

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3684



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**Introduced by Representative JAKE VINCENT S. VILLA**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Republic Act No. 9593 otherwise known as Tourism Act of 2009 provides:

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State declares tourism as an indispensable element of the national economy and an industry of national interest and importance, which must be harnessed as an engine of socio-economic growth and cultural affirmation to generate investment, foreign exchange and employment, and to continue to mold an enhanced sense of national pride for all Filipinos.

Towards this end, the State shall seek to:

x x x

(b) Recognize sustainable tourism development as integral to the national socio-economic development efforts to improve the quality of life of the Filipino people, providing the appropriate attention and support for the growth of this industry

x x x.

Further, "Sustainable tourism development" refers to the management of all resources that meets the needs of tourists and host regions while protecting the opportunities for the future, in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.

Pursuant to the above-quoted policy, this measure provides for uniform standards on signage for use throughout the Philippines that would facilitate travel in the country. The measure also provides the provision of directional signages in tourism facilities and destinations, including airports, seaports, land border crossings, highways, and bus, train and other public transit locations. Furthermore, under the bill, the Task Force is expected to prepare and disseminate multilingual travel and tourism information and promotional

materials and establish a toll-free telephone assistance system run by multilingual operators to provide assistance to domestic and foreign tourists.

It is worthy to note that nothing can be more daunting for a tourist in a country that a tourist visits and the tourist has no idea where to go for assistance, especially if said tourist becomes a victim of an untoward incident. With this in mind the protection and assistance of tourists is of utmost importance.

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



**JAKE VINCENT S. VILLA**

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE FOR  
THE PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE OF TOURIST**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as “Tourists Protection and Assistance Act”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Principles.* – The State recognizes tourism as a major contributor to the country’s economic growth. Towards this end, the State shall endeavor to enact measures for the protection and assistance of tourists, both domestic and foreign, during their travel around the country.

SECTION 3. *Tourists Protection and Assistance Task Force.* – Within Nine (9) months after the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Tourism (DOT) shall establish an intergovernmental task force to be known as “Tourists Protection and Assistance Task Force”, hereinafter referred to as the “Task Force”.

It shall be the duty of the Task Force to facilitate, through the concerned national government agencies and local government units (LGUs), the following:

- (a) Adoption of uniform standards on signage for use throughout the Philippines in order to facilitate travel in the country;
- (b) Provision of directional signages in tourism in tourism facilities and destinations, including airports, seaports, land border crossings, highways, and bus, train, and other public transit locations;
- (c) Preparation and dissemination of multilingual travel and tourism information and promotional materials;
- (d) Establishment of a toll-free telephone assistance system run by multilingual operators to provide assistance to domestic and foreign tourists;



- (e) Coordination with LGUs the establishment of tourist help desk in identified tourist destinations; and
- (f) Institution of measures to prevent unlawful acts or harassment committed on tourists.

SECTION 4. *Composition of the Task Force.* – The Task Force shall be composed of the following:

- (a) Secretary of DOT or the duly designated representative, as Chairperson;
- (b) Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government or the duly designated representative, as Vice Chairperson;
- (c) Secretary of the Department of Transportation or the duly designated representative;
- (d) Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways or the duly representative;
- (e) Secretary of the Department of Justice or the duly designated representative;
- (f) Director General of the Philippine National Police or the duly designated representative;
- (g) A representative from the Road Board of the Philippines; and
- (h) Such other representatives of other government agencies and private sector entities as may be determined to be appropriate to the mission of the Task Force by the Chairperson, as members.

The Task Force shall meet whenever necessary.

SECTION 5. *Funding.* – The amount necessary to cover the expenses for the operation of the Task Force shall be charge against the existing appropriation of the DOT as contained in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Funds for the implementation of the programs and projects that shall be approved by the Task Force shall be included in the appropriation of the implementing agencies concerned. For LGUs, funding shall be taken from their internal revenue allotment and other internally generated income.

SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, presidential decrees or issuances, executive orders, letter of instruction, administrative orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in newspaper of general circulation

Approved,