



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1570

Introduced by Rep. Manuel "Way Kurat" E. Zamora

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Sabong or cockfighting has always been an integral part of our history, pre-dating even the arrival of our colonizers. This traditional form of entertainment survives to this very day, both as a recreation and a source of livelihood for many Pinoys, with widely accepted rules among bettors, gamecock breeders and cockpit operators.

This bill seeks to amend Presidential Decree No. 449, or the "Cockfighting Law of 1974," by strengthening the role of the Games and Amusements Board (GAB) in regulating the industry. It establishes, through the GAB, a uniform set of rules and regulations enforceable to all duly-licensed cockpits nationwide. It will also regulate online *sabong*-betting sites by insulating them from young people who are regular users of online platforms, and to protect tech-based business entities who are vulnerable to cyber-attacks.

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


MANUEL "WAY KURAT" E. ZAMORA

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12

13
14 **AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF**
15 **THE GAMES AND AMUSEMENT BOARD**
16 **IN THE OPERATION OF COCKFIGHTING IN THE PHILIPPINES,**
17 **AMENDING THE COCKFIGHTING LAW OF 1974**
18 **AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**
19

20 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines*
21 *in Congress assembled:*
22

23 Section 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Cockfighting Act".
24

25 Sec.2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is hereby declared a policy of the State to
26 ensure maximum development and promotion of wholesome recreation and
27 amusement to bring about the effective control and regulation of cockfighting
28 towards its establishment as a national recreation, relaxation and source of
29 entertainment; to provide additional revenue to fund government welfare
30 programs; and, to remove and prevent excessive and unreasonable business
31 operation and profit considerations in the management of cockpits, thereby preserving
32 Philippine customs and traditions and thereby enhance our national identity.
33

34 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* As used in this law, the following terms
35 shall be understood, applied and construed as follows:
36

- 37 a) *Bet Taker of Promoter* refers to a person who calls and takes care of
38 bets from owners of both gamecocks and those of other bettors before
39 he orders commencement of the cockfight and thereafter distributes won bets
40 to the winners after deducting a certain commission.
41

1 b) *Bettor* refers to a person who participates in cockfights and with the use of
2 money or other things of value, bets with other bettors or through the bet taker
3 or promoter and wins or loses his bet depending upon the result of the cockfight
4 as announced by the Referee or Sentenciador. He may be the owner of fighting
5 cock.
6

7 c) *Cockfighting* shall embrace and mean the commonly known game
8 or term "*cockfighting derby, pintakasi or tupada*", or its equivalent terms in
9 different Philippine localities.
10

11 d) *Gaffer (Taga Tari)* is a person knowledgeable in the art of arming fighting
12 cocks with gaff or gaffs on either or both legs.
13

14 e) *Referee (Sentenciador)* is a person who watches and oversees the proper
15 gaffing of fighting cocks, determines the physical condition of fighting cocks
16 while cockfighting is in progress, the injuries sustained by the cocks and their
17 capability to continue fighting and decides and make known his decision by work
18 or gestures and result of the cockfight by announcing the winner or declaring a
19 tie or no contest game.
20

21 f) *Zoning Law or Ordinance* refers to either both national or local, or city or
22 municipal legislation which logically arranges, prescribes, defines and
23 apportions a given political subdivision into specific land uses as present and
24 future projection of needs warrant.
25

26 Sec. 4. *Powers and Functions relative to Cockfighting.* Except as
27 otherwise devolved to the local governments pursuant to the Local
28 Government Code, the supervision, regulation, and control of all other aspects of
29 cockfighting shall be with the Games and Amusements Board. The Board shall have
30 the power:
31

32 a) To promulgate rules and regulations relative to the holding, methods,
33 procedures, operations and conduct of cockfighting in general as well as
34 accreditation of cockpit personnel and association of cockpit owners, operators and
35 lessees, to elevate the standard of cockfighting;
36

37 b) To establish uniform rules and regulations to govern actual cockfighting
38 enforceable in all cockpits in the Philippines and to provide sanctions for violations
39 thereof;
40

41 c) To promulgate rules and regulations for the registration and effective
42 identification of fighting cocks as well as the prevention of theft and fraudulent use
43 thereof;

- 1 d) To supervise and regulate the conduct of international derbies and to collect
2 fees therefor;
3
4 e) To regulate and supervise the live streaming or broadcasting of cockfights,
5 and any and all betting on cockfighting through off-cockpit betting stations (OCBS)
6 or through the telephone, internet and other electronic means such as short
7 messaging service (SMS), mobile and desktop applications and similar platforms,
8 and to collect fees amounting to three percent (3%) of the gross bets made through
9 OCB's and the aforementioned platforms to defray the expenses of the Board;
10
11 f) To prescribe policy guidelines for the issuance of permits by the Bureau of
12 Animal Industry for the importation or entry of gamecocks into the country for
13 breeding or competition purposes;
14
15 g) To promulgate its own rules and procedures relative to the conduct of its
16 own business;
17
18 h) To deputize any government office, entity, agency and public officer in the
19 implementation of all laws, decrees, letters of instructions, general orders pertinent
20 to cockfighting and rules and regulations issued by the Board;
21
22 i) To initiate, undertake, hear and decide any investigation for any violation of
23 this Decree, rules and regulations of the Board and in connection therewith, to issue
24 subpoena and subpoena duces tecum;
25
26 j) To establish regional offices in such number and location as it will allow it to
27 perform the duties stated herein; and
28
29 k) To perform such other functions as may be authorized by law.
30

