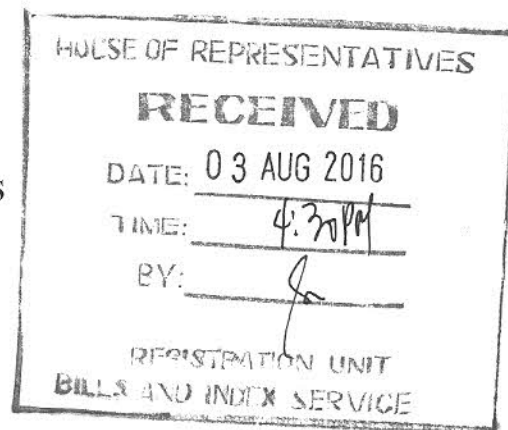


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2468



Introduced by Reps. Mohamad Khalid Q. Dimaporo and Abdullah D. Dimaporo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare the Province of Lanao del Norte as a Tourism Development Area. Once approved into law, this will pave the way for the formulation of a Tourism Development Plan for the Province and its incorporation into the Department of Tourism's National Tourism Development Plan, the creation of the Lanao del Norte Tourism Council and the development of support facilities and infrastructure that will greatly enhance the Province's tourism sector, boost the provincial economy and improve the quality of life of its residents.

Tourism, today, is one of the world's largest industries and one of its fastest growing economic sectors. For many countries, tourism is seen as a main instrument for regional development, as it stimulates new economic activities and creates employment opportunities.

Globally, tourism initiatives receive considerable public funding and private investments as a means of economically developing low-income communities. Amongst proponents, tourism is seen as a mechanism for local communities to capitalize on assets such as the natural environment and cultural heritage.

Along this line, the Philippine Government has given preeminence to tourism as a primary engine for national development. Tourism has become a focal point of development strategies designed to pump prime the national economy.

The Provincial Government of Lanao del Norte, on the other hand, has been exerting its best effort to uplift the quality of life of its residents in the rural and urban areas through the promotion and implementation of its Integrated Agriculture and Economics Tourism Development Programs. The primary goal of the development plan is to create conditions that will facilitate and accelerate the economic growth of the Province. One of the conditions identified is to promote the tourism industry to act as a catalyst for the development of trade and other economic interactions between outlying municipalities in the Province and its neighboring provinces as well.

Lanao del Norte offers a variety of tourist destinations that will surely invite the world's attention to a land of beauty and bounty. It has over thirty waterfalls, magnificent rivers ideal for white-water rafting, unspoiled springs and lakes, unspoiled caves, pristine beaches and majestic mountain ranges. It is also home to world-class sporting facilities set against the backdrop of idyllic and majestic mountain formations which have hosted on several occasions some of Mindanao's grandest sporting spectacles.

While tourism is on the rise in Lanao del Norte's leading tourist destinations, such as Maria Cristina Falls and Tinago Falls, much of the Province's natural attractions are hidden to the rest of the world. Despite their natural beauty, they have remained either undeveloped or underdeveloped due to several factors. It is high time that these natural wonders are developed to their fullest potentials and showcased for the world to enjoy.

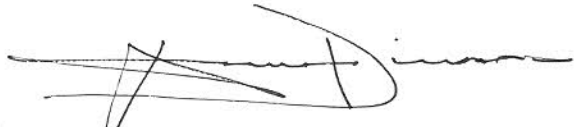
With the approval of this measure, it is hoped that efforts towards achieving the maximum development of the tourism sector in Lanao del Norte will be synchronized into an integrated plan that puts into consideration all relevant factors especially the preservation of the natural condition of the sites and ensure their sustainability in consonance with applicable environmental laws. With the assistance of the Department of Tourism, Lanao del Norte will be given a real chance to achieve its maximum potential as an attractive and commercially-viable tourism destination.

In view of the above premises, the prompt approval of this measure is earnestly requested and recommended.



