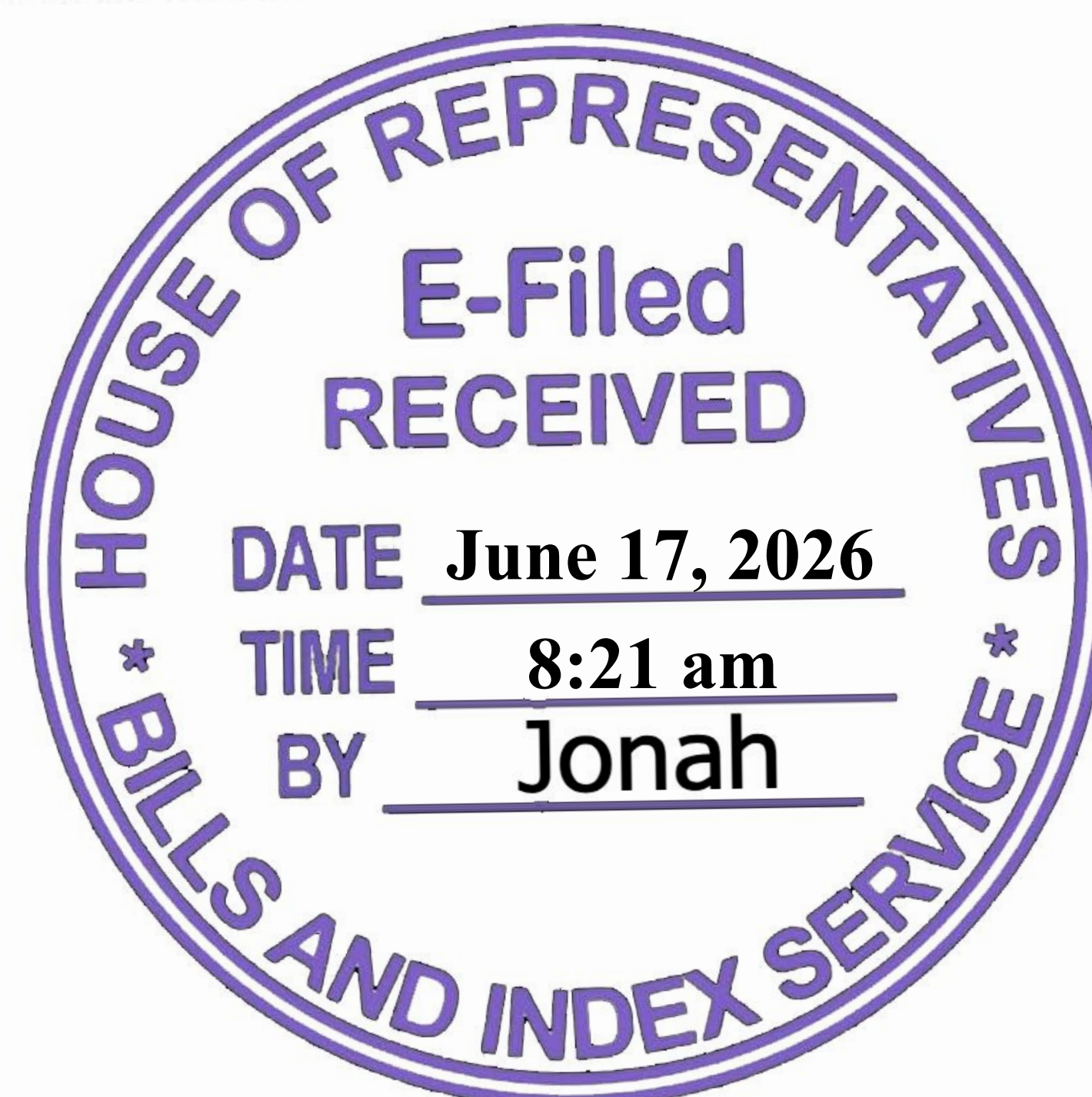




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Philippines

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9890



Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE ROMEO S. MOMO, SR.

**AN ACT DECLARING AUGUST 14 OF EVERY YEAR AS "INATU FESTIVAL" AS A
SPECIAL NONWORKING LOCAL HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LIANGA,
SURIGAO DEL SUR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Municipality of Lianga in the Province of Surigao del Sur is a repository of rich cultural traditions, vibrant history, and a resilient spirit. As the municipality continues to preserve its unique identity and promote sustainable tourism and economic development, there is a need to institutionalize a cultural celebration that genuinely reflects the heritage and aspirations of its people.

Historically, Lianga celebrated its Annual Town Fiesta every January 15 in honor of its primary patron saint, the Holy Child. However, unfavorable weather conditions during the first month of the year frequently affected the conduct of festivities and limited public participation. Consequently, the celebration was transferred to August 15, coinciding with the Feast of Our Lady of the Assumption, the municipality's secondary patron saint, to take advantage of more favorable weather conditions.

