



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Constitution Hills, Batasan Complex, Quezon City



NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 765

Introduced by Representatives **ALFEL M. BASCUG** and **EDDIEBONG G. PLAZA**

**AN ACT DECLARING THE PINANDAGATAN FALLS LOCATED IN
BARANGAY NEW TUBIGON, MUNICIPALITY OF SIBAGAT,
PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL SUR, AN ECOTOURISM SITE, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

Explanatory Note

This bill seeks to declare Pinandagatan Falls as an ecotourism site in the Municipality of Sibagat, Province of Agusan del Sur.

Pinandagatan Falls is a newly discovered multi-tiered waterfall, situated in the remote barangay of New Tubigon, Sibagat, Agusan del Sur. Being immersed deep in the forest of Agusan del Sur, this is considered an amazing, untouched, hidden paradise. With its expanse of different majestic tiers, the Caraga Backpackers Group recorded the site as possibly the longest running waterfall and one of the best waterfalls in the Caraga Region. The place is also the home of various attractions, including a beautiful mountain and a wide variety of flora and fauna, where tourists can enjoy a number of popular ecotourism-related activities such as trekking, swimming, bird watching, picnics, camping, nature viewing, and nature photography.

This hidden tourist gem has been a local tourist attraction but has never been publicly exposed to other tourists in the Philippines or the world. Due to a lack of needed development and promotion, the tourism potential of the place has been curtailed.

Thus, in order for this gem to be developed and become a fully grown tourist destination, it should be declared as an ecotourism site. The development of Pinandagatan Falls into an ecotourism site will not just enhance its aesthetic value but also increase local government revenue and create employment opportunities for the people of Agusan del Sur.

Notably, this measure has been previously filed in the 18th Congress. The House of Representatives approved it on 3rd Reading and the bill had been duly transmitted to the Senate.

The immediate passage of this bill is hereby earnestly sought.


ALFEL M. BASCUG
1ST District, Agusan del Sur


EDDIEBONG G. PLAZA
2nd District, Agusan del Sur



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

SECTION 1. The Pinandagatan Falls located in Barangay New Tubigon, Municipality of Sibagat, Province of Agusan del Sur, is hereby declared an ecotourism site. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism sites.

SECTION 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT shall, in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and concerned local government units (LGUs) and agencies of the government, prepare a tourism development plan that shall include the construction, installation and maintenance of appropriate infrastructure and facilities to enhance tourism in the area: *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural beauty and resources of the area.

SECTION 3. The DOT and its concerned attached agencies shall take immediate steps to implement the development plan with due consideration to the natural characteristics of the Pinandagatan Falls, and shall incorporate the same in its tourism development program for the calendar year immediately succeeding the approval of this Act. It shall also include the Pinandagatan Falls in all its national, regional and local promotion programs.

SECTION 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 shall augment such allocation with internally generated funds of the Department.

SECTION 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT shall, in consultation with the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority and concerned LGUs and government agencies, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SECTION 6. If any provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 7. All laws, rules, regulations, presidential decrees and other issuances inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,