



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9012

Introduced by:
REP. HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State guarantees its principle in providing for a balanced and healthful ecology. With it is the responsibility to take care and preserve the environment. This measure seeks to promote and preserve the Batag Lighthouse while at the same time, develop it to attract tourists and foster economic development in the area.

The Batag Lighthouse Station is a historic lighthouse in the municipality of Laoang. It was built during the American Colonial Period, by virtue of Act No. 1662 in 1907. This comes after the proposal of then Director of Navigation, J.M. Helm, considering that the San Bernardino Strait is considered as a gateway to Manila and other ports in the Philippines.


Given its historical and cultural significance, it became a provincial historical landmark in October 2008. It currently operates in one of the busiest waterways in the Philippines, servicing ships that enter from the Pacific Ocean or transiting from the San Bernardino Strait. This act aims to develop this historic site into a tourist destination.

In coordination with the Department of Tourism and other concerned agencies, the municipal government of Laoang will be given one year after the approval of this act to prepare a tourism development plan. This plan will ensure that the area will have suitable infrastructure in place for visitors and will guarantee the preservation of the site's historical significance.

With the development of a sound tourism plan, this measure seeks to also stimulate economic growth and prosperity in the Municipality. The Province of Northern

Samar is working towards a province that is strong, happy, and resilient. And it is of utmost importance that the progression of economic growth, and preservation of areas of cultural significance, are given harmonious importance.

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


REP. HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN



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INTRODUCED BY REP. HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN

AN ACT DECLARING THE BATAG LIGHTHOUSE STATION IN BARANGAY MARUBAY, BATAG ISLAND, MUNICIPALITY OF LAOANG, PROVINCE OF NORTHERN SAMAR, A TOURIST DESTINATION, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. The Batag Lighthouse Station, located in Barangay Marubay, Municipality of Laoang, Province of Northern Samar, is hereby declared a tourism destination. Pursuant thereto, its development shall be prioritized and supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourism destinations.

SEC. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the Municipal government of Laoang shall, in coordination with the DOT and concerned agencies of the government, prepare a tourism development plan that shall include the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate infrastructure and facilities to enhance tourism in the area: *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation of the historical significance of the area: *Provided, further*, That the implementation of the tourism development plan shall be also form part of the budget of the Municipal government of Laoang.

SEC. 3. The DOT shall assist the Municipal government of Laoang in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include the Batag Lighthouse in its national and regional promotion programs.

SEC. 4. The Secretary of Tourism shall also include in the DOT'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 Department of Tourism, in consultation with the Municipality of Laoang, and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 6. All laws, regulations, proclamations, executive orders, or part thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby amended accordingly.

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

Approved,