



NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

'22 AUG 11 P5:16

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SENATE

S. B. NO. 1138

Introduced by **SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NETWORK OF EMERGENCY LANES AND
EMERGENCY PATHWAYS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

On March 7, 2020, the first local transmission of the COVID-19 was confirmed by the DOH, triggering the declaration of a state of public health emergency on March 8, 2020, through Proclamation No. 922, and the imposition of the “community quarantine” on March 12, 2020, to prevent the further spread of the virus. On March 16, 2020, the “enhanced community quarantine” was implemented in the entire Luzon area, wherein all persons are required to remain at home, all modes of transportation had been suspended, provision of essential goods and services are regulated, and uniformed personnel strictly enforced quarantine procedures.¹

In view of the lack of public transportation, commuters, including frontline medical workers, had to resort to using other modes, including bikes. Because of this, several efforts had been initiated to provide bicycles to frontliners, including the Lend-a-Bike Project led by cycling enthusiasts² and free rides,³ among others.

¹ March 12, 2021, Timeline: One year of Covid-19 in the Philippines, Philippine Daily Inquirer. Accessible at <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1406004/timeline-one-year-of-covid-19-in-the-philippines> (last accessed August 11, 2022).

² March 24, 2020. Bikers lead initiative to lend bikes for frontliners in COVID-19 crisis. CNN. Accessible at <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/3/24/bikers-lead-initiative-bikes-frontliners-coronavirus.html> (last accessed August 11, 2022).

³ August 7, 2020. 1,000 Angkas drivers to provide free rides for health frontliners in Metro Manila. Inquirer. Accessible at <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1318150/1000-angkas-drivers-to-provide-free-rides-for-health-frontliners-in-metro-manila> (last accessed August 11, 2022).

Meanwhile, based on a face-to-face survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations in November 2020 and May 2021, the estimated number of households that owned bikes grew from 2 million to 4.9 million.⁴ In the same survey, it is reported that around 4.7 million Filipinos use bikes for essential activities, including market/grocery/store runs (3.1 million), going to and from work (1.4 million), and bikes for work-related or livelihood activities (1.1 million).⁵ Filipinos also use bikes for recreational activities, with an estimated 2.3 million using bikes for exercising, sightseeing, or playing.⁶

During the pandemic, almost 500 kilometers of bike lanes along national roads were put up to promote cycling as a mode of transport.⁷ To further encourage and promote cycling as a mode of transportation and to ensure the safety of bikers given the growing number of users, the government should invest in proper and adequate cycling infrastructure.

Thus, this bill provides for the following:

- a) The establishment of a Safe Pathways Network, or a network of bike lanes, spearheaded by the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), which shall be properly marked with road signs, mobile signs, or physical barriers;
- b) Placement of restrictions for motorized vehicle passage on pathways during peak hours of travel;
- c) Requiring public places and major establishments to have, as far as practicable, parking spaces for bicycles, non-motorized vehicles, electric scooters, electric bikes, and other similar modes of transportation; and
- d) Integration of driver education, as appropriate, in the respective curricula of the Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), to ensure basic knowledge on traffic laws, rules, and regulations for all motorists, pedestrians, and ordinary citizens;

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA

⁴ Social Weather Stations, *Bicycle Usage among Filipino Households during the Covid-19 Pandemic*, accessible at <http://www.sws.org.ph/downloads/publications/pr20211126%20-%20WAPOR%20Asia%202021-Bicycle%20Usage%20Among%20Filipino%20Households%20During%20the%20Covid-19%20Pandemic-Christian%20Michael%20Entoma.pdf> (last accessed August 11, 2022).

⁵ *Id.*


⁶ *Id.*

⁷ January 19, 2022. From Crises to opportunity: How the Philippines built 500km of bike lanes in less than a year. World Bank. Accessible at <https://blogs.worldbank.org/transport/crisis-opportunity-how-philippines-built-500km-bike-lanes-less-year#:~:text=Within%209%20months%2C%20the%20Philippines,and%20sustainable%20form%20of%20transport> (last accessed August 11, 2022).



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AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

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

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – The Constitution mandates the State to
4 protect and advance the right of the Filipino people to a balanced and healthful ecology
5 in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. It also declares the State policy to
6 protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness
7 among them.
8

9 Toward this end, the State recognizes that engine-powered vehicles contribute
10 to air pollution. At the same time, the State recognizes that the current state of
11 infrastructure in the country does not adequately promote and incentivize the use of
12 alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycles, and other non-
13 motorized vehicles, and to provide safe and convenient pathways for commuters,
14 especially health workers and other frontlines, pedestrians and non-motorized travel.
15 While these alternative modes of transportation have lesser carbon emissions, use
16 less energy and resources, and provide multiple health benefits and increase quality
17 of life, they have not been aggressively promoted in the country.
18

