

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **1147**



Introduced by Representative **MARLYN L. PRIMICIAS-AGABAS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare Barangay Malico of the Municipality of San Nicolas in the Province of Pangasinan as Ecotourism Zone.

Ecotourism involves travel to destinations where flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. It is intended to offer tourists an insight into the impact of human beings to the environment, and to foster a greater appreciation of the natural habitats.

Barangay Malico (Malico) of the Municipality of San Nicolas is fortunate to be home to an untapped ecotourism destination which has been laying unclaimed for the past several years. A barangay which has shrugged off modern comfort for years, Malico rests on the crest of the Caraballo Mountains with an altitude of 1,675 meters above sea level. It has a land area of 1,618 hectares, more or less, nurtured by indigenous people mostly from the Kalanguya Tribe. Cocooned by mother nature with a cold climate as that of the City of Baguio, Malico produces temperate crops like strawberries and other upland vegetables. It is dotted with pine trees which are mute to Malico's abundant cultural and wartime history. It is also dubbed as the second summer capital of the Philippines. Aside from the cold weather, Malico has a viewdeck which offers a breathtaking sunset view over the plains of Pangasinan. A hundred meters from the viewdeck also lies a Sherman tank of the United States' 32nd Infantry Division, which became known as the "Red Arrow Division", a witness to the gruelling battle during the second world war and a favorite photo spot for tourists abounding Malico. To this day, Japanese tourists visit the

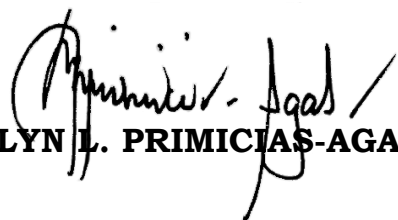
WWII Peace Memorial Park in Malico, a park for Japanese fallen heroes. Had the late President Marcos not been exiled, it would have been developed and tagged as Marcos City.

There is also the Villa Verde Trail. Historically significant, it is the place of one of the fiercest battles between the Filipino, American and Japanese forces during the 2nd World War. Much has been said about the landing of General Douglas McArthur at Lingayen Gulf, but little emphasis has been made on the bloody skirmishes between the 32nd Division of the U.S. Sixth Army and General Tomoyuki Yamashita's 14th Infantry Division where thousands of gallant soldiers fell, mostly in stand up fights, along the terrains of the Villa Verde Trail as evidenced by numerous foxholes, spent bullets and casings, the Sherman tank, and the WWII Peace Memorial Park.

The Villa Verde Trail commonly known as the Villa Verde Road is a major link connecting the Ilocos Region to Cagayan Valley via Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya. Motorists originating from Pangasinan and Region III need not negotiate the Dalton Pass to reach Sta. Fe. The Villa Verde Road is now under major rehabilitation.

Recently, Malico has become a favorite destination to hikers, bikers, and tourists. Before the pristine view, cultural and historical heritage of Malico is lost to the perils of urbanization, there is a need to equally protect the same through appropriate legislative measures such as its declaration as ecotourism zone. With its declaration, the State can advance Malico's development without losing sight of its cultural, historical, and anthropological heritage.

Hence, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


MARLYN L. PRIMICIAS-AGABAS

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**AN ACT DECLARING BARANGAY MALICO IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF
SAN NICOLAS, PROVINCE OF PANGASINAN AN ECOTOURISM ZONE
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. Barangay Malico in the Municipality of San Nicolas, Province of Pangasinan, is hereby declared as an ecotourism zone. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism zones.

SEC. 2. Within six (6) months after the approval of this Act, the DOT in coordination with the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority and other concerned agencies of the government, shall prepare a tourism plan involving the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure as shall encourage tourism in the area: *Provided*, That the development plan shall ensure the preservation of the natural beauty and historical significance in the area.

SEC. 3. The DOT shall take immediate steps to implement the tourism development plan and incorporate the same in its tourism development program for the ensuing calendar year.

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 internally generated funds of the DOT.

SEC. 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DOT shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its proper implementation.

SEC. 6. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,