

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**H. No. 1854**

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Introduced by **Representative Binky April M. Tupas**

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**AN ACT**  
**DECLARING THE ISLAS DE GIGANTES LOCATED IN THE**  
**MUNICIPALITY OF CARLES, PROVINCE OF ILOILO, AN**  
**ECOTOURISM ZONE**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Tourism functions as a fundamental economic pillar of the Philippines because it generates employment opportunities while expanding exports and supporting nationwide development inclusivity. The tourism sector has emerged as a vital force for local economic recovery during the post-pandemic period particularly in underdeveloped and promising areas.

The State policy to develop sustainable tourism and equitable development throughout the country guides this bill to establish *Islas de Gigantes* in the Municipality of Carles, Iloilo Province as an ecotourism zone. The proposed legislation works to establish *Islas de Gigantes* as a sustainable world-class tourist destination which will attract investments while creating local employment and protecting the island group’s natural biodiversity and cultural heritage.

The enchanting island chain of *Islas de Gigantes* exists in the Visayan Sea as part of the Western Visayas archipelago. The political boundaries of the Municipality of Carles, Iloilo include four barangays which are *Asluman, Granada, Lantangan, and Gabi*. The island group includes two major islands named *Gigantes Norte (Gigantes North)* and *Gigantes Sur (Gigantes South)* together with smaller islands such as *Cabugao Gamay, Cabugao Dako, Bulubadiang, Gigantillo, Antonia, Bantigui, Tanguingui, Polopandan, Waydahon, and Gigantuna*.

The islands are famous for their soft white sand beaches, clear waters, plenty of seafood, limestone cliffs, and interesting rock

formations. Popular spots like Cabugao Gamay Island, Tangke Saltwater Lagoon, and the North Gigantes Lighthouse have great opportunities for ecotourism. Even though more tourists are visiting lately, Islas de Gigantes falls behind bigger tourist destinations like Boracay and Bohol, which makes it a perfect place for balanced, eco-friendly, and responsible tourism to grow.

This bill aligns with the National Tourism Development Plan of the government which aims to diversify tourism options and boost the Philippines' position in global tourism.

This bill was already approved on Third Reading in the House of Representatives during the 19th Congress, reflecting strong legislative support for its passage.

In light of the foregoing, the immediate consideration and approval of this measure is respectfully urged.

  
**BINKY APRIL M. TUPAS**

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

**SECTION 1.** The Islas de Gigantes, consisting of four (4) barangays, namely, Asluman, Granada, Lantangan and Gabi, all located in the Municipality of Carles, Province of Iloilo, is hereby declared an ecotourism zone, to be known as the “Islas de Gigantes 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 six (6) months after the approval of this Act, the municipal government of Carles shall, in coordination with the DOT, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) 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 flora and fauna and perpetuate the historical significance of the identified tourism attractions: *Provided, further*, That the implementation of the tourism development plan shall be included in the budget of the municipal government of Carles.

**SEC. 3.** The DOT shall assist the municipal government of Carles in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include the Islas de Gigantes 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 Carles. The DOT may augment such allocation with internally-generated funds.

**SEC. 5.** Within sixty (60) days from the effectiveness of this Act, the municipal government of Carles shall, in consultation with the DOT, DENR and concerned agencies of the government, promulgate 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 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,