

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 918

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Introduced by Rep. AURELIO "DONG" D. GONZALES, JR.

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

Situated in the heart of vast tracts of agricultural land, Mt. Arayat stands gallantly at 1,030 MASL. The mountain is bordering two municipalities: the southern half lies within the municipality of Arayat, Pampanga, while the north half lies within Magalang.

Considered as an inactive volcano, Mt. Arayat's crater has several peaks, thus suitable for mountain hiking and nature trekking. Mt. Arayat is now considered as one of the most popular hiking destinations in the country because of its dominating presence in Central Luzon, making the view from its peaks truly breathtaking.

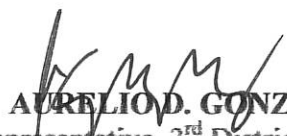
Aside from its natural magnificence, Mt. Arayat is also a cradle of the rich Kapampangan folklore. This mountain is revered by locals as sacred and mystical for it is the legendary home of Apu Sinukuan, the rival of Namalyari of Mt. Pinatubo.

Indeed, the delicate interplay with respect to the conservation of its natural resources, preservation of its cultural significance, and promotion of tourism and development calls for national attention. While tourism in the area is already being encouraged by the local government, it is undeniable that with the help from the national government, the tourism potential of the area will further be harnessed. This can be done without threatening the sanctity of the mountain's natural state and without disregarding the Kapampangan cultural beliefs and folklore.

This bill, therefore, aims to declare Mt. Arayat in the Municipalities of Arayat and Magalang, Pampanga, as a tourist destination, mandating the Department of Tourism, in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways, and in consultation with the

concerned local governments units, to come up with a comprehensive development plan for the improvement of Mt. Arayat, all areas attached to it, and all roads leading to and from it.

In view of the policy of the State to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and ethically and socially equitable for local communities, as declared in Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as "The Tourism Act of 2009", the approval of this bill is earnestly recommended.



**AURELIO D. GONZALES, JR.**  
Representative, 3<sup>rd</sup> District of Pampanga



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**AN ACT DECLARING MOUNT ARAYAT, BORDERING THE MUNICIPALITIES OF  
ARAYAT AND MAGALANG, PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA AS A TOURIST  
DESTINATION, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT AND APPROPRIATING  
FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

**SECTION 1.** Mount Arayat, situation along the borders of the Municipalities of Arayat and Magalang, Province of Pampanga is hereby declared a tourist destination. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourist destinations.

**SECTION 2.** Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways and the concerned local government units, shall prepare a tourism development plan involving the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure that shall promote the ecotourism in the area, and at the same time ensuring the accessibility and security of tourists; *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural beauty and resources of the area.

**SECTION 3.** The DOT and its concerned attached agencies shall take immediate steps to implement the tourism development plan that will cater to the natural characteristics of Mt. Arayat and shall incorporate the same in its overall development plans and programs for national implementation.

**SECTION 4.** The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and from internally generated funds of the DOT.

**SECTION 5.** Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act the TIEZA Board of Directors, the Provincial Governor of Pampanga and the Municipal Mayor of Arayat, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for the proper and effective enforcement, administration and implementation of this Act. For this purpose, they shall have the power and authority to create a Secretariat and Technical Working Group (TWG) to assist them in the drafting of the IRR.

**SECTION 6.** If for any reason, any section or provision of this Act is declared to be unconstitutional or invalid, other sections or provisions thereof which are not affected thereby, shall continue in full force and effect.

**SECTION 7.** All laws, decrees and order or part thereof inconsistent herewith, are deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 8.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of national circulation.

*Approved.*