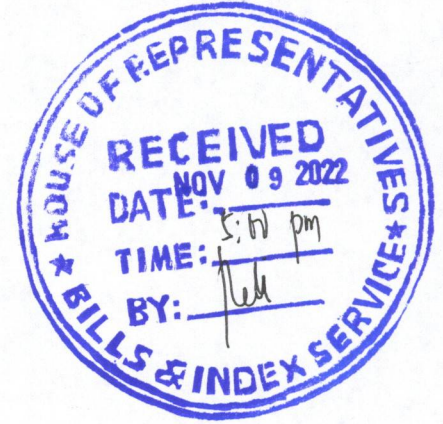


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

6011
HOUSE BILL NO. _____



Introduced by **Representative Wilbert T. Lee**

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SAFE PATHWAYS NETWORK OF BICYCLE
LANES AND SLOW STREETS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution declares the State shall protect the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature, to serve, and to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

Mass public transport is considered the lifeblood of most economies.¹ Hence, the implementation of the government's strict quarantine measures to curtail the spread of COVID-19 significantly affected the daily lives of Filipinos. It recreated how we conduct our daily routines.

As pre-pandemic activities slowly return after different levels of pandemic restrictions due to the COVID-19 transmission, implementing health protocols such as physical distancing has become more difficult as people's mobility increased with the resumption of face-to-face classes, onsite reporting to various offices and a bigger scale of public gatherings started.

As a result, our public transportation system, which was also crippled by the pandemic, is now hardly catering to a bigger demand of commuters and travelers despite the limited routes and actual transport vehicles. It is fair to say that the supply cannot meet that demand. We are starting to witness again congestion of commuters.

Likewise, in the face of record-high inflation and unabated hike in global oil prices, the transportation sector bares the impact of these problems. Private vehicles owners rethink the need to use their cars on a daily basis and some jeepney drivers halted their operations and opted for other sources of income, as they cannot keep up with the fuel price surge.²

¹ Asian Development Bank. 2020. Public Transport Can Bounce Back from COVID-19 with new and green technology, says ADB. Aug. 3. <https://www.adb.org/news/public-transport-can-bounce-back-covid-19-new-and-green-technology-says-adb>.

²Ong, G. (2022, June 14). Fewer cars on EDSA as fuel prices soar – MMDA. <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/06/14/2188169/fewer-cars-edsa-fuel-prices-soar-mmda>

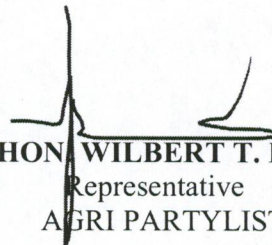
Unfortunately, this adversely affected the country's public transport supply, already unable to keep up with demand, especially in Metro Manila. As the Move as One Coalition states, "public transport supply is collapsing. More commuters are experiencing long lines, waiting times, and crowded commutes in enclosed spaces, and are at risk for COVID-19."³

It is high time to encourage our citizens and offer them sustainable modes of travel that are not fuel-reliant. Active transportation such as walking, and biking are some of these. Walking is cost-free and the price of buying and maintaining a bike is very low compared to owning a private vehicle. They also promote physical and mental health in a time of high anxiety. Further, they use fewer resources and will raise air quality due to reduced motorized vehicle use, lessening air toxins which are a leading cause of respiratory infection.⁴ Other non-motorized vehicles also offer the same advantages.

In line with this, this measure seeks to create a sustainable network of bicycle lanes and slow streets that are people-oriented and pedestrian-friendly, which shall connect users to essential destinations such as work, schools, medical facilities, and other similar places that may be identified. This network may then be adopted permanently even after the pandemic, as may be appropriate, as a solution to congested roads, volatilities in oil prices, and the pollution plaguing the country even before the pandemic.⁵

This bill also recognizes the importance of slow streets in a community, which are designed to limit motorized vehicle use on certain local streets, as may be determined by the concerned local government units, and allow them to be used as a shared space for people traveling by foot, by bicycle, or by other non-motorized means.⁶

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this measure is urgently sought.



