

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. **4459**

Introduced by Hon. Mark Aeron H. Sambar

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is common to read about bus related accidents either in Metro Manila or in the provinces. When one drives along EDSA, it is easy to see why that is the case. Buses are notorious for the reckless habits of their drivers as they swerve their way through busy traffic or careen through open highways. In a developing country like the Philippines, commuters would rather take the lower fare rates of provincial buses over the more expensive option of air travel. They are left at the mercy of bus drivers who are sometimes ill equipped to drive their buses for several straight hours just to make a living wage. Bus drivers operate their vehicles in a reckless and speedy manner since their income is dependent on the number of trips they make and the passengers they ferry in their limited hours of work. They are in effect always pressured to move fast to "make the pay." This has led to a disregard of traffic laws and regulations and sometimes even of the safety of the bus-riding public.

The news reports and anecdotes are supported by the hard facts. As of the end of 2009, a total of 33,033 buses are registered with the Land Transportation Office.¹ In 2008, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) recorded a total of 4,825 bus accidents, or an average of 13 per day.² In the first five months of 2009, 1,488 bus related accidents were recorded by the MMDA. A study conducted by the Department of Transportation and Communication (DOTC) found that 85% of road accidents are due to

¹ http://www.lto.gov.ph/Statistics/Stats2009/no_of_MV_TypeMode_LTO2009.html

² <http://www.gmanews.tv/story/171951/10-bus-accidents-hit-metro-manila-daily>

errors made by drivers.³ Studies show that motor vehicle crashes have a disproportionate impact on the poor and vulnerable in society. These are also the people with usually little influence over policy decisions. Poorer people comprise the majority of casualties and lack ongoing support in the event of long-term injury. Lower socioeconomic groups have limited access to post-crash emergency health care. The costs of prolonged medical care, the loss of the family breadwinner, the cost of a funeral, and the loss of income due to disability can push families into poverty.⁴

There is thus a need to address the problems of inadequate driver training and faulty system employed in the public utility bus structure in the Philippines. There is a dearth of competent training programs to cover the bus driving sector that must be dealt with. It will also help if drivers are made eligible to be paid the minimum wage to curb their irresponsible driving behavior.


HON. MARK AERON H. SAMBAR
Representative, Pwersa ng Bayan ng Bayan Party List

³ <http://ph.news.yahoo.com/abs/20110104/tph-bus-companies-suspended-over-fatal-a-8061bf7.html>

⁴ World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention, World Health Organization, http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/publications/road_traffic/world_report/en/

1 (a) *bus* – shall refer to a long public utility motor vehicle transporting passengers over
2 a fixed route;

3 (b) *bus driver* – a person who operates a bus;

4 SECTION 4. *Payment of Minimum Wage for Bus Drivers.* – Bus drivers shall be
5 entitled to be paid the minimum wage as set by the Regional Tripartite Wages and
6 Productivity Boards pursuant to Republic Act No. 6727.

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8 SECTION 5. *Required Tests for Bus Drivers.* – The following tests shall be
9 administered by the Department of Transportation and Communication for potential bus
10 drivers:

11 (a) theory and hazard perception tests;

12 (b) practical driving test;

13 (c) Driver Accreditation of Professional Competence.

14 SECTION 6. *TESDA Certification Requirement.* – The Director General of the
15 Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, in consultation with the Secretary of
16 the Department of Transportation and Communication, shall develop a certification and
17 training program for bus drivers to ensure the competence and professionalism of the sector.
18 After completion of this program, a driver deemed qualified to be a bus driver shall be issued
19 a Driver Accreditation of Professional Competence.

20 After three (3) years from the approval of this Act, only bus drivers with a
21 TESDA/DOTC accreditation shall be allowed to drive public utility buses. This is apart from
22 the requirements for obtaining a professional driver's license from the Land Transportation
23 Office.

1 SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision, or part hereof is held invalid or
2 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
3 valid and subsisting.

4 SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
5 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent
6 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

7 SECTION 9. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
8 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,