



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 215

Introduced by Hon. Roberto “Robbie” V. Puno

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has become a world-renowned, premier tourist destination. Through the combined efforts of the public and private sector, our tourism industry has surged in the recent years, contributing 12.2% of the country’s economy. The tourism direct gross value added (TDGVA) was the highest in 18 years and amounted to PhP 1.929 trillion in 2017, higher by 24.2% from the previous year’s PhP1.554 trillion.¹ Employment in tourism slightly grew and was estimated at 5.3 million, up from previous year’s 5.2 million. Meanwhile, the share of employment in tourism industries to total employment in the country was recorded at 13.1% percent in 2017.²

Despite its considerable growth, the Philippine tourism sector still has a wealth of untapped potential residing in the lesser-known tourist sites, particularly the hidden gem that is the Province of Rizal.

The Province of Rizal has the capacity to rival the top Philippine destinations as it boasts of awe-inspiring sights ranging from natural landscapes to historical and cultural attractions. Situated only a few hours away from Manila, the province is readily accessible to both foreign and local tourists.

In Antipolo City alone, we can find tourists attractions such as the Hinulugang Taktak Protected Landscape, a waterfall area recognized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources as a National Park and declared as a National

¹ C. Castaneda. (2018, June). Tourism contribution to GDP highest in 18 years. BWorldOnline. Retrieved from <https://www.bworldonline.com/tourism-contribution-to-gdp-highest-in-18-years/>

² id

Historical Shrine under Republic Act No. 6964. In the heart of the city can also be found the Antipolo Cathedral, the first dome-type church in the Philippines, which is also known as the National Shrine of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage.

Being a mountainous province, Rizal features many natural wonders, including the Daranak Falls, Palo Alto Falls, Kay Ibon Falls, Masungi Geo-Reserve, Cardona Rock Garden, Daraitan River, Sangab Cave, and Calinawan Cave. The province has become one of the favorite trekking sites of mountaineers as they are greeted not only by lush forests but also with splendid views of Laguna de Bay and magnificent waterfalls.

Named after our National Hero, the Province of Rizal is rich in history and culture. It is home to the Binangonan/Angono Petroglyphs — artworks believed to be the oldest in the Philippines. Dating to the third millennium B.C., they are a collection of 127 carvings of animals and human figures immortalized on the wall of a cave. The province's Pamintinan and Binacayan mountains have also been surrounded by folklore as they are said to have been separated by the mythical folk hero Bernardo Carpio through his brute force. Apart from its fabled past, Rizal likewise holds historical significance as its Pamintinan Cave, declared as a National Geological Monument, is where Andres Bonifacio and other katipuneros made their pilgrimage and covenant for freedom and has been. The province is also known for grottos, contemplation areas, and prayer gardens flocked by pilgrims and devotees especially during Lenten Season.

Other interesting tourist sites in Rizal are the Aviron Montalban Zoo, Pililia Wind Farm, various art galleries and museums, adventure parks, and agricultural farms.

This bill seeks to declare the Province of Rizal as a tourism development area in accordance with Republic Act No. 9593, also known as the Tourism Act of 2009. The said law promotes a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and equitable for local communities.

With this legislation, provision for the proper mechanisms and infrastructure for sustainable tourism development in the province will be established. Certain areas and sites identified as tourist destinations shall be promoted and developed, keeping in mind the preservation of the ecological balance and natural beauty of the

province. Rizal will progress to become a first-class tourism area that will drive and propel the economy not only of the province, but of the country as a whole.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



ROBERTO "ROBBIE" V. PUNO

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**AN ACT DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL A TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT AREA AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 SEC. 1. **Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as “Rizal Tourism
2 Development Act.”

3
4 SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy** –It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
5 promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible,
6 participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and equitable for local
7 communities. To this end, the State shall endeavor to provide the proper
8 mechanisms and infrastructure for sustainable tourism development. It shall promote
9 and develop certain areas and sites identified as tourist destinations or attractions or
10 having potential for tourism in order to drive and propel inclusive growth throughout
11 the country.

12
13 SEC. 3. **Province of Rizal as Tourism Development Area.** - The Province
14 of Rizal is hereby declared a tourism development area. As such, its development
15 shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Department of
16 Public Works and Highways (DPWH), subject to the rules and regulations governing
17 the development of tourism zones.

