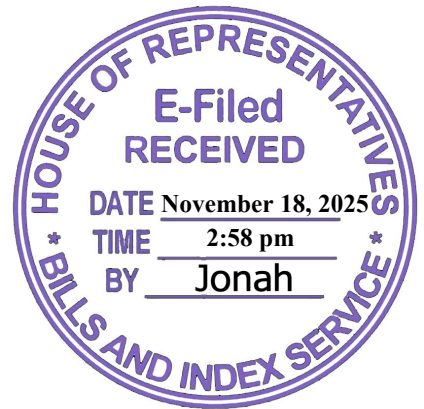




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



House Bill No. 6134

Introduced by:
HON. KING GEORGE LEANDRO ANTONIO V. COLLANTES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The *Simbahang Bato* in Barangay San Gabriel, Laurel, Batangas is a cave-turned-church known also as the “Kapilya ni San Gabriel Archangel.” According to local oral history and tourism sources, the site was previously considered sacred by the community and surrounded by a lush forest before it was converted into a chapel. During the Japanese occupation in World War II, residents reportedly used it as a refuge. Today, many visit it for pilgrimage, and during Holy Week, it draws numerous devotees, making it a place of both spiritual and cultural significance.

Recognizing and formally declaring the Simbahang Bato as a tourist destination will help preserve its natural and sacred environment, support its sustainable development, and benefit the local community economically, all while respecting its religious significance.

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


KING GEORGE LEANDRO ANTONIO V. COLLANTES
Representative, 3rd District, Batangas



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6134

Introduced by: HON. KING GEORGE LEANDRO ANTONIO V. COLLANTES

AN ACT
DECLARING SIMBAHANG BATO LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF
LAUREL, PROVINCE OF BATANGAS, A TOURIST DESTINATION,
PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Declaration as a Tourist Destination. - The Simbahang Bato, located in the Municipality of Laurel, Province of Batangas, is hereby declared a tourist destination. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourist destinations.

SEC. 2. Tourism Development Plan. - Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Laurel, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and other concerned agencies, shall prepare a tourism development plan involving the construction, installation, and maintenance of appropriate infrastructure and facilities that shall enhance tourism in the area, Provided, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural landscape and cultural heritage of Simbahang Bato; Provided, further, That any activities and developments shall conform with the National Ecotourism Strategy jointly issued by the DENR and the DOT.

SEC. 3. Implementation. - The DOT and its attached agencies shall take immediate steps to implement the tourism development plan that will suit the historical and natural characteristics of Simbahang Bato, and shall

incorporate the same in its tourism development program for the ensuing calendar year. It shall also include Simbahang Bato in all its national, regional, and local promotion programs.

SEC. 4. Appropriations. - The Secretary of Tourism shall include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) and may also be sourced from internally generated funds of the DOT.

SEC. 5. Transfer of Management. - The DOT shall transfer the management of the tourism facilities to the Municipality of Laurel within two (2) years after construction through a memorandum of agreement, subject to existing laws and regulations.

SEC. 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Tourism, in consultation with the LGU of Laurel, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 7. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions.

SEC. 8. Repealing Clause. - All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations, executive orders, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation

Approved,