

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4732



Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND “LRAY” F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.,
HON. MIGUEL LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE, HON. TSUYOSHI ANTHONY “HORI” G.
HORIBATA AND HON. NICOLAS “NICK” C. ENCISO VIII**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

"The fact that we live in a world that moves crisis by crisis does not make a growing interest in outdoor activities frivolous, or ample provision for them unworthy of the nation's concern. "

—John F. Kennedy

What makes a place livable? The world's best places are vibrant and offer the best quality of life for their residents. Livability is critical to the establishment of a sustainable community. A strong component of a livable place is tied to physical amenities like parks, green spaces, playgrounds, and other similar infrastructure. Access to these areas has been associated with better perceived general health, reduced stress levels, reduced depression, and more.

Recreational spaces contribute to environmental benefits. A network of parks and open spaces that include protected natural lands, ecological reserves, wetlands, and other green areas is critical to providing healthy habitats for humans, wildlife, and plants in these densely built places. Natural landscapes are vital to preserving regional ecosystems amid growing cities.

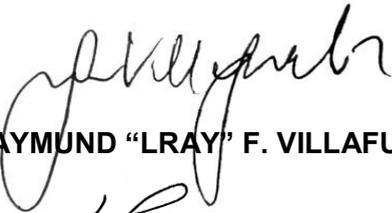
For a State that prioritizes the well-being of its people, it becomes imperative that it provides spaces that allow relaxation—spaces for social interactions and recreation. Recreational spaces such as parks fill the absence of green space and help improve air quality, especially for highly-urbanized cities, ultimately helping reduce carbon emission levels. They act as a buffer for noise pollution and improve climate and humidity levels while reducing the heat island effect or urban areas. It has also been said to improve the over-all health and well-being of people¹.

This bill proposes establishing and maintaining recreational spaces within cities and municipalities for public use. This includes preparing Comprehensive Land Use Plans and utilizing urban planning approaches that promote physical activity. We aim to produce recreational spaces that are not only attractive, but are accessible as well, especially for families and senior citizens. The plans should aim to enhance the over-all quality of life for the citizens of the city or municipality and not serve as mere value-adding property.

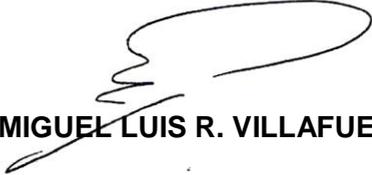
¹Sadeghian, M. & Vardanyan, Z (2013). The Benefits of Urban Parks, a Review of Urban Research. Journal of Novel Applied Sciences.

This bill also seeks to create an implementing body consisting of authorities tasked to oversee the development of recreational spaces and their corresponding comprehensive land use plans. Aside from aesthetics, this bill prioritizes function over the kinds of public parks, facilities, and open spaces to be developed. It examines the needs of the people it serves and what applies most to the demands of the city through consultations with the residents and relevant stakeholders.

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



LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.



MIGUEL LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE



TSUYOSHI ANTHONY "HORI" G. HORIBATA



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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING PUBLIC RECREATIONAL SPACES IN ALL
CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES IN THE COUNTRY AND ITS INTEGRATION IN
THEIR RESPECTIVE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLANS**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* — This act shall be known as the "*Recreation and Relaxation (R&R) Spaces Act*"

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is the declared policy of the government to set in motion State policies and mandates in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, namely:

- a. The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.
- b. 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, the State shall establish recreational spaces within cities and municipalities in order to provide a livable environment and a sustainable community for the Filipino people.

SECTION 4. *Definition of Terms.* — For purposes of this Act, the following definitions shall apply to the following terms:

- a. **Comprehensive Land Use** — a document designed to guide the future actions of a community. It presents a vision for the future, with long-range goals and objectives for all activities that affect the local government.

