



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8924



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE CARLOS ANDES LORIA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Municipality of Camalig, Province of Albay, is widely acknowledged as the “Heritage Town of Albay,” with a unique concentration of historic landmarks, Spanish era structures, archaeological sites, nature-based destinations, and living traditions that together embody the cultural and ecological wealth of the Bicol Region. Historical accounts record visits by Spanish explorers as early as 1569, and Camalig soon became a cabecera of Christian evangelization in Albay, underscoring its central role in the region’s colonial and religious history.

Among Camalig’s notable cultural properties is the St. John the Baptist Church, recognized as an Important Cultural Property, alongside Spanish era houses, historic bridges, and documented archaeological sites including Hoyop-Hoyopan Cave, where excavations (e.g., the Kobak Collection) revealed evidence of sophisticated pre-colonial lifeways. Quituinan Hill with World War II tunnels associated with the 1945 battle for Albay further expands the municipality’s timeline of national memory.

Beyond built heritage, Camalig’s portfolio of ecotourism resources from Sumlang Lake, Quitinday Green Hills, Solong Eco Park, and cave systems (e.g., Calabidongan, Taloto, Pariaan) to farm parks, waterfalls, and bike trails supports nature-based recreation, environmental education, and livelihoods. Complementing these is Camalig’s celebrated culinary heritage, notably Pinangat, which anchors the proposed School of Living Traditions (SLT) and the town’s creative economy offerings.

Local and provincial issuances such as Municipal Ordinance No. 2016 10 declaring Camalig the Heritage Town of Albay, Provincial Resolution No. 0039 2014, and the El Pueblo Viejo de Camalig Heritage Zone provisions in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan already recognize the area’s significance. National legislation, however, is essential to consolidate heritage protection, scale tourism infrastructure, strengthen

creative industries, and integrate Camalig into nationwide promotion, funding, and technical assistance frameworks.

This bill therefore declares Camalig a Heritage and Ecotourism Destination, establishes an inter-agency mechanism led by DOT with culture and infrastructure agencies, provides for tourism and heritage investments (e.g., Camalig Tourism Circuit Road, visitor centers, interpretive systems, museum development), and institutionalizes programs for conservation, creative industry support, and cultural transmission. The measure is expected to safeguard irreplaceable cultural and natural assets while catalyzing sustainable, community benefiting tourism and enterprise growth.

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



CARLOS A. NORIA
2nd District, Albay



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AN ACT
DECLARING THE MUNICIPALITY OF CAMALIG, PROVINCE OF
ALBAY, AS A HERITAGE AND ECOTOURISM DESTINATION,
PROVIDING FOR THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION, AND
DEVELOPMENT OF ITS CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES AND
ECOTOURISM RESOURCES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** This Act shall be known as the “Camalig Heritage and
2 Ecotourism Destination Act.”
3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** It is the policy of the State to: (a) protect, conserve, and
5 promote cultural heritage and historical resources; (b) develop sustainable tourism that
6 balances economic growth with environmental and heritage safeguards; (c) strengthen
7 local creative industries and living traditions; and (d) support LGUs in heritage and
8 ecotourism development. Accordingly, the Municipality of Camalig, Province of
9 Albay, is hereby declared a Heritage and Ecotourism Destination.
10

11 **SEC. 3. Coverage of Heritage and Ecotourism Sites.** The declaration under this Act
12 shall cover the conservation, protection, and development of cultural, historical,
13 archaeological, and ecotourism sites within Camalig, including but not limited to the
14 lists below (as may be expanded by the IRR upon validation and mapping):
15

16 (a) Ecotourism Sites - Sumlang Lake; El Miro de Shie Integrated Farm; Quituinan
17 Ranch; Hoyop Hoyopan Cave; Solong Eco Park; Solong Cave; Quitinday Green Hills;
18 Calabidongan Cave; Binanderahan Green Lake; Deogracias Nature Park; Manilao
19 Cave; Sarimaw Cave; Pariaan Cave; Taloto Cave; Cabrarian Pequeño Caves; Naulogan
20 Falls (Alangkaw na Busay); Ababang Busay; and the Anoling Bike Park and Trail.

