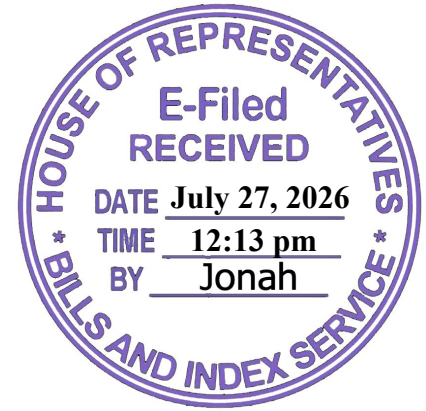


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10244



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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State recognizes the vital role of arts and culture in nation-building, identity formation, and inclusive development. The promotion of Filipino creativity is not only a constitutional mandate but also a strategic investment in the country's cultural and creative industries. However, despite the abundance of talent across the country, many Filipino artists, particularly those in the regions and those at the early stages of their careers, continue to face significant barriers in accessing platforms where they can publicly exhibit their work.

One of the most persistent challenges confronting local artists is the high cost and limited availability of exhibition spaces. Traditional galleries are often concentrated in urban centers and may be financially inaccessible to emerging artists. As a result, many are deprived of opportunities to showcase their work, connect with audiences, and participate meaningfully in the creative economy. This lack of access not only constrains artistic development but also limits the public's exposure to diverse forms of Filipino expression.

At the same time, numerous public spaces across the country, such as parks, plazas, government buildings, and other communal areas, remain underutilized or are not fully optimized for cultural engagement. These spaces present an opportunity to bring art closer to the people by transforming them into accessible venues for artistic expression and appreciation. By integrating art into everyday public environments, the State can foster a more vibrant, inclusive, and participatory cultural landscape.

This proposed measure seeks to address these gaps by allowing the free use of available public spaces for art exhibits of local artists. Through the coordinated efforts of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Department of Tourism, in partnership with local government units, the program will establish regional and local platforms where artists can exhibit their works without the burden of prohibitive costs.

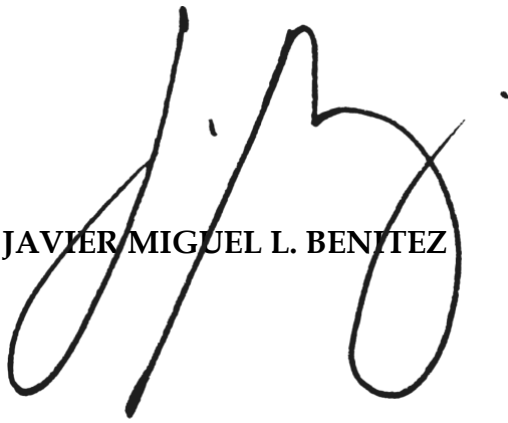
In doing so, the bill democratizes access to artistic spaces and ensures that opportunities for creative expression are not limited by geography or financial capacity.

Beyond supporting artists, this measure advances broader social and economic objectives. Public art enriches communities by making culture more visible and accessible, fostering a deeper sense of identity, pride, and shared heritage among Filipinos. It transforms public spaces into dynamic cultural hubs that encourage engagement, dialogue, and creativity. Moreover, by enhancing the cultural character of localities, art exhibitions in public spaces can contribute to tourism development and stimulate local economic activity, benefiting small businesses and surrounding communities.

The measure is likewise timely and necessary in light of the ongoing recovery of the creative sector. Many artists continue to experience limited income opportunities and reduced exposure following disruptions in recent years. Providing accessible venues for exhibitions serves as a practical and immediate intervention to help revitalize artistic livelihoods and sustain creative production across the country.

Ultimately, this bill represents a low-cost yet high-impact approach to cultural development. By maximizing existing public infrastructure, it creates opportunities for artistic expression, strengthens the creative economy, and promotes inclusive access to culture for all Filipinos.

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



JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ

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HOUSE BILL NO. 10244

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

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM FOR THE USE OF PUBLIC AND PARTICIPATING PRIVATE SPACES FOR ART EXHIBITS OF LOCAL ARTISTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Sining sa Pamublikong Lugar Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to promote and support the talents of the Filipino people in arts, aiming to cultivate creativity and enhance the cultural identity of the nation. Towards this end, the State shall establish a coordinated program for the promotion of public art exhibits in accessible public spaces, in partnership with Local Government Units (LGUs), cultural agencies, and stakeholders in the creative industries.

