEZ shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of Tourism Enterprise Zones under Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as the “Tourism Act of 2009”.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in coordination with the TIEZA and the Municipality of Loon shall delineate well-defined geographic areas within the Loon Upthrust Tourism Enterprise Zone and coordinate the integrated development of the area for the optimum use of natural assets and attractions. The

development shall ensure the sustainability, protection and preservation of the upthrust as a geological phenomenon and perpetuate its historical, educational and tourism significance.

SECTION 4. Development Plan. – The DOT and TIEZA, in coordination with the Municipality of Loon, and other concerned agencies of government shall prepare a development plan of the Loon TEZ.

Further, the Tourism Development Plan of the Municipality of Loon shall be incorporated in the overall National Tourism Development Plan of the DOT pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as the “Tourism Act of 2009”, and shall be jointly implemented by the Municipality of Loon and the TIEZA.

SECTION 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The DOT, TIEZA, and the Municipality of Loon in consultation with local government agencies concerned shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 6. Appropriations. – 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 the internally generated funds of the TIEZA.

SECTION 7. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders or issuance, or any parts thereof which are inconsistent herewith, are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 9. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect upon its publication on at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,