

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2485



Introduced by **Representative Roy M. Gonzales**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution unequivocally affirms that “xxx...The State shall conserve, promote, and popularize the nation's cultural and historical heritage and resources, as well as artistic creations.” (*Article XIV, Section 15*) No less than the State itself is duty-bound to preserve and develop the country's heritage, resources, and creations. In conformity with Republic Act No. 10066, or also known as the “National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009,” it conveys the constitutional mandate as provided by conserving cultural property which must strictly adhere to the accepted international standards of conservation.

The Cuartel de Santo Domingo, also popularly known as Fort Santo Domingo, is situated at Barangay Santo Domingo, City of Santa Rosa, Laguna. The Cuartel was built with walls made of adobe stones in 1877 across an 8.2-hectare stretch of land. It was named after St. Dominic, who was the founder of the Dominic order and owner of the haciendas around Santa Rosa, Biñan, and Calamba. During the Philippine Revolution, it served as headquarters led by Gen. Jose Lachambre, a Spanish governor-general, against the army of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo from Cavite. At the time of Japanese occupation, it became a refuge for women from Cabuyao and Calamba to protect them from abuses of the Imperial Japanese Army, and consequently, it transitioned into a commerce center. It significantly served as a detention center for high-profile detainees in recent years. The National Historical Commission of the Philippines recognized the Cuartel as a National Historical Landmark on July 21, 2005. Subsequently, the National Museum declared the Cuartel an important cultural property on January 14, 2019.

Cuartel is one of the existing Spanish colonial military architectures in the Philippines. Beyond its overall physical form, the structure holds deep cultural resonance as a witness to historical events in the evolution of the Philippine government and formidable institutions.

This bill endeavors to declare the Cuartel de Santo Domingo as a heritage site. The declaration is a recourse to preserve and develop the structure's historical and cultural significance in the city and country. By its passage, the State will not only echo its commitment to safeguard the nation's heritage but also recognize the structures of Cuartel de Santo Domingo as critical components of the nation's identity and commonly shared history.

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



ROY M. GONZALES
Representative

Lone District of Santa Rosa City, Laguna

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AN ACT
DECLARING CUARTEL DE SANTO DOMINGO IN THE CITY OF SANTA
ROSA, LAGUNA, AS A HERITAGE SITE, PROVIDING FOR ITS
PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Cuartel de Santo Domingo as a Heritage Site.* - The Cuartel de Santo Domingo, also commonly known as Fort Santo Domingo, located in the City of Santa Rosa, Laguna, is hereby declared a heritage site. The preservation and development of Cuartel de Santo Domingo shall be prioritized and supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), the City of Santa Rosa, and relevant agencies of the government, subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of heritage sites.

SECTION 2. *Tourism Development Plan.* - Within one (1) year upon the effectivity of this Act, the City of Santa Rosa shall, in accordance with the DOT, NHCP, DPWH, and relevant agencies of the government, prepare a tourism development plan that shall include the construction, installation, and maintenance of the facilities and infrastructure of the Cuartel de Santo Domingo, thereby ensuring its accessibility and the security of tourists: *Provided*, That such development plan shall ensure the preservation of the historical significance of Cuartel de Santo Domingo: *Provided, further*, That the implementation of the tourism development plan shall be included in the budget of the City of Santa Rosa.

SECTION 3. *Role of DOT.* - The DOT shall assist the City of Santa Rosa in the implementation of the tourist development plan by providing technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include the Cuartel de Santo Domingo in all its national and regional promotion programs and projects.

SECTION 4. *Appropriations.* - The funding for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the City of Santa Rosa. The DOT may augment such allocation with internally generated funds.

SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the City of Santa Rosa, in consultation with the DOT and relevant agencies of the government, promulgates rules and regulations to implement this Act.

SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, executive orders, issuances, and rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,