

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**
First Regular Session



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22 OCT 12 A9:53

SENATE
S.B. No. 1377

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

**AN ACT
DECLARING THE ADJACENT ENVIRONS OF THE SAINT MATTHIAS PARISH
CHURCH, LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TUMAUNI, PROVINCE OF
ISABELA, A TOURISM DESTINATION, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Saint Matthias Parish Church, commonly known as the Tumauni Church, in Isabela, is a Roman Catholic Church famous for its Baroque-style architecture. It was once called as the "Jewel of the Valley" for its exquisite brick ornamentation. In fact, in the book entitled "Great Churches of the Philippines", it was described as "an ultra-Baroque church, it is unique for its extensive use of baked clay both for wall finishes and for ornamentation." Certainly, Tumauni Church is one of the most striking and interesting churches built during the Spanish period.

In 1989, the Tumauni Church was declared by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines as a National Historical Landmark. It was also recognized by the National Museum of the Philippines as a National Cultural Treasure.

Pilgrims, tourists and even natives flock the Church not only to celebrate the Holy Mass but also to experience its beauty and architectural brilliance. As a result, the people of Isabela benefit in the profits that tourism provides in the Municipality and its neighbouring towns.

This bill seeks to declare Saint Matthias Parish Church and its adjacent environs, a tourist destination. This will assist the Municipality in its needed appropriation and support not only to boost its local tourism but also to help the church return to its former glory.

In view of the foregoing, passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.
Senator 

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Office of the Secretary

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

1 **Section 1.** The adjacent environs of the Saint Matthias Parish Church located
2 in the Tumauni, Province of Isabela, is hereby declared a tourism destination. As
3 such, the development of the Church and its adjacent environs shall be prioritized by
4 the Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with the municipal government of
5 Tumauni and other concerned agencies, subject to the rules and regulations
6 governing the development of tourism destinations.

7
8 **Sec. 2.** Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT shall, in
9 coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the National
10 Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), the municipal government of
11 Tumauni and other concerned agencies of the government, prepare a tourism
12 development plan that shall include the construction, installation and maintenance of
13 such appropriate facilities and infrastructure to improve the overall features of the
14 Church and its adjacent environs, thereby ensuring its accessibility and the security of

1 tourists: *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and
2 conservation of the historical significance of the area.

3

4 **Sec. 3.** The DOT and its attached agencies shall take immediate steps to
5 implement the tourism development plan for the Church and its adjacent environs and
6 shall incorporate the same in tourism its development program for the calendar year
7 immediately succeeding the approval of this Act.

8

9 **Sec. 4.** The Secretaries of the DOT and the DPWH shall include in their
10 respective Departments' program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which
11 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and shall augment such
12 allocation with the internally generated funds of the DOT.

13

14 **Sec. 5.** Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT shall, in
15 consultation with the municipal government unit of Tumauni, Isabela promulgate the
16 necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

17

18 **Sec. 6.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the
19 Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.