

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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5242



Introduced by Representative **DAVID “Jay-Jay” C. SUAREZ** and
ANNA MARIE VILLARAZA-SUAREZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 2, Chapter I of Republic Act 9593, also known as The Tourism Act of 2009, states: “The State declares Tourism as an indispensable element of the national economy and an industry of national interest and importance, which must be harnessed as an engine of socio-economic growth and cultural affirmation to generate investment, foreign exchange and employment, and to continue to mold an enhanced sense of national pride for all Filipinos.”

As a tourist destination, the province of Quezon is endowed with many natural wonders. One of the most visited places in our province is the municipality of Dolores, which was established in 1834. The name pertains to La Virgen Maria de los Dolores. Gobernador Heneral Gabriel de Torres issued a decree establishing the boundary of the new “*pueblo*” of Nuestra Senora de los Dolores, now popularly known as Dolores.

Dolores is about 98 kilometers south of Metro Manila, and is located at the foot of Mt. Banahaw, a protected landscape under Republic Act No. 9847, otherwise known as Mount Banahaw-San Cristobal Protected Landscape. The said Mt Banahaw is a very popular hiking and mountaineering site.

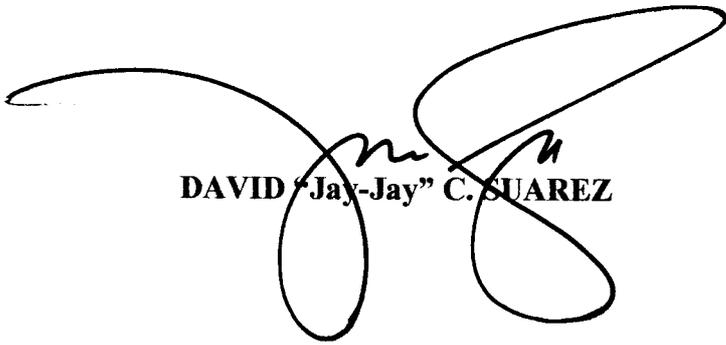
The town of Dolores is gifted by nature with streams, falls, rock formations, cave pits, gigantic trees, forests and a lot of attractions both for religious pilgrims and tourists. Kinabuhayan and Sta. Lucia, Kubli, Lumbo Springs, Bangkong-Kahoy Valley, Lukong Valley Farm, Bato Spring, Gunao Lake, Dels Garden and Resort, are among its hidden gems.

It is also a renowned pilgrimage destination especially during the Lenten Season: notably Our Lady of Sorrows Shrine and pilgrimage sites in Mt. Banahaw were visited by more or less 7,000 people in 2018.

Such endowments are an opportunity for the municipality's tourism industry. Dolores' development of its Agri-Eco-Tourism will benefit its constituents, especially the farmers of high value crops that are being patronized by tourists such as coconut, rambutan, citrus, lanzones and other tropical fruits. Other sectors will likewise benefit such as retail business of agricultural supply, meat and vegetable stalls, dry goods, drug stores, sari-sari stores, bakeries and eateries at the public market.

This measure was filed in the 18th Congress, and passed on third reading. If Dolores is declared as a must-see tourist destination, it will not only boost its tourism industry but also the economic and cultural development of the municipality, perhaps most importantly the preservation of its bio-diversity and ecology.

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



DAVID "Jay-Jay" C. SUAREZ



ANNA MARIE VILLARAZA-SUAREZ

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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5242

Introduced by Representative **DAVID “Jay-Jay” C. SUAREZ**

AN ACT
DECLARING THE MUNICIPALITY OF DOLORES, PROVINCE OF QUEZON,
A TOURIST DESTINATION, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. The Municipality of Dolores, Province of Quezon, is hereby declared a tourist destination. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourist destinations.

SEC. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and other concerned agencies of the government, shall prepare a tourism development plan including the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure that shall improve the overall feature of the area thereby ensuring the accessibility and security of tourists: *Provided*, That the development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the historic significance of the area.

SEC. 3. The DOT and its concerned attached agencies shall take immediate steps to implement the tourism development plan that will suit the needs of the Municipality of Dolores and shall incorporate the same in its tourism development program for the ensuing calendar year.

SEC. 4. The Secretaries of the DOT and DPWH shall include in their respective Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and shall augment such allocation with internally generated funds of the DOT.

SEC. 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DOT, in consultation with the municipal government of Dolores, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 6. All laws, rules, regulations, executive orders, presidential decrees and other issuances inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,