

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4801



Introduced by Rep. Sonny L. Lagon, *Party List*, AKO BISAYA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare the month of January every month as Visayan Heritage Month to promote the unique historical and cultural heritage of the Visayan people.

The Constitution mandates for the State to conserve, promote and popularize the nation's historical cultural heritage. Pursuant thereto Proclamation No. 439 was issued in recognition of the need to create in the people a consciousness, respect and love for the legacies of Filipino cultural history and to raise material support for the protection of tangible and intangible heritage.

Among the nation's largest ethnic groups, the Visayan people is also diverse in itself with characteristics that are unique among Cebuanos, Boholanos, Ilonggos, Siquijodnons, Hiligaynons and the other Visayan ethnic groups. Hence, there is a need to highlight the unique characteristics of the ethnic groups by highlighting the most significant festivals in the Visayas region.

In view of the above, the month of January is hereby declared as the Visayan Heritage Month to highlight the major festivals of the different provinces in the Visayas such as the Sinulog of Cebu, Dinagyang of Iloilo and the Ati-atihan of Aklan and other festivals to foster understanding and appreciation of the native culture and heritage of the various Visayan ethnic peoples.

In view hereof, the prompt approval of this measure is earnestly sought and recommended.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "S. Lagon".

SONNY L. LAGON
Party List, AKO BISAYA

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AN ACT
DECLARING THE MONTH OF JANUARY EVERY YEAR AS VISAYAN HERITAGE MONTH

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

SECTION 1. The month of January every year is hereby declared as Visayan Heritage Month to promote the preservation of the cultural and historical heritage of the Visayan peoples.

SECTION 2. All agencies of the national government and the local government units in Regions 6, 7 and 8 are hereby enjoined to undertake appropriate activities celebrating the unique cultural and historical heritage of the Visayan peoples. The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) is hereby tasked to lead and coordinate such activities in support of the major festivals in the Visayas such as the Sinulog of Cebu, Dinagyang of Iloilo, Ati-Atihan of Aklan and other festivals in any parts of the Visayas celebrated every January.

SECTION 3. The National Commission for Culture and the Arts, in coordination with the Department of Education and the Department of the Interior and Local Government shall issue such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect immediately.

Approved,