MOHAMAD KHALID Q. DIMAPORO

First District, Lanao del Norte



ABDULLAH D. DIMAPORO

Second District, Lanao del Norte

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HOUSE BILL NO. 2468

Introduced by Reps Mohamad Khalid Q. Dimaporo and Abdullah D. Dimaporo

AN ACT
DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF LANA DEL NORTE AS A TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT AREA, CREATING THE LANA DEL NORTE TOURISM
COUNCIL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as “An Act Declaring the Province of Lanao del Norte as a Tourism Development Area (TDA)”.

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable and equitable for local communities.

SECTION 3. *Scope and Coverage.* – The Tourism Development Area in the Province of Lanao del Norte includes, but not limited to, its municipalities endowed with natural beauty, small islands, waterfalls, springs, rivers, caves, beaches, sea and mountain resources, historical and natural landmarks, indigenous communities and other areas of interest to the tourism industry.

As such, it shall be accorded priority development by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the tourism industry.

SECTION 4. *Tourism Development Plan.* – The Tourism Development Plan of the Province of Lanao del Norte shall be incorporated in the DOT’s overall National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as the “National Tourism Act of 2009” and be jointly implemented with the local governments concerned and the Provincial Tourism Council of Lanao del Norte taking into consideration Republic Act No. 7586, otherwise known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992” and its implementing rules and regulations.

The DOT, in coordination with the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other concerned agencies of the Government, shall delineate well defined geographic areas within

the TDA and coordinate the integrated development of these areas for the optimum use of natural assets and attractions, as well as existing facilities.

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), in coordination with the DOT and the Provincial Tourism Council, shall set forth in place the necessary construction and/or improvement of roads and other infrastructure upon the promulgation of this Act and incorporate it in its infrastructure program.

SECTION 5. *Lanao del Norte Tourism Council.* - The Provincial Governor of Lanao del Norte shall create a Provincial Tourism Council which may be composed of government and private sector representatives. The Council shall have the following functions:

- a) Formulate programs and recommendations to develop local tourism facilities and attractions tapping local resources and funds;
- b) Assist in the regulation and supervision of tourism-oriented establishments thereby ensuring wholesome and clean tourism activities;
- c) Assist in monitoring the implementation of the Local Government Code on the matter of licensing of tourism establishments in the locality to ascertain safe and enjoyable stay of travelers;
- d) Strictly enforce sanitary standards in public restrooms frequented by public utility vehicles and tourist transport services, i.e. gasoline stations, restaurants along main highways and bus stops; and
- e) Any other duties in accordance with the Department of Interior and Local Government's (DILG) Guidelines.

SECTION 6. *Lanao del Norte Tourism Development Trust Fund.* There is hereby established a trust fund under this Act to be known as the Lanao del Norte Tourism Development Trust Fund for purposes of financing projects which shall enhance tourism in the Province of Lanao del Norte. The trust fund shall be administered by a trust fund administrator under the Provincial Tourism Office of Lanao del Norte. Income shall be derived from fees from visitors/tourists, other resources from the Province, proceeds from the registration and lease of multiple-use areas, including tourism concessions, fees, proceeds and contributions from industries and facilities directly benefiting the Province.

The Lanao del Norte Tourism Development Fund may be augmented by grants and donations, endowments from various sources, domestic or foreign entities and individuals, for purposes related to their functions. *Provided,* That disbursements therefrom shall be in accordance with existing accounting and auditing rules and regulations. *Provided, further,* That the funds shall not be used to cover personal services expenditures.

SECTION 7. *Appropriations.* - The Secretary of the DOT, Secretary of the DENR, and the Secretary of the DPWH shall include in their respective Department's programs the implementation of this Act and/or charged against the internally generated funds of the DOT.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* - Any provision of this Act or part hereof that may be declared unconstitutional shall not affect the effectivity of the other provisions.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act shall be deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,