



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



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5271

Introduced by **Representative KATRINA REIKO CHUA - TAI**
1st District, Zamboanga City

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Tourism significantly supports the Philippine economy, boosting income, jobs, and cultural promotion. In 2024, revenues reached ₱760 billion, indicating a strong recovery. However, major challenges remain.

The Department of Tourism (DOT) fell short of its 2024 target of 7.7 million foreign visitors, recording only 5.9 million. This shortfall signals a need to address tourism infrastructure and strategies, especially as early 2025 arrivals have slightly declined.

Key contributors to the shortfall include the reduced arrivals from various countries and budget cuts that weakened overseas marketing efforts. Stringent visa rules and geopolitical tensions further impacted tourism, highlighting the need for innovative, cost-effective solutions.

A critical gap in tourism development is the lack of consistent, visible, and informative signage at major tourist destinations and gateway cities. This measure is a targeted response to that need: by institutionalizing standardized tourist markers at all recognized sites and key entry points nationwide, we directly address a clear, urgent barrier to visitor satisfaction and sector growth.

These markers will guide tourists and highlight the historical, cultural, or natural significance of each site. They foster a sense of connection and pride, promote repeat visits, and strengthen word-of-mouth. Tourist markers serve as storytellers, safety aids, and tools for national branding and promotion.

Effective implementation needs collaboration. The Department of Tourism (DOT) and the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) will set standards, design content, and oversee implementation. Local Government Units (LGUs) will allocate at least 1% of their annual local development funds to create, maintain, and update the markers. Ongoing national government support to the DOT and NHCP is crucial for sustained success.

This collective effort is designed to resolve a central issue limiting the sector's growth: poor visitor navigation and insufficient context at sites. By making destinations more accessible and meaningful through standardized markers and uniform, informative, and visually appealing signage, we will position the Philippines to enhance the travel experience, strengthen national tourism branding, and surpass tourist arrival targets.

Tourism's strength depends on addressing its weakest link. When tourists feel lost or uninformed, their desire to return and their trust in our brand suffer. By prioritizing and standardizing tourist markers, we address a crucial problem that undermines the entire tourism chain.

For the benefit of our economy, culture, and communities, especially those heavily reliant on tourism, the swift passage of this measure is not only important but also essential to unlocking the sector's full potential.

IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katrina Reiko Chua - Tai', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

KATRINA REIKO CHUA - TAI



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AN ACT

**PROVIDING FOR THE PLACEMENT OF TOURIST MARKERS IN ALL
RECOGNIZED TOURIST SITES AND GATEWAY CITIES IN THE COUNTRY,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Tourist Marker Placement
Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to promote tourism as
an engine of economic growth and a means to foster national pride, cultural understanding, and
heritage conservation. In line with this, the government shall ensure the provision of visible,
standardized, and informative tourist markers in all officially recognized tourist destinations and
gateway cities in the country.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the following terms are
defined as follows:

"Tourist Markers" shall refer to physical signage or installations that provide relevant
information about a specific tourist destination, including its name, historical or cultural
significance, and wayfinding information.

"Gateway Cities" shall refer to urban centers that serve as entry points for domestic or
international travelers, including cities with major airports, seaports, or major land
transport terminals.

"Tourist Sites" shall refer to locations officially recognized by the Department of
Tourism or the concerned LGU as significant for tourism purposes, including natural,
cultural, historical, and recreational sites.

1 **SECTION 4. *Implementation.*** – The Department of Tourism (DOT) and the National
2 Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) shall be the lead implementing agencies of
3 this Act. They shall formulate and adopt uniform standards and guidelines for the design,
4 content, and placement of tourist markers, coordinate with LGUs in the identification,
5 validation, and prioritization of sites, and supervise the implementation, monitoring, and
6 periodic updating of tourist markers.

7 All Local Government Units (LGUs) shall actively participate in the implementation of
8 this Act by assisting in the identification and validation of tourist sites within their respective
9 jurisdictions. Each LGU shall allocate an amount equivalent to one percent (1%) of its Annual
10 Local Development Fund (LDF) for the installation, maintenance, and regular updating of tourist
11 markers within the first three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act, and every three (3) years
12 thereafter. LGUs shall ensure that these markers are properly protected, well-maintained, and
13 free from obstructions or acts of vandalism, in order to preserve their intended purpose and
14 integrity. Furthermore, LGUs are mandated to integrate this program into their Local Tourism
15 Development Plans, and to coordinate closely with the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the
16 National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) to ensure uniformity in marker
17 design, accuracy of content, and appropriateness of placement.

18 **SECTION 5. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of
19 this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) under the budgets of
20 the DOT and NHCP. Subsequent funding requirements shall be sourced from their respective
21 annual budgets and LGU appropriations in accordance with Section 4 of this Act.

22 **SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within ninety (90) days from the
23 effectivity of this Act, the DOT and NHCP, in consultation with the Department of Budget and
24 Management (DBM), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Union of Local
25 Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP), and other relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the
26 necessary implementing rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

27 **SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.*** – If any of the sections or provisions of this Act is
28 held invalid, all other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid.

29 **SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, issuances, rules and regulations
30 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

31 **SECTION 9. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
32 complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

33 *Approved,*