18
19 SEC. 4. **Tourism Development Plan.** - The DOT, in coordination with the
20 Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and other concerned
21 agencies of the government, shall prepare a tourism development plan for the
22 Province of Rizal, providing for the development, maintenance, improvement and

1 restoration of tourist sites, where appropriate, in conformity with set forth standards,
2 including the construction of hotels, resorts, restaurants, recreational facilities and
3 other appropriate facilities and infrastructure: Provided, that the said development
4 plan shall ensure the preservation of the ecological balance and natural beauty of the
5 area/s concerned. The DOT shall incorporate the tourism development plan to the
6 overall National Tourism Development Plan pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593,
7 otherwise known as "The Tourism Act of 2009".
8

9 The concerned local government unit, in coordination with DOT, TIEZA,
10 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and other concerned
11 agencies of the Government, shall delineate well defined geographic areas within
12 the tourism development area and coordinate the integrated development of these
13 areas for the optimum use of natural assets and attractions, and existing facilities.
14

15 The tourism development plan shall be jointly implemented by the local
16 government units concerned and the Provincial Tourism Council of Rizal.
17

18 The DPWH, in coordination with the DOT, shall implement the construction
19 of roads and other infrastructures necessary in the development of the Province of
20 Rizal upon the promulgation of this Act and incorporate the same in its infrastructure
21 program.
22

23 **SEC. 5. Rizal Tourism Council.** – (a) There is hereby organized the Rizal
24 Tourism Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, which shall be the primary
25 policy-making, planning and coordinating body in the development of tourism in the
26 Province of Rizal and administration of ecotourism sites therein. The Council shall
27 be composed of:
28

- 29 (1) The Provincial Governor of Rizal, as Chairperson;
30 (2) The mayors of all the municipalities and cities of Rizal, who shall elect
31 from among themselves the Council's Vice Chairperson;
32 (3) A member of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Rizal, duly designated by
33 such body; and
34 (4) Two (2) representatives from the private sector, nominated by the private
35 sector tourism industry organizations in Rizal and appointed by the Chairperson of
36 the Council, who shall serve for a period of two (2) years.
37

1 The Council may create such committees and provide for the functions and
2 the memberships thereof to assist it in the proper and effective performance of its
3 functions.

4
5 (b) In order to provide assistance and support to the Council in the
6 performance of its functions, the following shall serve as advisors:

- 7
8 (1) The Chief Operating Officer of the TIEZA;
9 (2) The Regional Director of the DOT for Region IVA;
10 (3) The Regional Director of the DENR for Region IVA;
11 (4) The Regional Director of the DPWH for Region IVA; and
12 (5) The Regional Director of the National Economic and Development
13 Authority (NEDA) for Region IVA.

14
15 The Council may call on other government agencies and offices to provide
16 advice and assistance on matters relating to the performance of its functions and the
17 development of tourism in Rizal.

18
19 (c) The Council shall ensure that constituencies, sectors and groups, whose
20 interests may be affected by the tourism development in Rizal, are given sufficient
21 opportunities to be heard. The Council shall pursue consultations with relevant
22 sectors and constituencies, conduct research, and engage the services and assistance
23 of experts and other resource persons, as may be needed in the performance of its
24 functions.

25
26 (d) The Provincial Government of Rizal shall provide a Secretariat for the
27 Council, including the necessary expenses for the performance of its official
28 functions and activities.

29
30 (e) The functions of the Council shall be harmonized with the functions and
31 responsibilities of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), the protected
32 area superintendents and the regional ecotourism committee to avoid any overlap or
33 conflict.

34
35 **SEC. 6. Rizal Tourism Development Fund** – There is hereby established a
36 trust fund under this Act to be known as the Rizal Tourism Development Trust Fund,
37 for purposes of financing projects which shall enhance tourism in the Province of
38 Rizal. The Trust Fund shall be administered by a Trust Fund Administrator under
39 the Provincial Tourism Office of the Province of Rizal. Funds shall be derived from

1 fees collected from visitors/tourists, other resources from the Province, proceeds
2 from the registration and lease of multiple-use areas, including tourism concessions,
3 fees, proceeds and contributions from industries and facilities directly benefiting the
4 Province.

5
6 The fund may be augmented by grants and donations, endowments from
7 various sources, domestic or foreign entities and individuals, for purposes related to
8 their functions. Provided, that disbursements therefrom shall be in accordance with
9 existing accounting and auditing rules and regulations. Provided, further, that the
10 fund shall not be used to cover personnel services expenditures.

11
12 **SEC. 7. Appropriations** - The Secretary of the DOT and the Secretary of
13 DPWH shall include in their respective Department's program the implementation
14 of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General
15 Appropriations Act and from internally generated funds of the DOT.

16
17 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations** - Within sixty (60) days from
18 the effectivity of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the local government units
19 of the Province of Rizal, shall likewise promulgate the necessary rules and
20 regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

21
22 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause** - If any provision or part of this Act is declared
23 invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected thereby
24 shall remain in full force and effect.

25
26 **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause** - All laws, presidential decrees, executive
27 orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof, which are
28 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act shall be deemed repealed or modified
29 accordingly.

30
31 **SEC. 11. Effectivity** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
32 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

33
34 Approved.