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15

Bill splits Aklan into two districts

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The House Committee on Local Government has passed a bill reapportioning the 17-town lone district of Aklan into two congressional districts.

The panel, chaired by South Cotabato and General Santos City Representative Pedro Acharon, approved House Bill (HB) 4670, filed by Aklan Rep. Carlito S. Marquez.

The proposed measure "would mean enhanced representation and better governance, but without violating the standards of proportional representation and minimum population in the creation of legislative districts as prescribed in Section 5, Article VI of the 1987 Constitution," Marquez said.

Under HB 4670, the municipalities of Altavas, Balete, Banga, Batan, Kalibo, New Washington, Libaciao and Madalag will make up the first district. The municipalities of Buruanga, Ibajay, Lezo, Makato, Malay, Malinao, Nabas, Numancia and Tangalan will be the second district.

Boracay Island, which belongs

to Malay town, will be in the second district.

"The incumbent representative of the lone district of the province of Aklan shall continue to represent and serve the district until the new representatives for the two districts shall have been elected, qualified, and assumed office," the bill states.

The measure directs the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to issue the implementing rules and regulations of the proposed act.

"The aim of the creation of a new legislative district should be the improvement of the delivery of government services and this is the popular, prevalent and general sentiment and outlook of Aklanons," Marquez said.

Aklan is the oldest province in the Philippines, organized in 1213 by settlers from Borneo. It became an independent province when the late President Ramon Magsaysay signed into law Republic Act 1414, separating it from Capiz, on April 25, 1956.

Aklan was inaugurated as an independent province on November 8, 1956.

* HOUSE BILL