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SENATE
S. No. 1176

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by SENATOR FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

AN ACT
DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN LEYTE A TOURISM ZONE, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Province of Southern Leyte is home to beautiful tourist destinations, such as Taglinao Falls, Bird Sanctuary and Mangrove Site, Crater Lake, Fatima Hills, and Guinsaugon Lake. The historical Limasawa, where the first Christian Mass was held and is considered the birthplace of Christianity in the Philippines, is located in Southern Leyte.

Southern Leyte is famous for its world-class dive sites, caves, extreme adventure sites, waterfalls, safari, river trekking, crater lake trekking, fish feeding, and resort islands.¹

To further boost tourism in Southern Leyte, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has been upgrading the road networks leading to five tourism sites in Leyte which are targeted to be completed within the year.²

This measure proposes to establish the Province of Southern Leyte as a Tourism Zone and to prioritize further development of the province for tourism. This will increase the number of tourists visiting the province, provide livelihood to its inhabitants, and usher sustainable and responsible tourism in the region.


FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

¹ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1138699>

² *Ibid.*

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

1 **Section 1. *Southern Leyte Tourism Zone.*** – The Province of Southern Leyte
2 is hereby declared a tourism zone. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the
3 Department of Tourism and the Department of Public Works and Highways, subject
4 to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourism zones.

5 **Section 2. *Tourism Development Plan.*** – Within one (1) year after the
6 approval of this Act, the Department of Tourism, in coordination with the Tourism
7 Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority and other concerned agencies of the
8 government, shall prepare a tourism development plan providing for the development,
9 maintenance, improvement, and restoration of tourism sites, where appropriate, in
10 conformity with set standards, including the construction of hotels, resorts,
11 restaurants, recreational facilities, and other appropriate facilities and infrastructure:
12 *Provided,* That said development plan shall ensure the preservation of the ecological
13 balance and natural beauty of the area.

14 **Section 3. *Implementation of Tourism Development Plan.*** – The
15 Department of Tourism shall take immediate steps to implement the development plan
16 and incorporate the same in its tourism development program for the ensuing calendar
17 year.

1 **Section 4. *Improvement of Roads and Infrastructure.*** – Upon the
2 promulgation of this Act, the Department of Public Works and Highways, in
3 coordination with the Department of Tourism, shall implement the construction and
4 improvement of roads and other infrastructure necessary in the development of the
5 Province of Southern Leyte and incorporate the same in the Department's
6 infrastructure program.

7 **Section 5. *Appropriations.*** – The Secretaries of the Department of Tourism
8 and the Department of Public Works and Highways shall include in their respective
9 Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be
10 included in the annual General Appropriations Act, and shall augment such allocation
11 with internally generated funds of the Department of Tourism.

12 **Section 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days
13 from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Tourism shall promulgate the
14 necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

15 **Section 7. *Separability Clause.*** – If any portion or provision of this Act is
16 held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall
17 continue to be in full force and effect.

18 **Section 8. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, proclamations,
19 presidential decrees, rules and regulations, and other issuances inconsistent with any
20 of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

21 **Section 9. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
22 following its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general
23 circulation.

Approved,