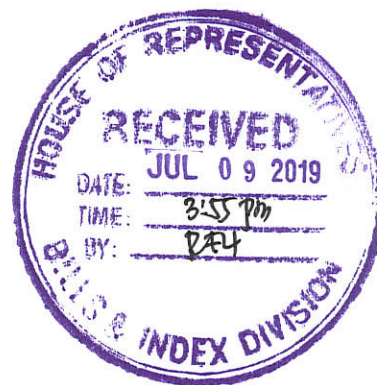


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1780



Introduced by Representative Sandra Y. Eriguel

EXPLANATORY NOTE


This Bill, which is entitled "AN ACT RECLASSIFYING CERTAIN PUBLIC LANDS WITHIN THE STRIP OF LAND FIVE (5) KILOMETERS FROM EITHER SIDE OF THE ASPIRAS HIGHWAY, FORMERLY KNOWN AS MARCOS HIGHWAY, FROM AGOO, PROVINCE OF LA UNION TO TUBA, PROVINCE OF BENGUET COVERED BY PROCLAMATION NO. 1754 AS ALIENABLE AND DISPOSABLE LANDS," was approved by the House of Representatives during 17th Congress and subsequently transmitted to the Senate on May 23, 2018. However, due to limited time, the Senate was not able to pass the same Bill. Thus, this Bill is being refiled.

Pursuant to Presidential Proclamation No. 1754 dated June 22, 1978, the area covering 30,811.81 hectares was reserved for forest and watershed purposes of which some 25,762.81 hectares were previously declared alienable and disposable land (A & D) and 5,049 hectares timberland per Land Classification No. 1392 approved on August 1, 1940. The said land area is under the jurisdiction of the Municipalities of Agoo, Tubao, Rosario, Pugo, Sto. Tomas and Aringay.

Sound land use promotes sustainable economic growth, equity and poverty alleviation. Under the 1976 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, it considers land as the principal instrument in fostering "social justice, development, provision of decent dwellings, and health conditions, and therefore should be used in the interest of the society as a whole." However, where there are conflicting land uses and practices, inappropriate land classification and confusion due to inconsistent laws and policies as well as continued negative environmental impact on land of human activities, the existing law needs to be revisited.

In this case, prior to Proclamation No. 1754, several portions affected by the same have already been issued land titles recognized under the law. As such, its continued use is primarily as residential and agricultural. The residents affected continue to depend on the land as their main source of livelihood. The law therefore failed to consider and balance the different but related concerns of the stakeholders such as food security, human settlements, environmental protection, indigenous communities, and other economic and commercial pursuits.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this Bill is earnestly requested.


SANDRA Y. ERIGUEL, M.D.
Representative, Second District, La Union

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AN ACT
RECLASSIFYING CERTAIN PUBLIC LANDS WITHIN THE STRIP OF LAND
FIVE (5) KILOMETERS FROM EITHER SIDE OF THE ASPIRAS HIGHWAY,
FORMERLY KNOWN AS MARCOS HIGHWAY, FROM AGOO, PROVINCE OF
LA UNION TO TUBA, PROVINCE OF BENGUET COVERED BY
PROCLAMATION NO. 1754 AS ALIENABLE AND DISPOSABLE LANDS

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

SECTION 1. *Reclassification of Certain Public Lands.* - The existing built-up and populated areas and the agricultural lands identified by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) within the strip of land five kilometers from either side of the Aspiras Highway, formerly known as Marcos Highway, from Agoo, La Union to Tuba, Benguet covered by Proclamation No. 1754 are hereby reclassified as alienable and disposable lands.

SEC. 2. *Specific Forest Limits.* - Immediately upon the effectivity of this Act, the DENR shall undertake the actual ground survey and verification of the specific forest limits using as basis all existing land classification (LC) maps, the latest forest cover data of the National Mapping and Resources Information Authority (NAMRIA) from its satellite imagery interpretations, and other available and reliable sources of information: *Provided*, That the area originally classified as timberland per LC Map No. 1392 shall be retained and shall be subject to a joint validation and redefinition of boundary by the DENR: *Provided, further*, That existing built-up and populated areas and the areas identified as agricultural lands within the coverage of Proclamation No. 1754 shall be subject to assessment and ground survey by the DENR in accordance with existing laws and rules and regulations: *Provided, finally*, That areas situated within the geo-hazard zones as determined by the DENR and the concerned LGUs shall be excluded from the coverage of this Act.

SEC. 3. *Status of National Parks, Mineral Lands and Other Public Reservations.* –

The land classification of proclaimed national parks, protected areas, mineral lands, the status of civil reservations, military reservations, and other reservations for public and quasi-public uses within the affected area shall not be affected by this Act.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DENR, in consultation with the Provincial Governments of La Union and Benguet and the affected municipalities, shall issue the corresponding implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, proclamations, letters of instructions, executive orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions not affected thereby.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,