

FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

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SENATE
S.B. No. 161

Introduced by Senator Ramon Bong Revilla, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The history of one's nation plays a central role in the formation and integration of norms, culture, behavior and the country's way of life. The sociological pattern of behavior in one's country is largely influenced by the practices and social patterns established by our ancestors. It is for this purpose that preserving the records of one's historical events and cultural circumstances is essential in the preservation of the rich culture of a nation.

At present, the National Historical Institute is the lead agency tasked to oversee the promotion and preservation of the Philippine historical heritage.

Furthermore, the National Historical Institute is effected with the responsibility to conduct research, including the widening of the local historical committee network. In addition, the NHI is tasked to manage and safeguard the improvement and restoration of national shrines, monuments, historical sites, buildings and landmarks.

To date, the NHI has been lacking in funds and clout to effectively pursue its duties in a more productive manner.


This proposed measure, therefore, aims to rectify the above-mentioned problems with the end in view of strengthening the powers of NHI and effectively perform their mandated responsibilities.

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


RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

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**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE IMPROVEMENT AND
STRENGTHENING OF THE NATIONAL HISTORICAL INSTITUTE,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. General Mandate. - The National Historical Institute (NHI) shall be responsible for the promotion and preservation of the Philippine cultural heritage by undertaking, among others, studies on Philippine history and Filipino heroes; encouraging historical educational activities, including the widening of local committee network; and managing and safeguarding the improvement sites, buildings and landmarks.

SEC. 2. Specific Functions. - The NHI shall assume jurisdiction over all matters relative to historical studies and popularization of Philippine history, including the survey and documentation, establishment, development and maintenance of historical sites and structures.

Specifically, its functions shall be as follows:

- a) To conduct and accelerate historical research programs, including the translation of Philippine written and oral history here and abroad; and to act as historical research resource center that will provide historical research services to the public by maintaining a historical data bank;
- b) To undertake the documentation, authentication and evaluation of works of various aspects of Philippine history, including the resolution of controversial and conflicting issues;
- c) To compile and acquire from various sources here and abroad data on historical personages and events including rare and contemporary Filipiniana materials, through purchase, donation, exchange, or through any other manner, of important historical documents, materials and objects;
- d) To promote the writing or publishing of works of national heroes and other illustrious Filipinos;
- e) For purposes stated in sub-paragraphs (c) and (d), to enter into negotiations or agreements subject to the approval of the Secretary of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) with institutions and individuals for purposes of securing original documents or copies, photostat and micro-films thereof, dealing with the Philippines;
- f) To gather and publish source books, reports, records and documents on historical preservation such as surveys and inventories, and other valuable information relating to historical places, markers, events and personage;

- g) To encourage research, writing, and publication on Philippine history, including textbooks, biographies of heroes, accounts of historical events, and translations of important scholarly works of Filipinos and foreigners, by providing appropriation as the Institute may deem necessary;
- h) To set a standard for declaring and classifying historical places, edifices, and landmarks in the country in consonance with the provisions of Presidential Decree No. 260, as amended by Presidential Decree No. 1505;
- i) To study important historical events; to recommend heroes who should be honored by way of proclamation and special public holidays in their honor; and to plan and arrange for the execution of fitting activities to commemorate the events and birth anniversaries or centennaries of Filipino heroes;
- j) To take charge of all historical activities or projects not otherwise undertaken by any entity or the government;
- k) To identify, designate, declare, classify, register and appropriately mark historic structures and places in the Philippines;
- l) To administer and appropriate with the approval of the Office of the President, funds donated to it by the public and the government, and proceeds from income in pursuance of its duties and functions;
- m) To work in coordination with the Institute of Philippine Languages for the translation of its work and materials into the National Language;
- n) To initiate with the assistance of the private sector, the restoration, preservation, construction, or reconstruction, operation, and maintenance of national shrines, monuments and landmarks that have been or may hereafter be declared, designated, and erected;
- o) To take charge of the acquisition, donation, exchange or by any other manner; and the preservation and restoration of historical objects, including relics and memorabilia of national heroes and illustrious Filipinos;
- p) To take charge of the preparation, evaluation, verification, and approval of heraldic designs in the country, including the blazoning of the national government and its instrumentalities, the celebration of the Annual Flag Day and the strict observance of the country's National Anthem and Flag Code;
- q) To coordinate and supervise the collection, identification, classification, reproduction, and release of archival materials and other historical papers in the possession of government agencies; and
- r) To work in collaboration with the Department of Tourism (DOT) towards the preservation, restoration, and/or reconstruction of historic sites, churches, structures, and places declared as national shrines, monuments and/or landmarks,

