

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1420



Introduced by **Pangasinan Fifth District Representative**
HON. RAMON N. GUICO JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution provides that:

“The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthy ecology in accord with rhythm and harmony of nature.”

Reality, however, demonstrates otherwise. Throughout the country, most evidently in urban areas, our people are choked by the seemingly incessant pollution. Heaps of garbage left to rot in the streets, including the stench of sewer water and excreta offend the senses. All this, contained in a depressing urban sprawl drains the lustre of life; the very balance and health of ecology that the State has promised to uphold.

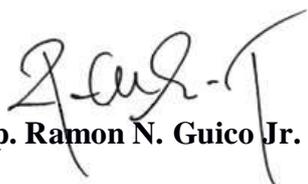
A happy, healthy, and content citizenry requires more than the satiety of their daily needs. They too, need to find the necessary reprieve from the pressures of a fast-paced lifestyle borne of modernity. Our people need to be able to reconnect and recollect themselves in the peace and serenity that, without comparison, nature can provide. Many areas in the country, however, do not afford this privilege to our people. The idea, therefore, is to bring the serenity of nature within reach to all through the development of public “green spaces.”

Presently, there are only 12,152.79 ha of green space or 21 percent of NCR providing breathing spaces for around 12.8 million people in the capital region and according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is expected to continually shrink, due to the onslaught of development and booming population growth. Even the famed “last lung” of Manila, the Arroceros Forest Park, was threatened with the proposed building of a gymnasium. This in turn, contributed to the country’s “mall culture,” seeing as the environment outside has become rather aesthetically displeasing.

The country’s development, so far, has lacked not only a healthful purpose, but an aesthetic one as well. Beautifying our surroundings is important not only because of its practical benefits to our overall well-being, but because it is a reflection of the values we uphold. Whether such values are drab and uninspiring, as we ought to witness now; or sublime and transformative as we all hope it would be, it would be best to make these changes now.

As such, under this Act the creation, development, and maintenance of public green spaces shall be a matter of national policy, provided for, at no cost to the people, by the State.

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



Rep. Ramon N. Guico Jr.

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1 AN ACT
2 PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF GREEN SPACES IN BARANGAYS,
3 MUNICIPALITIES, CITIES, AND PROVINCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES
4

5 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress*
6 *assembled,*
7

8 **SECTION 1. Short Title.**—This Act shall be known as the “**Public Green Spaces Act.**”

9 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.**—It is hereby declared the policy of the State to green spaces
10 in barangays, municipalities, cities, and provinces to promote balanced and healthful ecology as well
11 as to beautify and enhance the environment.

12 **SEC. 3. Scope.**—This Act shall cover all barangays, municipalities, cities, and provinces in
13 the country.

14 **SEC. 4. Definition of Terms.**—As used in this Act, the following definitions shall apply:

15 a. **Environment** refers to the surroundings; all the conditions, circumstances, and
16 influences surrounding and affecting the development of an organism or group of
17 organisms;

18 b. **Green Spaces** are open spaces for leisure, recreation, and promenade where soft
19 (i.e. plants and trees) and hard (i.e. pavement, benches) landscape may be found;

20 **SEC. 5. Objectives.**—Pursuant to the policy declared herein, it is the objective of this Act to:

21 a. Build, develop, and maintain green spaces in all barangays, municipalities, cities,
22 and provinces;

23 b. Provide a scenic environment in major areas of the country; and

24 c. Encourage the proliferation of green spaces in the country.

25 **SEC. 6. National Committee.**—A Green Space Development Committee is hereby created
26 with the Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) as Chairman and the
27 respective secretaries of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department

1 of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Education (DepEd), and the
2 Department of Tourism (DOT), through the Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA), as members. The
3 National Committee shall initiate, coordinate, and monitor all the activities of green space
4 development.

5 The National Committee shall tap any or all government agencies, corporations, and
6 instrumentalities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), peoples organizations (POs), the
7 Governor's League of the Philippines, Mayor's League of the Philippines, and the Barangay
8 Associations of the Philippines as local committees to provide resources and assistance in the
9 implementation of this Act.

10 The National Committee shall have the power to promulgate the pertinent rules and
11 regulations as may be necessary to fully implement the objectives and purposes of this Act within a
12 period not to exceed one hundred eighty (180) days from approval hereof.

13 **SEC. 7. Specific Functions of the Executive Departments.**—For the purpose of carrying out
14 effectively the provisions of this Act,

15 a. The DPWH shall:

16 1. Provide the necessary technical data with respect to the classification,
17 location, condition, and length of all existing vacant public lots in barangays,
18 municipalities, cities, and provinces.

19 2. Provide the necessary tools, equipment, and manpower to effect, the
20 development of green spaces.

21 b. The DILG shall:

22 1. Mobilize all local government units (LGUs) to ensure prompt and effective
23 implementation of this Act in every barangay, municipality, city, and province
24 in the country;

25 2. Effect the apprehension and prosecution of all persons violating the
26 provisions of this Act;

27 c. The DENR shall:

28 1. Determine the suitable species of trees and provide seeds or saplings to be
29 planted in the green spaces, suited to the kind, classification, and condition of
30 the area;

31 2. Provide for effective measures and ways for the optimum maintenance of
32 green spaces and the healthy growth of trees and plants in the same;

33 d. The DOT through the PTA shall:

1 1. Assist in the conceptualization, design, and site-evaluation of green spaces
2 in barangays, municipalities, cities, and provinces; and

3 2. Provide effective measures and ways for the optimum maintenance of green
4 spaces.

5 **SEC. 8. *Prohibited Acts.***—No cutting and destroying of trees and plants found in the green
6 spaces shall be permitted except when the cutting and destroying of the same is necessary for public
7 safety. Likewise, littering in and destroying of the structures in the green spaces are strictly prohibited.

8 **SEC. 9. *Persons Liable and Penalties.***—Any person who destroys, damages, or litters the
9 green spaces shall be punished with imprisonment of not less than six (6) months to not more than
10 one (1) year or a fine of not less than Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00), or with both such
11 imprisonment and fine, at the discretion of the court.

12 **SEC. 10. *Submission of Reports.***—The National Committee shall within ninety (90) days
13 after the approval of this Act and every one hundred eighty (180) days thereafter submit periodic
14 reports to both Houses of Congress of the Philippines for evaluation and consideration.

15 **SEC. 11. *Appropriations.***—The fund needed for the implementation of the green space
16 development in this Act shall be taken from any available appropriations in the General
17 Appropriations Act (GAA) for the year; *Provided* That, funds for this purpose shall also be included
18 in the GAA for the following year and every year thereafter; *Provided* finally, That there shall be
19 equitable and proportionate appropriations of funds annually for this purpose for all barangays,
20 municipalities, cities, and provinces. In addition, adequate portion of financial grants and
21 concessional loans extended to the Philippines by foreign governments and multilateral agencies shall
22 be allocated to augment the annual appropriations.

23 **SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.***—All laws, decrees, executive orders or parts thereof inconsistent
24 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

25 **SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.***—If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or
26 unconstitutional, the other parts not otherwise affected shall remain in full effect and force.

27 **SEC. 14. *Effectivity.***—This Act shall take effect immediately after its publication in the
28 Official Gazette or in at least two newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,