

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7915



Introduced by Rep. Cesar V. Sarmiento

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to help address the road safety crisis we have locally and globally. Around the world, road crashes are killing close to 1.3 million people every year. Road traffic injuries are also the leading cause of death among people aged between 15-29 years old. In view of the current slow rate of progress, the United Nations, in adopting Resolution 72/271 last 12 April 2018, expressed concern that the Sustainable Development Goal of reducing to half the number of global road crash deaths by 2020 will not be met.

In the Philippines, as of end of 2016, road crashes kill an average of 31 people a day! This figure does not even include road crash deaths that have not been reported to authorities. The 11,274 figure in 2016 of people who died in road crashes is a 64% increase compared to the number of road crash deaths in 2006, ten years ago. Comparing the two years, we did not only fail to reduce road crash deaths by half but also failed to prevent its increase to more than half.

In view of the various evidenced-based road safety laws we already passed that address key risk factors identified by the World Health Organization, the current problem is not anymore due to lack of road safety legislation. For one, we can observe that the problem already concerns law enforcement. Law enforcement is crucial in instilling discipline and deterring unsafe driving behaviors among our people. The lack thereof has resulted to dire consequences we are reaping now.

But, aside from effective law enforcement, another major yet uncharted highway to solving our prevailing road safety crisis remains to be tapped and that is, addressing the road safety issues on a cultural level. Like law enforcement, instilling national road safety awareness is a proactive measure with a wider impact at that. This is based on the principle that the road safety problem is a shared responsibility since everyone has the ability to prevent a road crash and is affected by it; no one is exempted from road hazards or safety risks.

In a paper presented during a 2013 road safety conference in Australia, the importance of a road safety culture was stressed, to wit: *"People's lives are substantially influenced by their cultural norms which affect the way they perceive road safety. Culture and lifestyle strongly influence the behaviour of individuals. The*

*road is a social space where individuals from different social backgrounds meet and interact with other road users within their cultural framework. Risk culture may arise from an accumulation of unsafe behaviour patterns that become socially acceptable."*¹

Hence, having national road safety awareness means having a society that does not condone a risk culture- a society that is cognizant and concerned of the causes, consequences, and costs of road deaths and injuries which, in turn, draws on people to give more value to human life and promote the protection of every road user. Instead of apathy, indifference and hopelessness, the culture or lifestyle of road safety affects the mind and heart of a person which will later translate into positive action once the individual takes the wheels.

Instilling national road safety awareness will require giving priority to road safety education in all schools nationwide so that we can produce a new generation of responsible and safety-conscious road users. The positive impacts of this strategy are supported by various international research studies.

It will also necessitate the conduct of multi-stakeholder dialogues and rationalizing the observance of various road safety events to ensure more meaningful activities and greater participation, especially among Local Government Units. The involvement of road crash victims, survivors and their families, in particular, especially in information, education and communication campaigns will help send a strong message to the public on the need for safer roads and responsible and safe driving.

We are in a road safety crisis, both locally and globally. If we are to really address this problem and prevent the wastage of more lives, road safety should become our society's norm, and should be inculcated in the mind and heart of every Filipino.

Hence, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



CESAR V. SARMIENTO

¹"The impact of culture on road safety in Jordan," Magableh, F., Grzebieta, R. and Job, R.F.S., Transport and Road Safety (TARS) Research, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. Paper presented during the 2013 Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing & Education Conference in Brisbane, Queensland (<http://acrs.org.au/files/arsrpe/Paper%20113%20-%20Magableh%20-%20Cultural%20Perspectives.pdf>: Last access on 26 June 2018)

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**AN ACT PROMOTING NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY AWARENESS THROUGH
ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION, ROAD SAFETY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES
AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the “National Road Safety Awareness Act.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to significantly reduce road crash deaths and injuries by addressing the road safety issues on a cultural level. The State recognizes that instilling national road safety awareness is a crucial way to protect the public and deter any form of road hazards or safety risks.

Towards this end, the State shall give priority to road safety education, public awareness campaigns, road safety events and activities, and consultation and collaboration with various stakeholders, including victims, survivors and their families, to help realize a Filipino society that is aware of the causes, consequences, and costs of road deaths and injuries, has a road safety consciousness, mindset, lifestyle and/or culture, and has due regard for the value of human life and the protection of every commuter on the road.

SEC. 3. – Mandatory Road Safety Education. The Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in coordination with the Department of Transportation (DOTr), the Land Transportation Office (LTO) and other concerned agencies, shall integrate road safety education in the school curricula at all levels, whether public or private, including barangay daycare, preschool, non-formal, technical vocational, indigenous learning and out-of-school youth courses programs.

Road safety education shall cover age-appropriate theoretical and practical modules and shall encompass, among others, road safety legislation, rules,

regulations and enforcement; the actual international and local road safety situation; global and local road safety research and best practices; the responsibilities of every stakeholder; the vulnerable sectors that need protection; safe use of alternative mobility; and, the ideals of a safe and sustainable community.

CHED and TESDA shall also include road safety awareness programs and activities in the National Service Training Program under Republic Act No. 9163.

SEC. 4. – *Declaring the Month of June as National Road Safety Month.* The month of June of each year is hereby declared as the National Road Safety Month to stress the importance of road safety education.

As part of the celebration of the National Road Safety Month, the DOTr and LTO, in coordination with the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Philippine National Police-Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG), the Local Government Units (LGUs) and other public and private stakeholders, shall conduct nationwide Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns throughout the month of June on road safety laws and best practices, road crash data, risk factors, rights and responsibilities of all road users and all other matters which will help increase the awareness of the public on the importance of road safety.

