

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 7656



Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill aims to recognize, protect and promote the Philippines' most outstanding roads having one of six core intrinsic qualities - scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational, and archaeological qualities - features which contribute to the character of the roadway and its communities. The National Scenic Byways designation aims to award routes that show the regional characteristics of the nation's culture, history and landscape.

National Scenic Byways represent the best of all scenic byways and provide visitors with a unique travel experience since they are considered tourist attractions in their own right. Under this measure, if a route is designated as such, it does not only gain an expected boost in tourism, but also becomes eligible for appropriations for improvements such as interpretive centers, overlooks, and rest areas. Moreover, local residents will be encouraged to work closely with the Government and civic organizations to preserve and promote the unique local beauty and distinctive character of their own community.

Recognition of scenic byways focuses not only on the promotion of roads, but also helps balance economic development and resource conservation in the localities. In the United States of America, strong scenic byways program demonstrated strong community support and even encouraged the citizens to develop a corridor management plan that describes in detail the preservation, marketing, and improvement strategies for the byway.

This program seeks to preserve the beauty of the designated scenic corridors, which reaps rewards by protecting community character while providing economic opportunities in tourism and recreation.

Approval of this bill is earnestly urged.

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Alejano".

GARY C. ALEJANO

Representative

Magdalo Para sa Pilipino Party-List

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AN ACT
RECOGNIZING NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS IN THE PHILIPPINES THEREBY
CREATING A NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** --- This Act shall be known as the "National Scenic Byways
2 Program of 2018."

3
4 **SEC. 2. Definition of Terms.** --- For the purpose of this Act, the words and phrases used
5 herein shall mean:

- 6
7 1. Grants - a non-repayable, non-bearing assistance or aid, given either through monetary or
8 in kind, to encourage development or growth in an area.
9
10 2. Byway - a minor or secondary road; a road other than the main road.
11
12 3. National Scenic Byway - a road that is recognized for its archaeological, cultural, historic,
13 natural, recreational, and/or scenic qualities.
14

15 **SEC. 3. Designation of Roads.-**
16

- 17 1. In general. - The Secretary of Department of Tourism (DOT) shall carry out a national
18 scenic byways program that recognizes roads having outstanding scenic, historic, cultural,
19 natural, recreational, and archaeological qualities by designating the roads as "National
20 Scenic Byways".
21
22 2. Criteria. - The DOT Secretary shall designate roads to be recognized under the national
23 scenic byways program in accordance with the criteria developed by the department.
24
25 3. Nomination. - To be considered for a designation, a road must be nominated by a national
26 government agency, local government unit (LGU), or a civic organization situated in the
27 locality of the road to be nominated.
28
29 4. Reciprocal notification. - National Government agencies, LGUs, and civic organizations
30 shall notify each other regarding nominations made under this subsection for roads that:
31

- a) are within the jurisdictional boundary of the National Government agencies, LGUs, and civic organizations; or
- b) directly connect to roads for which the National Government agencies, LGUs, and civic organizations are responsible.

SEC. 4. *Grants and Technical Assistance.*

- 1) In general. - The DOT Secretary shall make grants and provide technical assistance to National government agencies, LGUs, civic organizations to-
 - a) implement projects on highways designated as National Scenic Byways; and
 - b) plan, design, and develop a National Government agency, LGU or civic organization scenic byway program.
- 2) Priorities. - In making grants, the DOT Secretary shall give priority to –
 - a) each eligible project that is associated with a highway that has been designated as a National Scenic Byway and that is consistent with the corridor management plan for the byway;
 - b) each eligible project along a National Government agency, LGU or civic organization scenic byway that is consistent with the corridor management plan for the byway, or is intended to foster the development of such a plan, and is carried out to make the byway eligible for designation as a National Scenic Byway; and
 - c) each eligible project that is associated with the development of a National Government agency, LGU or civic organization scenic byway program.

SEC. 5. *Establishment of Philippines' Byways Resource Center.*

- 1) In general. - The DOT Secretary shall allocate funds made available to carry out the establishment of the Philippines' Byways Resource Center (PBRC). DOT shall oversee and manage the resources of the center.
- 2) Technical Support and Education. –
 - a) Use of Funds. - The Center shall use funds allocated to the Center under this section to continue to provide technical support and conduct educational activities for the national scenic byways program.
 - b) Eligible Activities, - Technical support and educational activities carried out under this sub-section shall provide local officials and organizations associated with National Scenic Byways, with proactive, technical, and on-site customized assistance, including training, communications (including a public awareness series), publications, conferences, on-site meetings, and other assistance considered appropriate to develop and sustain such byways and roads.

1 **SEC. 6. Eligible Projects.** - The following are projects that are eligible for Government
2 assistance under this section:

- 3
- 4 1) An activity related to the planning, design, or development of a National Government
5 agency, LGU or civic organization scenic byway program.
- 6
- 7 2) Development and implementation of a corridor management plan to maintain the scenic,
8 historical, recreational, cultural, natural, and archaeological characteristics of a byway
9 corridor while providing for accommodation of increased tourism and development of
10 related amenities.
- 11
- 12 3) Safety improvements to a National Government scenic byway, LGU scenic byway or
13 National Scenic Byway, to the extent that the improvements are necessary to
14 accommodate increased traffic and changes in the types of vehicles using the highway as
15 a result of the designation as a Government scenic byway, civic organization scenic
16 byway or National Scenic Byway.
- 17
- 18 4) Construction along a scenic byway of a facility for pedestrians and bicyclists, rest area,
19 turnout, highway shoulder improvement, overlook, or interpretive facility.
- 20
- 21 5) An improvement to a scenic byway that will enhance access to an area for the purpose of
22 recreation, including water-related recreation.
- 23
- 24 6) Protection of scenic, historical, recreational, cultural, natural, and archaeological
25 resources in an area adjacent to a scenic byway.
- 26
- 27 7) Development and provision of tourist information to the public, including interpretive
28 information about a scenic byway.
- 29
- 30 8) Development and implementation of a scenic byway marketing program.
- 31

32 **SEC. 7. Limitation of Grants.** - The DOT Secretary shall not make a grant under this
33 section for any project that would not protect the scenic, historical, recreational, cultural, natural,
34 and archaeological integrity of a highway and adjacent areas.

35

36 **SEC. 8. Savings Clause.** - The DOT Secretary shall not withhold any grant or impose
37 any requirement on a National Government, LGU or civic organization as a condition of
38 providing a grant or technical assistance for any scenic byway unless the requirement is
39 consistent with the authority provided in this Act.

40

41 **SEC. 9. Regulation.** - The DOT Secretary, in consultation with all concerned
42 stakeholders shall issue the necessary rules and regulations of this Act within ninety (90) days
43 after the effectivity of this Act.

44

45 **SEC. 10. Appropriations.** - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act
46 shall be provided out of the savings from the appropriations of the DOT for the current year.
47 Thereafter, the sum necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be appropriated in the
48 annual appropriations of the DOT.

49

1 **SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.*** All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts
2 thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

3
4 **SEC. 12. *Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days upon its publication in at
5 least two (2) general newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,