

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

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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House Bill No. 2321

Introduced by Honorable Joaquin M. Chipeco, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This is a refiled bill from the 16th Congress, which intends to declare June 19 of every year – commemorative of Dr. Jose Rizal's natal day – as a special non-working holiday in the Province of Laguna, Rizal's birthplace (he was born in Calamba, Laguna). Despite the merits of the measure, which is self-evident, it was objected to by one agency of the government (namely, the Department of Labor and Employment) purportedly on the ground that the country has too many holidays already.


The objection is obviously misplaced. It overlooks the fact that many Filipinos, of lesser stature than that of our national hero, have special non-working holidays celebrating their respective birthdays (locally), namely, Lopez Jaena Day on Dec. 18 in Iloilo Province and Iloilo City (RA 6155); President Manuel Luis Quezon Day on Aug. 19 in the provinces of Quezon and Aurora and Quezon City (RA 6741); Pres. Osmena Day on Sept. 9 in Cebu (RA 6953); Pres. Carlos P. Garcia Day on Nov. 4 in Bohol; Pres. Quirino Day on Nov. 16 in [Vigan] Ilocos Sur (Pres. Proc. No. 1927); Blas Ople Day on Feb. 3 in Bulacan (Pres. Proc. No. 1204); and Roque B. Ablan, Sr. Day on Aug. 9 in Ilocos Norte (RA 6941). Without in any manner denigrating their stature, it is important to note that the last two illustrious Filipinos in the preceding enumeration were neither "heroes", in the general acceptance, nor presidents (Ople was more of a statesman while Ablan is described as "late governor and labor leader").

The opposition to this measure (especially coming from the DoLE) is also questionable on another level. The Labor Code speaks only of two (2) kinds of holidays, namely, regular holidays and special non-working days, both of

which really are non-working days. Now, somewhere along the way, people who perhaps could not make up their minds, came up with a third kind of holiday, that is, special working holidays. This specie of holiday actually defeats the purpose of a holiday celebration. The reason usually given for setting aside a certain day as a special non-working holiday is to give the people "full opportunity to celebrate and participate in the occasion with appropriate ceremonies." The assumption here is that if a day is characterized by routinary work and academic activities, people do not have "full opportunity" to celebrate and participate in the activities of the occasion inasmuch as they are encumbered by their daily work/class schedules. And by "routine" the event is robbed of its special significance whereby people could reflect on the day's deeper meaning. The non-working aspect of any holiday gives the people "pause", perhaps even forcing them to think as to why there are no classes and work on that special occasion.

As things stand now, purveyors of the memories of Messieurs Lopez Jaena, Quezon, Osmena, Garcia, Quirino, Ople and Ablan are content, happy with the thought that the birthdays of their "idols" (outstanding Filipinos) are fully commemorated in their localities. Meanwhile, June 19 of every year come and go without a special fitting celebration of the natal day of perhaps the greatest Filipino who ever lived.

In view of the foregoing, the early approval of this measure is most fervently sought.



HON. JOAQUIN M. CHIPECO, JR.
Representative
Second District, Province of Laguna

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2321

Introduced by HONORABLE JOAQUIN M. CHIPECO, JR.

AN ACT
DECLARING JUNE NINETEEN OF EVERY YEAR A NON-WORKING PUBLIC
HOLIDAY THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE OF LAGUNA TO BE KNOWN AS "THE
NATIONAL HERO'S DAY" IN HONOR OF THE BIRTH OF OUR NATIONAL HERO
DR. JOSE P. RIZAL

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

SECTION 1. June Nineteen of every year is hereby declared a non-working
public holiday throughout the Province of Laguna to be known as "THE NATIONAL HERO'S
DAY".

SECTION 2. This Act shall take effect upon approval.

Approved,