

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )**



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**SENATE**

**P. S. Res. No. 937**

RECEIVED BY: JOS

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**Introduced by SENATOR JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**

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**RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO  
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE LACK OF MEDICAL  
FACILITIES AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN PRIME TOURIST SPOTS IN THE  
COUNTRY, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF FORMULATING A LAW THAT WILL  
ENSURE EASY ACCESS TO ADEQUATE MEDICAL SERVICES IN ALL TOP  
TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES**

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines, with its breathtaking beaches, rich culture and unparalleled hospitality is one of the top tourist destinations in Asia, with Boracay, Palawan, and Siargao placing third, sixth, and tenth respectively in Conde Nast's 2023 ranking of top islands in the region;

**WHEREAS**, according to the Department of Tourism, the Philippines recorded 5,450,557 international arrivals from January 1 to December 31, 2023 surpassing its 4.8 million target by around 650,000, indicating the steady recovery of the Philippine tourism industry after the pandemic;

**WHEREAS**, despite the popularity of our tourist destinations and their undeniable contribution to the growth of our economy, most of these areas still lack the necessary medical facilities and personnel to ensure the health and safety not only of domestic and foreign tourists but also of its local inhabitants;

**WHEREAS**, back in 2015, the case of Miguel Gabriel Ruiz, a 25-year old Filipino tourist, who died in Palawan after stepping on what is believed to be a sea-urchin, drew attention to the lack of medical facilities and trained personnel in the province. His family and friends decried the absence of a well-equipped ambulance, and the failure to administer first aid to Ruiz;

**WHEREAS**, in 2018, the lack of medical facilities in tourist destinations was once again highlighted when broadcast journalist Karen Davila, in a Facebook post, shared her family's unfortunate experience in Siargao after her son suffered from surfing injuries but was unable to get appropriate first aid or timely medical attention. She denounced the lack of medical facilities available in the vicinity, with the nearest hospital being 45 minutes away;

**WHEREAS**, since these incidents, the government has taken several steps to ensure that healthcare services are easily accessible in more areas in the country, particularly in remote tourist destinations. The construction of Siargao Island Medical Center is already

well underway, having broken ground last year, after the law for its creation was passed in 2020. Congress has also recently passed the Regional Specialty Centers Act which strengthens Department of Health hospitals in every region through the establishment of specialty centers and the Doktor Para sa Bayan Act to help address the lack of medical professionals specially in the remote areas of the country;


**WHEREAS**, despite these efforts, access to adequate medical care and well-equipped hospitals in tourist destinations remains a problem, with health and safety still among the main concerns of tourists travelling to the Philippines;

**WHEREAS**, the lack of medical facilities and health professionals in the country's top tourist spots was emphasized in a recent gathering of foreign consular officers, as they consider this problem as a deterrent in attracting more tourists to the country;

**WHEREAS**, ensuring access to adequate health and medical services in tourist destinations should go hand-in-hand with our country's efforts to promote and develop our tourism industry. As such, it is important to study and identify the issues and address the gaps to come up with further solutions; *Now therefore, be it:*

**RESOLVED**, that the appropriate Senate Committee be directed to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on the lack of medical facilities and health professionals in prime tourist spots in the country, with the end in view of formulating a law that will ensure easy access to adequate medical services in all top tourist destinations in the Philippines.

***Adopted,***



**JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**