The State shall accordingly facilitate and provide support through the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), in coordination with the Department of Tourism (DOT) and Local Government Units (LGUs), the establishment of regional and local platforms showcasing such talents and allowing the public to have access to local arts.

SEC. 3. *Use of Public Spaces and Participating Private Establishments for Art Exhibits.* – LGUs are hereby encouraged to designate appropriate public spaces within their respective jurisdictions as venues for art exhibits of local artists, subject to existing laws, ordinances, and public safety regulations.

Public Spaces and Participating Private Establishments refer to parks, plazas, government buildings, cultural centers, sidewalks, open grounds, and other publicly

accessible areas owned, controlled, or managed by Local Government Units (LGUs) or national government agencies, as well as privately owned but publicly accessible venues, including malls, commercial centers, and similar establishments, that voluntarily participate in the Program, which may be designated as venues for art exhibits, subject to existing laws, ordinances, and public safety regulations.

The use of such public spaces for art exhibits may be granted free of charge or at subsidized rates, as may be determined by the concerned LGU through appropriate ordinances or issuances.

The DOT and the NCCA shall provide technical and programmatic support to LGUs in the identification, development, and promotion of such public art spaces.

SEC. 4. *Participation of Private Establishments.* — Privately-owned establishments, including malls and commercial centers, may voluntarily participate in the Program by making designated publicly accessible spaces available for art exhibits of local artists, subject to guidelines to be issued under this Act.

Participating private establishments shall coordinate with the concerned LGU and the NCCA for program alignment, scheduling, and compliance with safety and accessibility standards.

SEC. 5. *Incentives for Participating Private Establishments.* —

- (a) Participating private establishments may avail of applicable fiscal and non-fiscal incentives under existing laws, subject to the requirements of such laws, for activities undertaken in support of the Program.
- (b) Expenses directly incurred for the hosting, promotion, and maintenance of art exhibits under this Act may be treated as allowable deductions from gross income, subject to existing tax rules and regulations.
- (c) Local Government Units are encouraged to provide non-fiscal incentives, including recognition programs, streamlined permitting, and promotional support, and may grant reductions in local fees or charges, subject to the Local Government Code and existing ordinances.
- (d) The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with the NCCA, may develop recognition and accreditation programs for participating establishments.

SEC. 6. *Venues and Schedule.* — The DOT and the NCCA shall identify suitable venues within each region and locality for the conduct of the art exhibits. The schedule of exhibits shall be determined jointly by the LGUs, with technical support from the DOT

and NCCA, upon consultation with relevant stakeholders, including local artists and cultural organizations.

SEC. 7. *Program Framework and Artist Selection.* – The NCCA, in coordination with the DOT and LGUs, shall develop a program framework for the implementation of public art exhibits under this Act, which shall include:

- (a) Transparent and inclusive mechanisms for the selection and participation of local artists;
- (b) Guidelines for curation, installation, and display of artworks;
- (c) Standards for the maintenance, preservation, and security of exhibited works; and
- (d) Measures to ensure accessibility and public engagement.

SEC. 8. *Safeguards and Liability.* – LGUs, in coordination with the NCCA and DOT, shall ensure that the use of public spaces for art exhibits complies with public safety standards and does not unduly disrupt the primary use of such spaces.

Appropriate measures shall be adopted to protect exhibited artworks from damage, theft, or vandalism. The terms and conditions governing liability for loss or damage shall be defined in the implementing rules and regulations or in agreements with participating artists.

SEC. 9. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to execute the aims and purposes of this Act shall be allocated by Congress annually and shall be managed and disbursed by the NCCA. Such funds shall be used for program development, artist support, logistical requirements, capacity-building for LGUs, and promotional activities related to the Art in Public Places Program.

SEC. 10. *Inter-agency Coordination.* – The NCCA shall serve as the lead implementing agency of this Act and shall coordinate with the DOT, LGUs, and other relevant agencies to ensure the effective implementation of the program.

SEC. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the date of effectivity of this Act, the DOT and NCCA, in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and concerned LGUs, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 12. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 13. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, issuances, decrees, rules, and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, modified, or repealed accordingly.

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

Approved,