

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8846



Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Aklan piña weaving is one of the most refined and culturally significant textile traditions in the Philippines. Woven from fibers of the Red Spanish pineapple and shaped by centuries of indigenous knowledge and craftsmanship, piña cloth has long served as a symbol of Filipino identity and ceremonial dress. In 2023, Aklan piña weaving was inscribed in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, affirming its global cultural importance and urgent need for safeguarding measures.¹

Despite its international recognition, the piña weaving tradition faces serious and well-documented threats. A study on piña weaving in Kalibo, Aklan noted over 50% of weavers surveyed were over age 50, showing a significant lack of younger entrants to the craft.² The same study documented challenges such as low wages, competition from other fibers, and limited production scale, which undermine long-term viability for weavers and contribute to erosion of skill transmission.³

Cultural heritage experts emphasize that intangible traditions survive only when supported by living communities and viable economic systems. UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage defines intangible cultural heritage as practices, knowledge and skills recognized by communities as part

¹ Intergovernmental Comm. for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, *Decision 18.COM 8.b.5*, U.N. Doc. LHE-23-18.COM-8.b (Dec. 8, 2023).

² Simon Ellis, *Piña Weaving and Climate Change in Kalibo, Aklan*, *Garland Mag.* (Aug. 28, 2024), <https://garlandmag.com/pina-and-climate-change-in-kalibo-aklan/>.

³ *Id.*

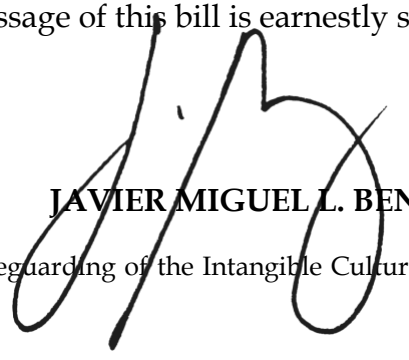
of their heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, and recreated in response to their environment, providing identity and continuity, thus, underscoring the need for active safeguarding and community involvement to maintain its viability.⁴ Without coordinated national intervention, the knowledge systems surrounding piña weaving risk gradual erosion.

This bill establishes the Aklan Piña Conservation and Innovation Center in the Municipality of Kalibo, Aklan, the historic heart of piña weaving, as a specialized institution dedicated to safeguarding, promoting, researching, and modernizing this heritage industry. The Center operationalizes the State policy to conserve and promote cultural heritage under Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution, which mandates the protection of Filipino artistic and historic traditions.

The proposed Center adopts a holistic framework that links cultural preservation with agricultural sustainability, science and technology, education, and trade development. It institutionalizes cultural mapping and archiving consistent with national safeguarding programs, supports sustainable pineapple cultivation in partnership with the Department of Agriculture (DA), promotes textile innovation aligned with research directions of the Philippine Textile Research Institute (PTRI), and strengthens the global competitiveness of piña products in line with creative economy strategies advocated by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The Center also facilitates intellectual property protection for traditional designs, consistent with international best practices on safeguarding community knowledge under the World Intellectual Property Organization.

By anchoring conservation in innovation and economic empowerment, this measure recognizes that cultural heritage thrives when culture-bearers are supported and given sustainable livelihoods. The creation of the Aklan Piña Conservation and Innovation Center affirms the State's commitment to protecting Filipino artistic heritage while transforming it into a dynamic driver of regional development, cultural pride, and global cultural presence.

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


JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ

⁴ UNESCO, Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2020 ed.), U.N. Doc. CLT-2021/WS/5 (2020).

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8846

Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

**AN ACT CREATING THE AKLAN PIÑA CONSERVATION AND INNOVATION
CENTER IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KALIBO, AKLAN, DEFINING ITS
PURPOSES, AND PROVIDING FOR ITS ORGANIZATION,
MANAGEMENT, PROGRAMS, AND FUNDING**

*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 “*Aklan Piña Conservation
and Innovation Act.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
conserve, promote, and popularize the nation’s historical and cultural heritage,
resources, and artistic creations, as well as to pursue measures that ensure the
achievement of the stated policy.

SEC. 3. *Creation of the Aklan Piña Conservation and Innovation Center.* – There
is hereby created the Aklan Piña Conservation and Innovation Center (the “Center”), a
specialized institution for the safeguarding, promotion, research, innovation, and
transmission of Aklan piña weaving. The Center shall be based in the Municipality of
Kalibo, Province of Aklan, and shall operate under the oversight of the National
Commission for Culture and the Arts (“NCCA”), in close coordination with relevant
stakeholders, including the Provincial Government of Aklan, the Municipal Government
of Kalibo, academic institutions, and weaving communities. For its establishment, the

Center shall utilize and strengthen existing facilities, resources, and networks provided by local governments, regional line agencies, academic institutions, or weaving communities.

SEC. 4. Staffing. – The Center shall be headed by a Chief who shall be responsible for its overall management and coordination with local stakeholders and national agencies. The staffing pattern of the Center shall be prepared by the NCCA, subject to the approval of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and in accordance with existing laws, rules, and regulations.

SEC. 5. Functions. – The Center shall:

- (a) Undertake cultural mapping, oral history collection, and digital archiving of Aklan piña weaving traditions in partnership with the NCCA and local governments;
- (b) Support farmers in cultivating the Red Spanish pineapple, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture (DA), including the distribution of planting materials, tools, and training in sustainable agriculture;
- (c) Develop programs to ensure the transmission of weaving knowledge, including Schools of Living Traditions and mentorship initiatives, and coordinate with the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education to integrate piña weaving and textile heritage into appropriate educational and youth programs, modules, and research initiatives;
- (d) Collaborate with the Department of Science and Technology, universities, and design institutions to advance research on textile fibers, promote sustainable technologies, support product standardization, and expand piña product applications;
- (e) Work with the Department of Trade and Industry to strengthen the market positioning, branding, competitiveness, and value chain integration of piña textiles, including support for product development and participation in local and international trade platforms;
- (f) Partner with the Department of Tourism and Local Government Units (LGUs) to integrate piña weaving into cultural tourism programs, festivals, and heritage routes;

- (g) Coordinate with the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines to assist weavers and cooperatives in securing appropriate intellectual property protection, including designs, trademarks, and potential geographical indications, with due regard to the rights of communities and culture-bearers; and
- (h) Perform such other functions as may be necessary to carry out the intent and purposes of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Governance and Administration.* – The Center shall be governed by a Management Council(the “Council”) composed of representatives from the following:

- (a) National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), as Chairperson;
- (b) Provincial Government of Aklan, as Co-Vice Chairperson;
- (c) National Museum of the Philippines;
- (d) Municipal Government of Kalibo;
- (e) Department of Trade and Industry;
- (f) Department of Agriculture;
- (g) Department of Science and Technology – Philippine Textile Research Institute;
- (h) Department of Tourism;
- (i) Department of Education;
- (j) Commission on Higher Education;
- (k) Technical Education and Skills Development Authority;
- (l) Academe and research institutions, as may be designated; and
- (m) Recognized piña weavers’ associations or cooperatives, which shall constitute at least two (2) seats in the Council, one of whom shall be appointed as Co-Vice Chairperson.

The Council shall formulate the policies, programs, and priorities of the Center, ensuring inter-agency coordination, community participation, and cultural sensitivity.

SEC. 7. *Funding.* – The initial funding necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the NCCA. Thereafter, such amounts as may be necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the NCCA, in coordination with the concerned government

agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,