

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. 8585



Introduced by Representative **John Marvin "Yul Servo" C. Nieto**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

As a manifestation of support to this timely piece of legislation, this representation respectfully refiles this bill, which has constantly been receiving support from the past and present Congress.

The State recognizes that rights of commuters and of the riding public in general. Towards this end, the proposed measure seeks to create an office that will be committed to ensure the safety, convenience, comfort, and betterment of commuters. It is the hope of this representation that the creation of the Office of Commuter Affairs in the Department of Transportation will positively impact the government's effort in affirming this duty to the public.

The Office of Commuter Affairs will be primarily concerned with the following:

- a. Provide assistance to commuters in terms of matters concerning safety, convenience, and comfort, to name a few
- b. Serve as a portal for the commuting public where they can forward their concerns
- c. Provide assistance in the identification and apprehension of erring and abusive drivers and operators

In this light, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


JOHN MARVIN "YUL SERVO" C. NIETO

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**AN ACT CREATING THE OFFICE OF COMMUTER AFFAIRS IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS
AND RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Office of
Commuter Affairs Act."

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. - The State recognizes the rights of
commuters and of the riding public in general. Such recognition goes with
the government's responsibility to provide the same with quality services,
ensure their safety and offer valuable assistance specially during
emergency situations. Toward this end, it is imperative to create a
dedicated office in the Department of Transportation to oversee all the
above-mentioned concerns.

Sec. 3. Creation of the Office of Commuter Affairs. - There is hereby
created an office to be known as the Office of Commuter Affairs (OCA) in
the Department of Transportation (DOTr). The OCA shall be headed by an
Assistant Secretary who shall be appointed by the President of the
Republic of the Philippines. It shall maintain its principal office in Metro
Manila and establish regional offices as may be necessary for the proper
conduct of its operations.

Sec. 4. Functions and Responsibilities of the Office. - The OCA shall
be tasked to perform the following functions and responsibilities:

- a. Coordinate with other DOTr agencies as well as law enforcement
agencies dealing with road, rail, air and maritime transportation to
ensure safe, efficient and comfortable travel of commuters;
- b. Operate help desks for the riding public;

- c. Assist the commuters whenever the safety and efficiency of travel is compromised;
- d. Undertake massive commuter education programs for the traveling public to know their rights and responsibilities;
- e. Ensure legal assistance for commuters, when the need arises;\
- f. Reactivate the DOTr Action Center by the use of landline, web, social media, radio and television.

Sec. 5. Divisions Under the OCA. - The OCA shall have the following divisions:

- a. Commuter Welfare Division. - The division that takes charge of ensuring safe, efficient and comfortable travel of passengers from arrival to departure at terminals, train stations, airports and seaports.
- b. Commuter Education Division. - The division that is responsible for public, school and corporate trainings and publications on all modes of transportation.
- c. Commuter Communications Division. - The division tasked to manage the DOTr Central Office (DOTr-CO) Hotline and call center, website and social media for commuters' complaints, concerns and suggestions. For this purpose, the existing DOTr Action Center shall be transferred from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Communications to the Office of Commuter Affairs.
- d. Legal Assistance Division. - The division tasked to provide legal assistance to affected commuters and to the Office itself.

Sec. 6. Inter-agency Cooperation. - The OCA shall link and cooperate with existing DOTr offices, such as the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Communications, the Department's Legal Service as well as the Driver's Academy under the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to address areas of mutual concerns and common interests for the greater good and welfare of the riding public.

Sec. 7. Funding and Manpower Requirements. - Funding for the manpower and operational activities, programs as well as other needs of the OCA shall be sourced from the General Appropriations Act (GAA), subject to the applicable accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

Support assistance from the Administrative, Finance and Management Comptrollership Services of the DOTr-CO shall be made available for the operationalization of the said Office.

Sec. 8. Separability Clause. - Should any provision of this Act be subsequently declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not so declared and not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 9. Repealing Clause. - All other laws, issuances, orders, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

Sec. 10. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,