



Republic of the Philippines  
**House of Representatives**  
Constitution Hills, Batasan Complex, Quezon City



**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3292

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Introduced by Representative **ADOLPH EDWARD G. PLAZA**  
2<sup>ND</sup> District, Agusan del Sur

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**"AN ACT  
DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL SUR AS THE HOME OF THE  
GOLDEN TARA"**

**Explanatory Note**

In this fast changing world, culture aids social communities in preserving and promoting identity and character. Globalization tends to erode people's culture and identity; hence, the need to protect and uphold cultural artifacts to provide a sense of stability that creates lasting identity.

Cultural objects and artifacts are the best representation of the community's identity. They are material culture anchored to the past and evoke history. The 21- karat Hindu or Buddhist deity statuette, better known as *The Golden Tara*, found in 1917 by a Manobo woman named Bilay Campos on a muddy bank of Wawa River in Esperanza, Agusan del Sur is a testament of an elaborate and complex culture and society of pre-colonial Agusan del Sur.

Dating back to the 9th-10th Century, there were suggestions the Golden Image was made and crafted as trade goods for the Buddhist Empire of Sri Vijaya. The Image serves as an evidence of early Agusanon Sur's craftsmanship and their trading relations with early Southeast Asian Empires, revealing its historic-cultural significance.

The statuette's iconographic attributes may have been a subject of debate as to whether it belongs to the Hindu or Buddhist pantheon, but it is certain that it is discovered in Agusan del Sur. The image is believed to have come from the upriver areas of the province and was carried away downstream by a flood to where it was found, at the riverbank of Esperanza.

Taking into consideration the circumstances of its discovery, it is therefore, beyond dispute that its home is the Province of Agusan del Sur.

Presently, a historical landmark was built by the locals from Esperanza where the important cultural artifact was discovered. This is an initiative of the local community to establish their rightful claim on the famous Golden Tara with a view of boosting tourism in the province.

In view of this matter, the urgent approval of this bill is sought.



**ADOLPH EDWARD G. PLAZA**  
2<sup>nd</sup> District, Agusan del Sur



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**House of Representatives**  
Constitution Hills, Batasan Complex, Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**

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**3292**

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2<sup>ND</sup> District, Agusan del Sur

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**“AN ACT  
DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL SUR AS THE HOME  
OF THE GOLDEN TARA”**

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

**SECTION 1.** It is the policy of the State to promote and popularize the nation's historical and cultural resources as well as the artistic creations.

**SECTION 2.** The province of Agusan del Sur is hereby declared as the Home of the Golden Tara.

**SECTION 3.** The Golden Tara shall refer to the 21-karat gold statuette of a female Hindu deity which was found in 1917 on the banks of Wawa River in Esperanza, Agusan del Sur.

**SECTION 4.** The Province of Agusan del Sur, in coordination with the Department of Tourism, shall take immediate steps to incorporate this Act in the Department's overall tourism development program for the ensuing year. They shall likewise promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

**SECTION 5.** This Act shall be effective fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.