

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 8849

BY REPRESENTATIVES CABOCHAN, ALVAREZ (F.) AND ABUEG-ZALDIVAR, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 785

AN ACT

DECLARING PAG-ASA ISLAND AND ITS ADJOINING ISLANDS OF PAROLA, KOTA AND PANATA LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KALAYAAN, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN, AS ECOTOURISM DESTINATIONS, TO BE COLLECTIVELY KNOWN AS THE PAG-ASA ISLAND ECOTOURISM CLUSTER, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **SECTION 1.** *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
2 promote a sustainable ecotourism industry to attract local and foreign tourists to secure the
3 country's share in the world tourism market and to make it an avenue for generation of employment
4 while ensuring environmental protection and preservation of the area.

5 As used in this Act, ecotourism shall refer to a form of sustainable tourism within a natural
6 and cultural heritage area where community participation, protection and management of natural
7 resources, culture and indigenous knowledge and practices, environmental education and ethics,
8 and economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the enrichment of host communities and
9 satisfaction of visitors.

1 **Sec. 2. *Pag-asa Island Ecotourism Cluster.*** - The Pag-asa Island and its adjoining islands
2 of Parola, Kota and Panata in the Municipality of Kalayaan, Province of Palawan, to be
3 collectively known as the Pag-asa Island Ecotourism Cluster, are hereby declared ecotourism
4 destinations.

5 **Sec. 3. *Pag-asa Island Ecotourism Cluster Development Plan.*** – Within ninety (90) days
6 after the approval of this Act, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)
7 shall make an inventory of the existing flora and fauna of the Pag-asa Island Ecotourism Cluster
8 that shall be considered in the preparation of a development plan for the purpose of this Act.

9 Within one hundred twenty (120) days from the approval of this Act, the Pag-asa Island
10 Ecotourism Cluster Governing Board, in coordination with the Tourism Infrastructure and
11 Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), shall prepare a development plan to be approved by the
12 President of the Republic of the Philippines.

13 **Sec. 4. *Pag-asa Island Ecotourism Cluster Governing Board.*** - The Pag-asa Island
14 Ecotourism Cluster Governing Board, hereinafter referred to as the Board, is hereby created. It
15 shall be composed of the following:

- 16 (a) Governor of the Province of Palawan, as Chairperson;
- 17 (b) Representative of the First District of Palawan, as Co-Chairperson;
- 18 (c) DENR Regional Director for Region IV-B, as Vice Chairperson;
- 19 (d) Department of Tourism (DOT) Regional Director for Region IV-B, as Co-Vice
20 Chairperson;
- 21 (e) Mayor of the Municipality of Kalayaan;
- 22 (f) Barangay Chairperson of Pag-asa Island;
- 23 (g) Armed Forces of the Philippines Western Command Commander;

1 (h) Representative from a non-government organization whose advocacy is environmental
2 preservation;

3 (i) Representative from the academe;

4 (j) Representative from the business sector; and

5 (k) Representative from the private sector.

6 The Board shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper
7 implementation of this Act by the concerned local government units, and shall, as the need arises,
8 amend, modify or revise such rules and regulations to meet the needs of changing times.

9 The provincial government of Palawan shall provide a Secretariat for the Board including
10 the funding necessary to cover the expenses for the performance of its official functions and
11 activities.

12 **Sec. 5. Appropriations.** – The Secretaries of the DOT and DENR shall include in their
13 respective Department’s program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be
14 included in the annual General Appropriations Act, and shall augment such allocation with
15 internally generated funds of the DOT.

16 **Sec. 6. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional
17 or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

18 **Sec. 7. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, rules, regulations, executive orders, presidential
19 decrees and other issuances inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed
20 repealed or amended accordingly.

21 **Sec. 8. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the
22 *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,