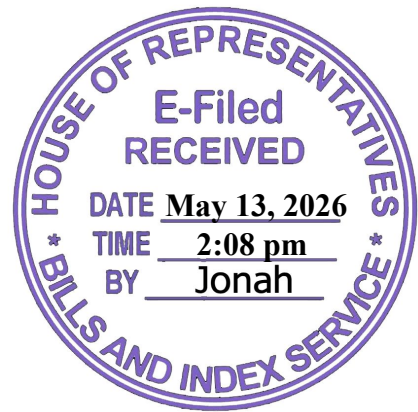


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9245



Introduced by **HON. JOSEPH "JOJO" L. LARA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Municipality of Peñablanca in the Province of Cagayan is endowed with exceptional natural, cultural, and ecological resources that make it a prime destination for sustainable tourism development. It is home to the renowned Peñablanca Protected Landscape and Seascape, which includes the Callao Cave, diverse limestone formations, underground rivers, and rich biodiversity.

Peñablanca also holds significant historical and archaeological importance, being the site of some of the earliest evidence of human habitation in Northern Luzon. Its unique blend of eco-tourism attractions, cultural heritage, and adventure tourism opportunities positions it as a vital contributor to the region's tourism industry.

Despite its vast potential, the municipality remains underdeveloped in terms of tourism infrastructure, investment, and promotion. Declaring Peñablanca as a Tourism Development Area will enable the national and local governments to prioritize its development, attract investments, improve infrastructure, and ensure the sustainable management of its natural and cultural resources.

This measure aims to promote inclusive economic growth, generate employment opportunities for local communities, and preserve the ecological integrity and cultural heritage of the area.

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


JOSEPH "JOJO" L. LARA

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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 9245

Introduced by **HON. JOSEPH “JOJO” L. LARA**

AN ACT
DECLARING THE MUNICIPALITY OF PEÑABLANCA IN THE PROVINCE OF
CAGAYAN AS A TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AREA, 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 “Peñablanca Tourism Development Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote tourism as an engine of economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. The State shall develop and promote areas with high tourism potential in a manner that ensures ecological balance and community participation.

SECTION 3. Declaration of Tourism Development Area. – The Municipality of Peñablanca in the Province of Cagayan is hereby declared a Tourism Development Area (TDA), and hereinafter referred to as the Peñablanca TDA.

The following areas within the municipality which are endowed with natural beauty, pristine waters and historical and cultural significance, shall be included in the TDA and shall be developed, protected, managed, and promoted as tourism destinations as tourism destinations:

- a) Callao Caves;
- b) Peñablanca Protected Landscape and Seascape;
- c) Sierra Cave;
- d) Jackpot Cave;
- e) Gabur-Gabur Falls;
- f) Odessa-Tumbali Cave System;

- g) Allahiban Horseshoe Viewpoint;
- h) San Carlos Cave;
- i) Hermoso-Tuliao Cave;
- j) Mororan River;
- k) Basaw Lake Trekking Area;
- l) Lapi Falls;
- m) Pinacanauan River;
- n) Patagueleg-Tawi View Deck;
- o) Other potential tourism sites that may subsequently be identified and included by the Municipal Government of Peñablanca in coordination with the Department of Tourism (DOT).

The development of Peñablanca TDA shall be prioritized and supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourism development areas.

SECTION 4. Tourism Development Plan. – Within one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in coordination with the local government of Peñablanca, the Provincial Government of Cagayan, and other relevant agencies, shall prepare and implement a comprehensive tourism development plan for the area. The plan shall include:

- a) Infrastructure development;
- b) Environmental protection and conservation measures;
- c) Cultural heritage preservation;
- d) Tourism promotion and marketing strategies;
- e) Capacity-building programs for local stakeholders.

The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Peñablanca shall play a primary role in the implementation of the tourism development plan and shall ensure active participation of local communities, indigenous peoples, and stakeholders.

SECTION 5. Infrastructure and Support. – The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Transportation (DOTr), and other concerned agencies shall prioritize the construction and improvement of roads, transportation systems,

utilities, and other infrastructure necessary to support tourism development in Peñablanca, Cagayan.

SECTION 6. Funding. – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of Section 5 of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The funding of the implementation of the other provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the Municipal Government of Peñablanca, Cagayan. The DOT may augment such allocation with internally generated funds.

SECTION 7. Environmental Protection. – All tourism development activities shall comply with existing environmental laws and regulations. Sustainable tourism practices shall be strictly enforced to preserve the natural resources of the area.

SECTION 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Municipal Government of Peñablanca and the DOT, in coordination with concerned agencies, shall promulgate the rules and regulations to implement this Act.

SECTION 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.

SECTION 10. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, presidential decrees, proclamations, rules and regulations and other issuances inconsistent with this Act are hereby deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,