

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3583**



Introduced by Representative GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

AN ACT
RECOGNIZING NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS IN THE PHILIPPINES
THEREBY CREATING A NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill aims to recognize, protect and promote the Philippine's most outstanding roads which possess one of six core intrinsic qualities – scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational, and archaeological – features which contribute to the character of the roadway and its communities. The National Scenic Byways designation aims to award routes that show the regional characteristics of the nation's culture, history and landscape.

National Scenic Byways represent the best of all scenic byways and provide visitors with a unique travel experience since they are considered tourist attractions in their own right. Under this measure, if a route is designated as such, it does not only gain an expected boost in tourism, but also become eligible for appropriations for improvements such as interpretive centers, view deck, and rest area. Moreover, local residents will be encouraged to work closely with the Government and civic organizations to preserve and promote the unique local beauty and distinctive character of their own community.

Recognition of scenic byways focuses not only on the promotion of roads, but also helps balance economic development and resource conservation in the localities. In the United States of America, a strong scenic byways program produced strong community support and even encouraged the citizens to develop a corridor management plan that describes in detail the preservation, marketing, and improvement strategies for the byway.

In view of the importance of this proposed measure, its expeditious approval is earnestly urged.


GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
2nd District, Pampanga

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "National Scenic Byways Program Act of 2013."

SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following words and phrases shall be construed to mean as follows:

- (a) Grants – a non-repayable, non-bearing assistance or aid, given either through money or in kind, to encourage development or growth in an area.
- (b) Byway – a minor or secondary road; a road other than the main road.
- (c) National Scenic Byway – a road that is recognized for its archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and/or scenic qualities.

SECTION 3. *Designation of Roads.* –

(1) In general. – The Secretary of Department of Tourism (DOT) shall carry out a national scenic byways program that recognizes roads having outstanding scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational qualities by designating the roads as "National Scenic Byways"

(2) Criteria. – The DOT Secretary shall designate roads to be recognized under the national scenic byways program in accordance with criteria developed by the department.

(3) **Nomination.** – To be considered for a designation, a road must be nominated by a national government agency, local government unit (LGU), or a civic organization situated in the locality of the road to be nominated.

(4) **Reciprocal notification.** – National Government Agencies, LGUs, and civic organizations shall notify each other regarding nominations made under this subsection for a roads that;

(a) Are within the jurisdictional boundary of the National Government agencies, LGUs, and civic organizations is responsible.

(b) Plan, design, and develop a National Government agency, LGU or civic organization scenic byway program.

SECTION 4. *Grants and Technical Assistance.* –

(1) **In general.** – The DOT Secretary shall make grants and provide technical assistance to National government agencies, LGUs, civic organizations to:

(a) Implement projects on highways designated as National Scenic Byways

(b) Plan, design, and develop a National Government agency, LGU or civic organization scenic byway program.

(2) **Priorities.** – In making grants, the DOT Secretary shall give priority to:

(a) Each eligible project that is associated with a highway that has been designated as a National Scenic Byway and that is consistent with the corridor management plan for the byway;

(b) each eligible project along a National Government agency, LGU or civic organization scenic byway that is consistent with the corridor management plan for the byway, or is intended to foster the development of such a plan, and is carried out to make the byway eligible for designation as a National Scenic Byway; and

(c) each eligible project that is associated with the development of a National Government agency, LGU or civic organization scenic byway program.

SECTION 5. *Establishment of Philippine's Byways Resource Center.* –

(1) **In general.** – The DOT Secretary shall allocate funds made available to carry out the establishment of the Philippine's Byways Resource Center (PBRC). The DOT shall oversee and manage the resources of the center.

(2) **Technical Support and Education.** –

(a) **Use of Funds.** – The Center shall use funds allocated to the Center under this section to continue to provide technical support and conduct educational activities for the national scenic byways program.

- (b) **Eligible Activities.** – Technical support and educational activities carried out under this sub-section shall provide local officials and organizations associated with National scenic Byways, with proactive, technical, and on-site customized assistance, including training, communication (including a public awareness series), publications, conferences, on-site meetings, and other assistance considered appropriate to develop and sustain such byways and roads.

SECTION 6. *Eligible Projects.* – The following are projects that are eligible for Government assistance under this section:

- (a) An activity related to the planning, design, or development of a National Government agency, LGU or civic organization scenic byway program.
- (b) Development and implementation of a corridor management plan to maintain the scenic, historical, recreational, cultural, natural, and archaeological characteristics of a byway corridor while providing for accommodation of increased tourism and development of related amenities.
- (c) Safety improvements to a National Government scenic byway, LGU scenic byway or National Scenic Byway, to the extent that the improvements are necessary to accommodate increased traffic and designation as a Government scenic byway, civic, organization scenic byway or National Scenic Byway.
- (d) Construction along a scenic byway of a facility for pedestrians and bicyclists, rest area, turnout, highway shoulder improvement, overlook, or interpretive facility.
- (e) An improvement to a scenic byway that will enhance access to an area for the purpose of recreation, including water-related recreation.
- (f) Protection of scenic, historical, recreational, cultural, natural, and archaeological resources in an area adjacent to a scenic byway.
- (g) Development and provision of tourist information to the public, including interpretive information about a scenic byway, and :
- (h) Development and implementation of a scenic byway marketing program.

SECTION 7. *Limitation of General.* – The DOT Secretary shall not make a grant under this section for any project that would not protect the scenic, historical, recreational, cultural, natural, and archaeological integrity of a highway and adjacent areas.

SECTION 8. *Savings Clause.* – The DOT Secretary shall not withhold any grant or impose any requirement on a national Government, LGU or civic organization as a condition of providing a grant technical assistance for any scenic byway unless the requirement is consistent with the authority provided in this Act.

SECTION 9. *Regulation.*- The DOT Secretary, in consultation with all concerned stakeholders shall issue the necessary rules and regulations of this Act within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 10. *Appropriation.* – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be provided out the savings from the appropriations of the DOT for the current year. Thereafter, the sum necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be. Appropriated in the annual appropriations of the DOT.

SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 12. *Effectively Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days upon its publication in at two (2) general news papers or general circulation.

Approved,