

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 4588



INTRODUCED by **HONORABLE ARNOLFO A. TEVES JR.**


EXPLANATORY NOTE

Cockfighting has been around for centuries in all places of the country and it withstand the test of time because it is more of a tradition and passion rather than gambling. Breeders raised fighting cocks and fought it in the pit not primarily for gambling but for honor and prestige and sometimes for big prize money; cockfighting now has evolved into a hobby, a sporting event and a competition.

The feed and veterinary industry connected to cockfighting is now a multi-billion industry providing employment for salespersons, technicians, veterinarians, and agrivet store employees. The breeding and raising of fighting cocks provides employment for farm workers, handlers, and breeders. The cockpit also provides employment to gaffers, sentenciadors, bet takers and utility personnel, as well as business opportunities for stall owners and carinderias inside, among others. Hence, the perceived ill-effect of cockfighting is now outweighed by the benefits derived from it.

P.D. 449 otherwise known as "The Cockfighting Law of 1974" have obsolete provisions and does not anymore conform with the demands of time to the point of holding back the the progress of the cockfighting industry. There is also a pressing need to harmonize the role of the Local Government Unit and Games and Amusement Board to have uniform rules and regulations enforceable all over the country.

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


HON. ARNOLFO A. TEVES JR.
Representative
3rd DISTRICT, NEGROS ORIENTAL

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AN ACT REGULATING COCKFIGHTING IN THE PHILIPPINES

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

Sec 1. Title. This Act shall be known as the "Revised Cockfighting Law of the Philippines".

Section 2. Scope. This Act shall govern the establishment, operation, maintenance and ownership of cockpits.

Section 3. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared a policy of the State to promote the welfare of the farmers and the industry affiliated to farming, preserve local customs and traditions, and progressively regulate cockfighting as a form of recreation and revenue generation.

Section 4. Definition of Terms. As used in this Act, the following terms shall be understood, applied and construed as follows:

- (a) Cockfighting – It embraces the commonly known game or term "*hackfight, tari, sabong, ulutan, derby, pintakasi or tupada*", or its equivalent terms in different Philippine localities.
- (b) Regular Cockfighting – It is cockfighting done by matching of roosters by and between owners only, and being done only on Sundays, legal holidays and local fiestas.

- (c) Derby – It is a form of cockfighting wherein roosters are matched according to their submitted weights and there is a prize money for the highest number of wins.
- (d) Zoning Law or Ordinance - Either both national or local city or municipal legislation which logically arranges, prescribes, defines and apportions a given political subdivision into specific land uses as present and future projection of needs warrant.
- (e) Promoter - A person or association who puts up a cockfighting event in coordination with licensed cockpit owners.
- (f) Bet Taker – A person acting on behalf of the promoter and/or cockpit owner who calls and takes care of bets from owners of both gamecocks and those of other bettors before he orders commencement of the cockfight and thereafter distributes won bets to the winners after deducting the tax and a certain commission.
- (g) Gaffer (Taga Tari) - A person knowledgeable in the art of arming fighting cocks with gaff or gaffs on either or both legs.
- (h) Referee (Sentenciador) - A person who watches and oversees the proper gaffing of fighting cocks, determines the physical condition of fighting cocks while cockfighting is in progress, the injuries sustained by the cocks and their capability to continue fighting and decides and make known his decision by work or gestures and result of the cockfight by announcing the winner or declaring a tie or no contest game.
- (i) Bettor - Any person who participates in a cockfight and bets with the use of money, bets with other bettors or through the bet taker or promoter and wins or loses his bet depending upon the result of the cockfight as announced by the Referee or Sentenciador.

Section 5. Cockpits and Cockfighting: In General:

- (a) Ownership, Operation and Management of Cockpits. Only Filipino citizens not otherwise inhibited by existing laws shall be allowed to own, manage and operate cockpits. Cooperative capitalization is encouraged.
- (b) Establishment of Cockpits. Only one cockpit shall be allowed in each city or municipality, except that in cities or municipalities with a population of over one hundred thousand, one cockpit may be established, maintained and operated for every additional one hundred thousand population.

(c) Cockpits Site and Construction. New Cockpits, shall be constructed and operated within the appropriate areas as prescribed in Zoning Law or Ordinance. In the absence of such law or ordinance, the local government unit shall see to it that no cockpits are constructed within a radius of five (500) hundred meters from existing residential area, hospitals, school buildings, churches or other public buildings. Approval or issuance of building permits for the construction of cockpits shall be made by the city or municipal engineer in accordance with their respective building codes, ordinances or engineering laws and practices.

(d) Holding of Regular Cockfights. Except as provided in this Act, cockfighting shall be allowed only in licensed cockpits. It may also be held outside the licensed cockpit during barangay fiestas for a maximum of three days; provided, it is operated by the licensed cockpit owner of the city or municipality at the option of the barangay if there are more than one licensed cockpit in the locality, and that the proceeds thereof shall be divided equally by the barangay and the cockpit owner after deducting the permit fees and taxes. Provided, further, that no cockfighting shall be held on December 30 (Rizal Day), June 12 (Philippine Independence Day) November 30 (National Heroes Day), Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Election or Referendum Day and during Registration Days for such election or referendum.

(e) Holding of Derbies. Derbies can be held only in licensed cockpit after approval of its application by the Games and Amusement Board.

(f) Cockfighting for Entertainment of Tourists or for Charitable Purposes. Subject to the preceding subsection hereof, the Games and Amusement Board may also allow the holding of cockfighting for the entertainment of foreign dignitaries or for tourists, or for returning Filipinos, commonly known as "Balikbayan" or for the support of fund-raising campaigns for charitable purposes upon request by the Department of Tourism or the local government unit.

(g) Collection of Amusement Taxes and Fees. All taxes and fees shall be due to the local government unit where the cockfighting is held in accordance with its local ordinance.

Section 6. Licensing of Cockpits. Games and Amusement Board (GAB) is authorized to issue licenses for the operation and maintenance of cockpits subject to the applicable laws.

Section 7. Cockfighting Officials. Gaffers, referees or bet takers or promoters shall not act as such in any cockfight herein authorized, without first securing a license from the Games and Amusement Board upon payment of prescribed fees. Only licensed gaffers, referees, bet takers or promoters shall officiate in all kinds of cockfighting authorized in this Act.

Section 8. Penal Provisions. Any violation of the provisions of this Act and of the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto shall be punished as follows:

a. By *prision correccional* in its maximum period and a fine of Fifty thousand pesos (Php 50,000.00), with subsidiary imprisonment in case of insolvency, when the offender is the financier, owner, manager or operator of cockpit, or the gaffer, referee or bet taker in cockfights; or the offender is guilty of allowing, promoting or participating in any other kind of gambling in the premises of the cockpit.

b. By *prision correccional* or a fine of not less than Thirty thousand pesos (Php 30,000.00) pesos or both, such imprisonment and fine at the discretion of the court, with subsidiary imprisonment in case of insolvency, in case of any other offender.

Section 9. Rules and Regulations. The Games and Amusement Board shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of the provisions of this Act.

Section 10. Repealing Clause. All laws, decrees, rules and regulations, or orders which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Section 10. Date of Effectivity. This Decree shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following the completion of the publication in the Official Gazette.

Approved


ARNOLFO "ARNIE" A. TEVES, JR.