

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

House Bill No. 2666



Introduced by Representative ROMMEL RICO T. ANGARA

AN ACT
RECOGNIZING THE MUNICIPALITY OF BALER IN THE
PROVINCE OF AURORA
AS THE "BIRTHPLACE OF PHILIPPINE SURFING", DECLARING IT
AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION AND PROVIDING FOR ITS
DEVELOPMENT

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The waves of Baler have been popular not only to the local surfers but also to the foreign surfing enthusiast. Unknown to many, surfing in Baler started in the late 1960s with the GIs then living in Subic Naval Base in search of waves they can ride on.

In 1972, Steve Scott, a surfer who was then staying in Subic Naval Base went to Baler with his surfboard and discovered the waves of the then untouched town of Baler. Although foreign to the locals of Baler, the surfboard left by Scott started the surfing community in Baler which is still existing up until today. Even after the visit of Scott in Baler, foreigners from Surfer Magazine also visited Baler in 1977 prior to the filming of Apocalypse Now in 1978, which was documented in a film entitled "Explore the Amazing Land of the Philippines- True Adventure Documentary", in search of a place where surfing competition can take place.

While many places in the Philippines may claim that they too have their own First Filipino Surfer, but what makes Baler different is the fact that after the GIs discovered the waves of Baler, the locals then learned to surf and surfing community were formed which paved way in making Baler a popular surfing destination.

Truly, the discovery of the foreigners of Baler as a surfing haven made it possible for Baler to be known as the Birthplace of Philippine Surfing. Thus this bills aims to recognize Baler not only as the Birthplace of Philippine Surfing but also to declare Baler as an Eco Tourism Destination.

This bill also aims to help the Local Government of Baler to promote the tourism industry of the municipality and to generate higher income for the LGU while protecting the tourism sites from the threats of deterioration due to pollution.

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


ROMMEL RICO T. ANGARA
Representative, Lone District of Aurora

House Bill No. **2666**

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**AN ACT
RECOGNIZING THE MUNICIPALITY OF BALER IN THE
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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

- 1 SEC. 1. The Municipality of Baler in the Province of Aurora is hereby declared
2 an ecotourism destination and shall be recognized as the "Birthplace of Philippine
3 Surfing". As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism
4 (DOT) and other concerned government agencies, subject to the rules and regulations
5 governing the development of ecotourism destinations.
- 6 SEC. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT in coordination
7 with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other
8 concerned government agencies, shall prepare a tourism development plan that shall
9 include the construction, installation and maintenance of such facilities and
10 infrastructure as may be necessary and appropriate to promote the beaches and surfing
11 activities in the area: Provided, That said development plan shall guarantee the
12 accessibility and security of tourists thereat and ensure the preservation, conservation
13 and optimum utilization of available assets and resources in the area.

14 SEC. 3. The DOT shall take immediate steps to implement the development plan and
15 incorporate the same in its tourism development program for the ensuing calendar
16 year. It shall also include the Municipality of Baler in all its national, regional and
17 local promotions programs.

18 SEC.4 The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department's program the
19 implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual
20 General Appropriations Act, and shall augment such allocation with internally
21 generated funds of the Department.

22 SEC. 5. Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT, in
23 consultation with the DENR, the municipal government of Baler and other concerned
24 government agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the
25 proper implementation of this Act.

26 SEC. 6. All laws, rules, regulations, executive orders, proclamations, presidential
27 decrees and other issuances inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are
28 hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

29 SEC. 7. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official
30 Gazette or in a national newspaper of general circulation.

31 Approved,

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