

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. 8485



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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A watershed is an area of land that drains rain water into one location such as a stream, lake or wetland. These water bodies supply our drinking water, water for agriculture and manufacturing, offer opportunities for recreation and provide habitat to numerous plants and animals. Much of the water comes from rainfall and stormwater runoff. The quality and quantity of stormwater is affected by all the alterations to the land--mining, agriculture, roadways, urban development, and the activities of people within a watershed.

Watersheds are important because the surface water features and stormwater runoff within a watershed ultimately drain to other bodies of water. It is essential to consider these downstream impacts when developing and implementing water quality protection and restoration actions. Everything upstream ends up downstream. We need to remember that we all live downstream and that our everyday activities can affect downstream waters.

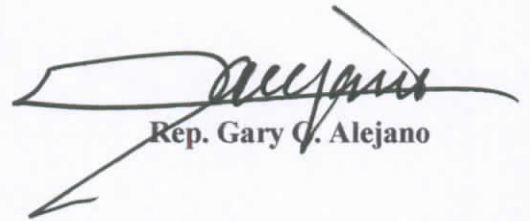
However, despite the vital role of watersheds in maintaining a balanced and healthful ecology for the whole country, it is nonetheless threatened by people who fail to appreciate its importance. Illegal logging in watersheds and other protected areas remain rampant and it has had adverse effects to the overall environmental crisis of the country.

On 13 February 2018, the Office of the President has received a complaint from concerned environmentalists and mountaineers about the massive deforestation of the Ipo Watershed in Norzagaray, Bulacan. The Ipo Watershed's 6,600 hectares of forest provides fresh water to more than 11 million people in Metro Manila by generating water that flows to the Ipo Dam and the La Mesa Dam and yet, as early as 2004, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources identified illegal logging, *kaingin*, and charcoal-making as primary reasons for the destruction of about 70% of the watershed's forest cover.

This dilemma requires that authorities step in and execute the full force of the law to deter erring citizens, however R.A. 7586 or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 fails to provide for the definition and provision of penalties for specific destructive activities within these areas.

In response to the abovementioned problems, this bill shall seek to define the offense of illegal logging within protected areas and provide penalties for its violations. Government must ensure the protection, conservation, and development of our valuable water resources for the benefit of our people and of future generations.

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



Rep. Gary C. Alejano

1 granted, forward a copy of the information to the Department of Environment and Natural
2 Resources (DENR). Upon receipt thereof, the DENR shall immediately cause the suspension of the
3 license agreement, lease or permit, as the case may be, of the offender until termination of the
4 criminal case.

5 In case the offender is acquitted, the suspension shall be ordered lifted. Otherwise, the
6 license, lease, or permit shall be ordered cancelled.

7 **SEC. 5. *Exemptions.***—The Indeterminate Sentence Law shall not be applicable to the
8 offense punished in this Act.

9 **SEC. 6. *Forfeiture of the Instrument of the Crime.***—Any tool, equipment, or vehicle used in
10 the cutting and transport of the illegally cut trees shall be automatically forfeited in favor of the
11 government.

12 **SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.***—All laws, decrees, executive orders or parts thereof inconsistent
13 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

14 **SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.***—If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or
15 unconstitutional, the other parts not otherwise affected shall remain in full effect and force.

16 **SEC. 9. *Effectivity.***—This Act shall take effect fifteen days after its complete publication in
17 at least two newspapers of general publication.

Approved,