

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 696



Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL "JAVI" L. BENITEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Presidential Proclamation No. 895, Series of 2005, declared the Northern Negros Forest Reserve a protected area to be known as the Northern Negros Natural Park (NNNP). Many areas within the NNNP can benefit from revenues from ecotourism activities, revenues that can fund biodiversity conservation and reforestation.

Mount Kanlandog, located between Mount Mandalagan and Mount Kanlaon, is one of the areas within NNNP with great ecotourism potential. Relay stations or transmitters of several radio and TV companies, and telecommunication towers have been constructed at the top of Mount Kanlandog. Recently, the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) has donated its telco tower at Mount Kanlandog to the municipal government of Murcia.

The Municipality of Murcia has outlined plans to develop the site for ecotourism. It has applied for Special Use Agreement in Protected Areas, as required by Republic Act No. 11038 which governs the management of areas within the NNNP.

But the construction of additional structures to serve tourists will entail adequate funding. The municipal government of Murcia will also need the technical assistance of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to design facilities according to the standards for structures constructed or installed within protected areas. Declaring Mount Kanlandog an ecotourism tourism will channel the necessary funding and technical assistance from the National Government to ensure sustainable development of the area.

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


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AN ACT DECLARING MOUNT KANLANDOG LOCATED IN BARANGAY CANLANDOG, MUNICIPALITY OF MURCIA, PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, AN ECOTOURISM ZONE, 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. Mount Kanlandog located in Barangay Canlandog, Municipality of Murcia, Province of Negros Occidental, is hereby declared an ecotourism zone. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism zones.

SEC. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the local government of the Municipality of Murcia and concerned agencies of the government, shall prepare a tourism development plan involving the construction, installation, and maintenance of appropriate infrastructure and facilities that shall enhance tourism in the area: *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural ecosystems and resources of the area: *Provided, further*, That any activities and developments to be carried out in the area should conform with the concept of ecotourism as provided in the national ecotourism strategy jointly issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the DOT.

SEC. 3. The DOT and its concerned attached agencies shall take immediate steps to implement the tourism development plan that will suit the natural characteristics of Mount Kanlandog, and shall incorporate the same in

its tourism development program for the ensuing calendar year. It shall also include Mount Kanlandog in all its national, regional and local promotion programs.

SEC. 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 from internally generated funds of the DOT.

SEC. 5. The DOT shall transfer the management of the facilities to the local government of the Municipality of Murcia within two (2) years after construction through a memorandum of agreement.

SEC. 6. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DOT, in consultation with the local government of the Municipality of Murcia, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 7. If any provision of this Act or any part hereof is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions.

SEC. 8. All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations and executive orders, or parts thereof, contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,