

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4230



Introduced by Representative Ambrosio "Boy" C. Cruz, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

From stunning white sand beaches to sky-high mountains, the Philippines is a sight to behold and thus, it consistently attracts domestic and international tourists. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has put the dynamic progress of Philippine tourism to a halt.

In a study made by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP)¹, the tourism sector is among those badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic due to the closing of Philippine Borders. According to BSP, both the country's international tourist arrivals and tourism receipts fell by about 80% in 2020 and by about 90% in 2021.

Nevertheless, the same study posits an optimistic view regarding the future of the country's tourism sector. It is projected that by 2022, travel receipts will post a robust recovery reaching twice its level in 2021. The Department of Tourism foresees that foreign tourists will reach between 2 million and 5 million in 2022.

Truly, borders are now easing up. People can now travel with less restrictions than they did in 2020 and 2021. With this, there is a need to reboot and maximize the Philippines' tourism potential. One of the steps to achieve this goal is to explore more tourist spots other than the usual go-to destinations.

In this regard, The Garden at Ciudad de Victoria certainly fits the bill. Located in the Municipality of Bocaue, Bulacan, The Garden offers various attractions such as the Orchidarium, Japanese Garden, and Flower Glass Dome, Animal Land, Candy Land Café, and Embrace Café, among others. With manicured lawns, perfectly curated species of plants and flowers, well-thought-out attractions, The Garden is the perfect place for rest and relaxation.

As more people discover The Garden, it is important for the local and national government to undertake measures to promote it while still preserving its beauty. The

¹ https://www.bsp.gov.ph/Media_And_Research/Publications/EN22-02.pdf

declaration of The Garden as a tourist destination can guarantee this.

Verily, the declaration of The Garden as a tourist destination will ensure its further development and preservation. If properly managed, The Garden will be able to welcome more tourists, which, in return, can result in exceptional economic benefits through investments and employment opportunities for the locals in the area.

Indeed, with the DOT's assistance and supervision, The Garden can be a great addition to the roster of top tourist destinations in the country.

Considering the foregoing, the immediate approval of this proposed measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ambrosio Cruz Jr.', with a large, stylized initial 'A'.

AMBROSIO "BOY" C. CRUZ, JR.
Representative, Fifth District of Bulacan

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**AN ACT DECLARING THE GARDEN, CIUDAD DE VICTORIA LOCATED IN THE
MUNICIPALITY OF BOCAUE, BULACAN AS A TOURIST DESTINATION AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “The Garden Tourist Destination Act.”

Section 2. *Scope and Coverage* – The Garden, located in the Municipality of Bocaue, Bulacan is hereby declared a tourist destination. In view thereof, the development of The Garden shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with the Municipality of Bocaue and other related agencies, subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourism destinations.

Section 3. *Tourism Development Plan of The Garden* – 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. The said tourism development plan shall consist, among others, the construction, installation, and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure that shall encourage tourism in the area: *Provided*, that said tourism development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of The Garden.

Section 4 *Implementation* – The DOT, in coordination with TIEZA and other concerned agencies shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

Section 5. *Appropriations and funding.* – The Secretary of the DOT 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.

Section 6. *Separability clause.* - If any provision of this Act shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this Act.

Section 7. *Repealing clause.* - All provisions of laws, presidential decrees, letters of instruction and other presidential issuances which are incompatible or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed amended or repealed.

Section 8. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect within fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,