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SENATE

S. No. 472

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Introduced by SENATOR JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A SAFE PATHWAYS NETWORK OF BICYCLE LANES AND
SLOW STREETS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

With the implementation of transport and mobility restrictions during the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of commuters in public transportation was reduced to a minimum and several modes of transport including jeepneys and buses were prevented from plying their routes. As a result, many people were either forced to walk from their homes to their workplaces and vice versa, or purchase budget-friendly vehicles such as bicycles. While these options promote physical and ecological health, major thoroughfares were not ready to accommodate the wave of new road users.

This bill, which was reported out by the Senate Committee on Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking and already approved on Third Reading during the 18th Congress, aims to establish a safe pathways network for use of non-motorized vehicles, including bicycles, push scooters and skateboards.

This measure is also included in the legislative priorities identified in the updated Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022, specifically in accelerating infrastructure development, and in ensuring ecological integrity, clean and healthy environment.

In Chapter 19 of the PDP, with regard to the modernization of public transportation and in transitioning to the new normal: "Non-motorized transport (e.g.,

bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure) will be integrated into the existing network through retrofitting. The design of new projects will also consider features to encourage more walking and cycling trips. Standardized designs for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure will be mainstreamed in projects of national transport agencies and LGUs. Existing and future transportation facilities will have infrastructure supporting non-motorized transport modes (e.g., bicycle racks, adequate pedestrian lighting) to promote multimodal mobility.”

Meanwhile in Chapter 20 (Ensuring Ecological Integrity, Clean and Healthy Environment), it was mentioned that as a means to adopt and implement innovative pollution abatement solutions, support must be given to “reforms on mass transport system, including the expansion of ride-sharing services to reduce proliferation of vehicles and promote the production and utilization of eco-friendly vehicles, as well as the use of non-motorized transport through the establishment of bicycles lanes and replication of local bike-sharing systems.”

The immediate passage of this bill is recommended.



JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

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**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A SAFE PATHWAYS NETWORK OF BICYCLE LANES AND
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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Safe Pathways Network*
2 *Act*”.

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The Constitution mandates the State to protect
4 and advance the right of the Filipino people to a balanced and healthful ecology in
5 accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature, and to protect and promote the right
6 to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

7 In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Action Plan Against COVID-19
8 provides that the State shall mitigate its consequences and impact on the social,
9 economic, and personal security of the Filipino people.

10 The State recognizes the urgent need to safeguard the public’s health during
11 the COVID-19 pandemic by ensuring physical distancing. It recognizes that the
12 current transportation system compromises the safety of health workers, other
13 frontliners, and commuters.

14 The State recognizes the need for infrastructure and a change in mindset to
15 encourage and accommodate sustainable and healthy modes of transportation such
16 as walking, biking, and the use of other non-motorized vehicles and to provide safe
17 and convenient pathways for commuters. The State further acknowledges the need

1 to provide a quick solution to mobility issues during this pandemic and other
2 emergency situations that may arise.

3 Prioritizing walking, biking, and the use of non-motorized vehicles will result in
4 reduced carbon emissions, less use of energy and resources, and provide multiple
5 health benefits and increase quality of life.

6 These are also in line with the State's commitment to the Sustainable
7 Development Goals (SDGs), in particular: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being); SDG
8 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure);
9 SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); SDG 13 (Climate Action); and SDG 17
10 (Partnerships for the Goals).

11 *Sec. 3. Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, these terms are defined
12 as follows:

13 (a) *Electric personal mobility devices* refer to any electric motorized device
14 exclusively used for transporting an individual. This includes electric
15 bicycles and electric scooters, excluding motorcycles, tricycles and other
16 similar modes of transport;

17 (b) *Non-motorized vehicles* refer to all forms of transportation that do not
18 rely on an engine or motor for movement, including, but not limited to,
19 bicycles and shall wheeled non-motorized transport such as skateboards,
20 push scooters, and handcarts; and,

21 (c) *Slow streets* refer to local roads providing safe and convenient access to
22 frequented destinations by restricting motor vehicle access, use or speed
23 limits in certain days or hours in the day, as may be determined by the
24 concerned local government unit (LGU), and prioritizing access and use
25 by pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized vehicle users.

26 *Sec. 4. Safe Pathways Network.* – Immediately upon the effectivity of this Act,
27 the Safe Pathways Network shall be established for the use of non-motorized vehicles:
28 *Provided,* That the use of electric personal mobility devices may be allowed subject to
29 the guidelines set by the LGUs, in consultation with the Department of Transportation
30 (DOTr). The Safe Pathways Network shall consist of the following:

31 (a) *Bicycle lanes.* LGUs, in consultation with the DOTr and the Department
32 of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), shall identify and create a

1 network of bicycle lanes, which may be temporary or permanent in
2 nature. The temporary lanes alternatively known as pop-up lanes shall
3 be set up, whenever possible, during the COVID-19 pandemic or
4 whenever other emergency situations may arise: *Provided*, That along
5 national roads in Metro Manila, the DOTr, in coordination with the Metro
6 Manila Development Authority (MMDA), shall be the lead implementing
7 agency.