19 Thus, the State hereby adopts the policy of promoting and incentivizing the use
20 of alternative modes of transportation, not only to protect the environment, but also to
21 promote the health, safety and well-being of all.
22

23 **SEC. 3. Safe Pathways Network.** – Upon the effectivity of this Act, the
24 Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Public Works and

1 Highways (DPWH), in coordination with Department of Interior and Local Government
2 (DILG) and Local Government Units (LGUs), shall identify and create a network of
3 bicycle lanes, hereinafter, Safe Pathways Network, which shall be used strictly for
4 bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles. For the purposes of this Act, “non-
5 motorized vehicles” include all forms of travel that do not rely on an engine or motor
6 for movement. This includes, but is not limited to, walking, bicycles, and small-
7 wheeled non-motorized transport (skates, skateboards, push scooters and hand
8 carts).

9
10 The bicycle lanes shall, as far as practicable, directly connect users to
11 essential destinations, such as medical facilities, public and private facilities
12 frequented by people, schools and other institutions of learning, and other similar
13 places. The lanes must be marked appropriately with road signs, mobile signs, or
14 physical barriers and the like. In all cases, lane markings for vehicles shall be
15 appropriately adjusted and/or marked to avoid confusion among motorists.

16
17 Electric scooters, electric bicycles, and other similar modes of transport may
18 be allowed subject to the guidelines set by the DOTr and other appropriate agencies.

19
20 To complement the network of bicycle lanes, LGUs shall also create a
21 designated network of people-oriented pathways along local roads that will provide
22 pedestrians, bicycles and non-motorized vehicle users safe and convenient access
23 to frequented destinations by restricting motorized vehicle passage in these pathways
24 during peak hours. These pathways shall be clearly marked with signage containing
25 restrictions. The DOTr and DPWH shall identify priority areas for implementation.

26
27 In all cases, the DPWH and LGUs shall ensure that sidewalks and non-
28 motorized transport lanes are appropriately integrated in the design and construction
29 of road networks. For this purpose, the DPWH shall make appropriate revisions in its
30 manuals and guidelines for road design and construction to include non-motorized
31 vehicles in the allocation of road space on national and local roads, and to promote
32 the safety of pedestrians and non-motorized vehicle users.

33
34 The LGUs shall coordinate with the DPWH and other appropriate agencies
35 and issue the necessary measures for the adoption and implementation of the Safe
36 Pathways Network pursuant to this Act. The LGUs shall also regularly clear all local
37 roads and sidewalks of obstructions, and make the necessary improvements on
38 existing infrastructures.

39
40 **SEC. 4. Obedience to Traffic Laws, Rules and Regulations; Driver and**
41 **Pedestrian Education.** – All non-motorized vehicle users, including users of electric
42 scooters, electric bicycles, and other similar modes of transport as allowed by the
43 DOTr and other appropriate agencies, shall obey existing traffic laws, rules and
44 regulations, and shall be subject to existing penalties for violations.

45
46 For this purpose, the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on
47 Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development
48 Authority (TESDA) shall integrate in the curriculum driver education, as appropriate,
49 to ensure that motorists, pedestrians and ordinary citizens have basic knowledge on
50 traffic laws, rules and regulations.

1
2 **SEC. 5. Non-Motorized Vehicle Parking Spaces.** – All public places,
3 government offices, schools, places of work and major establishments, including
4 malls, banks, hospitals, and the like, shall provide, as far as practicable, adequate
5 parking spaces for bicycles, other non-motorized vehicles, electric scooters, electric
6 bicycles, and other similar modes of transport as allowed by the DOTr and other
7 appropriate agencies.

8
9 **SEC. 6. Role of the Public and Private Sectors.** – Both the public and private
10 sectors shall promote walking and the use of bicycles and other non-motorized
11 vehicles as an alternative means of travel. They shall develop the necessary
12 infrastructure, facilities and programs for its implementation, including showers,
13 changing areas, and hydration facilities, and shall ensure that the necessary health
14 and other protocols during travel are followed.

15
16 **SEC. 7. Appropriations.** – The funds necessary for the initial implementation
17 of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DOTr and
18 DPWH. Thereafter, such funds as necessary for the effective implementation of this
19 Act shall be included in the budgets of DOTr, DPWH and other appropriate agencies
20 under the annual General Appropriation Act.

21
22 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within thirty (30) days from
23 the effectivity of this Act, the DOTr, in coordination with the DPWH, DILG, and other
24 appropriate agencies and relevant stakeholders, shall issue the rules and regulations
25 for the effective implementation of this Act.

26
27 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is declared
28 unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be
29 affected thereby.

30
31 **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, orders, issuances, rules and
32 regulations or part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
33 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

34
35 **SEC. 11. Effectivity Clause.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
36 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
37 circulation.

38
39 **Approved,**