31 **Sec. 5. Cockpits and Cockfighting.** In General:
32

- 33 a) *Ownership, Operation and Management of Cockpits.* Only Filipino citizens
34 not otherwise inhibited by existing laws shall be allowed to own, manage and
35 operate cockpits. Cooperative capitalization is encouraged.
36
37 b) *Establishment of Cockpits.* Only one (1) cockpit shall be allowed in each city
38 or municipality, except that in cities or municipalities with a population of over one
39 hundred thousand (100,000), two (2) cockpits may be established, maintained and
40 operated, which shall be licensed as such by the Local Government units in
41 accordance with the Local Government Code.
42

1 c) *Additional cockpits.* Upon study and recommendation by the Board, a third
2 and final cockpit may be licensed by the local government units that have a
3 population of more than three hundred thousand (300,000).
4

5 d) *Studio Cockpits.* Upon study and recommendation by the Board, the local
6 government units may authorize the establishment of one (1) studio cockpit, or one
7 that holds cockfights solely for live streaming or broadcasting and is not open to the
8 general public, per city or municipality. Said studio cockpit may hold cockfights
9 every day, provided that no cockfighting shall be held on December 30 (Rizal Day),
10 June 12 (Philippine Independence Day) November 30 (National Heroes Day), Holy
11 Thursday, Good Friday, Election or Referendum Day and during Registration Days
12 for such election or referendum.
13

14 e) The Board may authorize the establishment of OCBS anywhere in the
15 Philippines, subject to compliance with the terms and conditions set by the Board
16 including distance from other OCBS and from places of worship and educational
17 institutions.
18

19 f) No OCBS shall be established and operated, nor any betting through the
20 telephone, the internet and other electronic means such as short messaging service
21 (SMSL mobile and desktop applications and similar platforms be conducted,
22 without the appropriate permits issued by the Board.
23

24 g) *Cockpits Site and Construction.* Cockpits shall be constructed and operated
25 within the appropriate areas as prescribed in Zoning Law or Ordinance. In the
26 absence of such law or ordinance, the local executives shall see to it that no cockpits
27 are constructed within or near existing residential or commercial areas, hospitals,
28 school buildings, churches or other public buildings. Owners, lessees, or
29 operators of cockpits which are now in existence and do not conform to this
30 requirement are given three (3) years from the date of effectivity of this Act to
31 comply herewith. Approval or issuance of building permits for the construction of
32 cockpits shall be made by the city or provincial engineer in accordance with
33 their respective building codes, ordinances or engineering laws and practices.
34

35 h) *Holding of Cockfights.* Cockfighting shall be allowed only in licensed
36 cockpits during Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays and during local
37 fiestas for not more than three (3) days. It may also be held during provincial, city
38 or municipal, agricultural, commercial or industrial fair, carnival or exposition
39 for a similar period of three (3) days upon resolution of the province, city or
40 municipality where such fair, carnival or exposition is to be held; provided,
41 further, that no cockfighting shall be held on December 30 (Rizal Day), June
42 12 (Philippine Independence Day) November 30 (National Heroes Day), Holy
43 Thursday, Good Friday, Election/Referendum Day and during Registration Days

1 for such election or referendum.
2

3 i) *Other games during cockfights proscribed.* No gambling of any kind shall
4 be permitted on the premises of the cockpit or place of cockfighting during
5 cockfights. The owner, manager or lessee off such cockpit and the violators of this
6 injunction shall be criminally liable.
7

8 *Sec. 6. Cockfighting Officials.* Gaffers, referees or bet takers or promoters of
9 local cockfights shall not act as such in any cockfight herein authorized, without first
10 securing a license from the city or municipality where they reside. Gaffers, referees or
11 bet takers or promoters who shall engage in a cockfight held in a different municipality
12 or city and or in international derbies shall secure a license from the Board. In both
13 cases, the Board shall maintain a register of all such gaffers, referees or bet takers.
14

15 *Sec. 7. Government Share.* For each cockfighting event, whether local or
16 international, there shall be collected from the cockpit operator an amount equivalent
17 to three percent (3%) of all gate receipts collected at the entrance gate. The cockpit
18 operator shall also pay the equivalent of three percent (3%) of all center bets or
19 plazada it collects from every cockfight.
20

21 *Sec. 8. Separability Clause.* If any part or provision of this Act shall be held to
22 be unconstitutional, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby
23 shall continue to be in full force and effect.
24

25 *Sec. 9. Repealing Clause.* The provisions of Presidential Decree No. 449,
26 entitled "Cockfighting- Law of 1974", and all other- laws, presidential decrees,
27 executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of
28 this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.
29

30 *Sec. 10. Effectivity Clause.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
31 complete publication in the Official Gazette or in one (1) newspaper of general
32 circulation.
33

34
35 Adopted,