SEC. 3. Historic Building Survey and Documentation. - A Historic Building Survey and Documentation Center shall be established within the NHI with the existing Survey and Documentation Section as its nucleus, to undertake the survey, identification, documentation, classification, designation and declaration of historic structures and edifices such as national shrines, monuments, and landmarks and the maintenance of national registry of historic structures.

SEC. 4. Local Historic Committees Network - The existing Provincial Historical Section of the Institute shall constitute the Local Historical Committees Network that will monitor, coordinate and support various local historical bodies engaged in the collection, documentation, popularization and preservation of extant historical materials found in different parts of the Philippines; and the recording of the oral histories to towns, cities, provinces and regions.

SEC. 5. Materials Conservation Center. - The Materials Conservation Section of the National Historical Institute shall be renamed as the Materials Conservation Center. It shall:

- 1) Provide consultancy services to collectors of historical objects that are considered valuable components of Filipino heritage to insure that preservation and recreation techniques and procedures are in accordance with the accepted international standards set in protecting historical objects and materials;
- 2) Enrich and update knowledge on restoration and preservation techniques by conducting scientific research on these techniques to ensure the conservation of Filipino Cultural Heritage;
- 3) Establish linkages between the Philippines and various international bodies engaged in the scientific preservation of historical and cultural objects.

SEC. 6. Private Sector and Tax Incentives. - The participation and full support from private individuals and entities shall be solicited for the preservation and restoration of national shrines, monuments, landmarks, and other important historic edifices.

Any person, entity or corporate body undertaking the rehabilitation of historical buildings and structures classified, identified and listed in the National Registry of Historic Structures by the National Historical Institute shall be given tax incentives equivalent to fifty percent (50%) of the total amount spent for the year the rehabilitation, restoration or preservation works were completed.

SEC. 7. Other Tax Incentives. - Professional fees derived from the restoration, reconstruction and preservation of historic buildings protected by the Philippine Government and listed in the National Registry of Historic Structures shall not be included under its gross income and shall be exempt from taxation.

Historical buildings declared as national shrines, monuments, or landmarks which are listed in the National Registry of Historical Structures and have undergone restoration, preservation and reconstruction shall not be subject to any tax in case of sale, exchange, or any other disposition.

SEC. 8. Fund Raising Programs /Activities. - Souvenir and history museum shops shall be established by the National Historical Institute at various historical shrines and landmarks under its care in order to provide monetary support for the operation and administration of all historical shrines, monuments and landmarks throughout the country.

The NHI is hereby authorize to print, fabricate, reproduce and sell historical souvenirs and replicas of relics or publications and other items of popular interest Proceeds may be deposited in a special account with a government financial institution, and used in the publication, production and manufacture of suitable items needed in the shops and for the furtherance of the Institute's objective of bringing the history of the country closer to the community.

SEC. 9. Utilization of Savings. - The Director of the National Historical Institute is hereby authorized to use the agency's savings subject to the approval of the President under Section 40 of Presidential Decree No. 1177, as amended, for: a) the repair and improvement of various historic sites and structures identified and classified under Presidential Decree No. 260, as amended, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS); b) the payment of the services of contractual or temporary technical consultants in the specialized fields of conservation, restoration, preservation and heraldry, including translators, researchers and curators, who may be employed by the Institution from time to time.

SEC. 10. Coordination With Other Agencies. - The NHI, in coordination with the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), is hereby empowered to promulgate les and regulations for the implementation of the provisions of this Act. Such rules and

regulations shall be approved by the Secretary of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports. The NHI shall coordinate with the Department of Tourism (DOT) and other related agencies of government, for the purpose of implementing tourism projects and activities.

SEC. 11. Separability Clause. - If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other section or provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid.

SEC. 12. Repealing Clause. - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 13. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,