

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7272



Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

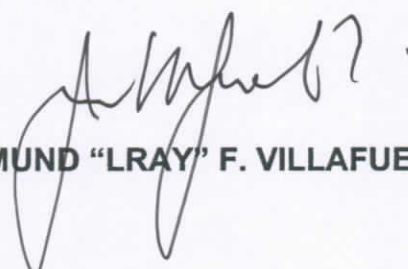
EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Department of Health estimated that over 300,000 people in the country are bilaterally blind while over 2 million have bilateral low vision. Blindness or severe visual impairment result in reduced functional ability and quality of life for the person. In the digital age especially, where screens are operated with the help of sight and touch, persons with disabilities are handicapped to perform even the simplest of routines in the modern era, such as banking using Automated Teller Machines (ATMs).

The State's promotion of the welfare and development of the PWDs in the country is itself constitutional, and was the wisdom that inspired the enactment of the Republic Act No. 7277¹, or the "Magna Carta for Disabled Persons", as amended. However, there remains a lack in foresight for the digital age for visually-impaired persons. Nowadays, ATMs are touch-screened enabled and buttons with Braille labels are sparse. There lacks a non-visual method for these types of machines.

This bill intends to address this by providing standards for our ATMs to make them accessible to those who are visually-impaired. It requires any machine to have both a visual transmission system and an audio transmission system. Any ATMs installed prior to the passage of this bill shall be upgraded or replaced that follows the standard provided herein.

The approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.

¹ <http://www.ncda.gov.ph/disability-laws/republic-acts/republic-act-7277/>

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AN ACT
MAKING AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINES ACCESSIBLE TO THE VISUALLY-IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

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

SECTION 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the “ATM Visually-Impaired Friendly Act”.

SECTION 2. Definition of Terms. – The following terms shall have the following meaning/interpretations:

- a) Banking Institution – shall mean a network of commercial, savings, and specialized banks that provide financial services, including accepting deposits and providing loans and credit, money transmission and investment facilities;
- b) Visual Transmission System – shall mean the graphic display of information by an automated teller machine;
- c) Audio Transmission System – shall mean a system that recites with sonic clarity through a personal listening device substantially the same information that is conveyed by a visual transmission system;
- d) Personal Listening Device – shall mean earphones or other similar receiver designed to transmit audio information to an individual, which receiver is placed in the individual's ear or held up to the ear such that only that individual can hear such audio information.

SECTION 3. Automated Teller Machine Requirements. – Every banking institution shall maintain the following requirements with respect to each of the automated teller machines within its dominion and control to provide equal access for all individuals:

- a) Any automated teller machine installed on or after the effectivity date of this Act shall transmit any message through both (i) a visual transmission system, and (ii) an audio transmission system;
- b) Any automated teller machine installed prior to the effective date of this Act shall, whenever an upgrade or replacement of such automated teller machine becomes necessary, be upgraded or replaced in such a manner so that such automated teller machine shall transmit any message through both (i) a visual transmission system, and (ii) an audio transmission system.

SECTION 4. Separability Clause. – If any provision or part thereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

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

SECTION 6. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,