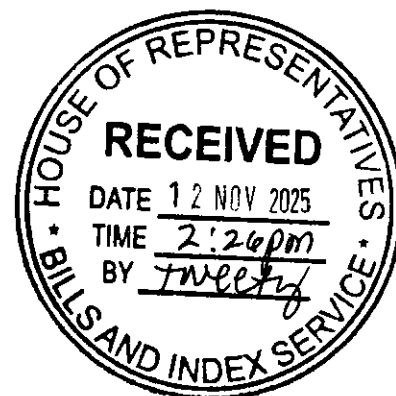


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5919



INTRODUCED BY **HONORABLE MA. ISABEL L. SAGARBARRIA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Dumaguete City's designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Literature in 2025 stands as a historic milestone not only for Negros Oriental but for the entire nation. This distinction recognizes Dumaguete's longstanding role as the cradle of Philippine literature, a home to generations of writers, educators, and thinkers whose words have shaped the country's cultural and intellectual landscape.

For over six decades, Dumaguete has been at the heart of the nation's literary movement. The Silliman National Writers Workshop, founded in 1962 by National Artists for Literature Edilberto K. Tiempo and Edith L. Tiempo, has mentored thousands of Filipino writers, many of whom have become National Artists, Palanca awardees, and respected literary voices both here and abroad. Through this tradition of mentorship and creativity, Dumaguete has become synonymous with the Philippine literary spirit.

However, as the creative industries evolve in the digital age, there is an urgent need for spaces to not only preserve our literary heritage but also to adapt means that foster the learning, creativity, and communication of our present and future generations. While the declaration of Dumaguete City as the Literary Capital of the Philippines celebrates its legacy, there must also be a concrete institution to sustain and expand it, a living monument to reading, writing, and the Filipino imagination.

The proposed Dumaguete City National Library and Creative Center (DCNLCC) seeks to fulfill that role. It will serve as a national hub for culture, knowledge, and creativity, providing access to both physical and digital collections of Philippine literature and global works, while promoting literacy and creative expression at all levels of society.

More than a repository of books, the DCNLCC will be a creative campus, a place where artists, writers, students, and scholars can collaborate, learn, and innovate. It will host workshops, residencies, public readings, performances, and festivals that foster inclusive participation and community engagement. Its design will integrate heritage preservation, digital technology, and sustainable architecture, making it both a world-class facility and a public space for all.

The Center will also play a vital role in regional and national development by strengthening the creative economy, promoting cultural tourism, and providing educational opportunities for youth across Negros Oriental and the Visayas. By housing archives of Filipino and Visayan literature, the DCNLCC will ensure that the voices of local writers are preserved and amplified in the national consciousness.

In partnership with the National Library of the Philippines (NLP), the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), and the City Government of Dumaguete, the establishment of this institution will mark a new chapter in the country's commitment to literacy, culture, and intellectual freedom.

This measure envisions a future where every Filipino, regardless of background, has access to the world of ideas, where libraries are not silent halls of books, but living spaces of dialogue, learning, and inspiration. In honoring Dumaguete's literary legacy, we also invest in the creative future of our people.

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



MA. ISABEL L. SAGABARRIA

Representative, 2nd District of Negros Oriental

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. **5919**

Introduced by **HONORABLE MA. ISABEL L. SAGABARRIA**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE DUMAGUETE CITY NATIONAL LIBRARY
AND CREATIVE CENTER IN RECOGNITION OF DUMAGUETE'S
DESIGNATION AS A UNESCO CREATIVE CITY OF LITERATURE, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

Section 1. Title. This Act shall be known as the “Dumaguete City National Library and Creative Center Act.”

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the State to promote culture and literacy, support creative industries, and provide universal access to knowledge. In recognition of Dumaguete City’s designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Literature, the State shall establish a world-class public library and creative center as a hub for learning, research, and artistic collaboration.

Section 3. Establishment. There is hereby established in Dumaguete City, Province of Negros Oriental, the Dumaguete City National Library and Creative Center (DCNLLC), which shall serve as:

- a) A regional repository of books, manuscripts, and digital materials;
- b) A creative and cultural hub for writers, artists, and students;
- c) A venue for literary events, festivals, and workshops; and
- d) A heritage site preserving the works of Filipino and Visayan writers.

Section 4. Administration. The Library and Creative Center shall be under the joint supervision of the National Library of the Philippines (NLP) and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), in coordination with the City Government of Dumaguete and local universities.

Section 5. Components. The DCNLCC shall include, but not be limited to:

- a) A main library building with physical and digital collections;
- b) Archives of Philippine and Visayan literature;
- c) A writers' residency and training center;
- d) An amphitheater for lectures and performances;
- e) A children's literacy garden and reading park;
- f) A digital library and online access system.

Section 6. *Appropriations.* The amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (₱500,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated for the initial construction, furnishing, and digitalization of the Dumaguete City National Library and Creative Center. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continuous operation and maintenance of the DCNLLC shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the NLP, NCCA, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), and the City Government of Dumaguete shall jointly promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its implementation.

Section 8. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 9. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, and rules inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 10. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,