

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3105**



Introduced by the Hon. Dibu S. Tuan

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare the Bakngeb River Cave in the Municipality of T'boli in the Province of South Cotabato as an eco-tourism site.

Located in Barangay Laconon, Municipality of T'boli, the Bakngeb River Cave is a 4-kilometer subterranean river frequented by locals and tourists. It features a wide river pool in its outlet, and has naturally cold and crystal clear waters which came from an underground cave system and natural rock formations. Visitors can explore what's inside the river cave by riding a raft or go water tubing. The river cave is also home to bats.

In view of the policy of the State to promote the tourism industry as a powerful economic driver, the swift approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


DIBU S. TUAN
Third District, South Cotabato

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Quezon City, Metro Manila

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AN ACT

DECLARING THE BAKNGEB RIVER CAVE IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF T'BOLI IN THE PROVINCE OF SOUTH COTABATO AS AN ECO-TOURISM SITE, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

SECTION 1. *The Bakngeb River Cave Eco-Tourism Site.* – The Bakngeb River Cave located in Barangay Laconon, Municipality of T'boli in the Province of South Cotabato is hereby declared an eco-tourism site. As such, it shall be accorded with priority development by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of eco-tourism sites.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable and equitable for local communities.

SEC. 3. *Tourism Development Plan.* The DOT shall prepare the development plan for the Bakngeb River Cave and shall incorporate the same in the overall National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP), pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as “The Tourism Act of 2009”. The plan shall be implemented jointly with the Municipality of T'boli.

The DOT, in coordination with the Municipality of T'boli and other appropriate agencies of the government, shall identify well defined geographic areas of the tourism site and coordinate the integrated development of these areas for the optimum utilization of natural assets and attractions, as well as existing infrastructure and facilities; *Provided*, that the development shall ensure the preservation of the scenery and the historic significance of the identified tourist attraction.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Tourism, in consultation with the Municipality of T'boli, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Appropriations.* The Secretary of Tourism 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. 6. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,