

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7467



Introduced by Honorable Cristina "Chiqui" Roa-Puno

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has become a world-renowned, premier tourist destination. Through the combined efforts of the public and private sector, our tourism industry has surged in the recent years, contributing 8.6% of the country's economy. The tourism direct gross value added amounted to PhP 1,243.5 billion in 2016, higher by 13.7 percent compared to previous year's PhP 1,093.4 billion.¹ Employment in tourism characteristic industries was estimated at 5.2 million, while share of employment in tourism industries to total employment in the country was recorded at 12.8 percent in 2016.²

Despite its considerable growth, the Philippine tourism sector still has a wealth of untapped potential residing in the lesser-known tourist sites, particularly the hidden gem that is the Province of Rizal.

The Province of Rizal has the capacity to rival the top Philippine destinations as it boasts of awe-inspiring sights ranging from natural landscapes to historical and cultural attractions. Situated only a few hours away from Manila, the province is readily accessible to both foreign and local tourists.

In Antipolo City alone, we can find tourists attractions such as the Hinulugang Taktak Protected Landscape, a waterfall area recognized by the

¹ Contribution of Tourism to the Economy is 8.6 Percent in 2016, Philippine Statistics Authority, 08 June 2017, <https://psa.gov.ph/tourism-satellite-accounts-press-releases>, last access 07 March 2018

² id

Department of Environment and Natural Resources as a National Park and declared as a National Historical Shrine under Republic Act No. 6964. In the heart of the city can also be found the Antipolo Cathedral, the first dome-type church in the Philippines, which is also known as the National Shrine of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage.

Being a mountainous province, Rizal features many natural wonders, including the Daranak Falls, Palo Alto Falls, Kay Ibon Falls, Masungi Geo-Reserve, Cardona Rock Garden, Daraitan River, Sangab Cave, and Calinawan Cave. The province has become one of the favorite trekking sites of mountaineers as they are greeted not only by lush forests but also with splendid views of Laguna de Bay and magnificent waterfalls.

Named after our National Hero, the Province of Rizal is rich in history and culture. It is home to the Binangonan/Angono Petroglyphs — artworks believed to be the oldest in the Philippines. Dating to the third millennium B.C., they are a collection of 127 carvings of animals and human figures immortalized on the wall of a cave. The province's Paminitinan and Binacayan mountains have also been surrounded by folklore as they are said to have been separated by the mythical folk hero Bernardo Carpio through his brute force. Apart from its fabled past, Rizal likewise holds historical significance as its Pamintinan Cave, declared as a National Geological Monument, is where Andres Bonifacio and other katipuneros made their pilgrimage and covenant for freedom and has been. The province is also known for grottos, contemplation areas, and prayer gardens flocked by pilgrims and devotees especially during Lenten Season.

Other interesting tourist sites in Rizal are the Aylon Montalban Zoo, Pililia Wind Farm, various art galleries and museums, adventure parks, and agricultural farms.

This bill seeks to declare the Province of Rizal as a tourism development area in accordance with Republic Act No. 9593, also known as the Tourism Act of 2009. The said law promotes a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and equitable for local communities.

With this legislation, provision for the proper mechanisms and infrastructure for sustainable tourism development in the province will be established. Certain areas and sites identified as tourist destinations shall be promoted and developed, keeping in mind the preservation of the ecological balance and natural beauty of the province. Rizal will progress to become a first-class tourism area that will drive and propel the economy not only of the province, but of the country as a whole.

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


CRISTINA "CHIQUT" ROA-PUNO

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**AN ACT DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL A TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT AREA AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 **SEC. 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as “Rizal Tourism
2 Development Act.”

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy** –It is hereby declared the policy of the
5 State to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible,
6 participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and equitable for local
7 communities. To this end, the State shall endeavor to provide the proper
8 mechanisms and infrastructure for sustainable tourism development. It shall
9 promote and develop certain areas and sites identified as tourist destinations or
10 attractions or having potential for tourism in order to drive and propel inclusive
11 growth throughout the country.

12
13 **SEC. 3. Province of Rizal as Tourism Development Area.** - The
14 Province of Rizal is hereby declared a tourism development area. As such, its
15 development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the
16 Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), and shall be subject to
17 the rules and regulations governing the development of tourism zones.

