

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 37



Introduced by HON. LORD ALLAN JAY Q. VELASCO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The province of Marinduque, dubbed as the “Heart of the Philippines,” is a heart-shaped island in the Southern Tagalog Region. Coincidentally, the island is also the geographical center of the archipelago, and a stone marker marks its significance in Philippine geography.

To signify that it is the geographical center of the Philippine archipelago, a marker has been fixed in what is known as the Luzon Datum of 1911 or Station Balanacan. This piece of stone marker is located on top of a hill that locals call *Mataas na Bundok* or Mt. Mataas in Barangay Hinanggayon, town of Mogpog. It is the primary geodetic reference or origin of all geological surveys in the Philippines which means all maps and surveys made in the country use the Luzon Datum as a reference point.

In other countries, their geographic centers have become tourist attractions due to their creative initiative to build large stone monuments in these centers. Examples of these countries are Japan, Australia, and the United States of America.

It is then fitting that the Luzon Datum of 1911 be converted into a tourist spot. The development of a monument will signify its relevance as the geographic center of the Philippines and attract tourism. This will spur tourism and provide a source of livelihood for the people in surrounding communities.

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


LORD ALLAN JAY Q. VELASCO

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 37

Introduced by HON. LORD ALLAN JAY Q. VELASCO

**AN ACT DECLARING THE LUZON DATUM LOCATED IN BARANGAY
HINANGGAYON, MUNICIPALITY OF MOGPOG, PROVINCE OF
MARINDUQUE, A TOURIST SPOT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. The Luzon Datum, the geographical center of the Philippines, located in Barangay Hinanggayon, Municipality of Mogpog, Province of Marinduque, is hereby declared a tourist spot. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourist spots. The DOT shall likewise prioritize the establishment of a tourist center in the area, to be known as the Luzon Datum Tourist Center, that shall showcase the historical significance of the Luzon Datum.

Sec. 2. Within six (6) months after the approval of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and other concerned agencies of the government, shall prepare a tourism development plan consisting, among others, the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure that shall encourage tourism in the area: *Provided*, that said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural beauty and historical significance thereof.

Sec. 3. The DOT shall take immediate steps to implement the tourism development plan for Luzon Datum and shall incorporate the same in the National Tourism Development Plan.

Sec. 4. 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 from internally generated funds of the DOT.

Sec. 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DOT shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

Sec. 6. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,