

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2898



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Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**  
**HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Military Shrine Services (MSS) was created on January 26, 1977 by virtue of Presidential Decree No. 1076. The MSS is placed under the supervision of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), along with The Veterans Memorial Hospital, The Veterans Claims Settlement Staff, and The Philippine Veterans Administration. Tasked to conserve and develop military shrines of national importance, the MSS plays an instrumental role in preserving the historical significance of our country's military legacies.

The significance of military shrines cannot be overemphasized. Military shrines are the country's historical touchstones that link the past, present and future generations. Military shrines ensure that those who lost their lives in battles will never be forgotten. They also serve as central symbols of our country's architectural and artistic heritage.

The sorry state of our military shrines warrants urgent government attention for it is only through their preservation can we immortalize the sacrifices of our fallen heroes. The absence of a military historian, coupled with inadequate budget, hinders the MSS to properly maintain and develop national military shrines. Lack of funds also hampers the ability of the MSS to acquire military shrines that are under the management of local government units.

As such, this bill proposes to create a Military History and Shrines Board (MHSB), under the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), which will fully focus on the maintenance and development of national military shrines and battle fields. The Board will be chaired by the Administrator of PVAO, assisted by a military historian. Other members of the Board will be the Head of the Office of the Military Historian, Chairperson of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines, Administrator of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Museum, and two esteemed members of the academe.

By expanding the powers and delineating the functions of the Military History and Shrines Board, it is hoped that the public will place greater importance on the value of patriotism. For these reasons, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

**MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III**  
*Representative*  
Magdalo Para sa Pilipino Party-List

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AN ACT  
EXPANDING AND STRENGTHENING THE MILITARY SHRINES SERVICE AND  
RENAMING IT TO MILITARY HISTORY AND SHRINES BOARD

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

1       **SECTION 1.***Short title.* - This Act shall be "The Military History and Shrines  
2 Board."

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4       **SEC. 2.***Declaration of policy.* -It is hereby declared to be the policy of the State to  
5 foster the preservation, enrichment, and dynamic evolution of a Filipino national culture  
6 based on the principle of unity in diversity in a climate of free artistic and intellectual  
7 expression. The Constitution stipulates that the State shall conserve, promote, and popularize  
8 the nation's historical and cultural heritage and resources. Towards this end, all artistic and  
9 historic wealth constitutes the cultural treasure of the nation and shall be under the protection  
10 of the State which may regulate its disposition.

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12       **SEC. 3.***Creation of the Board.* - The Military Shrines Service (MSS), established  
13 under Presidential Decree No. 1076, as amended, is hereby expanded and strengthened and  
14 shall hereinafter be renamed as the Military History and Shrines Board (MHSB), hereinafter  
15 referred to as the Board, attached to the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) under the  
16 general supervision of the Department of National Defense (DND).

17  
18       **SEC. 4.***Purposes and Objectives.* -The Board shall administer, maintain and  
19 development national shrines consisting of military memorials, battle monuments or sites,  
20 underwater or on land.

21  
22       **SEC. 5.***Powers and Functions.* In furtherance of its purposes and objectives, the  
23 Board shall have the following powers and functions:

- 24           1. Identify and acquire military shrines, monuments and battle fields of  
25           national significance in concurrence with the National Historical  
26           Commission of the Philippines;  
27           2. Take over local government units on the management of military shrines,  
28           monuments and battle fields;  
29           3. Regulate activities pertaining to the preservation, restoration and  
30           conservation of military shrines, monuments and battle fields;  
31           4. Manage and preserve underwater military wrecks;



5. Coordinate with the National Historical Commission of the Philippines on the declaration of markers on military shrines, monuments and battle fields;
6. Provide database that will list the activities undertaken with regard to the maintenance and development of military shrines, monuments and battle fields;
7. Secure and receive local, bilateral and international donations, grants and endowments in support of its programs and projects;
8. Collect reasonable fees for the use, sale or rent of its resources as well as entrance fees to shrines and landmarks under the jurisdiction of the MHSB;

**SEC. 6. Composition of the Board.** - The Administrator of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) shall act as the Chairperson of the Board. The Chairperson shall be assisted by a Vice Chairperson who must be a distinguished military historian. The regular members of the Board shall be composed of the Director of the Office of the Military Historian, the Chairperson of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines, Administrator of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Museum, and two members of the academe.

