

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4057



Introduced by **HON. TSUYOSHI ANTHONY "HORI" G. HORIBATA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The St. Peter Baptist Church, located in Poblacion, Lupi, Camarines Sur, stands as one of the most historic ecclesiastical structures in the Bicol region. Founded in 1726, it has been at the heart of the town's history and identity, coinciding with the establishment of Lupi as a *pueblo* under the patronage of St. Peter the Baptist ^[1]. In 2026, the parish will celebrate its 300th anniversary, making it one of the oldest continuously active parishes in Camarines Sur and a symbol of resilience and faith for the local community ^{[1][2]}.

For nearly three centuries, the church has been more than a place of worship. It has shaped the cultural and spiritual lives of generations, hosting countless baptisms, weddings, and feasts, while also serving as a refuge in times of calamity. Its presence has nurtured values of unity, faith, and tradition, anchoring the identity of the citizens of Lupi and connecting them to their deep historical roots. Beyond its spiritual role, the church is also an architectural and cultural landmark, reflecting the heritage of Spanish colonial mission churches that remain integral to Philippine history.

Despite its importance, St. Peter Baptist Church has yet to be formally recognized as a heritage site and tourist destination. With its tercentenary approaching, it is both timely and necessary to preserve its environs and secure its protection against the risks of neglect, encroachment, and unregulated development. Heritage recognition will enable a structured conservation program, encourage sustainable tourism, and ensure that future generations can continue to experience the church's historical and cultural significance.

Furthermore, designating the church and its immediate environs as a heritage site will boost local pride and strengthen community identity, while at the same time supporting local livelihoods

^[1] National Historical Commission of the Philippines, *Foundation of Towns: Lupi, Camarines Sur*, <https://nhcp.gov.ph/articles/foundation-of-towns-lupi-camarines-sur/>

^[2] ParishPH.com, Saint Peter Baptist Parish – Lupi, Camarines Sur.

<https://www.parishph.com/2022/01/saint-peter-baptist-parish-lupi-camarines-sur.html>

through tourism. Pilgrims, devotees, and visitors already frequent the parish for spiritual and cultural reasons; with formal recognition, the area can be further developed to responsibly accommodate cultural tourism, thereby contributing to both cultural preservation and economic growth.

Similar efforts have been made in other parts of the country to preserve historical and religious sites, underscoring the urgency to safeguard equally valuable landmarks in Camarines Sur. With the 300th anniversary of St. Peter Baptist Church on the horizon, it is high time to honor its legacy and ensure its rightful place as part of the nation's cultural and historical patrimony.

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



HON. TSUYOSHI ANTHONY "HORI" G. HORIBATA
First District, Camarines Sur

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AN ACT
DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF THE ST. PETER BAPTIST CHURCH IN POBLACION, LUPI,
CAMARINES SUR, A HERITAGE SITE AND TOURIST DESTINATION, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFORE

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

SECTION 1. The immediate environs of the St. Peter Baptist Church, located in the Barangay Poblacion, Municipality of Lupi, Camarines Sur, is hereby declared a heritage site and tourism destination. As such, the development of the immediate environs of the St. Peter Baptist Church shall be prioritized and supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), the local government of the Municipality of Lupi and concerned agencies of the government, subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of heritage sites and tourism destinations.

SEC. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the local government of the Municipality of Lupi shall, in coordination with the DOT, NHCP, Department of Public Works and Highways 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 St. Peter Baptist Church, thereby ensuring its accessibility and the security of tourists: *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the historical significance of the St. Peter Baptist Church: *Provided, further*, That the implementation of the tourism development plan shall be included in the budget of the local government of Lupi.

SEC. 3. The DOT shall assist the local government of Lupi 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 St. Peter Baptist Church in all 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 Lupi. 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 Lupi shall, in consultation with the DOT and concerned agencies of the government, promulgate 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,