

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1374



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Introduced by Rep. Christopher P. De Venecia

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#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

Tourism holds a significant impact on the Philippine economy. The sector has redounded countless business opportunities and greater contribution to our nation's GDP over the years, which, in turn, has generated substantial employment for the Filipinos.

The Philippine Statistics Authority reported that the tourism industry alone created around 100,000 jobs in 2017, or roughly 13 percent of overall employment across sectors the following year. The Department of Tourism (DOT) also reported a rise in international tourist arrivals in April 2019, hitting 662,987 tourists or 12.15 percent higher than the previous year. The contributions of tourism to the economy and the community are certainly not to be overlooked nor ignored.

As a driver of economic growth especially for the regions, tourism provides provinces and local governments with the unique opportunity to capitalize on their local and culture heritage as well as celebrate the wonders that their own town or city beholds.

As such, there is a need to strengthen tourism safeguards as mentioned in Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as the "Tourism Act of 2009," a law that was enacted to utilize tourism's potential "as an engine of socio-economic growth and cultural affirmation to generate investment, foreign exchange and employment and to continue to mold an enhanced sense of national pride for all Filipinos."

R.A. 9593 explicitly states that every province, city or municipality, in coordination with the DOT, shall have a permanent plantilla position for a tourism officer. However, most local government units are negligent or unable to comply since Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the "Local Government Code of 1991," contains no such provision.

The absence or lack of a dedicated tourism officer working round the clock to develop tourism products and programs for their jurisdiction holds a negative impact for both long-term planning and poverty alleviation strategies of the LGU – something that a well-crafted tourism development plan as mandated by R.A. 9593, will certainly address.

In light of these circumstances, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
REP. CHRISTOPHER DE VENECIA  
Fourth District, Pangasinan

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
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1374  
House Bill No. \_\_\_\_\_

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**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR MANDATORY APPOINTMENT OF TOURISM OFFICERS  
IN PROVINCES AND CITIES AND OPTIONAL APPOINTMENT IN MUNICIPALITIES,  
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN  
AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991 AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES**

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

**SECTION. 1. Declaration of Policy.** – The State shall provide for a local government position that will be responsible for and accountable to the development of the tourism industry whereby it is harnessed as an engine of sustainable socio-economic growth and cultural affirmation to generate investment and employment.

**SEC. 2.** Section 443(b) of Republic Act No. 7160 entitled “Officials of the Municipal Government” is hereby amended to read as follows:

(b) In addition thereto, the mayor may appoint a municipal administrator, a municipal legal officer, a municipal agriculturist, a municipal environment and natural resources officer, a municipal social welfare and development officer, a municipal architect, (and) a municipal information officer (.), **and a municipal tourism officer.**

**SEC. 3.** Section 454(a) of Republic Act No. 7160 entitled “City Officials in General” is hereby amended to read as follows:

(a) There shall be in each city a mayor, a vice-mayor, sangguniang panlungsod members, a secretary to the sangguniang panlungsod, a city treasurer, a city assessor, a city accountant, a city budget officer, a city planning and development coordinator, a city engineer, a city health officer, a city civil registrar, a city administrator, a city legal officer, a city veterinarian, a city social welfare and development officer, (and) a city general services officer(.), **and a city tourism officer.**

**SEC. 4.** Section 463(a) of Republic Act No. 7160 entitled "Officials of the Provincial Government" is hereby amended to read as follows:

- (a) There shall be in each province a governor, a vice-governor, members of the sangguniang panlalawigan, a secretary to the sangguniang panlalawigan, a provincial treasurer, a provincial assessor, a provincial accountant, a provincial engineer, a provincial budget officer, a provincial planning and development coordinator, a provincial legal officer, a provincial administrator, a provincial health officer, a provincial social welfare and development officer, a provincial general services officer, a provincial agriculturist, (and) a provincial veterinarian(.), **and a provincial tourism officer.**

**SEC. 5.** There shall be incorporated in Title V entitled "Appointed Local Officials Common to All Municipalities, Cities, and Provinces" of the said Code a new article to be known as Article XXI on the Tourism Officer to read as follows:

**"ARTICLE XXI  
The Tourism Officer**

**Section 490-A. *Qualifications, Powers, and Duties***

- (a) No person shall be appointed tourism officer unless he is a citizen of the Philippines, a resident of the local government unit concerned, of good moral character and irreproachable reputation, of known integrity and competence, has never been convicted of any election offense or of any crime punishable by more than six (6) months of imprisonment, or has no pending information for any offense, a holder of a college degree in tourism, business, economics, marketing, public administration or other related fields from a recognized college or university, and a first grade civil service eligible or its equivalent. He/she must have at least five (5) years of substantial work experience and involvement in the tourism industry either in the private sector or government.

Local Government Units with existing Tourism Officers prior to the implementation of this law will be given three (3) years to comply with the aforementioned requirements.

- (b) The tourism officer shall take charge of the office for tourism and shall practice the following:
- (1) Prepare, implement, coordinate, monitor and update local tourism development plans;
  - (2) Ensure the proper enforcement of tourism standards, laws, rules and regulations;
  - (3) Provide regular reports on status of tourism plans and programs, tourist arrivals, employment, occupancy rates, investment and tourist products, among others, to the local chief executive and to the Department of Tourism (DOT);

- (4) Coordinate with the DOT and its attached agencies, as well as corporations and private entities, in regard to the development and promotion of tourism in the locality; and
  - (5) Establish partnership with local agencies and private entities in promoting the tourism of their concerned cities and provinces nationwide and globally.
- (c) Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.”

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**SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

**SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, orders, and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

**SEC. 8. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,