(b) Cultural Heritage Sites and Structures - St. John the Baptist Church (Simbahan ng Camalig); St. John the Baptist Convent; Spanish era houses; historic bridges (e.g., Cabrarian Pequeño Bridge, Cristina Bridge, Barangay 4 Old Bridge, Iluluan Bridge, Bariw Old Bridge); Old Municipal Building; Gabaldon and Marcos type school buildings; El Pueblo Viejo de Camalig Heritage Zone streetscapes; Quitoinan Hill (WWII tunnels); archaeological areas including Hoyop Hoyopan Cave; Nuyda Park; and the Jose Rizal Monument.

SEC. 4. Tourism Infrastructure Development. The Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Provincial Government of Albay, and the LGU of Camalig, shall undertake priority projects, including: (a) improvement and development of roads leading to attractions and completion of the Camalig Tourism Circuit Road; (b) construction of Visitor Information Centers; (c) installation of solar powered street lighting along tourism routes; (d) establishment of a Pasalubong and Cultural Products Center; and (e) development of wayfinding, interpretive signage, and site facilities consistent with heritage sensitive design.

SEC. 5. Cultural Heritage Conservation. The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), and the National Museum of the Philippines, in coordination with the LGU of Camalig, shall: (a) implement restoration, preservation, and protection programs for priority structures and landmarks; (b) provide technical assistance for conservation planning and heritage zoning; (c) support archaeological research and site protection; and (d) assist in establishing a Camalig Local History and Art Museum.

SEC. 6. Creative Industry and Cultural Development. The DOT, NCCA, DTI, TESDA, and the LGU of Camalig shall implement programs that: (a) promote Camalig in national and international campaigns; (b) support cultural festivals including the Pinangat Festival; (c) provide grants, training, and incubation for artists and creative entrepreneurs; (d) advance heritage-based product development; and (e) document, digitize, and promote traditional arts, crafts, and culinary heritage.

SEC. 7. School of Living Traditions (SLT). A School of Living Traditions shall be established in Camalig to preserve and transmit Pinangat preparation and other culinary and cultural practices of the Bicol Region, in partnership with cultural agencies, academe, and community bearers.

SEC. 8. Tourism Promotion. The DOT shall integrate the Camalig Heritage and Ecotourism Destination into its national and international promotion programs and itineraries.

SEC. 9. Implementing Agencies; Inter Agency Coordination. Lead Implementing Agency: Department of Tourism (DOT). Co-implementing/Partner Agencies: NCCA, NHCP, National Museum, DPWH, DTI, TESDA, the Provincial Government of Albay, and the LGU of Camalig. An inter-agency committee may be constituted to coordinate planning, investment programming, and performance monitoring.

SEC. 10. Appropriations. The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act including pre investment activities, master planning, detailed architectural and

1 engineering designs, environmental and social safeguards, and priority site
2 development shall be charged against current appropriations of the concerned agencies
3 (including, as applicable, the Department of Tourism and/or culture and infrastructure
4 agencies) and other available sources consistent with law. Thereafter, such sums as may
5 be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the
6 annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) and may be complemented by lawful
7 sources such as grants, donations, and LGU counterpart funds, consistent with existing
8 budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules.

9
10 **SEC. 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).** Within ninety (90) days from
11 the effectivity of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the implementing agencies
12 and the LGU of Camalig, shall promulgate the necessary IRR, including the final
13 inventory and maps of covered sites, conservation priorities, and tourism investment
14 pipeline.

15
16 **SEC. 12. Separability Clause.** If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional,
17 the remaining provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

18 **SEC. 13. Repealing Clause.** All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations
19 inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

20
21 **SEC. 14. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
22 the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

23
24 Approved,