18
19 **SEC. 4. Tourism Development Plan.** - The DOT, in coordination with
20 the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and other
21 concerned agencies of the government, shall prepare a tourism development
22 plan providing for the development, maintenance, improvement and restoration
23 of tourist sites, where appropriate, in conformity with set forth standards,
24 including the construction of hotels, resorts, restaurants, recreational facilities

1 and other appropriate facilities and infrastructure: Provided, that the said
2 development plan shall ensure the preservation of the ecological balance and
3 natural beauty of the area/s concerned. The DOT shall incorporate the tourism
4 development plan to the overall National Tourism Development Plan pursuant
5 to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as "The Tourism Act of 2009".
6

7 The concerned local government unit, in coordination with DOT, TIEZA,
8 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and other
9 concerned agencies of the Government, shall delineate well defined geographic
10 areas within the tourism development area and coordinate the integrated
11 development of these areas for the optimum use of natural assets and
12 attractions, as well as existing facilities.
13

14 The Tourism Development Plan shall be jointly implemented by the local
15 government units concerned and the Provincial Tourism Council of Rizal.
16

17 The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), in
18 coordination with the DOT, shall implement the construction of roads and other
19 infrastructures necessary in the development of the Province of Rizal upon the
20 promulgation of this Act and incorporate the same in its infrastructure program.
21

22 **SEC. 5. Rizal Tourism Council.** – (a) There is hereby organized the
23 Rizal Tourism Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, which shall be the
24 primary policy-making, planning and coordinating body in the development of
25 tourism in the Province of Rizal and administration of ecotourism sites therein.
26 The Council, which shall convene upon the effectivity of this Act, shall be
27 composed of:
28

- 29 (1) The Provincial Governor of Rizal, as Chairperson;
30 (2) The mayors of all the municipalities and cities of Rizal, who shall
31 elect from among themselves the Council's Vice Chairperson;
32 (3) A member of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Rizal, duly designated
33 by such body; and
34 (4) Two (2) representatives from the private sector, nominated by the
35 private sector tourism industry organizations in Rizal and appointed by the
36 Chairperson of the Council, who shall serve for a period of two (2) years.
37

38 The Council may create such committees and provide for the functions
39 and the memberships thereof to assist it in the proper and effective performance
40 of its functions.
41

1 (b) In order to provide assistance and support to the Council in the
2 performance of its functions, the following shall serve as advisors:

- 3
4 (1) The Chief Operating Officer of the TIEZA;
5 (2) The Regional Director of the DOT for Region IVA;
6 (3) The Regional Director of the DENR for Region IVA;
7 (4) The Regional Director of the DPWH for Region IVA; and
8 (5) The Regional Director of the National Economic and Development
9 Authority (NEDA) for Region IVA.

10
11 The Council may call on other government agencies and offices to
12 provide advice and assistance on matters relating to the performance of its
13 functions and the development of tourism in Rizal.

14
15 (c) The Council shall ensure that constituencies, sectors and groups,
16 whose interests may be affected by the tourism development in Rizal, are given
17 sufficient opportunities to be heard. The Council shall pursue consultations with
18 relevant sectors and constituencies, conduct research, and engage the services
19 and assistance of experts and other resource persons, as may be needed in the
20 performance of its functions.

21
22 (d) The Provincial Government of Rizal shall provide a Secretariat for the
23 Council, including the necessary expenses for the performance of its official
24 functions and activities.

25
26 (e) The functions of the Council shall be harmonized with the functions
27 and responsibilities of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), the
28 protected area superintendents and the regional ecotourism committee to avoid
29 any overlap or conflict.

30
31 **SEC. 6. Rizal Tourism Development Fund** – There is hereby
32 established a trust fund under this Act to be known as the Rizal Tourism
33 Development Trust Fund for purposes of financing projects which shall enhance
34 tourism in the Province of Rizal. The trust fund shall be administered by a trust
35 fund administrator under the Provincial Tourism Office of the Province of
36 Rizal. Funds shall be derived from fees collected from visitors/tourists, other
37 resources from the Province, proceeds from the registration and lease of
38 multiple-use areas, including tourism concessions, fees, proceeds and
39 contributions from industries and facilities directly benefiting the Province.

40
41 The fund may be augmented by grants and donations, endowments from
42 various sources, domestic or foreign entities and individuals, for purposes

1 related to their functions. Provided, that disbursements therefrom shall be in
2 accordance with existing accounting and auditing rules and regulations.
3 Provided, further, that the fund shall not be used to cover personnel services
4 expenditures.

5
6 **SEC. 7. Appropriations** - The Secretary of the DOT and the Secretary
7 of DPWH shall include in their respective Department's program the
8 implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the
9 General Appropriations Act and from internally generated funds of the DOT.

10
11 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations** - Within sixty (60) days
12 from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the local
13 government units of the Province of Rizal, shall likewise promulgate the
14 necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

15
16 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause** - If any provision or part of this Act is
17 declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not
18 affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

19
20 **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause** - All laws, presidential decrees, executive
21 orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof, which are
22 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act shall be deemed repealed or
23 modified accordingly.

24
25 **SEC. 11. Effectivity** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
26 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

27
28 Approved.