**SEC. 7. Qualifications of the Members of the Board.** - No person shall be appointed or elected to the Board unless he/she possesses the following minimum qualifications:

- a. A natural-born citizen of the Republic of the Philippines;
- b. At least thirty-five (35) years of age;
- c. With good moral character;
- d. Has distinguished himself/herself in the field of Philippine history; and
- e. Has published works in Philippine history and other academic fields recognized by scholars and the reading public.

**SEC. 8. The Chairperson.** - The Administrator of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) shall act as the Chairperson of the Board.

**SEC.9. Term of Office of the Chairperson.** - The Chairperson shall have a term of three (3) years and shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

**SEC.10. Functions of the Chairperson.** - The Chairperson is the head of the Board and shall represent and act for the Board in all matters pertaining to the MHSB. The Chairperson, being the public face of the MHSB, shall:

- a. Provide leadership in the realization of purposes and goals of the MHSB
- b. Preside over meetings of the MHSB;
- c. Propose the agenda for meetings of the MHSB;
- d. Exercise oversight over the MHSB to ensure the implementation of its policies, decisions and resolutions;
- e. Represent the MHSB on official matters;
- f. Represent the MHSB in the Board of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office;
- g. Perform such other authority, functions or duties as delegated by the Secretary of National Defense.

**SEC. 11. The Vice Chairperson-** The Vice Chairperson shall be appointed by the Secretary of National Defense. He/she must be a military historian with proven academic credibility.

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2       **SEC.12. Term of Office of the Vice Chairperson.** - The Vice Chairperson shall have  
3 a term of three (3) years and shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.  
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5       **SEC. 13. Functions of the Vice Chairperson.** - The Vice Chairperson shall have the  
6 following functions:

- 7       a. Assist the Chairperson in performing the latter's duties and responsibilities;  
8       b. Monitor the implementation of the policies and programs approved and  
9       promulgated by the MHSB;  
10       c. Administer the day-to-day operations of the MHSB;  
11       d. Represent the MHSB in meetings when authorized or delegated by the Board;  
12       e. In the event that the Chairperson is absent and the normal functions of the  
13       Chairperson cannot be carried out, the Vice Chairperson will take the role as  
14       the acting Chairperson until the Chairperson resumes carrying out his normal  
15       duties or a new Chairperson has been elected and appointed by the Board;  
16       f. Perform such other functions assigned by the MHSB Board.  
17

18       **SEC. 14. Regular Members; Term of Office.** - The regular members of the Board  
19 shall serve for a term of four (4) years: *provided*, that the regular members shall not serve for  
20 more than two (2) consecutive terms. Appointment to any vacancy shall only be for the  
21 unexpired portion of the term of the predecessor. In no case shall a member be appointed or  
22 designated in a temporary or acting capacity.  
23

24       **SEC. 15. Reorganization.** - Within one hundred twenty (120) days from the  
25 effectivity of this Act, the Board shall have the authority to reorganize the structure of the  
26 MHSB, including its staffing pattern in order to carry out its functions pursuant to its  
27 expanded mandate as the MHSB.

28       Employees of the MSS shall be subsumed in the MHSB and, whenever qualified, be  
29 upgraded to their analogous positions. Employees opting to avail of an early retirement  
30 scheme shall be granted under the existing DBM guidelines.  
31

32       **SEC. 16. Tax Exemption on Donations.** -The MHSB shall be exempt from all taxes  
33 on its income. All donations in any form to the MHSB shall be exempt from the donor's tax  
34 and the same shall be considered as allowable deduction from the gross income in the  
35 computation of the income tax of the donor, in accordance with the provisions of Republic  
36 Act No. 8424, otherwise known as the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.  
37

38       **SEC. 17. Funding Provision.** - The amount necessary for the effective  
39 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.  
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41       **SEC. 18. Implementing Rules and Regulations.**— Within ninety (90) days from his  
42 appointment, the Secretary of National Defense shall promulgate rules and regulations  
43 necessary to ensure the effective implementation of this Act.  
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45       **SEC. 19. Separability Clause.**— If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid  
46 or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and  
47 effect.  
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1       **SEC. 20.Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, executive orders and other  
2 administrative issuances and parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this  
3 Act, are hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.  
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5       **SEC.21.Effectivity.**–This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in  
6 the *Official Gazette* and at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*