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SENATE
S. No. 1805

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Executive Order No. 292, or the "Administrative Code of 1987," Title 13, Chapter 1, Section 1, provides:

The State shall promote, encourage and develop tourism as a major national activity in which private sector investment, effort and initiative are fostered and supported, and through which socio-economic development may be accelerated, foreign exchange earned, international visitors offered the opportunity to travel to the Philippines and appreciate its natural beauty, history and culture, and Filipinos themselves enabled to see more of their country and imbued with greater pride in and commitment to the nation.

The tourism industry contributes to the economic growth of our country by generating foreign exchange earnings, employment opportunities and international goodwill. It also promotes the rich and colorful socio-cultural life of the Filipino people.

In order to realize the full potential of tourism as an important economic tool necessary for national development, the government should adopt and implement an integrated approach to tourism development.

Hence, this bill seeks to establish an intergovernmental task force for international visitor assistance to make the Philippines a premier travel and tourism destination in the world.*

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Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

* This bill was originally filed during the Fourteenth Congress, First Regular Session.



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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE FOR
INTERNATIONAL VISITOR ASSISTANCE

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Visit Philippines Act."

2 SECTION 2. *International Visitor Assistance Task Force.* -

3 (A) ESTABLISHMENT - Not later than ninety (90) days after the enactment of this
4 Act, the Secretary of Tourism shall establish an Intergovernmental Task Force for International
5 Visitor Assistance (hereinafter referred to as the "Task Force").

6 (B) DUTIES - The Task Force shall examine -

7 (1) signage at facilities in the Philippines, including airports, seaports, land
8 border crossings, highways, and bus, train, and other public transit
9 stations, and shall identify existing inadequacies and suggest solutions for
10 such inadequacies, such as the adoption of uniform standards on signage
11 for use throughout the Philippines in order to facilitate international
12 visitor's travel in the Philippines;

13 (2) the availability of multilingual travel and tourism information and means
14 of disseminating, at no or minimal cost to the government, of such
15 information; and

16 (3) facilitating the establishment of a toll-free, private-sector operated,
17 telephone number, staffed by multilingual operators, to provide assistance
18 to international tourists coping with an emergency.

1 (C) MEMBERSHIP - The Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

2 (1) The Secretary of Tourism;

3 (2) The Secretary of Interior and Local Government;

4 (3) The Secretary of Transportation and Communications;

5 (4) Such other representatives of other government agencies and private-
6 sector entities as may be determined to be appropriate to the mission of the
7 Task Force by the Chair.

8 (D) CHAIR - The Secretary of Tourism shall be the Chair of the Task Force. The
9 Task Force shall meet at least twice each year. Each member of the Task Force shall furnish
10 necessary assistance to the Task Force.

11 (E) REPORT - Not later than eighteen (18) months after the date of the enactment of
12 this Act, the Chair of the Task Force shall submit to the President and to Congress a report on the
13 results of the review, including proposed amendments to existing laws or regulations as may be
14 appropriate to implement such recommendations.

15 SECTION 3. *Funding.* -

16 (A) AUTHORIZATION - Subject to subsection (B), there are authorized to be
17 appropriated such sums as may be necessary for the purpose of funding promotional activities by
18 the Department of Tourism to help brand, position, and promote the Philippines as a premier
19 travel and tourism destination in the world.

20 (B) RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF FUNDS - None of the funds appropriated under
21 subsection (A) may be used for purposes other than marketing, research, outreach, or any other
22 activity designed to promote the Philippines as the premier travel and tourism destination in the
23 world.

24 SECTION 4. *Report to Congress.* - The Secretary shall submit to the relevant
25 Committees of Congress an annual detailed report setting forth -

26 (A) the manner in which appropriated funds were expended;

1 (B) changes in the Philippine market share of international tourism in general and as
2 measured against specific countries and regions;

3 (C) an analysis of the impact of international tourism on the Philippine economy,
4 including, as specifically as practicable, an analysis of the impact of expenditures made pursuant
5 to this Act;

6 (D) an analysis of the impact of international tourism on the Philippine trade balance
7 and, as specifically as practicable, an analysis of the impact on the trade balance of expenditures
8 made pursuant to this Act; and

9 (E) an analysis of other relevant economic impacts as a result of expenditures made
10 pursuant to this Act.

11 SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
12 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
13 valid and subsisting.

14 SECTION 6. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
15 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent
16 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

17 SECTION 7. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
18 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,