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Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

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**RESOLUTION**

**DECLARING OUR NATIONAL HERO, DR. JOSÉ PROTACIO MERCADO ALONZO Y REALONDA RIZAL, AS THE FATHER OF COOPERATIVISM IN THE PHILIPPINES.**

**WHEREAS**, 2012 is declared the International Year of Cooperatives by virtue of Resolution 64/136 by the United Nations General Assembly, where all member States are encouraged to promote and raise awareness of the crucial role cooperatives play to economic growth and progress;

**WHEREAS**, Cooperativism in the country emerged during the latter part of the Spanish colonial regime when revolutionary ilustrados schooled in Europe brought the idea of the cooperative movement in the country;

**WHEREAS**, it was when our National Hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, was exiled in Dapitan that he encouraged the citizens of the community to put up a school for the poor inspired by the principle of cooperativism, then a new idea to Filipinos;

**WHEREAS**, the national hero helped organized abaca farmers in Dapitan to establish a store named *La Sociedad de los Abacaleros* which operates under the principle of self-help with members sharing resources to pool capital and put up enterprises that may help advance their welfare;

**WHEREAS**, these initiatives of the national hero were the precursors to the emergence of the cooperative movement which has since gathered strength in the marginalized communities deprived of assistance and service from the central government established by colonizers of the country;

**WHEREAS**, the cooperative movement has been a force for freedom and national development helping our marginalized brothers be delivered from the chains of helplessness and prosper collectively, guided by the ideals and aspirations of the national hero in whose legacy, the country united towards ultimate liberty;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate to declare our National Hero, Dr. José Protacio Mercado Alonzo y Realonda Rizal, as the Father of Cooperatives.

**Adopted,**

  
**MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID**  
Senator