

*Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City*



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2126

Introduced by HONORABLE LUCY TORRES-GOMEZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

One of the most disturbing issues plaguing the tourism industry is "Sustainability." This bill, to be known as the "Philippine Sustainable Tourism Act," is filed in response to the Filipino people's clamor for resolution and action, especially as regard to the issues of environmental degradation, public health and intractable tourism business growth in Boracay.

This bill calls for the assembly of a Philippine Sustainable Tourism Council, to be composed of relevant stakeholders, to: (1) Establish a unified definition of "Sustainable Tourism," (2) Establish goals to uphold and maintain "Sustainable Tourism," (3) Integrate all laws pertaining to the tourism industry in the various sectors that influence the sustainability of the industry. These sectors include, but are not limited to, the following: environmental stewardship, public health, infrastructure development, inclusive socio-economic growth, local government regulation and enforcement, and tourism development, (4) Create new regulations, that are presently non-existent, but are required to achieve our national "Sustainable Tourism" goals, (5) Institute a system for accountability of violations to systematically enforce these laws, and (6) Mainstream "Sustainable Tourism" laws and their enforcement at all levels, from national agencies to local governments.

We have come to a point where "Sustainable Tourism" is no longer a choice. In fact, it has to become the new norm. This Act should not be an augmentation to our traditional assumptions and conventional methods of operating the tourism industry. Instead, the Philippine Sustainable Tourism Act will offer a paradigm shift from our old ways of doing

business in the tourism industry. "Sustainable Tourism" concerns all Filipinos and all tourist destinations. Therefore, we must all band together to protect the industry that has helped lift our country's GDP growth. This largely implies taking care of the natural resources that are the very capital of this industry.

In light of the urgent nature of the issues we wish to address, the immediate approval of this bill is earnestly requested.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Torres Gomez', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the left.

LUCY TORRES GOMEZ
Representative
Fourth District, Leyte

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HOUSE BILL NO. 2126

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AN ACT INTEGRATING AND ESTABLISHING PERTINENT POLICIES AND REGULATIONS TO ENSURE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PHILIPPINE TOURISM INDUSTRY

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Philippine Sustainable Tourism Act.”

SEC. 2. *Creation of Philippine Sustainable Tourism Council.* – The responsibility of achieving and maintaining “Sustainable Tourism” shall be given to qualified representatives of all relevant stakeholders of the Tourism Industry. An assembly of such stakeholder representation shall be immediately convened and called the “Philippine Sustainable Tourism Council.” The Tourism Committee of the House of Representatives shall be the convener and administrator of this council.

Stakeholders for representation shall include, but shall not be limited to:

- (a) Tourism Committee- House of Representatives
- (b) Tourism Committee- Senate of the Philippines
- (c) Department of Tourism
- (d) Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- (e) Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority
- (f) Department of Public Works and Highways
- (g) Department of Health
- (h) Department of Trade and Industry
- (i) National Economic and Development Authority

- (j) Department of Interior and Local Government
- (k) Department of National Defense
- (l) Department of Finance
- (m) Department of Budget and Management
- (n) Local Government Units
- (o) National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
- (p) Climate Change Commission
- (q) Utilities Service Providers and Tourism Supply Chain Providers
- (r) Direct and Indirect Tourism Enterprises, including Small and Medium Operators
- (s) Tourism-related Non-Government Organizations
- (t) Tourism-related Civil Society Organizations
- (u) Local Communities of Tourism Development Areas

SEC. 3. Objectives. – The Philippine Sustainable Tourism Council shall be tasked to accomplish the following:

- (1) Establish a unified definition of “Sustainable Tourism,”
- (2) Establish goals to achieve and maintain “Sustainable Tourism,”
- (3) Integrate all existing laws pertaining to the Tourism Industry in various areas that influence the sustainability of the industry. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following: environmental stewardship, public health, infrastructure development, inclusive socio-economic growth, local government regulation and enforcement, and tourism development,
- (4) Create new and necessary policies and regulations to achieve our national “Sustainable Tourism” goals,
- (5) Institute a system for accountability of violations to systematically enforce this Act, and
- (6) Generate procedures for mainstreaming “Sustainable Tourism” laws and their enforcement at all levels, from national agencies to local governments.

SEC. 4. Philippine Sustainable Tourism Laws. – The Philippine Sustainable Tourism Council shall compose a set of Philippines Sustainable Tourism laws in accordance with the results of the council proceedings. These sections shall constitute the “Philippine Sustainable Tourism Act.”

SEC. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Philippine Sustainable Tourism Council shall promulgate not later than thirty (30) days upon the approval of the Philippine Sustainable Tourism Act, all the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SEC. 6. Separability Clause. – If any section or part of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, issuances or any part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication either in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. S. Mendoza", with a long horizontal line extending to the left.