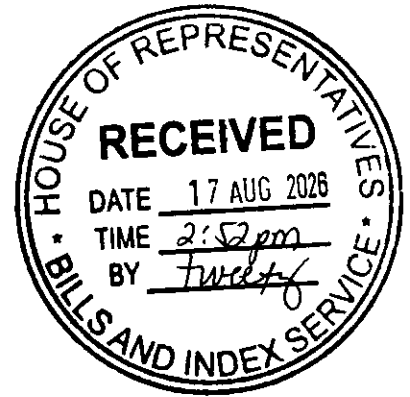




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **10830**



Introduced by Representative Bambi B. Emano

AN ACT DECLARING THE LANTAWANAN FESTIVAL AS THE OFFICIAL FESTIVAL OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF INITAO, PROVINCE OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL, DECLARING EVERY 24TH OF NOVEMBER TO THE 3RD DAY OF DECEMBER AS A TOURISM EVENT, PROVIDING FOR ITS PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is a nation whose strength lies in the diversity of its people, cultures, languages, traditions, and local histories. Throughout the archipelago, festivals have evolved beyond mere celebrations into enduring expressions of cultural identity, historical memory, and community resilience. They embody the collective experiences of generations and serve as living traditions through which communities preserve their heritage while sharing it with the rest of the nation.

The 1987 Constitution recognizes culture as a fundamental component of nation-building. Article XIV mandates the State to foster the preservation, enrichment, and dynamic evolution of Filipino culture. Likewise, Republic Act No. 7356 establishing the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Republic Act No. 9593 or the Tourism Act of 2009, Republic Act No. 10066 or the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009, Republic Act No. 8371 or the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997, and Republic Act No. 11961 or the Philippine Creative Industries Development Act collectively affirm the State's commitment to preserving local heritage while utilizing culture as a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable development.

Among the cultural treasures of Northern Mindanao is the Lantawanan Festival of the Municipality of Initao, Province of Misamis Oriental.

Derived from the Cebuano word 'lantaw,' meaning 'to see,' 'to behold,' or 'to envision,' the festival reflects the municipality's tourism identity, 'Lantaw Initao.' More than simply referring to scenic landscapes, the term embodies the people's aspiration to present Initao as a place where history, nature, indigenous traditions, and community life converge. It represents a vision of a municipality that proudly embraces its cultural identity while pursuing sustainable progress.

Situated along the northern coast of Misamis Oriental, Initao occupies a strategic position between the highly urbanized centers of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan. Its fertile lands, coastal resources, caves, forests, rivers, and marine ecosystems have shaped not only its economy but also the traditions and way of life of its people.

Long before the arrival of colonial powers, the area was inhabited by indigenous communities whose stewardship of the land established enduring customs centered on respect for nature and communal responsibility. These traditions continue to influence the municipality's cultural identity and remain visible in local customs, craftsmanship, folklore, and community celebrations. The Lantawanan Festival serves as an avenue through which these traditions are celebrated, preserved, and passed on to younger generations.

The festival has become an important instrument for local economic development. It creates livelihood opportunities for local farmers, fisherfolk, artisans, performers, transport operators, hospitality establishments, and micro, small, and medium enterprises while promoting indigenous products, local cuisine, and creative industries.

It likewise advances environmental awareness by highlighting Initao's forests, caves, marine ecosystems, and other natural attractions. Through responsible tourism and community participation, it promotes environmental stewardship and sustainable development.

Recognizing the Lantawanan Festival through national legislation affirms the State's constitutional duty to preserve, develop, and promote the nation's historical and cultural heritage. National recognition will strengthen institutional support, encourage collaboration among national agencies and the local government, and position Initao as a premier cultural and tourism destination in Northern Mindanao.

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



BAMBI B. EMAMO
2nd District of Misamis Oriental



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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 'Lantawanan Festival Act'.

SECTION. 2. Declaration of Policy - It is the policy of the State to preserve Filipino cultural heritage, strengthen local tourism, recognize indigenous traditions, and support sustainable community development through cultural festivals.

SECTION. 3. Annual Celebration - The festival shall continue to be celebrated annually during the Municipality's Tourism Week from November 4 to December 3, unless otherwise determined by the Local Government Unit of Initao.

SECTION. 4. Lead Agencies - The Department of Tourism, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and the Local Government Unit of Initao shall coordinate the promotion, preservation, and development of the festival.

SECTION.5. Cultural Preservation - The implementing agencies shall ensure that indigenous traditions, local history, cultural expressions, and environmental conservation remain integral components of the festival.

SECTION.6. Separability Clause - If any provision is declared invalid, the remaining provisions shall remain in force.

SECTION.7. Repealing Clause - All inconsistent laws and issuances are repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. Effectivity - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,