



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4394



Introduced by Representative Carlos Andes Loria

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare February 1 of every year a special non-working holiday in the Municipality of Daraga, Province of Albay, to be known as the “*Cagsawa Festival*,” in commemoration of the 1814 catastrophic eruption of Mayon volcano and in recognition of the Cagsawa Church Ruins as a national cultural treasure, symbolizing the resilience, faith and the distinct identity of the Albayanos,

The Municipality of Daraga in the Province of Albay is home to the historic Cagsawa Ruins, one of the country’s most iconic and enduring heritage landmarks. The ruins stand as a solemn reminder of the catastrophic eruption of Mayon Volcano on February 1, 1814, which buried the town of Cagsawa and claimed thousands of lives. Despite this tragedy, the people of Albay rose with resilience, rebuilding their communities and preserving their faith and culture. Equally significant is the legacy of the Franciscan Mission, which laid the foundations of religious, social, and cultural life in the area. The rebuilding of the Cagsawa Church after the devastation further symbolizes the indomitable spirit, unity, and distinct identity of the Albayanos.

The Cagsawa Ruins have since become one of the most recognizable heritage sites in the Philippines. The bell tower, partially buried by volcanic debris, continues to evoke both the tragedy of loss and the triumph of survival, while its picturesque backdrop of Mayon Volcano has made it a symbol of national identity, admired by both local and international visitors. The site’s importance has long been recognized: in 1930, it was proclaimed as part of the

Mayon Forest Reserve (Proclamation No. 341), and in 1938, it was converted into a National Park (Proclamation No. 292). On November 21, 2000, it was reclassified as a Natural Park under Proclamation No. 413 issued by President Joseph Estrada. Most notably, on December 23, 2015, the National Museum of the Philippines declared the Cagsawa Ruins a National Cultural Treasure, underscoring its exceptional historical, cultural, and artistic value.

This measure institutionalizes the support for the Cagsawa Festival, an annual celebration held every February to commemorate the tragic 1814 eruption of Mayon Volcano and honor the memory of those who have perished. Beyond remembrance, the festival affirms the resilience, faith, and enduring identity of the Albayanos, while showcasing the historical and cultural significance of the Cagsawa Ruins as a National Cultural Treasure. It also provides a platform for cultural pride and community participation by bringing together residents, artisans, and performers in various activities such as exhibitions, storytelling, and traditional presentations. Furthermore, by drawing local and international visitors, the festival strengthens cultural tourism, creates livelihood and enterprise opportunities, and contributes to the sustainable development of Daraga and the wider province of Albay. Declaring February 1 as a special non-working holiday will give this commemoration the recognition and support it deserves, ensuring that its legacy is preserved and celebrated for generations to come.

This measure is anchored on Article XIV, Sections 15 and 16 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which mandate the State to conserve, promote, and protect the nation's historical and cultural heritage. Declaring February 1 as a special non-working holiday in the Municipality of Daraga, Province of Albay, to be celebrated as the Cagsawa Festival, affirms this duty by honoring history, preserving the Cagsawa Ruins as a cultural treasure, and inspiring future generations with the resilience and identity of the Albayanos.

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


CARLOS ANDRES LORIA



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AN ACT

**DECLARING FEBRUARY 1 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-
WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF DARAGA,
PROVINCE OF ALBAY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE "CAGSAWA
FESTIVAL," IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 1814 CATASTROPHIC
ERUPTION OF MAYON VOLCANO AND IN RECOGNITION OF THE
CAGSAWA CHURCH RUINS AS A NATIONAL CULTURAL
TREASURE, SYMBOLIZING THE RESILIENCE, FAITH AND THE
DISTINCT IDENTITY OF THE ALBAYANOS**

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

SECTION 1. February 1 of every year is declared a special non-working
holiday in the Municipality of Daraga, Province of Albay, to be known as the
"Cagsawa Festival," in commemoration of the 1814 catastrophic eruption of
Mayon volcano and in recognition of the Cagsawa Church Ruins as a national
cultural treasure, symbolizing the resilience, faith and the distinct identity of the
Albayanos.

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2 SEC. 2. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
3 the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

4 Approved,