

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2474



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**Introduced by Honorable Deogracias Victor "DV" B. Savellano**

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#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

About 30 years after Christopher Columbus had arrived in the Americas in 1492, a Portuguese explorer by the name of Ferdinand Magellan led a fleet of five ships out of Seville, Spain in 1519 in an attempt to find a western sea route to the so called Spice Islands. He discovered the Strait of Magellan and became the first European to cross the Pacific Ocean. Magellan landed on March 16, 1521 on the island of Homonhon, part of an archipelago, to be christened later as the Philippine Islands in honor of King Philip II of Spain.

In an attempt to subdue Datu Lapu-Lapu on the island of Mactan, Magellan was killed in battle by the natives. Although Magellan wasn't able to return home, his few remaining men completed the expedition by returning to Spain via the Indian and Atlantic Ocean marking it as the first recorded circumnavigation of the globe.

Magellan's landing in the Philippines signified the onset of a new era wherein other Europeans would follow Magellan's route, coming to the Far East via the Pacific Ocean. It was to commence a modern age, about almost at the same time of the Renaissance which was emerging when trade, exchanges of culture and colonization from distant nations prospered.

It was a time of cultural confrontation and assimilation; conquest and colonization; subjugation and resistance — when much of the future political, social and cultural landscape of the Far East was just being formed. Magellan's voyage was part of the prototypical and massive foray by a European power into overseas imperialism.

The Spanish landing also introduced Christianity that would greatly influence the culture of the people, making it their premier faith to become the only Christian dominated nation in the whole of Asia. In fact, the International Eucharistic Congress is already planning to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Catholicism in the Philippines in 2021.

For the native islanders or Indios, later on termed Filipinos, the Spanish onslaught was an unmitigated disaster, exacerbated by the brutal mistreatment they suffered at the hands of the conquistadors if not the friars. These Castellians like the ancient Romans before them were solely interested in immediate profit and willing to carry out any requisite social and economic dislocation in the attainment of this goal.

Using the cross and the sword alternately to subdue the Indios, dominion over the archipelago lasted for more than 300 years until the once scattered but resilient local tribes finally

found a singular identity that would unite them towards revolution and independence from Spain in 1898.

As we pay homage to the Quincentennial commemoration of the first recorded circumnavigation of the earth and Magellan's landing in the Philippines, let us also reflect on the impact of Magellan's landing at Homonhon and how it had accelerated the interaction among the countries. Magellan's voyage had not only laid down the probable destiny of our people in the centuries that followed after 1521 but also as to the rest of Asia and even Australia.

Research and preparation for the Quincentennial should not be limited to the events after 1521 but also to the period prior to the said date. Only a complete reflection on our history can guide us towards a more analytical resolution *vis-a-vis* the factual episodes and its profound consequences that has brought us to where we are as a people today and our affiliation with the world community of nations.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill appropriating Two Hundred Fifty Million ( 250,000,000.00) Pesos for preparations for the Quincentennial celebration of the First Circumnavigation of the Globe, the Introduction of Christianity in the Philippine Island and Magellan's Landing at Homonhon on March 19, 1521 is thereby sought.



DEOGRACIAS VICTOR "DV" B. SAVELLANO

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**AN ACT**

**APPROPRIATING TWO HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION (250,000,000.00) PESOS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, NATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE PHILIPPINES, NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS, NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF THE PHILIPPINES, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PHILIPPINES, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF THE PHILIPPINES AND OTHER SUCH RELATED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES FOR A QUINCENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION OF THE FIRST CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF THE GLOBE, THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY AS A RELIGION IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS AND MAGELLAN'S LANDING AT HOMONHON ON MARCH 19, 1521, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. An amount of Two Hundred Fifty Million (250,000,000.00) Pesos shall be appropriated to the Department of Tourism for a Quincentennial commemoration of the first circumnavigation of the globe, the introduction of Christianity as a religion in the Philippine Islands and Magellan's landing at Homonhon on March 19, 1521, that will feature social, cultural and historical events throughout the country.

SECTION 2. The amount of Two Hundred Fifty Million (P250,000,000.00) Pesos shall be incorporated in the yearly appropriations to the Department of Tourism, National Historical Commission of the Philippines, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, National Archives of the Philippines, National Museum of the Philippines, National Library of the Philippines and other such related government agencies under the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 3. The Department of Tourism as the lead agency shall prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the Quincentennial celebrations within six (6) months from the approval of this act.

SECTION 4. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days upon publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,