

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC }
OF THE PHILIPPINES }
Second Regular Session }



Senate
Office of the Secretary

15 JUN -4 P6:33

SENATE

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 172

RECEIVED BY: 

Submitted jointly by the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Tourism; and Finance on JUN 04 2015.

Re : Senate Bill No. 525

Recommending its approval with amendments.

Sponsor : Senator Legarda.

MR. PRESIDENT:

The Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Tourism; and Finance to which was referred Senate Bill No. 525, introduced by Senator Legarda, entitled:

**"AN ACT
DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AS THE ECOLOGICAL TOURISM
CAPITAL OF THE PHILIPPINES AND OTHER PURPOSES"**

have considered the same and have the honor to report this bill back to the Senate with the recommendation that Senate Bill No. 525 be approved with the following amendments:

1. On page 1, on the title of the bill, delete the phrase "THE ECOLOGICAL TOURISM CAPITAL OF THE PHILIPPINES" and in lieu thereof, insert the phrase "AN ECOTOURISM ZONE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR";
2. On the same page, also on the title of the bill, between the conjunction "AND" and the word "OTHER", insert the preposition "FOR";
3. On the same page, line 5, after the word "industry", insert the phrase "WHILE ENSURING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION";
4. On the same page, line 6, delete the phrase "environmental protection and making the industry" and in lieu thereof, insert the phrase "ECOTOURISM AS";
5. On the same page, line 7, after the word "livelihood", delete the phrase "and an avenue for the generation of employment" and in lieu thereof, insert the phrase "WHILE GUARANTEEING THE RICHNESS OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES";
6. On the same page, line 8, delete the word "aggressive";

7. On the same page and line, delete the word "restore", and in lieu thereof, insert the word "IMPROVE";
8. On the same page, line 9, delete the phrase "Asian tourist" and in lieu thereof, insert the phrase "WORLD TOURISM";
9. On the same page, line 12, delete the subtitle "Ecological Tourism Capital of the Philippines" and in lieu thereof, insert the subtitle "THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AS AN ECOTOURISM ZONE";
10. On the same page, line 13, capitalized the letter "c" in the word "city";
11. On the same page, line 14, delete the punctuation mark hyphen "-" between the word "eco-tourism";
12. On the same page and line, delete the phrase "and shall be called the Eco-Tourism Capital of the Philippines";
13. On the same page, line 15, after the first sentence, insert the sentence "FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS ACT, ECOTOURISM SHALL REFER TO A FORM OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM WITHIN A NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE AREA WHERE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION, PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, CULTURE AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES, ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND ETHICS AS WELL AS ECONOMIC BENEFITS ARE FOSTERED AND PURSUED FOR THE ENRICHMENT OF HOST COMMUNITIES AND SATISFACTION OF VISITORS.";
14. Delete the entire provision of Section 4 found on page 1, line 17 up to page 2, line 2 and in lieu thereof, insert a new provision for Section 4 which shall read as follows:

"SEC. 4. IMPLEMENTING AGENCY. - WITHIN ONE HUNDRED TWENTY (120) DAYS FROM THE APPROVAL OF THIS ACT, THE PALAWAN COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (PCSD), IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM (DOT), SHALL PREPARE AND IMPLEMENT THE ECOTOURISM MASTER PLAN FOR THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN INCLUDING THE CITY OF PUERTO PRINCESA."
15. On page 2, line 4, delete the phrase "DENR and" and in lieu thereof, insert the phrase "IN COORDINATION WITH THE";
16. On the same page and line, between the acronym "DOT" and the word "shall", insert the phrase "AND AFTER PUBLIC CONSULTATION" and the punctuation mark comma ",";
17. On the same page, line 5, delete the phrase "prepare an eco-tourism master plan and";
18. On the same page, line 7, delete the word "the board" and in lieu thereof, insert the acronym "PCSD";

19. On the same page, line 18, between the words "laws" and "executive", insert the word "DECREES" and the punctuation mark comma ",";
20. On the same page, line 22, between the words "effect" and "after", insert the phrase "FIFTEEN (15) DAYS";
21. On the same page and line, between the word "publication" and preposition "in", insert the phrase "IN THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE OR";
22. Omnibus amendment to the abbreviation "Sec." found in the beginning of each section to be capitalized for proper format; and
23. Omnibus amendment to insert the punctuation mark hyphen (-) after the end of each sub-title for proper format.

Respectfully submitted:

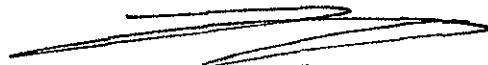
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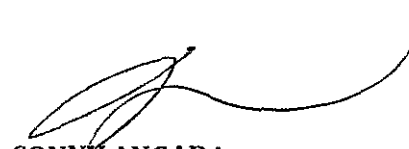
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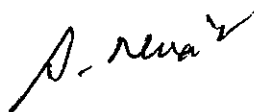
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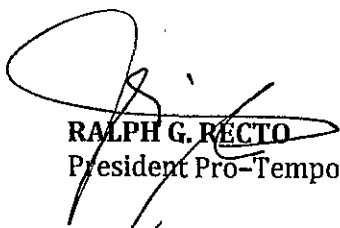
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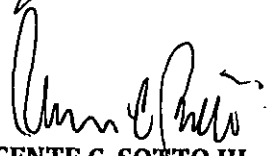
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SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



Senate
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE
S.B. No. 525

RECEIVED BY: *ju*

Introduced by Senator LOREN LEGARDA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill declares the province of Palawan as the ecological tourism capital of the Philippines with the corresponding government support and grant of autonomy.

The concept of ecological tourism is consistent with the State's policy on the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology.

Section 16, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution states that the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. In the 1993 landmark case of *Oposa vs. Factoran*, the Supreme Court ruled that the right to a balanced and healthful ecology carries with it the correlative duty to refrain from impairing the environment.

Ecotourism focuses on local culture, wilderness adventures, volunteering, personal growth, and learning new ways to live on the planet; typically involving travel to destinations where flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. Responsible ecotourism includes programs that minimize the negative aspects of conventional tourism on the environment, and enhance the cultural integrity of local people. Therefore, in addition to evaluating environmental and cultural factors, an integral part of ecotourism is in the promotion of recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation, and creation of economic opportunities for the local communities

Palawan is the biggest province in the Philippines and is composed of 1,768 islands and islets. The island-province first attracted foreign attention in the 1970's when it became a United Nations Vietnamese Refugee Center. Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park is Palawan's most popular attraction and covers 5,349 hectares of lush forest, dark mountains, caves and white beaches. The Park is inscribed in the prestigious list of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage.

Ecology awareness is at a high level throughout the province. Puerto Princesa prides itself as the cleanest city in the Philippines. To protect its mega-diversity, only eco-friendly programs are adhered to by tourist establishments. And there are strict ordinances against dynamite fishing, with only net and line fishing allowed. Palawan may have opened itself to tourism but it has also taken serious efforts to preserve this last frontier.

This proposed measure seeks to provide the necessary support to such efforts of the province of Palawan by declaring it the ecological tourism capital of the Philippines. By this, there shall be created an Ecological Tourism Office, whose governing board shall be co-chaired by Representatives of the legislative districts of the province and the Governor of Palawan. The membership of the board shall be composed of representatives from the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Tourism (DOT), the private sector, the non-governmental organization, and the local government units. This Office shall rationalize all efforts pertaining to environmental protection and making the tourism industry a major source of livelihood and an avenue for the generation of employment.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly requested.



LOREN LEGARDA
Senator