



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

Eighteenth Congress  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 4058**



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**Introduced by Representatives Ria Christina G. Fariñas  
and Rudys Caesar G. Fariñas I**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill seeks to declare September 20 of every year as Josefa Llanes-Escoda Day in the Province of Ilocos Norte.

Josefa Llanes-Escoda was the founder of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines in 1940. She was known as the Florence Nightingale of the Philippines, a leading advocate of women's rights and World War II heroine. As a prominent civic leader and social worker during her time, she empowered girls and women to contribute to nation-building.

Josefa Llanes-Escoda was born on September 20, 1898 in Dingras, Ilocos Norte to Mercedes Madamba and Gabriel Llanes. She graduated valedictorian from Dingras Elementary School and salutatorian from Laoag Provincial High School. In College, she obtained her teaching degree from the Philippine Normal School (now Philippine Normal University) in 1919 where she graduated with honors. She eventually earned her high school teacher's certificate from the University of the Philippines in 1922. She immediately dedicated her time and effort as a social worker in the Philippine Charter of the American Red Cross. This gave her the opportunity to obtain her master's degree in Sociology from the Columbia University through the generosity of Red Cross in granting her a scholarship.

Before World War II in 1939, she took a program in the United States wherein she underwent an intensified training in girl scouting sponsored by the Boy Scouts of the Philippines. Upon her arrival in the



Philippines in 1940, she started training young female teachers from both public and private educational institutions to be girl scout leaders and eventually organized girl scout troops, thus, leading to the birth of Commonwealth Act No. 542, entitled "An Act To Create A Corporation, To be Known as the Girl Scouts of the Philippines, and to Define its Powers and Purposes".

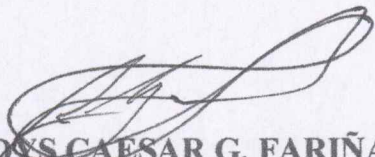
On May 26, 1940, President Manuel L. Quezon signed the charter of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines (Commonwealth Act No. 542), in recognition of its role in leadership training of girls and women. Escoda became the first National Executive of GSP. She served in this capacity until she was captured by the Japanese occupation army.

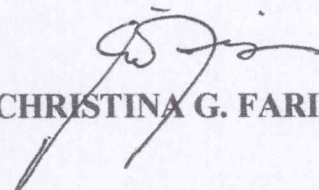
She was married to Antonio Escoda, a reporter from the Philippine Press Bureau, and they were blessed with two children, Maria Teresa and Antonio Jr.

During the Japanese occupation, she and her husband helped Filipino and American prisoners in several concentration camps. They sent medicines, clothing, messages and food to both Filipino war prisoners and American internees in concentration camps. In June 1944, Escoda's husband, Antonio was arrested and two months thereafter, on August 27, 1944, Escoda was arrested and imprisoned in Fort Santiago. Her husband was executed in 1944 and on January 6, 1945, Josefa Llanes-Escoda was also executed.

In the province of Ilocos Norte, a road was dedicated to her as the Doña Josefa Llanes-Escoda National Highway. Nationwide, her face can be seen smiling on the current 1000-peso bill as one of the martyrs during the Japanese occupation. Further, the Girl Scouts of the Philippines commemorates her achievements by organizing activities on September 20 of every year in her honor.

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

  
RUDOLPH CAESAR G. FARIÑAS I

  
MARIA CHRISTINA G. FARIÑAS



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1 **AN ACT**  
2 **DECLARING SEPTEMBER 20 OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL**  
3 **NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF ILOCOS**  
4 **NORTE TO BE KNOWN AS "JOSEFA LLANES-ESCODA DAY"**  
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6 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the*  
7 *Philippines in Congress assembled:*  
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9 **SECTION 1.** September 20 of every year is hereby declared to be a  
10 special non-working public holiday in the Province of Ilocos Norte to be  
11 known as "Josefa Llanes-Escoda day" in honor of Josefa Llanes-Escoda,  
12 Filipina World War II heroine, champion of women's rights and Girl  
13 Scouts of the Philippines founder.

14 **SEC. 2.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
15 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general  
16 circulation.

17 **Approved,**