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**Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri**

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**AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING THE NEGROS ISLAND REGION TO BE KNOWN AS  
REGION XVIII**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Long split into two separate administrative regions, the provinces of Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental have both faced considerable challenges in efficiently accessing government services from their respective regional centers. Further, the administrative divide has barred the adjacent provinces from progressing apace of each other, given the disparities in their funding and other such bureaucratic differences.

Being twin provinces on the same island, and sharing many of the same natural resources and industries, the best course of governmental action would be to align Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental under a single administrative region.

Indeed, this logic has already led to the establishment of the Negros Island Region (NIR) in 2015, under Executive Order 183. This was a long-awaited victory for Negrenses who have lobbied for the NIR since the 1980s, as it finally brought the two provinces together under one administrative region, with the promise of equal opportunities for growth and progress.

The celebration was short-lived, however, because by 2017, Executive Order 38 formally abolished the region, citing its costliness. The NIR will indeed entail additional costs on the part of the national government, but it is a necessary investment. In the long term, it would be more economically sound and efficient to have the two provinces under one administrative region.

Negros Island is a land of great potential. The NIR, given a fair chance, will be instrumental in harnessing that potential toward genuine progress and uplift for the people.

With the above stated reasons, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



**JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**

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SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

Senate Bill No. 89

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AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING THE NEGROS ISLAND REGION TO BE KNOWN AS  
REGION XVIII

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

1 **SECTION 1.** This Act shall be known as the "*Negros Island Administrative Region Act*".

2 **SEC. 2.** It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote efficiency in the  
3 government to enable it to pursue programs consistent with national goals for accelerated  
4 social and economic development. Further, it will also enhance intergovernmental  
5 relations for efficient and effective delivery of services.

6 Pursuant to this policy, the State, after due consultation with the appropriate local  
7 government units, government agencies, and the private sector, to formulate  
8 socioeconomic development programs in accordance with its mandate to promote a more  
9 equitable distribution of opportunities, income and wealth, and ensure a sustainable  
10 increase in the amount of goods and services provided for the benefit of the people.

11 It is also the policy of the State that it shall promote administrative decentralization  
12 to strengthen the autonomy of the local government units and accelerate the economic  
13 and social growth and development of the region.

14 **SEC. 3.** The Negros Island Region is hereby established to be known as Region XVIII.  
15 The NIR shall be composed of the following provinces, including the cities, municipalities,  
16 and barangays comprising the provinces of:

- 17 1. Negros Occidental; and  
18 2. Negros Oriental

19 **SEC. 4.** The same privileges under the rules and regulations covering the regions shall  
20 remain in force.

21 **SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days from the  
22 approval of this Act, the National Economic and Development Authority, in coordination  
23 with the Department of the Interior and Local Government, shall formulate the necessary  
24 rules and regulations for the establishment of the regional center. The implementing rules

1 and regulations issued pursuant to this section shall take effect thirty (30) days after its  
2 publication in at least two (2) national newspaper of general circulation.

3 **SEC. 6. *Amendatory Clause.*** –All laws, decrees, orders and rules and regulations which  
4 are inconsistent with this Act are hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

5 **SEC. 7. *Effectivity Clause.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
6 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*