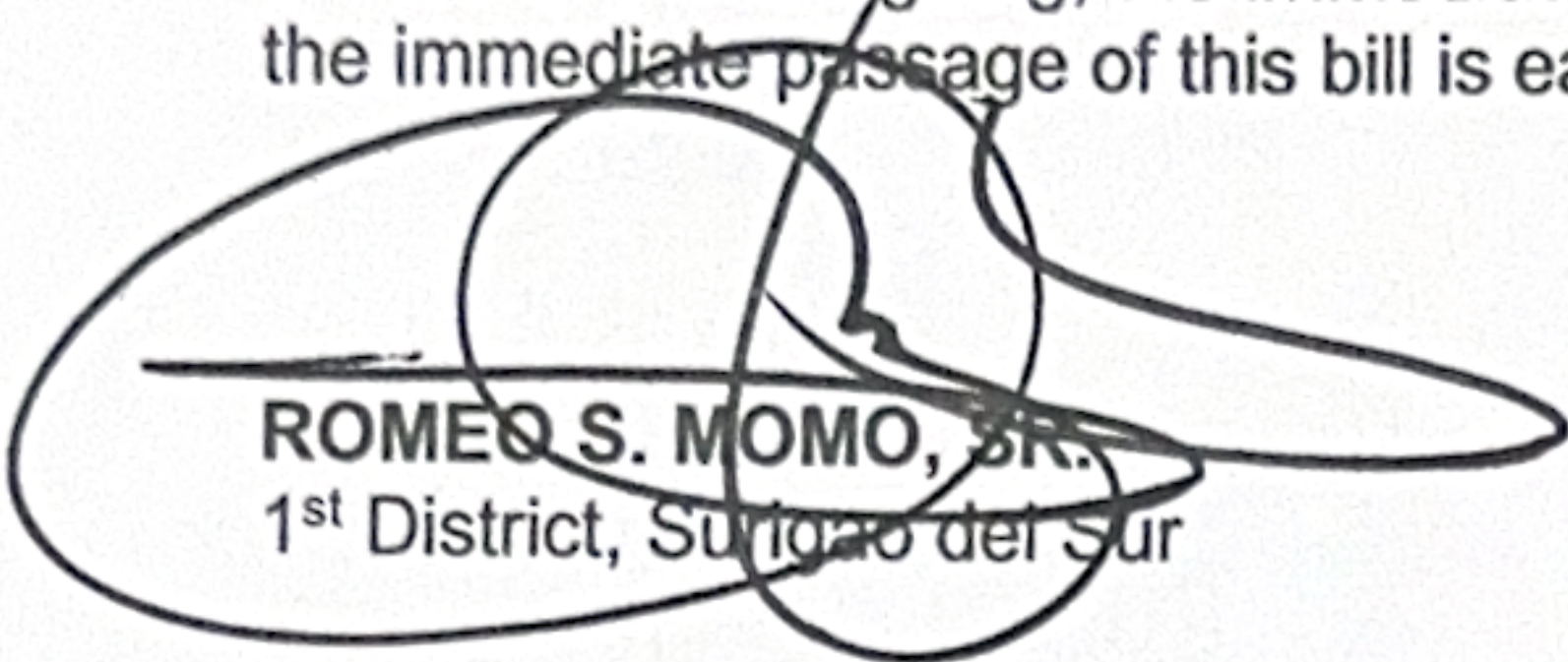
While these religious celebrations remain deeply ingrained in the lives of the people of Lianga, the Local Government Unit faces limitations in directly funding activities that are purely religious in nature pursuant to the constitutional principle of separation of Church and State and applicable Commission on Audit regulations.

To address this concern and to provide a lawful framework for cultural promotion, the Municipality seeks to institutionalize the Inatu Festival, a secular cultural celebration to be observed every August 14. The term "Inatu," meaning "Our Own," embodies the distinct identity, heritage, and collective aspirations of the people of Lianga. The festival will serve as a venue to showcase the municipality's indigenous traditions, music, dances, arts, agricultural and fisheries products, and culinary heritage.

The declaration of the Inatu Festival as the Official Cultural Festival of Lianga will strengthen cultural preservation efforts, ensure legal compliance in the use of public funds, promote tourism and local economic growth, and establish a permanent place for Lianga in the cultural and tourism calendar of the Province of Surigao del Sur and the Caraga Region.

This proposed measure finds support in Article XIV, Section 14 of the 1987 Constitution, Section 16 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, and Republic Act No. 10066, otherwise known as the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009, all of which mandate and encourage the preservation, promotion, and development of Filipino culture and heritage.

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



ROMEO S. MOMO, SR.
1st District, Surigao del Sur



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SURIGAO DEL SUR**

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

SECTION 1. The Inatu Festival is the official cultural festival of the Municipality of Lianga, Province of Surigao del Sur. The term "Inatu," which literally means "Our Own," embodies the unique cultural identity, heritage, traditions, and aspirations of the people of Lianga. The festival serves as a platform for showcasing the municipality's indigenous traditions, music, dances, arts, agricultural and fisheries products, and culinary treasures.

SECTION 2. The Inatu Festival shall be celebrated annually on August 14 as a secular cultural celebration that promotes cultural preservation, tourism development, economic growth, and community unity. In recognition of the significance of the festival to the people of Lianga and to encourage broad public participation in its activities, August 14 of every year is hereby declared a special non-working holiday in the Municipality of Lianga, Province of Surigao del Sur.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,