



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

20th CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3488



Introduced by Representative SITTIE SHAHARA "BAI DIMPLE" I. MASTURA

AN ACT

DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF SULTAN HAJI HASSANAL BOLKIAH MASJID, ALSO KNOWN AS THE GRAND MOSQUE OF COTABATO, LOCATED IN BARANGAY KALANGANAN, COTABATO CITY AS TOURISM DESTINATION

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Masjid, also known as the Grand Mosque of Cotabato is a significant landmark in the City of Cotabato, a living testament to the enduring spirit of the Muslim Ummah.

With the capacity to accommodate 15,000 people, the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Masjid is the largest mosque in the Philippines, designed by our very own Architect Felino Palafox with its architecture inspired by classical and modern masjids in Turkey, Dubai and those along the Arabian Gulf nations incorporated with indigenous Filipino Muslim cultural motifs.

More than just a place of worship, mosques are heritage sites which has successfully integrated religion and culture, promoting Islamic history, the history of mosques, the surrounding Muslim community, cultural diversity, understanding and mutual respect between religions.

The profound spiritual significance that Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Masjid holds for the Islamic faithful draw worshippers and visitors alike, enhancing its potential as a tourism destination, that by and large compliments the bustling economy and rich heritage of the City of Cotabato.

Tourism is an indispensable element and contributor to a country's economy and in a world often marked by division and strife, the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Masjid proudly stands as a shining beacon of faith, unity and cultural pride.

This bill seeks the declaration of the surrounding environs of the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Masjid as tourist destination, mandate DOT, DPWH, local government of Cotabato City and other concerned agencies to prepare a comprehensive and complementary development plan for the surrounding environs of the Gand Mosque of Cotabato.

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

SITTIE SHAHARA "BAI DIMPLE" I. MASTURA

Representative

Maguindanao del Norte, Lone District



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

SECTION 1. The immediate environs of *Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Masjid*, also known as the Grand Mosque of Cotabato, located in Barangay Kalanganan, Cotabato City, are hereby declared as tourism destination. Pursuant thereto, the development of the immediate environs of the Grand Mosque of Cotabato shall be prioritized and supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourism destinations.

SEC. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the local government unit of Cotabato City shall, in coordination with the DOT 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 improve the overall features of the immediate environs surrounding the Grand Mosque of Cotabato, thereby ensuring its accessibility and security of tourists: *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the cultural significance of the area: *Provided further*, That the implementation of the tourism development plan shall be included in the budget of the local government unit of Cotabato City.

SEC. 3. The DOT shall assist the local government unit of Cotabato City in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include the immediate environs of the Grand Mosque of Cotabato 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 local government of Cotabato City. The DOT may augment such allocation with internally-generated funds.

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

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,