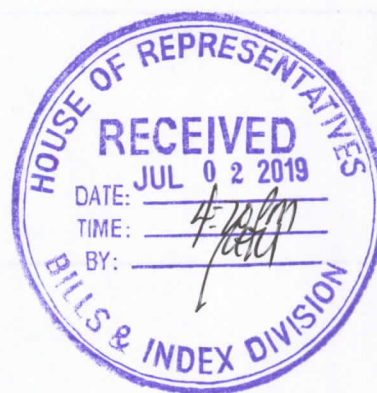


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
H. No. 1127



Introduced by **Representative Raul C. Tupas**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

**AN ACT DECLARING THE SICOOGON ISLAND IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF
CARLES, PROVINCE OF ILOILO AS AN ECOTOURISM ZONE AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

The travel and tourism sector contributed a total of Php 3.35 trillion to the Philippine economy in 2017, accounting for about 21% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), according to the latest report from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). The sector also directly supported some 2.3 million jobs or about 5.8% of employment last year. This is expected to rise by 6.6% in 2018 and rise by 2.6% to 3.2 million jobs in 2028.¹

The Western Visayas Tourist Arrival Data from DOT Region VI show that a total of 5.9 million tourists visited the region in 2017 and spent a total of Php 128.46 billion in terms of tourist receipts. Of this, the Province of Iloilo hosted around 1.3 million tourists in 2017.²

Certainly, travel and tourism remains one of the largest economic sectors in the Philippines. The booming travel and tourism sector is currently driving the growth of many industries as it continues to create jobs, drive exports and generate prosperity for the country.

Pursuant to the policy of the State to promote sustainable tourism industry throughout the country, this bill seeks to declare the Sicogon Island in the Municipality of Carles, Province of Iloilo as an ecotourism zone with the goal of developing and promoting the island into a tourist destination, generating investments and creating job opportunities, and protecting the natural resources within the area.

Sicogon Island is one of the smaller islands in the northeastern tip of the Province of Iloilo. It has an estimated area of 1,160 hectares and politically located in the Municipality of Carles. The island has three barangays, namely, Alipata, Buaya, and San Fernando with an estimated population of 5,238.

¹ <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2018/philippines2018.pdf>

² Official Western Visayas 2017 Tourist Arrivals Data

Sicogon Island is one of the many beautiful attractions that grace the waters of Northern Iloilo. Sicogon became a popular tourist destination during the 70s and 80s because of the high-end resort suitably named "Sicogon Island Resort" operating in the island. At present, Sicogon Island is touted as the newest tourism hub and Gateway of Western Visayas.

This bill is in line with the National Tourism Development Plan of the government which supports the development of Philippine tourism product and raises the competitiveness of the Philippines as a tourism destination.

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


RAUL "BOBOY" C. TUPAS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
H. No. 1127

Introduced by Representative Raul C. Tupas

**AN ACT DECLARING THE SICOGON IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CARLES,
PROVINCE OF ILOILO AS AN ECOTOURISM ZONE AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

- 1 **SECTION 1.** This Act shall be known as the "Sicogon Island Ecotourism Zone Act."
2
- 3 **SECTION 2.** It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote a tourism industry
4 that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally-sensitive,
5 economically viable and equitably beneficial to local communities.
6
- 7 **SECTION 3.** The Sicogon Island consisting of three (3) barangays, namely, Alipata,
8 Buaya, and San Fernando located in the Municipality of Carles, Province of Iloilo, is
9 hereby declared as an ecotourism zone, to be known as Sicogon Island Ecotourism
10 Zone. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT)
11 and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of
12 ecotourism zones.
13
- 14 The DOT shall prepare the development plan for Sicogon Island and shall
15 incorporate the same in the overall National Tourism Development Plan. The plan shall
16 be implemented jointly with the Municipality of Carles, the Department of Environment
17 and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone
18 Authority (TIEZA).
19
- 20 The DOT, in coordination with the Municipality of Carles, the DENR, the TIEZA
21 and other concerned agencies of the government, shall delineate well-defined
22 geographic areas within the Sicogon Island Ecotourism Zone and coordinate the
23 integrated development of the area for the optimum use of natural assets and
24 attractions. The development shall ensure the preservation of the flora and fauna and
25 perpetuate the historic significance of the identified tourist attractions.
26
- 27 **SECTION 4.** The Secretaries of the DOT, DENR and the Chief Operating Officer of the
28 TIEZA shall include in their respective programs the implementation of this Act, the

29 funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and
30 internally generate funds of the DOT.

31

32 **SECTION 5.** Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the
33 DOT, in consultation with the DENR, the TIEZA and the Municipality of Carles, shall
34 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this
35 Act.

36

37 **SECTION 6.** All laws, orders, decrees, rules and regulations and other issuances, or
38 parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified
39 accordingly.

40

41 **SECTION 7.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least
42 two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

43

44 Approved,