The IEC campaigns shall employ effective, technology-based and relevant social marketing strategies with the end view of reaching and informing the citizenry from all socio-economic classes. The DOTr and LTO shall also primarily coordinate with victims and survivors of road crashes, including their families, and enable them to use available platforms and IEC tools in sharing their stories and promoting national road safety consciousness.

In addition, the DepEd, CHED, TESDA, in coordination with the DOTr, LTO and other stakeholders, shall conduct nationwide school activities such as road safety research and paper contests, programs, parades, seminars, contests highlighting the students' road safety knowledge and, if applicable, especially to senior high school and college students, age-appropriate driving, motorcycle and bicycle riding, and parking simulated exercises that test the students' road safety skills: *Provided, That* in view of the different academic calendars, the DepEd and/or CHED may permit the holding of such school activities in succeeding months.

SEC. 5. – *Other Mandatory Road Safety Events and Activities.* The DOTr and LTO, in coordination with concerned agencies and private stakeholders, shall also oversee the observance of the following mandatory events, programs and activities:

- a) The National Road Safety Week shall be synchronized with and be related to the celebration of the United Nations Global Road Safety Week. In addition to the activities to be hosted in coordination with international organizations, this event may serve as a prelude to the events and activities that will be conducted in the National Road Safety Month in June.
- b) The National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims, Survivors and Families shall be observed nationwide every 3rd Sunday of November of each year. Commemorative programs and activities in provinces, cities

and municipalities nationwide for road crash victims and survivors, involving their families and support groups, shall be observed. In support of this, LGUs are encouraged to put up road side memorials in strategic local public spaces to commemorate the lives who were lost and/or injured and to promote road safety to the public.

To further guarantee a meaningful observance, government offices shall dedicate their flag-raising ceremonies the week immediately after the National Day of Remembrance to road crash victims, survivors and their families, and shall provide a platform for bereaved or affected employees to advocate the need for road safety.

- c) The government shall continue to observe and support the International Day of Disabled Persons every December 3 of each year. In coordination with the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), the DOTr and LTO shall update the sector on efforts done to ensure the ease of access and safety of persons with disabilities while using the Philippine transport system, especially the land transport services.
- d) The government shall launch and maintain a government website which is linked to other platforms and dedicated to road safety awareness. It shall also include a database registry that honors road crash victims and survivors and a mechanism where the public can report road crash incidents, unsafe driving practices, ineffective law enforcement, etc.
- e) Other road safety-related programs and activities designed to increase the road safety consciousness of the public as may be provided in the IRR, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Regular national, regional and local multi-stakeholder dialogues or summits;
 - ii. Re-tooling, skill-up training and character building of all traffic law enforcers as well as drivers, motor pool staff and other employees of the national and local governments;
 - iii. Inclusion of road safety training in the trainings provided by private companies to their employees, especially to their drivers and riders;
 - iv. Publication and dissemination of road safety handbooks;
 - v. Special recognition of officers, volunteers and organizations who are instrumental in saving lives or supporting victims, survivors and their families;
 - vi. Recognition of and support for private sector-led road safety activities such as those initiated by vehicle and motorcycle manufacturers, motorcycle and bicycle organizations, road safety advocates, funding associations, religious organizations, foundations, etc.; and
 - vii. Other supporting activities to ensure meaningful observance of the National Road Safety Month, National Day of Remembrance, etc.

SEC. 6. DOTr as Lead Agency. The DOTr shall be the lead agency in overseeing and/or monitoring all efforts, programs and activities to develop a national road safety culture and to improve the Philippine road safety situation.

Towards this end, the Department shall endeavor to strengthen its institutional capacity to formulate road safety policies, plans and programs and to hone or develop local road safety professionals. In collaboration with public and private stakeholders, national, regional and local steering committees may also be created for effective implementation and meaningful observance of events and activities.

SEC. 7. LGU Participation. Every month of June of each year, every provincial, city and municipal government shall publish a mandatory report on the number of road crash incidents within their respective jurisdictions; the classification and type of vehicles involved; the names of all the parties, including the people who died or were injured, the costs and causes of the tragedies; the actions taken to address the issues; their participation in road safety events and activities; proactive measures to address existing road hazards or risks for drivers, passengers, motorcycle and bicycle riders and pedestrian; and other relevant updates or information: *Provided*, That any individual or organization shall have access to the said report and can request a copy of the same. The DOTr and LTO shall generate similar reports accessible to the public for the national and regional level.

Through the DILG, the support and participation of the LGUs in road safety events, programs and activities that are mandated in this Act and in improving the road safety situation in their respective jurisdictions, shall form part of the criteria for existing and future local government performance assessments and for the giving of distinctions and incentives by the national government.

SEC. 8. Appropriation – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DOTr, LTO, DepEd, CHED, DILG, TESDA, DOH and other concerned agencies. For the LGUs, the requirements shall be taken from their Internal Revenue Allotment and other local funds. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Additional funds for the implementation of this Act may be sourced from the Motor Vehicle User's Charge under Republic Act No. 8974, as amended.

SEC. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. The DOTr and LTO, in collaboration with DepEd, CHED, TESDA, DILG and other agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC.10. Separability Clause. – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid, such declaration shall not affect other provisions of this Act.

SEC.11. Repealing Clause. – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SEC. 12. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,