

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

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 7884

Introduced by REP. RAUL "BOBOY" C. TUPAS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

AN ACT DECLARING THE ISLAS DE GIGANTES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CARLES, PROVINCE OF ILOILO AS AN ECOTOURISM ZONE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

The travel and tourism sector contributed a total of Php 3.35 trillion to the Philippine economy in 2017, accounting for about 21% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), according to the latest report from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). The sector also directly supported some 2.3 million jobs or about 5.8% of employment last year. This is expected to rise by 6.6% in 2018 and rise by 2.6% to 3.2 million jobs in 2028.¹

The Western Visayas Tourist Arrival Data from DOT Region VI show that a total of 5.9 million tourists visited the region in 2017 and spent a total of Php 128.46 billion in terms of tourist receipts. Of this, the Province of Iloilo hosted around 1.3 million tourists in 2017.²

Certainly, travel and tourism remains one of the largest economic sectors in the Philippines. The booming travel and tourism sector is currently driving the growth of many industries as it continues to create jobs, drive exports and generate prosperity for the country.

Pursuant to the policy of the State to promote sustainable tourism industry throughout the country, this bill seeks to declare the Islas de Gigantes in the Municipality of Carles, Province of Iloilo as an ecotourism zone with the goal of developing and

¹ <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2018/philippines2018.pdf>

² Official Western Visayas 2017 Tourist Arrivals Data

promoting the island into a tourist destination, generating investments and creating job opportunities, and protecting the natural resources within the area.

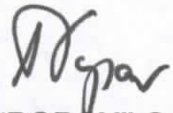
Islas de Gigantes is an island chain within the larger Western Visayas archipelago in the Visayan Sea. It is politically located in the Municipality of Carles, Iloilo and has four barangays: (1) Asluman; (2) Granada; (3) Lantangan; and (4) Gabi.

The Gigantes Islands consist of several islands; the two largest are Gigantes Norte (North Gigantes) and Gigantes Sur (South Gigantes). In addition to the two main islands, the Gigantes group includes the following minor islets: Cabugao Gamay, Cabugao Dako, Bulubadiang, Gigantillo, Antonia, Bantigui, Tanguingui, Turnina, Polopandan, Waydahon and Gigantuna.

The islands are blessed with pristine white sand beaches, bountiful fresh seafood, and jagged rock formations. Some of the main tourist attractions are the Cabugao Gamay Island, Tangke Salt Water Lagoon, and the North Gigantes Island Lighthouse. Despite the increase of tourist arrivals in recent years, Gigantes has retained its off-beat charm and remains relatively underdeveloped compared to Boracay, Bohol, and other mainstream tourist destinations in the Philippines.

This bill is in line with the National Tourism Development Plan of the government which supports the development of Philippine tourism product and raises the competitiveness of the Philippines as a tourism destination.

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


RAUL "BOBOY" C. TUPAS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
H. No. 7884

Introduced by Representative Raul C. Tupas

AN ACT DECLARING THE ISLAS DE GIGANTES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CARLES,
PROVINCE OF ILOILO AS AN ECOTOURISM ZONE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Short Title – This Act shall be known as the “Islas de Gigantes Ecotourism
Zone Act.”

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

SECTION 3. Islas de Gigantes Ecotourism Zone – The Islas de Gigantes consisting of
four (4) barangays, namely, Asluman, Granada, Lantangan and Gabi located in the
Municipality of Carles, Province of Iloilo, is hereby declared as an ecotourism zone, to be
known as Islas de Gigantes Ecotourism Zone. Its development shall be prioritized by the
Department of Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing
the development of ecotourism zones.

The DOT shall prepare the development plan for Islas de Gigantes and shall
incorporate the same in the overall National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP), pursuant
to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as “The Tourism Act of 2009”. The plan shall be
implemented jointly with the Municipality of Carles, the Department of Environment and
Natural Resources (DENR) and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority
(TIEZA).

The DOT, in coordination with the Municipality of Carles, the DENR, the TIEZA and
other concerned agencies of the government, shall delineate well-defined geographic areas
within the Islas de Gigantes Ecotourism Zone and coordinate the integrated development of
the area for the optimum use of natural assets and attractions. The development shall
ensure the preservation of the flora and fauna and perpetuate the historic significance of the
identified tourist attractions.

SECTION 4. Appropriations- The Secretary of the Department of Tourism (DOT) shall
include in the Department’s program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which

31 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and internally-generated funds
32 of the DOT.

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34 **SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations-*** Within sixty (60) days after the
35 effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Tourism (DOT), in consultation with
36 the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Tourism Infrastructure
37 and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and the Municipality of Carles, shall promulgate the
38 necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

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40 **SECTION 6. *Repealing Clause-*** All laws, orders, decrees, rules and regulations and other
41 issuances, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or
42 modified accordingly.

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44 **SECTION 7. *Effectivity-*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
45 at least two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

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47 Approved,