

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Seventeenth Congress  
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5597



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**Introduced by Representative Gil "Kabarangay" P.  
Acosta**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill seeks to declare the Third District of Palawan as a mining-free zone.

The Third District of Palawan vaunts of a mantel of rainforests, magnificent mountains, prehistoric caves, pristine dive sites and beaches.

Among many others, its virgin forests are rich in minerals such as mercury, copper and nickel, all of which are sought after by miners.

Section 16, Article II of the 1987 Constitution explicitly provides that "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature." As citizens of the Philippines, we have the intergenerational responsibility to preserve and protect the environment that is capable of sustaining life. The said right carries with it the correlative duty to refrain from impairing the environment.

Mining in the Third District of Palawan is said to have destroyed forests and caused siltation of water sources. While mining provides job opportunities for

some, the degree of damage to the earth, on the livelihood of farmers and Palaweños' general well-being has become exceptionally alarming.

Thus, in order to protect and preserve the natural environment of the Third District of Palawan, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



**Gil "Kabarangay" P. Acosta**  
Representative, 3<sup>rd</sup> District of Palawan

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HOUSE BILL NO. **5597**

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**AN ACT DECLARING THE THIRD DISTRICT OF PALAWAN AS A MINING FREE ZONE**

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

3       **SECTION 1. Statement of Policy.** - It is the policy of the State to protect and  
4 advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with  
5 the rhythm and harmony of nature. Towards this end, the State shall protect the  
6 people and the environment of the Third District of Palawan composed of the  
7 City of Puerto Princesa and the Municipality of Aborlan against the adverse  
8 effects of mining.

9       **SECTION 2. Declaration of the Third District of Palawan as a Mining Free**  
10 **Zone.** – The Third District of Palawan City composed of the City of Puerto  
11 Princesa and the Municipality of Aborlan is hereby declared as a mining free  
12 zone; thereby all forms of mining activity within its territorial jurisdiction is  
13 prohibited.

14       For the purpose of this Act, mining shall refer to the extraction of valuable  
15 minerals or other geological materials, excluding gravel and sand marble,”

16 inclusive of mining activities as exploration, feasibility, development, utilization  
17 and processing.

18 **SECTION 3. Penal Provisions.** – Any person who violates any of the  
19 provisions of this Act shall, upon conviction, be punished by imprisonment of not  
20 less than six (6) years and one (1) day but not more than twelve (12) years or a  
21 fine of not less than one hundred thousand (P100,000.00) pesos but not more  
22 than five hundred thousand (P500,000.00) pesos, or both, at the discretion of the  
23 court.

24 If the offense is committed by a corporation, partnership, association or  
25 any other juridical entity, the penalty shall be imposed on the president,  
26 managing director, partner or chief operating officer. The license to operate of  
27 the erring corporation, partnership, association or any other juridical entity shall  
28 be cancelled and revoked permanently. The operator or owner thereof shall not  
29 be allowed to operate similar establishments in a different name or in a different  
30 location.

31 If the offender is a foreigner, he shall after service of sentence or  
32 payment of fine, be subject to deportation and permanently barred from entering  
33 the country.

34 **SECTION 4. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The Secretary of  
35 the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall formulate  
36 the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

37 **SECTION 5. Separability Clause.** – If any portion or provision of this  
38 Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or the provisions not  
39 affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

40 **SECTION 6. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and  
41 regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby  
42 repealed or modified accordingly.

43                    **SECTION 7. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days  
44 following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of  
45 general circulation.

46                    Approved,