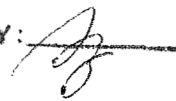


13th Congress of the Republic)
of the Philippines)
First Regular Session)

'04 JUN 30 P10:53

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

S. B. No. 1130

Introduced by Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Hajj is the pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, prescribed as a religious duty for Muslims. It is considered as one of the five pillars of Islam.

By virtue of the mandate of Executive Order 122-A, as amended by Executive Order 295, otherwise known as An Act Creating the Office of Muslim Affairs, the Bureau of Pilgrimage and Endowment of the OMA is primarily responsible for the administration of this annual pilgrimage. Unfortunately, there have been a number of complaints from the Muslims who were not able to successfully complete their hajj because of irregularities in the administration and supervision of the conduct of pilgrimage activities.

This bill seeks to introduce safeguards against such irregularities. Under this proposed legislation, the Bureau of Pilgrimage and Endowment shall formulate guidelines to ensure the timely processing of the pilgrims' travel documents, the collection of reasonable fees for the processing of passports, the establishment of a special trust fund for the collected fees, the establishment of regional and provincial hajj coordinating and monitoring units, among others.

The urgent passage of this bill is therefore requested.


AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL, JR.

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**AN ACT
AMENDING EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 122-A, AS AMENDED BY
EXECUTIVE ORDER 295 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ACT
CREATING THE OFFICE OF THE MUSLIM AFFAIRS**

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

SECTION 1. Section 4 of Executive Order No. 122-A as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

SECTION 16. Bureau of Pilgrimage and Endowment. The Bureau of Pilgrimage and Endowment shall be primarily responsible for the administration of the annual Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia; the formulation and implementation of programs, projects and activities for the efficiency and effective administration and supervision of the conduct of pilgrimage activities, *Awqaf* (endowment) properties and institutions; and the conduct of researches and studied for the establishment and hajj towns, Islamic centers and *Awqaf* projects.

THE BUREAU SHALL FORMULATE THE NECESSARY GUIDELINES TO ENSURE THE TIMELY PROCESSING OF THE PILGRIMS' TRAVEL DOCUMENTS; COLLECTION OF EQUITABLE AND REASONABLE FEES WHICH SHALL BE LIMITED TO MUTAWIFF AND PROCESSING OF PASSPORTS. FOR THIS PURPOSE, A SPECIAL TRUST FUND SHALL BE CREATED WHERE THE COLLECTED FEES SHALL BE DEPOSITED. ALL EXPENSES SHALL BE SUBJECT TO EXISTING GOVERNMENT AUDITING LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS.

THE BUREAU SHALL LIKEWISE GIVE THE PILGRIMS THE OPTION TO CHOOSE THE TRAVEL AGENCIES AND AIRLINES OR OTHER MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE SITE OF THE PILGRIMAGE; PROVIDED THAT PILGRIMS SHOULD COMPLY WITH THE PRESCRIBED ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE SCHEDULES FIXED BY THE MINISTRY OF HAJJ OF THE BUREAU SHALL UNDERTAKE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL HAJJ COORDINATING AND MONITORING UNITS; ACCREDITATION OF QUALIFIED AND DESERVING SHIEKS, AND AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE, STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH THE FORMULATED TIMETABLE OF HAJJ ACTIVITIES.

SECTION 2. Repealing Clause. All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 3. Effectivity. This Act shall effect upon its approval.

Approved,