

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9759



Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

**"AN ACT
DECLARING ADDITIONAL CAVES AND CAVE SYSTEMS AS PART OF THE
LIBMANAN CAVES NATURAL PARK IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LIBMANAN,
PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR AN ECOTOURISM SITE AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"**

This measure proposes to declare additional caves to be part of the Libmanan Caves Natural Park in the Municipality of Libmanan in Camarines Sur as an Ecotourism Site.

All caves in Sigamot and the nearby barangays of Bical and Odoc are proposed to be included in a bigger Libmanan Caves National Park. It is centered on the massive 2,856-meter-long Colapnitan Cave, the tenth longest cave in the Philippines. The park itself covers a total area of 19.4 hectares across the hilly farmlands of Libmanan.

Ecotourism is about uniting conservation, communities, and sustainable travel. The declaration of the ecotourism site helps build environmental and cultural awareness and respect. It is aimed not only at conservation but also generating financial benefits for the local community.

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


LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as “Expanded Libmanan Caves Natural Park Ecotourism Act.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates that the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.

Accordingly, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote to promote an ecologically-sustainable and effective tourist industry that will enhance environmental preservation and support socio-economic development.

SECTION 3. *The Expanded Libmanan Caves Ecotourism Site.* At least fifteen more caves in addition to the Libmanan Caves Natural Park in the Municipality of Libmanan, Province of Camarines Sur is hereby declared as an ecotourism site. Its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism sites.

The DOT, in coordination with the concerned local government units as well as with the other concerned government agencies, shall prepare a tourism development plan for Expanded Libmanan Caves Natural Park which shall be incorporated in the overall National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP), pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as “The Tourism Act of 2009”, and which shall also include the construction and maintenance of infrastructure and facilities in the area; Provided, That the development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the scenery and resources of the area.

SECTION 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DOT, in consultation with the concerned local government units, the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and other agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 5. *Appropriations.* The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act and internally generated funds of the DOT.

SECTION 6. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations, executive orders or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,