

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

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
**Third Regular Session**

HOUSE BILL NO. 10025



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Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

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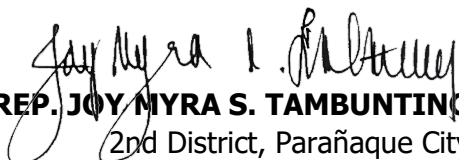
### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Climate change to date, is a pressing global concern and Philippines is among the highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As an archipelagic country, climate change places communities near coastlines at risk of flooding due to sea level rise. On top of this, climate change also brings about extreme weather conditions—heavier rains, more devastating typhoons and increasing heat indices. For the year 2021, the country has recorded heat indices exceeding 40°C which are considered “dangerous” levels due to the high likelihood of heat cramps and heat exhaustion. The highest heat index recorded in 2021 was 53°C in Dagupan City, Pangasinan.

It is in this context that open green spaces are increasingly becoming more important. Green spaces has the capacity to reduce harmful carbon pollution as soil can absorb carbon from the air. This is particularly helpful in urban areas where carbon emission levels are high. Open green contributes to cleaner and healthier for the population. It is also a cost effective way of moderating harsh climates at a local level with the potential to reduce surface temperature by 5°C.

In this regard, this measure proposes to establish a green patches program which shall identify, preserve and/or maintain existing green spaces in the country. This measures also seeks to utilize idle lands or non-agricultural lands in urban or urbanizable areas for greening purposes. Ultimately, the goal of this measure is to help mitigate the effects of climate change and to improve microclimactic conditions of human settlements in urban areas.

On behalf of the people of Parañaque City’s Second District, and for the common good of the Filipino people, the approval of the said measure is earnestly sought.

  
**REP. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**  
2nd District, Parañaque City

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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING THE URBAN GREEN PATCHES PROGRAM AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

**SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the "Urban Green Patches Program Act."

**Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. Towards this end, the State shall establish a program which shall preserve, maintain and improve the country's existing green spaces and utilize idle lands to help improve the microclimatic conditions of human settlements especially in urban areas, and address food security.

**Sec. 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act, the following definitions shall apply:

- (A) Green spaces are open spaces for leisure, recreation, and promenade where soft (i.e. plants and trees) and hard (i.e. pavement and benches) landscape may be found.
- (B) Idle land is a non-agricultural land in urban and urbanizable areas with an area of more than one thousand (1,000) square meters, five hundred (500) square meters of which have no improvements for a period of five (5) consecutive years immediately prior to or at any time after the effectivity of this Act, as identified by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in coordination with the local government units.

Improvements shall refer to all types of buildings and residential units, wall, fences, structures or constructions of all kinds of a fixed character or which adhered to the soil but shall not include trees, plants and growing fruits, and other fixtures that are mere superimpositions on the land.

**Sec. 4. Green Patches Program.** – The Green Patches Program is hereby established under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in coordination with relevant government agencies and local government units, that shall:

- (A) Conduct an inventory of existing green spaces and idle lands in the country, that shall produce a baseline data indicating the extent of vegetative cover, and other bio-physical and ecological conditions of each;
- (B) Enforce measures to preserve, improve and maintain the existing green spaces to include:
  - (I) Prohibition on the utilization or development of the same for any other purpose; and
  - (II) Utilization of effective measures for the optimum maintenance of such spaces as well as the growth of the trees and plants therein.
- (C) Formulate and enforce policies and regulations to promote the greening of idle lands in urban areas such as:
  - (I) Enforcement of a 10-year moratorium on the utilization or development of such idle lands for purposes other than for greening purposes;

Provided, That idle lands falling within the coverage of the Program shall be exempt from the additional ad valorem tax on idle lands imposed by a province or city, or a municipality within the Metropolitan Manila Area, pursuant to their local tax ordinances; Provided further, That should an idle land owner decide to use the land for any other purpose other than for greening purposes within the 10-year period, the same shall be required to contribute in any government reforestation programs and projects by planting one (1) tree for every 10 square meters of such idle land.

- (II) Provision of free tree, food crop and other plant seedlings and saplings as well as continued technical and financial assistance by the DENR to participating Idle land owners;

**Sec. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DENR, in consultation with other relevant agencies shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations necessary to fully implement the objectives and purposes of this Act.

**Section 6. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the. implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations for the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

**Sec. 7. Separability Clause.** – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

**Sec. 8. Repealing Clause.** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, rule or regulation inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**Sec. 9. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*