

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 7989

BY REPRESENTATIVE HOFER, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 591

**AN ACT
DECLARING THE UNDERGROUND TIPAN CAVE IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF
NAGA, PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY, AN ECOTOURISM SITE,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Underground Tipan Cave
2 Ecotourism Act."

3 Sec. 2. *Underground Tipan Cave Ecotourism Site.* - The Underground Tipan Cave
4 located in the Municipality of Naga in the Province of Zamboanga Sibugay, is hereby
5 declared an ecotourism site.

6 Sec. 3. *The Underground Tipan Cave Ecotourism Council.* There shall be created the
7 Underground Tipan Cave Ecotourism Council, hereinafter referred to as the "Council",
8 composed of the following:

- 9 (a) Mayor of the Municipality of Naga, as *ex-officio* Chairperson;
- 10 (b) Regional Director of the Department of Tourism (DOT), as Co-Chairperson;
- 11 (c) Representative from the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority
12 (TIEZA);
- 13 (d) Provincial Tourism Officer of the Province of Zamboanga Sibugay;

- 1 (e) Municipal Tourism Officer of the Municipality of Naga;
- 2 (f) One (1) representative from an accredited non-governmental organization whose
- 3 advocacy is environmental preservation;
- 4 (g) One (1) representative from a recognized indigenous people's organization; and
- 5 (h) Two (2) representatives from the private sector whose expertise is in the field of
- 6 tourism, as members.

7 The local legislative body of the Municipality of Naga shall appoint the members of

8 the Council mentioned in paragraphs (f), (g) and (h) for a term of five (5) years, which

9 appointment may be extended to a second term.

10 The municipal tourism office of Naga shall act as the Secretariat of the Council, and

11 shall provide the funding necessary to cover expenses to be incurred in the performance of its

12 official functions and activities.

13 *Sec. 4. Functions and Responsibilities of the Council.* - The Council shall exercise the

14 following functions:

- 15 (a) Study and determine the geographical limits of the site;
- 16 (b) Formulate the Underground Tipan Cave Development Plan, in consultation with
- 17 local residents, businesses, and other stakeholders;
- 18 (c) Assess and evaluate the potential impact of the development to the environmental
- 19 safety and well-being of the site, communities, and enterprises;
- 20 (d) Provide technical and financial assistance to communities within the site;
- 21 (e) Formulate rules and regulations in relation to the maintenance and security of the
- 22 ecotourism site;
- 23 (f) Perform other functions as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this
- 24 Act.

1 **Sec. 5. *Technical Assistance to the Council.*** - The DOT, TIEZA, Department of
2 Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Public Works and
3 Highways (DPWH) shall provide technical assistance to the Council in the performance of its
4 functions and responsibilities.

5 **Sec. 6 . *Implementing Agencies.*** - The DOT, in coordination with the TIEZA,
6 DENR, DPWH and other concerned agencies of government, shall be responsible for the
7 monitoring and implementation of the approved Underground Tipan Cave Development Plan.

8 **Sec. 7, *Implementing Rules and Regulations,*** - Within sixty (60) days from the
9 effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Tourism shall, in coordination with the Municipality
10 of Naga, TIEZA and other tourism stakeholders, promulgate the necessary rules and
11 regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

12 **Sec. 8. *Appropriations.*** - The Secretaries of the DOT, DENR and DPWH shall
13 include in their respective Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding
14 of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and shall augment such
15 allocation with internally generated funds of the DOT.

16 **Sec. 9. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations, executive
17 orders or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended or
18 repealed accordingly.

19 **Sec. 10. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
20 in the *Official Gazette* or in any newspaper of general circulation.

21 Approved,