

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
20TH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1402



Introduced by: **REP. JOEL R. CHUA**

Explanatory Note

This Bill seeks to declare the immediate environs of Quiapo Church, Plaza Miranda, San Sebastian Church, and Plaza del Carmen as a National Heritage Zone. During the 19th Congress, this Representation filed a similar Bill which was later consolidated to become House Bill No. 8664. The same was approved on third reading and was transmitted to the Senate for its consideration. Unfortunately, due to lack of material time, the Bill remained in the Senate Committee level.

This Bill is the same as what was approved by the 19th Congress. As such, this Representation reiterates my explanation stated in my original Bill:

At the heart of the City of Manila lies the vibrant area of Quiapo. For many reasons, Quiapo has become a household name, a landmark, and a symbol for many Filipinos. Within this area, two historical churches may be found: the Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene, popularly known as Quiapo Church, and the Minor Basilica of San Sebastian.

The Quiapo Church was founded at around 1578, and it serves as the home of the miraculous Black Nazarene Statue for whom thousands of devotees would gather every Friday, and on its feast day. The Minor Basilica of San Sebastian is just as significant, as the only all-steel church in the country making it an architectural marvel.

Ultimately, there is a need to declare the immediate environs of Quiapo Church, Plaza Miranda, San Sebastian Church, and Plaza del Carmen as a National Heritage Zone **for the restoration of their infrastructures, preservation of its culture, and the rehabilitation of the community as a whole.**

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


REP. JOEL R. CHUA

3rd District of Manila
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AN ACT

DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF QUIAPO CHURCH, PLAZA MIRANDA, SAN SEBASTIAN CHURCH, PLAZA DEL CARMEN, QUEZON BRIDGE, THE LIFE THEATRE OR OLD VILLONGCO BUILDING, AND OTHER BUILT HERITAGE WITH NOTABLE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AS NATIONAL HERITAGE ZONE, PROVIDING FOR THEIR RESTORATION, REHABILITATION, CONSERVATION, AND DEVELOPMENT, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Quiapo Heritage Zone Act”.

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect, preserve, and conserve the nation's cultural heritage, its properties and history, and the traditions of local communities.

To this end, the State shall endeavor to designate heritage zones to protect the historical and cultural integrity of a geographical area and deepen our sense of unity, belonging and national pride.

SEC. 3. Quiapo Heritage Zone. – As provided for in Article II, Section 3(q) and Article IV, Sections 12 and 13 of Republic Act (RA) No. 10066, otherwise known as the “National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009”, there is hereby established a heritage zone in the immediate environs of Quiapo Church, Plaza Miranda, San Sebastian Church, Plaza Del Carmen, Quezon Bridge, The Life Theatre or Old Villongco Building, and other built heritage with notable historical and cultural significance.

The Quiapo Heritage Zone shall be bounded on the west by Evangelista Street, wrapping around the properties surrounding Quiapo Church and Plaza Miranda; on the north by rear property lines of buildings facing Escaldo Street and F. R. Hidalgo Street, continuing northwest along the rear property lines of buildings facing San Sebastian Street and northeast along Recto Avenue; on the east bounded by the side property lines of the San Sebastian College complex and Plaza del Carmen; and on the south, following the south bank of the Estero de Quiapo and wrapping around the rear property lines of buildings facing Hidalgo Street and A. Bautista Street.

The Quiapo Heritage Zone shall also include the traditional route of the Feast of the Black Nazarene procession to sustain socio-cultural practice within the heritage zone. It shall have an established core and buffer zones.

The City Government of Manila shall, in coordination with the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), and other concerned stakeholders, conduct a public hearing to consult the owners of affected sites and structures, designated representatives of the community, cultural heritage organizations, religious organizations, and heritage preservation professionals, such as architects, historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, and sociologists, in order to determine and identify the specific sites and structures to be declared as part of the Quiapo Heritage Zone: Provided, That the owners of the sites and structures which shall be identified to become part of the Quiapo Heritage Zone during the public hearing shall be included in the formulation of the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

The Quiapo Heritage Zone shall be accorded priority development by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and other concerned national government agencies and local government units (LGUs) and shall be subject to existing laws and rules and regulations governing the development of national heritage zones.

SEC. 4. Development Plan of the Quiapo Heritage Zone. – Within the period of one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT shall, in partnership with the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, the City Government of Manila, NHCP, NCCA, and other concerned government agencies, prepare the development plan involving the restoration, rehabilitation, conservation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities: Provided, That said development shall ensure the preservation of the cultural heritage and the historical significance of the identified areas: Provided, further, That the NHCP and NCCA shall approve only those methods and materials that strictly adhere to the accepted international standards of conservation in undertaking conservation and restoration works, as provided for in Section 15 of RA

10066: Provided, finally, That the City Government of Manila shall pass a city ordinance to operationalize appropriately the management of the Quiapo Heritage Zone, including all the cultural properties designated as intrinsic thereto, in accordance with the development plan and in line with the objectives and provisions of RA 10066 and this Act.

A comprehensive Conservation Management Plan is likewise created, which shall be headed by a site manager, to be designated by the City Government of Manila and assisted by the NHCP, who shall commit and sustain this undertaking and shall serve as the guide for the conduct of a thorough cultural mapping and for the development of the site.

All plans for the development and conservation of the Quiapo Heritage Zone shall be based on consultations and coordination with the civil society – designated representatives of the communities to be affected by the plans, cultural heritage organizations, religious organizations, and heritage preservation professionals.

SEC. 5. Coordination with National Government Agencies and LGUs. – The DOT shall, together with the TIEZA and DPWH and in coordination with the NHCP, NCCA, and the City Government of Manila, set forth, incorporate in the infrastructure program, and implement the necessary construction and/or improvement of roads and other infrastructure upon the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 6. Exemption from Real Property Tax. – Private properties designated as Important Cultural Property or National Cultural Treasure as declared by the NHCP or the NCCA shall be exempt from the Real Property Tax: Provided, That the owners of these private properties shall be responsible in the restoration, rehabilitation, conservation, and maintenance of their respective properties: Provided, further, That in the event the owner inappropriately or unnecessarily introduces intervention, damage, and degradation so severe as to diminish or destroy the heritage significance, the owner shall be fined with the corresponding back taxes.

SEC. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The NHCP shall, in consultation with the NCCA, DOT, TIEZA, DPWH, City Government of Manila, and other official regulatory agencies and concerned stakeholders, promulgate the rules and regulations implementing the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. Appropriations. – The Secretaries of the DOT and the DPWH shall include in their programs the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. Separability Clause. – Should any portion or provision of this Act be declared unconstitutional or invalid by a competent court, the other portions or provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, letters of implementation, rules and regulations or part or parts thereof inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 11. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,