

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4771



Introduced by **Representative AGATHA PAULA "AGAY" A. CRUZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The St. Martin of Tours Parish Church in Barangay Poblacion, Bocaue, Bulacan is a prominent historical and religious landmark that has long served as a center of faith, community life, and tradition. It is closely identified with Bocaue's distinctive cultural practices, including the annual "Pagoda sa Wawa" festival. As one of Bulacan's oldest parishes, it stands as an enduring testament to the town's cultural heritage. Despite this significance, the church and its immediate environs lack the facilities and infrastructure necessary to fully support tourism and to showcase the site's value to both local and foreign visitors.

This measure proposes to declare the immediate environs of the St. Martin of Tours Parish Church as a tourism destination. By doing so, the Municipal Government of Bocaue, in coordination with the Department of Tourism (DOT), will be mandated to prepare and implement a tourism development plan, which will cover infrastructure, accessibility, and safety improvements while ensuring that the historical and cultural value of the church and its surroundings are preserved in accordance with the Tourism Act of 2009.

This bill further directs the DOT to extend technical assistance in tourism capacity building and include the church and its immediate environs in national and regional promotion programs. Funding for these initiatives will primarily come from the municipal government, with the DOT authorized to augment resources as necessary.

St. Martin of Tours, patron saint of soldiers, beggars, conscientious objectors, tailors, and winemakers, is most remembered for sharing his cloak with a beggar — an enduring gesture of compassion and stewardship. In the same spirit, this bill aims to extend a "cloak" of support over the church's surroundings, ensuring that they are developed responsibly, with due respect for heritage and with tangible benefits for the local community.

By formally recognizing the area as a tourism destination, the proposed legislation

will not only help preserve an important heritage site, but also generate local employment opportunities, stimulate small enterprises, and foster grassroots economic activity. In effect, it brings attention to the church's surroundings as an integral part of the visitor experience, ensuring that they complement and enhance the church itself.

It should be noted that this measure had already been approved on Third and Final Reading during the previous Congress, underscoring the continued and broad-based recognition of its importance and urgency. Thus, the immediate enactment of this bill is earnestly sought.


AGATHA PAULA "AGAY" AGUILAR CRUZ
Representative, Fifth Legislative District of Bulacan



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AN ACT
DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF THE ST. MARTIN OF TOURS
PARISH CHURCH, LOCATED IN BARANGAY POBLACION, MUNICIPALITY OF
BOCAUE, PROVINCE OF BULACAN, AS TOURISM DESTINATION

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

1 **Section 1. Scope and Coverage.** – The immediate environs of the St. Martin of Tours
2 Parish Church located in Barangay Poblacion, Municipality of Bocaue, Province of
3 Bulacan, are hereby declared as tourism destination. Pursuant thereto, the development
4 of the immediate environs of the St. Martin of Tours Parish Church shall be prioritized
5 and supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations
6 governing the development of tourism destinations.
7

8 **Section 2. Tourism Development Plan.** – Within one (1) year after the approval of
9 this Act, the municipal government of Bocaue, in coordination with the DOT and
10 concerned government agencies, shall prepare a tourism development plan that shall
11 include the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate infrastructure
12 and facilities to improve the overall features of the immediate environs surrounding the
13 St. Martin of Tours Parish Church, thereby ensuring its accessibility and the security of
14 tourists: *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and
15 conservation of the historical significance of the church: *Provided, further*, That the
16 implementation of the tourism development plan shall be included in the budget of the
17 municipal government of Bocaue.
18

19 **Section 3. Implementation.** – The DOT shall assist the municipal government of
20 Bocaue in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing technical
21 assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include the immediate environs of the
22 St. Martin of Tours Parish Church in all its regional and national promotion programs.
23

24 **Section 4. Appropriations and Funding.** – The funding for the implementation of

1 this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the municipal government of Bocaue.
2 The DOT may augment such allocation with internally-generated funds.
3

4 **Section 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days from the
5 effectivity of this Act, the municipal government Bocaue shall, in consultation with the
6 DOT and concerned agencies of the government, promulgate rules and regulations to
7 implement this Act.
8

9 **Section 6. *Separability Clause.*** – If any part or provision of this Act is held
10 unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall remain in
11 full force and effect.
12

13 **Section 7. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and
14 regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
15 repealed or modified accordingly.
16

17 **Section 8. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following the
18 completion of its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.
19

20 *Approved,*