8 Pop-up bicycle lanes may be marked with removable tapes and mobile
9 signs, which can easily be placed and removed as necessary. Other
10 physical barriers may also be used.

11 The bicycle lanes shall, as much as practicable, directly connect users to
12 essential destinations, such as medical facilities, public and private
13 facilities frequented by people, schools, and other similar places that
14 may be identified. Motorcycles, tricycles, and other similar modes of
15 transport, whether powered by gas or electricity, are prohibited from
16 using the bicycle lanes; and,

17 (b) *Slow streets*. To complement the network of bicycle lanes, LGUs shall
18 create a designated network of people-oriented slow streets, which may
19 be temporary or permanent, along local roads that will provide
20 pedestrians and non-motorized vehicle users safe and convenient access
21 to frequented destinations. Speed limits and access on certain days or
22 hours by motorized vehicles in slow streets shall be determined by the
23 concerned LGU. Motor vehicles or residents, delivery, and trash
24 collection vehicles servicing the area of the slow streets and emergency
25 services shall have access to slow street subject to restrictions to be
26 imposed by the LGU.

27 Slow streets shall be clearly marked with signage specifying the
28 restrictions. The DOTr and DPWH shall identify priority areas for
29 implementation.

30 *Sec. 5. Health Facilities Loop.* – LGUs shall coordinate with health facilities within
31 their jurisdiction to establish pop-up bicycle lanes and slow streets that can connect
32 and provide safe access for healthcare workers to hospitals and other health centers.

1 Health facilities loops may be permanently adopted, as far as practicable.

2 *Sec. 6. Traffic Laws, Rules and Regulations.* – All users of non-motorized
3 vehicles and electric personal mobility devices shall obey traffic laws, rules and
4 regulations and shall be subject to existing penalties for violation.

5 The LGUs, in consultation with DOTr and other appropriate agencies, shall issue
6 guidelines for the safe use of bicycle lanes and the use of non-motorized vehicles and
7 electric personal mobility devices.

8 *Sec. 7. Bicycle Racks and other End-of-Trip Facilities.* – All public places,
9 government offices, schools, places of work, and commercial establishments, including
10 malls, banks, hospitals, and the like shall provide, as far as practicable, bicycle or
11 multi-use racks and other end-of-trip facilities as needed.

12 *Sec. 8. Role of Public and Private Sectors.* – Both the public and private sectors
13 shall promote walking and the use of bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles as a
14 sustainable and healthy means of transportation. They shall develop Safe Pathways
15 Network by putting up the necessary infrastructure facilities and programs as provided
16 by this Act. They shall also provide, as far as practicable, additional support, benefits,
17 subsidies, and training that will promote walking, biking, and the use of other non-
18 motorized vehicles.

19 LGUs shall incorporate the creation of the Safe Pathways Network and their
20 corresponding infrastructure in their local development plans.

21 *Sec. 9. Information Campaign.* – The DOTr, in coordination with other
22 government agencies and the private sector, shall establish an information campaign
23 on the importance of a shift to a sustainable and healthy mode of transportation, and
24 the establishment and use of the Safe Pathways Network. The program shall be
25 designed for traffic enforcers, motorists, non-motorized vehicle and electric personal
26 mobility device users, the commuting public, and the community in general.

27 *Sec. 10. Design and Construction of Permanent Bicycle Lanes.* – The DPWH, in
28 coordination with LGUs, shall revise its manuals and guidelines for road design and
29 construction to include non-motorized vehicles and electric personal mobility devices
30 in the allocation of road space on national and local roads, and to promote the safety
31 of pedestrians and non-motorized vehicle and electric personal mobility device users.
32 Permanent bicycle lanes shall be constructed with safety as the paramount concern.

1 As much as practicable, permanent bicycle lanes shall be physically separated from
2 the main road through physical barriers, or shall be elevated or otherwise constructed
3 separately from the main road. Painted road markers may also be used for roads with
4 limited space.

5 Sec. 11.*Sources of Funding.* – The funds necessary for the implementation of
6 this Act shall be sourced from the appropriations of the DOTr and DPWH under the
7 General Appropriations Act and the Local Road Support Fund from the Motor Vehicle
8 User’s Charge as provided under Republic Act No. 8794, as amended.

9 Sec. 12.*Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
10 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision or part not otherwise
11 affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

12 Sec. 13.*Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
13 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or
14 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended
15 accordingly.

16 Sec. 14.*Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
17 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

18 *Approved,*