

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

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6577



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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 the Sinking Bell Tower in the City of Laoag, Ilocos Norte, as a tourist destination.

In 1612, the Augustinians built the sinking bell tower in the City of Laoag, which makes it one of the legacies during the Spanish colonization. The bell acquired the *sinking* name from how it was built. The tower was believed to be built with bricks on a sandy foundation and because of this, the tower sinks gradually by one inch every year. Formerly, a man on a horse can pass through its gate effortlessly but nowadays, a man can barely stand erect through it. However, the local government unit no longer allows passing through the gate to preserve the tower.

The 45-meter bell tower is considered as the tallest historic building in Laoag City and the tallest bell tower in the Philippines. It has also earned its inclusion in the 'Earthquake Baroques' style of Architecture' from surviving numerous earthquakes.

The bell tower is fragile and requires funding for its continuous preservation. In view of the foregoing, the approval of this proposed measure is earnestly sought for.

  
RIA CHRISTINA G. FARIÑAS

  
RUDYS CAESAR G. FARIÑAS I

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**AN ACT  
DECLARING THE SINKING BELL TOWER IN THE CITY OF LAOAG, PROVINCE OF ILOCOS  
NORTE, AS A TOURIST DESTINATION, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT, AND  
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

**Section 1.** The Sinking Bell Tower in the City of Laoag, Province of Ilocos Norte is hereby declared a tourist destination. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourist destinations.

**Sec. 2.** Within one (1) year from the approval of this Act, the DOT shall, in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), and other concerned agencies of the government, prepare a tourism development plan involving the construction, installation, and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructures that enhance tourism in the area: *Provided, That the development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural beauty and resources of the area: Provided, further, That any activities and developments to be carried out in the area must conform with the concept of ecotourism as provided in the national ecotourism strategy*



jointly issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the DOT.

**Sec. 3.** The DOT and its attached agencies shall take immediate steps to implement the tourism development plan tailored to the needs of the Sinking Bell Tower in the City of Laoag and shall incorporate the same in its tourism program for the ensuing calendar year. It shall also include the Sinking Bell Tower in all its national, regional, and local promotion programs.

**Sec. 4.** The Secretary of Tourism shall include in the DOT's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and from internally generated funds of the DOT.

**Sec. 5.** Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Tourism shall, in consultation with the City of Laoag, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

**Sec. 6.** All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations, executive orders, or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby amended accordingly.

**Sec. 7.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*