

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3578



**Introduced by Representatives Jose C. Alvarez and Gil
"Kabarangay Jr." A. Acosta**

**AN ACT
DECLARING THE THIRD DISTRICT OF PALAWAN A MINING-FREE ZONE
AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Province of Palawan serves as a frontier for our country's defense, a popular tourist destination, and a bulwark of ecological diversity. To protect Palawan's delicate ecosystems and priceless natural resources from the irreparable harm that mining operations can cause, this bill proposes to declare the Third District a mining-free zone.

This proposed measure was first introduced by Rep. Gil "Kabarangay" P. Acosta in the Seventeenth Congress as House Bill No. 5597. The House of Representatives approved it on third reading on January 21, 2019. On January 22, 2019, it was forwarded to the Senate but did not progress due to time constraints. The measure was refiled by Rep. Gil "Kabarangay Jr." A. Acosta in the Eighteenth Congress as House Bill No. 1158 and referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, which confirmed the bill's merit and broad support by endorsing it for approval without amendment in its Committee Report No. 81.

The existence and potential of extractive industries threaten the critical ecological zones of the Third District of Palawan, including the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, lush watersheds, vital marine habitats, and ancestral domains.

The Constitution is adamant about protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development, even as it

requires the exploration and use of natural resources to advance the country. This bill aims to achieve the necessary equilibrium.

Declaring Palawan's Third District a mining-free zone strengthens the nation's commitment to intergenerational stewardship, respects the wisdom of indigenous custodians, and honors the voices of local communities.

In light of the foregoing, the approval of this measure is fervently sought.



JOSE C. ALVAREZ
Representative
2nd District of Palawan



GIL "KABARANGAY JR." A. ACOSTA
Representative
3rd District of Palawan

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3578

**Introduced by Representatives Jose C. Alvarez and Gil
"Kabarangay Jr." A. Acosta**

AN ACT
DECLARING THE THIRD DISTRICT OF PALAWAN A MINING-FREE ZONE
AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR

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

1 Sec. 1. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is the policy of the State to
2 protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and
3 healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of
4 nature. Towards this end, the State shall protect the people and the
5 environment of the Third District of Palawan, composed of the City
6 of Puerto Princesa and the Municipality of Aborlan, against the
7 adverse effects of mining.

8 Sec. 2. *Mining-Free Zone.* — The Third District of Palawan is
9 hereby declared a mining-free zone. All forms of mining operations
10 and activities within its territorial jurisdiction are therefore prohibited.

11 As used in this Act, "mining" shall refer to the extraction of
12 valuable minerals or other geological materials, excluding
13 quarrying of gravel, sand and marble. This shall include large-scale
14 mining activities involving exploration, feasibility, development,
15 utilization and processing.

16 Sec. 3. *Penalties.* — Any person, natural or juridical, or any
17 public officer, who violates the provisions of this Act shall suffer the
18 penalty 16 of imprisonment of not less than six (6) years but not more
19 than twelve (12) years and a fine of not less than One million pesos
20 (P1,000,000.00) but not more than Ten million pesos
21 (P10,000,000.00).

1 Any public officer who violates this Act shall also be dismissed
2 from service and perpetually disqualified from holding public office.

3 If the violator is a juridical entity, the highest ranking official
4 and the members of its board of directors or trustees who
5 authorized the violations therein shall suffer the penalty imposed in
6 this Act.

7 Sec. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within sixty (60)
8 days from the passage of this Act, the Department of Environment
9 and Natural Resources shall formulate the necessary rules and
10 regulations for its effective implementation.

11 Sec. 5. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is
12 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not
13 affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

14 Sec. 6. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, presidential decrees,
15 executive orders, memoranda, circulars, and other issuances, or
16 parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the Act, are hereby
17 repealed or modified accordingly.

18 Sec. 7. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen
19 (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper
20 of general circulation.

21 Approved,