



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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2233

Introduced by HON. CHRISTOPHERSON “COCO” M. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Twin Islands of San Pedro and San Pablo are two of Southern Leyte’s premier island tourism destinations. Their crystal-clear waters, white pebble beach, and rich marine ecosystem is only thirty (30) minutes away from the mainland making them attractive to tourist who are in for some quick island get-away.

In the latest Census on Population and Housing by the Philippine Statistics Authority, the Municipality of Hinunangan has a population of twenty-nine thousand, one hundred forty-nine – with the Island of San Pablo having a population of 445 and the Island of San Pedro having 449.

With agriculture and fisheries as these people’s primary source of income, development of Hinunangan’s tourism industry provided a significant boost in the local economy.

The declaration of The Twin Island of San Pablo and San Pedro as eco-tourism zone would pave the way for its development into a premier community participatory and sustainable eco-tourism destination equipped with facilities and amenities that could

help them reach their full potential. More importantly, it would create more opportunities for local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises and jobs for the labor force.

* * *

Community participatory tourism programs with sustainability at its core spurred socio-economic development in the tourism industry. Much of the gains of the local tourism initiatives has been rolled back by the COVID-19 pandemic forcing tourism related businesses cut their workforce or, worse, halt business operation. With the easing of travel restrictions, the tourism sector is poised for a comeback.

In Southern Leyte, recovery of our tourism sector faced a major setback by the devastation brought by typhoon Odette which destroyed what little structure they had in place. Apart from that, it also caused lost wages and unemployment to those who relied on the tourism industry.

This bill, along with all the other bills of a similar subject, from this representation, seeks to help jumpstart economic recovery in the Second District of Southern Leyte by providing institutional support from the national government to its tourism industry.

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


CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP
Representative, Second District of Southern Leyte



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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2233

Introduced by HON. CHRISTOPHERSON “COCO” M. YAP

AN ACT
DECLARING THE TWIN ISLANDS OF SAN PEDRO AND SAN PABLO IN THE
MUNICIPALITY OF HINUNANGAN, PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN LEYTE AN
ECOTOURISM ZONE, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

- 1 **SECTION 1.** The Twin Islands of San Pedro and San Pablo in the Municipality
2 of Hinunangan Province of Southern Leyte is hereby declared an
3 ecotourism zone. As such, its development shall be prioritized by
4 the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and
5 regulations governing the development of ecotourism zones.
6
- 7 **SEC. 2.** Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT, in
8 coordination with the concerned local government units and
9 agencies of the government, shall prepare a joint tourism
10 development plan for both islands involving the construction,
11 installation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and
12 infrastructure as shall encourage tourism in the area: *Provided,*

13 That said development plan shall be environmentally sound,
14 community participatory, and ensure the preservation and
15 conservation of the natural beauty and resources of the area.

16
17 **SEC. 3.** The DOT shall take immediate steps to implement the development
18 plan that will suit the natural characteristics of the Twin Islands of
19 San Pedro and San Pablo, and shall incorporate the same in the
20 overall National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP), pursuant to
21 Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as “The Tourism Act of
22 2009.” It shall also include the Twin Islands of San Pedro and San
23 Pablo in all its national, regional, and local promotion programs.

24
25 **SEC. 4.** The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department’s
26 program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall
27 be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and from
28 internally generated funds of the DOT.

29
30 **SEC. 5.** Within sixty (60) days from effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of
31 the DOT shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulation for
32 the proper implementation of this Act.

33
34 **SEC. 6.** All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations, executive orders or
35 parts thereof inconsistent with this Act, are hereby amended
36 accordingly.

37
38 **SEC. 7.** This Act shall take effect 15 days after its publication in the Official
39 Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,