- b. Open Space — any open piece of land that is undeveloped and is accessible to the public. Open space may include green space.
- c. Recreational Space — is public land developed for the provision of recreational facilities and outdoor or open-air recreational areas principally used for passive and/or active recreation.
- d. Recreational Facilities — various types of facilities primarily for recreation and relaxation that have public access (See Section 5).
- e. Recreation and Relaxation (R&R) Development Council — refers to the committee tasked with the formulation of the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

SECTION 4. *Establishment of Recreational Spaces.* — Pursuant to the policy enunciated in Section 1 hereof, there is hereby established and maintained at least one (1) Recreational Space in every city and municipality in the country. Such Recreational Space shall be located in an Open Space as may be determined by the implementing agency in consultation with appropriate government agencies.

Such Recreational Space shall comprise of an area with Recreational Facilities as provided under Section 5 of this Act and as may be determined by the R&R Development Council hereafter designated in consultation with the appropriate government agencies.

In the event a city or municipality has an existing Recreational Space, the concerned local government unit (LGU) shall coordinate with the R&R Development Council within thirty (30) days upon approval of this Act, in order to ensure that such Recreational Space complies with the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 5. *Comprehensive Land Use Plan.* — All cities and municipalities shall prepare their respective comprehensive land use plans that shall be enacted through zoning ordinances. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan shall designate the general location and extent of the uses of land for the establishment of open spaces. Wherever possible, the land use element should consider utilizing urban planning approaches that promote physical activity. The plan must contain the following:

- a. A forecast of the future needs for recreational spaces and related facilities;

- b. An inventory of existing open spaces, public parks and other related facilities, showing the locations and capacities of the facilities;
- c. The proposed locations and capacities of expanded or new recreation spaces and open spaces;
- d. An allotment to maintain recreational spaces and facilities; and
- e. A provision that subjects comprehensive land use plans to a review every 5 years in order to include any update on urban planning and other related fields LGU urban planners and city or municipal engineers must consult with the R&R Development Council in developing their comprehensive land use plans. At least five (5) public hearings shall be conducted to determine the needs of the residents and stakeholders who will use and benefit from the Recreation Spaces.

In the event that a city or municipality has an existing Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the same shall be re-evaluated by the R&R Development Council.

SECTION 5. *Kinds of public parks, recreational facilities and open spaces.* —

Recreational Facilities refer to various types of facilities that have public access. These facilities are classified but not limited into the following:

- a. Green Space - land that is partly or completely covered with grass, trees, shrubs, or other vegetation;
- b. Educational space - an area or physical setting conducive to learning;
- c. Parks - areas of natural or semi-natural space set aside for recreation and/or the protection of wildlife or natural habitats;
- d. Garden - a semi-natural area planned and developed for the cultivation of plants, and enjoyment of humans;
- e. Allotments — sites used for horticulture, often comprising of numerous plots rented out to members of the community;
- f. Sport Facilities — i.e. basketball, volleyball and badminton courts, leisure centers, swimming pools and other similar facilities;
- g. Community Halls — locations or areas where members of the community tend to gather for social activities;
- h. Cultural Facilities — i.e. libraries, museum, tourist attractions, and other similar facilities; and
- i. Playing Field — sites that are large enough to accommodate outdoor sports.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Immediately after this Act takes effect, a committee tasked with the formulation of the implementing rules and regulations of this Act shall be created. The committee, hereby known as the "R&R Development Council", shall be composed of the following:

- a. The Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government, who shall also chair the committee;
- b. A representative from the Department of Public Works and Highways;
- c. A representative from the Department of Environment and National Resources;
- d. A professor from the University of the Philippines School of Urban and Regional Planning;
- e. A professor from the University of the Philippines College of Architecture;
- f. A representative from the Philippine Green Building Council;
- g. A representative from the National Parks Development Committee.

Within six (6) months after this Act takes effect the Committee shall submit the implementing rules and regulations.

SECTION 7. *Appropriation.* — The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* — If any portion or provision of this Act or the application thereof shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the validity of other parts or provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, executive issuances, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,