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OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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SENATE
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SENATE
S. No. 1665

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Small communities are vital components of the nation's economic, social, agricultural, historic, and cultural fabric. Our national character has been shaped by and is forever tied to the landscape of surrounding small communities. A growing number of small communities are facing significant challenges that place their long-term viability at risk, including economic hardship, declining population, eroding tax bases, and environmental pressures. Revitalizing and strengthening small communities begins by helping residents of those communities to articulate and formalize their vision for the future and to develop an action plan to achieve that vision, including in the areas of economic development, agriculture, tourism, transportation, land use, education, recreation, and culture, and by understanding the amenity characteristics of landscapes.

In many cases, a community's vision for the future is rooted in and inseparable from the landscape, including the natural and built environments. Landscape architects have the education, training, and skills, including in the areas of community involvement and public participation, land use planning, design, project visualization techniques, scenic resource assessment, mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), environmental analysis, and environmental psychology, that ideally qualify them to lead community visioning efforts.

Expanding national support for small community visioning is an investment in the future of small communities and will leverage additional public and private sector participation in such efforts. Successful community visioning efforts have yielded tangible results with regard to the enhancement of transportation corridors, economic development initiatives, land use policies,

conservation of natural and community resources, community master plans, and park and recreation plans.

This bill seeks to develop and facilitate innovative visions that help small communities address pressing local needs; facilitate coordination between small communities, land-grant and other universities, and design professionals; encourage public-private partnerships; and translate the small community's vision into images of design projects that integrate physical planning and design techniques, with sustainable community action, at the appropriate geographic scale.¹

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

¹ This bill was originally filed in the Fourteenth Congress, Second Regular Session

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S. No. **1665**

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1 AN ACT
2 IMPROVING THE CAPABILITY OF SMALL COMMUNITIES TO COORDINATE WITH
3 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS AND DESIGN PROFESSIONALS IN DEVELOPING A
4 VISION TO ADDRESS THEIR LOCAL NEEDS
5

6 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in*
7 *Congress assembled:*
8

9 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Small Community Visioning
10 Improvement Act."
11

12 SECTION 2. *Community Visioning Pilot Initiative.* - The Secretary of Tourism shall
13 make grants to eligible recipients for the purposes of carrying out small community visioning
14 processes. In order to be eligible for a grant under this section, the applicant must use a small
15 community visioning process that includes the following:

16 A. *Soliciting and Organizing Public Participation* - The broadest segment of the
17 public is invited to participate, and the process is structured to maximize
18 participation and maintain efficiency.

19 B. *Needs Determination* - The small community determines whether the
20 community requires assistance through this process with a broad-based needs
21 assessment or whether it has identified a specific need through a prior
22 community-based process that the community wants to address through the
23 small community visioning process. The community's needs may include the
24 areas of economic development, transportation, land use, agriculture, and the
25 natural, cultural, and aesthetic values of the community.

1 C. *Developing Design Options* - Members of the community engage in a series of
2 discussions to articulate their vision for addressing the identified need. The
3 design professionals facilitate the discussions, help members of the
4 community identify areas of consensus, and begin translating the vision into
5 images, including sketches, maps, digital images, computer simulations, and
6 design concepts. The vision and design options are refined in an ongoing
7 dialogue until community consensus is reached and physical designs for 1 or
8 more projects are finalized.

9 D. *Implementation Planning* - Design professionals, members of the public, and
10 others develop and finalize a plan that describes the specific steps the
11 community would take to achieve its vision. At a minimum, the plan should
12 identify the following:

- 13 1. projects relating to that vision, including projects the community
14 can undertake and complete with existing resources, personnel, and
15 funding, and projects which the community could undertake and
16 complete only with the infusion of additional resources, personnel,
17 and funding;
- 18 2. government agencies, nongovernmental entities, and other
19 potential partners that could participate in implementation; and
- 20 3. possible sources of public and private funding to achieve the
21 vision.

22
23 SECTION 3. *Application Process for Grant Eligibility.* - Not later than 60 days after the
24 Secretary issues final regulations, the Secretary shall solicit applications for grants from eligible
25 grant recipients. The application shall include the following:

- 26 A. A statement of the needs that the small community would address through the
27 small community visioning process, or a statement that the small community
28 requires assistance to identify such a need.

- 1 B. A brief description of process the small community used or will use to involve
2 a diverse cross-section of residents of the community in determining the need.
- 3 C. A description of how the applicant will use the services of design
4 professionals or university programs with demonstrated expertise in small
5 community visioning processes in providing assistance to the small
6 community.
- 7 D. A description of how the applicant will involve a diverse cross-section of
8 residents of the small community in the visioning process.
- 9 E. A description of the phases of the visioning process, the anticipated outcomes
10 of each phase, and of the visioning initiative as a whole.
- 11 F. A detailed budget for the visioning process, including the contribution to be
12 provided by the applicant pursuant to subsection (h) or a request for waiver of
13 such a contribution.
- 14 G. A description of the steps the applicant will take to do the following:
- 15 1. assess the effectiveness of the visioning process in addressing the
16 community's need; and
- 17 2. integrate the findings of the needs determination into ongoing
18 efforts to implement the vision developed pursuant to this section.
- 19

20 SECTION 4. *Grant Regulations.* - Within 180 days after the effectivity date of this Act
21 and after opportunity for public comment, the Secretary shall issue such regulations as the
22 Secretary deems appropriate to carry out this section.

23

24 SECTION 5. *Grant Amounts and Administrative Expenses.* - A grant under this section
25 shall not exceed one million pesos (P1,000,000.00) for each grantee.

- 26 A. *Administrative Expenses* - The Secretary may use not more than 20 percent of
27 the total amount appropriated under this section for each fiscal year to
28 administer this section.

1 B. *Limitation* - A grant under this section shall not be used to develop or produce
2 construction documents.

3
4 SECTION 6. *Report to Congress.* - Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment
5 of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees in the Senate and House
6 of Representatives a report that describes, at a minimum--

7 A. the most effective practices and procedures used to assist communities in the
8 small community visioning process;

9 B. examples of the public-private partnerships developed to identify and
10 implement community goals;

11 C. examples of the tangible, physical outcomes of small community visioning
12 processes funded under this section;

13 D. recommendations for improving, strengthening, and expanding the program
14 carried out under this section; and

15 E. a list of all grantees under this section, the province in which the grantees are
16 located, and grant amounts received by each grantee.

17
18 SECTION 7. *Appropriation.* -- The amount of twenty million pesos (P20,000,000.00) is
19 hereby authorized to be appropriated for the grants to implement the community visioning
20 processes. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the operation of the program shall be included in
21 the General Appropriations Act.

22
23 SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* -- If any provision or part thereof is held invalid or
24 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
25 valid and subsisting.

26
27 SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* -- All laws, presidential decree or issuance, executive
28 orders, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule and regulation contrary to, or inconsistent
29 with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

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2 SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following
3 its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

4 Approved,

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