



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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3494



Introduced by Representative **GERALDINE B. ROMAN**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare Barangay Tala in the Municipality of Orani, Province of Bataan as eco-tourism zone. It was approved on third reading during the 18th Congress and was transmitted to the Senate.

It is the policy of the State to accord priority status to sustainable, vibrant and profitable tourism development as one of the engines of socio-economic growth and cultural affirmation to generate investment, foreign exchange and employment. Environmentally sound and community participatory tourism programs have spurred socio and economic development in the tourism industry. In today's growth trend, the problem of unemployment remains unresolved. Tourism-related sector is becoming an increasingly important source of economic prosperity by way of creating job opportunities. The total number of arrivals of tourists and sightseers to the Philippines has greatly contributed to the improved economy and to our country's status as a rising tourist destination.

Part of the Bataan National Park, one of the most sought-after tourist destinations in Bataan for its serene and natural beauty and unique terrain, is located in Barangay Tala. Barangay Tala is also famous because of the Sinagtala Farm Resort and Retreat Park. The declaration of Barangay Tala as local eco-tourism zone will definitely help enhance its continued tourism viability. Further, Barangay Tala could be easily developed into a first-class eco-tourism zone if it is equipped with amenities and facilities complementing its full potential as a tourism venue.

The lack of allied infrastructure and facilities such as hotels, lodges, camps, potable water supply and public transportation hinder the socio-economic and environmental development of the area. Developing this barangay into an eco-tourism zone will mold and enhance a sense of history and pride for all residents of Tala and neighboring communities, thereby promoting the Bataan National Park as a tourist destination. Further, it will provide employment opportunities to local residents and with the influx of tourists, the eco-tourism zone will be a significant source of business opportunities.

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


GERALDINE B. ROMAN



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AN ACT
DECLARING BARANGAY TALA IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ORANI, PROVINCE OF BATAAN AN ECOTOURISM ZONE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as “*Tala Ecotourism Zone Act.*”

SEC. 2. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally-sensitive, economically viable and equitably beneficial to local communities.

SEC. 3. Barangay Tala in the Municipality of Orani, Province of Bataan is hereby declared an ecotourism zone. 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 zones.

The DOT shall prepare the development plan for Barangay Tala and shall incorporate the same in the overall National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP), pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as “*The Tourism Act of 2009.*” The plan shall be implemented jointly with the Municipality of Orani, the local Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), the Bataan National Park (BNP) and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA).

The DOT, in coordination with the Municipality of Orani, PAMB, BNP, TIEZA and other concerned agencies of the government, shall identify well-defined geographic areas within Barangay Tala ecotourism zone, which shall include the Bataan National Park and existing infrastructure and facilities therein, and ensure the integrated development of these areas for the optimum utilization of natural assets and attractions, as well as the preservation of their historic significance.

SEC. 4. 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.

SEC. 5. Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DOT, in consultation with the Municipality of Orani, PAMB, BNP, TIEZA, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SECTION 6. All laws, orders, decrees, rules and regulations and other issuances, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,