

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

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SENATE

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S. No. 722

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 16 of Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides: "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with rhythm and harmony of nature."

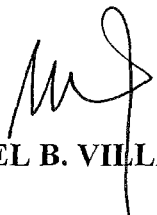
The development of parks and mini-parks in barangays, cities, municipalities and provinces complements the country's beautification and reforestration goals.

As pointed out by one journalist: "In every big city in the world, whether it be New York, San Francisco, Rome, London, Moscow, Canberra, etc., there is at least one big park in the middle of the city. Moscow has a small park every few blocks; every house is always within a short walking distance to a park. Aside from parks, China has a green belt surrounding every city. The streets and sidewalks are wide and shaded by trees so that even downtown areas have a park-like atmosphere. Even tiny Singapore, although short of land, has a park-like feel because every inch of available space on the sidewalks and backyards are planted to shady narra trees that came from, ironically, the Philippines."

But in Metro Manila, the only park of consequence for all the cities and towns comprising the megalopolis is in Rizal Park.

Quezon City, for all its huge sprawling area, has only the pocket-sized Quezon Memorial Park and the tiny Bernardo Park at EDSA as parks worth mentioning.

With the passage of this bill, it is hoped that more public parks can be created and enjoyed by the people.


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

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**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARKS AND MINI-PARKS IN
BARANGAYS, MUNICIPALITIES, CITIES AND PROVINCES, AND, FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Title. -- This Act shall be known and cited as the "Philippine Parks and Mini-Parks Development Act."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. -- It is hereby declared the national policy to build parks and mini-parks in barangays, municipalities, cities and provinces to promote balanced and healthful ecology as well as to beautify and enhance the environment.

SEC. 3. Scope. -- This Act shall cover all barangays, municipalities, cities and provinces in the country.

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

a. Environment - the surroundings; all the conditions, circumstances and influences surrounding and affecting the development of an organism or group of organisms;

b. Parks and mini-parks - an open space for leisure, recreation and promenade where soft (i.e. plants, trees) and hard (i.e. pavement, benches) landscape may be found;

SEC. 5. Objectives. -- Pursuant to the policy declared herein, it is the objective of this Act;

a. To build, develop and maintain parks and mini-parks in all barangays, municipalities, cities, and provinces; and

b. To provide a scenic environment in major areas of the country.

SEC. 6. National Committee. -- A National Parks and Mini-Parks Development Committee is hereby created with the Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) as Chairman and the respective secretaries of the Department of Local and Interior Government (DILG), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) and the Department of Tourism (DOT), through the Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA), as members.

The National Committee shall initiate, coordinate and monitor all the activities of parks and mini-parks development.

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

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

SEC. 7. Specific Functions of the Executive Departments. -- For the purpose of carrying out effectively the provisions of this Act, --

a) The DPWH shall:

1. Provide the necessary technical data with respect to the classification, location, condition, and length of all existing vacant public lots in barangays, municipalities, cities and provinces;
2. Provide the necessary tools, equipment, and manpower to effect, the development of parks and mini-parks;

b) The DILG shall:

1. Mobilize all local government units (LGUs) to ensure prompt and effective implementation of this Act in every barangay, municipality, city and province in the country;
2. Effect the apprehension and prosecution of all persons violating the provisions of this Act;

c) The DENR shall:

1. Determine the suitable species of trees and provide seeds or saplings to be planted in the parks and mini-parks, suited to the kind, classification, and condition of the area;
2. Provide for effective measures and ways for the optimum maintenance of parks and mini-parks and the healthy growth of trees and plants in the same;

d) The DOT through the PTA shall:

1. Assist in the conceptualization, design and site-evaluation of parks and mini-parks in barangays, municipalities, cities and provinces; and
2. Provide effective measures and ways for the optimum maintenance of parks and mini-parks.

SEC. 8. Prohibited Acts. -- No cutting and destroying of trees and plants found in the parks and mini-parks shall be permitted except when the cutting and destroying of the same is necessary for public safety. Likewise, littering in and destroying of the structures in the parks and mini-parks are strictly prohibited.

SEC. 9. Persons Liable and Penalties. -- Any person who destroys, damages or litters the parks and mini-parks shall be punished with imprisonment of not less than six months to not more than one year or a fine of not less than Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00) to not more than Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00), or with both such imprisonment and fine, at the discretion of the court.

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

SEC. 11. Funding. -- The fund needed for the implementation of the park and mini-parks development in this Act shall be taken from any available appropriations in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) for the year; Provided, that funds for this purpose shall also be included in the GAA for the following year and every year thereafter; Provided, finally, that there shall be equitable and proportionate appropriations of funds annually for this purpose for all barangays, municipalities, cities and provinces. In addition, adequate portion of financial grants and concessional loans extended to the Philippines by foreign governments and multilateral agencies shall be allocated to augment the annual appropriations.

SEC. 12. Separability Clause. -- If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional, such declaration of unconstitutionality shall not affect the other provisions of this Act.

SEC. 13. Amending and Repealing Clause. -- All laws, decrees, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 14. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect upon its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,