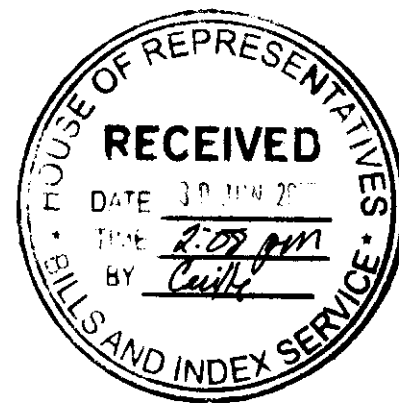


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 490



Introduced by **HON. TSUYOSHI ANTHONY "HORI" G. HORIBATA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

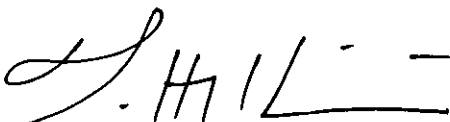
The Banga Caves, located in Barangay Banga Caves, Municipality of Ragay, Camarines Sur, comprise at least 17 interconnected caverns steeped in historical and natural significance. Local accounts recount that these caves served as hideouts for Japanese forces during World War II, which is supported by artifacts and implements discovered on site. The term "Banga" is derived from the native palm trees once abundant in the area.

The declaration of the Banga Caves as an ecotourism site would enable the Department of Tourism and concerned agencies to partner with local stakeholders in preserving the caves and developing sustainable infrastructure, ensuring that the economic, cultural, and employment benefits of tourism directly uplift residents of Ragay and nearby communities.

A similar proposal, House Bill No. 7304, was filed in the 19th Congress seeking to declare the Banga Caves an ecotourism destination, reflecting early recognition of the site's potential for sustainable tourism and local development.^[1]

Ecotourism bridges conservation, community participation, and sustainable travel. This bill aligns with the Department of Tourism's National Ecotourism Strategy and adheres to the State's constitutional duties under Article II, Sections 15 and 16 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which promote public health, environmental balance, and sustainable development.

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


TSUYOSHI ANTHONY "HORI" G. HORIBATA
First District, Camarines Sur

¹ Congress of the Philippines. (2023, March 8). *House Bill No. 7304 – Declaring Banga Caves in the Municipality of Ragay, Province of Camarines Sur an Ecotourism Destination*. 19th Congress, First Regular Session. Retrieved from: https://docs.congress.hrep.online/legisdocs/third_19/HB17304.pdf

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 430

Introduced by HON. TSUYOSHI ANTHONY "HORI" G. HORIBATA

AN ACT
DECLARING BANGA CAVES, LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF RAGAY, PROVINCE OF CAMARINES
SUR, AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION

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

SECTION 1. *The Banga Caves located in the Municipality of Ragay, Province of Camarines Sur, are hereby declared an ecotourism 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 ecotourism destinations.*

SEC. 2. *Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the municipal government of Ragay shall, in coordination with the DOT, Department of Environment and Natural Resources 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 and conservation of the natural beauty and resources of the area: Provided, further, That the implementation of the tourism development plan shall be included in the budget of the municipal government of Ragay.*

SEC. 3. *The DOT shall assist the municipal government of Ragay in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include the Banga Caves in its national and regional promotion programs.*

SEC. 4. *The funding for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the municipal government of Ragay. The DOT may augment such allocation with internally-generated funds.*

SEC. 5. *Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the municipal government of Ragay shall, in consultation with the DOT and concerned agencies of the government, promulgate rules and regulations to implement this Act.*

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

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

Approved,