

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1005



Introduced by Lone District of Agusan del Norte Representative
HON. DALE B. CORVERA

AN ACT
DECLARING THE CONGRESSMAN EDELMIRO A. AMANTE, SR. MAPASO RESORT AND ADVENTURE NATURE PARK, LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SANTIAGO, PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL NORTE, AN ECOTOURISM ZONE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

As early as 1939, the beauty and importance to a balanced ecology of the Mapaso Hot Spring in the Province of Agusan del Norte has been recognized. Then Philippine President Manuel L. Quezon issued Proclamation No. 422, series of 1939, entitled “Establishing as Mapaso Hot Spring Forest Reserve for Watershed Protection and Timber Production a Parcel of Public Domain Situated in the Municipality of Cabadbaran, Province of Agusan, Island of Mindanao.

Over the years, a new municipality, Santiago, was created, the territorial jurisdiction of which includes the area where the Mapaso Hot Spring Forest Reserve is located. To further protect and preserve the natural beauty of the area and its wildlife species, Municipal Ordinance No. 30, series of 1993 was ordained. The ordinance declared the 50-hectare Mapaso Municipal Park as Sanctuary of Wildlife and mandated the putting up of signboards thereon to raise awareness.

In honor of the late Congressman Edelmiro A. Amante, Sr. who initiated the development of the Mapaso Hot Spring into a primary tourist destination not only in the Municipality of Santiago, but in the whole Province of Agusan del Norte, the Sangguniang Bayan of the Municipality of Santiago ordained Municipal Ordinance No. 163, series of 2022 naming the Mapaso Hot and Cold Spring of the Municipality of Santiago, Agusan del Norte into Congressman Edelmiro A. Amante, Sr. Mapaso Resort and Adventure Nature Park.

The purpose of this bill is to ensure the preservation of the Congressman Edelmiro A. Amante, Sr. Mapaso Resort and Adventure Nature Park including its wildlife species, and its promotion as a primary tourist destination in the Province of Agusan del Norte. This measure recognizes that a comprehensive tourism development plan aligned with the national tourism development program of the Department of Tourism is vital in ensuring that the generations

yet unborn will be able to enjoy the subject nature park the way the past and the present generations relish it.

This version of the bill is a rehash of HB 11169 which was filed during the 19th Congress and approved by the House of Representatives on third reading on 18 December 2024. Unfortunately, no counterpart bill was filed by the Senate.

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

DALE B. CORVERA

Representative

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

SECTION 1. The Congressman Edelmiro A. Amante, Sr. Mapaso Resort and Adventure Nature Park, located in the Municipality of Santiago, Province of Agusan del Norte is hereby declared an ecotourism zone. 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 zones.

SEC. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the municipal government of Santiago 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 Santiago.

SEC. 3. The DOT shall assist the municipal government of Santiago in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing technical assistance in tourism

capacity building. It shall also include the Congressman Edelmiro A. Amante, Sr. Mapaso Resort and Adventure Nature Park in all its regional and national promotion programs.

SEC. 4. The funding for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the municipal government of Santiago.

The DOT through the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), if necessary, may include such allocation in the TIEZA's program.

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

SEC. 6. If any provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 7. All laws, rules, regulations, presidential decrees, and other issuances inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 8. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,