

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH (17TH) CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5721**



Introduced by **Hon. Tricia Nicole Q. Velasco - Catera**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to mandate the incorporation of tactile paving into all highways, roads, pavements, stairs, sidewalks, rail platforms, pedestrian crossings, as well as public spaces and infrastructure, whenever practicable, to enhance the safety and independent mobility of the blind and visually impaired.

Tactile paving is a system of textured ground surface indicators on roads, footpaths, stairs and train station platforms, public spaces and other infrastructure that serves to alert blind and visually impaired persons to, among others, approaching pedestrian crossings, hazards, obstructions, and grade changes.

In Republic Act No. 7277, otherwise known as the "Magna Carta for Disabled Persons", the State made a commitment to promote the mobility of disabled persons. However, there is still much to be done in realizing this guarantee. For instance, tactile paving has been in use in Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States for quite some time already. Even our neighboring countries here in South East Asia such as Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia already have tactile patterns installed. On the other hand, the Philippines has yet to adopt this technology and, to date, has no enabling legislation that requires the installation of tactile paving in our national public infrastructure system.

Independent mobility is one of the most burdensome problems for the blind and visually impaired. With consistent and dependable information communicated to them through tactile paving, blind and visually impaired persons will gain the confidence to walk independently wherever they may be. Consequently, road safety for them, which is the main purpose of this bill, shall be enhanced remarkably.

Notably, based on observations from countries that have already adopted the technology, tactile paving is also used as a way for people to line themselves up at pedestrian crossings. Therefore, this will also enhance the safety of other pedestrians.

The passage of this bill will surely contribute significantly to the goal of making blind and visually impaired persons self-reliant. Thus, passage thereof is earnestly sought.


TRICIA NICOLE Q. VELASCO - CATERA

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AN ACT MANDATING THE USE OF TACTILE PAVING IN ALL PUBLIC SPACES AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE BENEFIT OF BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED PERSONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SEC. 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Tactile Paving Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to provide full support to the improvement of the total well-being of persons with disabilities (PWDs) and their full integration into mainstream society. To this end, the State shall establish, promote, and implement the following policies for the benefit of blind and visually impaired persons:

- (a) To incorporate tactile paving as a central part of national public infrastructure system specifications;
- (b) To provide the blind and visually impaired with dependable mobility aids; and
- (c) To enhance road safety for all pedestrians and motorists in general.

SEC. 3. *Tactile Paving.* – Tactile Paving is a system of textured ground surface indicators found on public highways, streets, footpaths, stairs, railway platforms, as well as other public spaces and infrastructure, that alerts blind and visually impaired persons to the presence of pedestrian crossings, hazards, obstructions, or grade changes, enabling them to travel safely while maximizing their capabilities for independent mobility.

There are various types of tactile patterns that convey different information about the environment such as, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Blister surface - to guide visually impaired persons through pedestrian crossings.

- (b) Offset blister tactile - to warn visually impaired persons of the edge of off-street railway platforms.
- (c) Lozenge tactile - to warn visually impaired persons that they are approaching the edge of an on-street railway platform or bus stop.
- (d) Corduroy hazard warning tactile - to warn visually impaired persons of the presence of specific hazards, such as steps, level crossings or approaches to on-street railway platforms, bus stops, or where footways join shared routes.
- (e) Cycle way tactile - to advise visually impaired persons of the correct side to enter in conjunction with a segregated shared cycle track/footway.
- (f) Directional or guidance tactile - to guide visually impaired persons along a route when the traditional cues, such as a property lines or kerb edges, are not available.

SEC. 4. *Mandatory incorporation of tactile paving in all public spaces and infrastructure.* - All public highways, roads, pavements, footways, footpaths, stairs, footbridges, sidewalks, rail platforms, bus stops, pedestrian crossings, and all other public spaces and infrastructure shall incorporate tactile paving according to specifications in the Implementing Rules and Guidelines on the use of tactile paving to be promulgated and issued jointly by the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), taking into consideration internationally accepted standards and safety considerations.

The DOTr and DPWH shall conduct earnest efforts to reconstruct or retrofit existing public spaces and infrastructure to incorporate tactile paving.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Guidelines.* - The DOTr and DPWH shall jointly promulgate the Implementing Rules and Guidelines upon consultation with the Land Transportation Office (LTO), Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), the Department of Interior Local Government (DILG), and notable organizations promoting the welfare of the blind and visually impaired. The Rules and Guidelines shall make tactile paving a central part of national public infrastructure system specifications.

SEC. 6. *Appropriations.* - To carry out the provisions of this Act, such amount as may be necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury. Thereafter, the amounts necessary for the implementation and maintenance of the tactile paving system shall be included in the annual appropriations of the DOTr and DPWH.

SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.* - Should any provision herein be subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity or the legality of the other provisions not so declared.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, other issuances, and parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed and modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) after publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,