HON. WILBERT T. LEE
Representative
AGRI PARTYLIST

³Atienza, K.A. (2022). Public transport system on brink of 'collapse' due to high fuel prices. <https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2022/06/14/455032/public-transport-system-on-brink-of-collapse-due-to-high-fuel-prices/>; Abante, Dayao, and Siy (2022). Fighting Transport Inflation: A Ten-Point Agenda (Move as One Policy Paper). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361268506_Fighting_Transport_Inflation_A_Ten-Point_Agenda_Move_As_One_Policy_Paper

⁴"Air Pollution." World Health Organization, World Health Organization, 15 Aug. 2017, <https://www.who.int/ceh/risks/cehair/en/>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Slow Streets Program. (n.d). Retrieved from <https://www.sfmta.com/projects/slow-streets-program>.

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SAFE PATHWAYS NETWORK OF BICYCLE
LANES AND SLOW STREETS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION. 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “*Walkable and Bikeable*
2 *Communities Act.*”

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – The Constitution mandates the State to protect and
4 advance the right of the Filipino people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with
5 the rhythm and harmony of nature, to protect and promote the right to health of the people
6 and instill health consciousness among them.

7 The State recognizes the urgent need to safeguard the public’s health during the
8 ongoing COVID-19 pandemic by promoting physical distancing. It acknowledges that the
9 current transportation system compromises the safety of health workers, other essential
10 workers, and commuters.

11 The State also affirms the need for infrastructure and a change in mindset to
12 encourage and accommodate sustainable and healthy modes of active transport such as
13 walking, biking, and the use of other non-motorized vehicles and to provide safe and
14 convenient pathways for commuters. It further acknowledges the need to provide quick

1 solutions to long-standing mobility issues brought to light by this pandemic and that may
2 arise again in other emergency situations.

3 Prioritizing active transport will result in reduced carbon emissions, reduced road
4 congestion, less use of energy and resources, as well as less dependence on oil, lightening the
5 impact of oil price shocks. It will also provide multiple health benefits and enhance the
6 quality of life.

7 There are also in line with the State's commitment to the Sustainable Development
8 Goals (SDGs), in particular: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being); SDG 7 (Affordable and
9 Clean Energy); SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure); SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities
10 and Communities); SDG 13 (Climate Action); and SDG 17 (Partnership for the Goals).

11 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** – For purposes of this Act, these terms are defined as
12 follows:

- 13 a. *Active transport* refers to physical activity undertaken as a means of transport,
14 such as walking or cycling and the use of other non-motorized vehicles;
- 15 b. *Electric personal mobility devices* refer to any electric motorized device
16 exclusively used for transporting an individual. This includes electric bicycles and
17 electric kick scooters, excluding motorcycles, tricycles, and other similar modes
18 of transport;
- 19 c. *End-of-trip facilities* refer to facilities that cater to active transport users' needs at
20 their destinations, which may include shower and changing rooms, short- and
21 long-term bicycle parking, bicycle repair stations, and lockers, among others;
- 22 d. *Non-motorized vehicles* refer to all forms of transportation that do not rely on an
23 engine or motor for movement, including, but not limited to, bicycles and small
24 wheeled non-motorized transport, such as skateboards, push scooters, and
25 handcarts; and
- 26 e. *Slow streets* refer to local roads providing safe and convenient access and use by
27 restricting motor vehicle access, use, or speed limits on certain days or hours in
28 the day, or any combination of such measures as may be determined by the
29 concerned local government unit (LGU), and prioritizing access and use by
30 pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized vehicle users.

31 **SEC. 4. Safe Pathways Network.** – Within twelve (12) months from the effectivity of
32 this Act, the Safe Pathways Network shall be established for the use of active transport:
33 *Provided*, That the use of electric personal mobility devices may be allowed subject to the
34 guidelines set by the LGUs, in consultation with the Department of Transportation (DOTr).

35 The Safe Pathways Network shall consist of the following:

- 36 a. *Bicycle lanes.* LGUs, in consultation with the DOTr and the Department of Public
37 Works and Highways (DPWH), shall identify and create a network of bicycle
38 lanes, which may be temporary or permanent in nature. The temporary lanes
39 alternatively known as pop-up lanes shall be set up, whenever necessary,
40 including during emergency situations: *Provided*, That along national roads in

Metro Manila, the DOTr, in coordination with the DPWH and the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), shall be the lead implementing agency.

Pop-up bicycle lanes may be marked with removable tapes and mobile signs, which can easily be placed and removed as necessary. Other physical barriers may also be used.

The bicycle lanes shall, as much as practicable, directly connect users to essential destinations, such as medical facilities, public and private facilities frequented by people, schools, and other similar places that may be identified. Motorcycles, tricycles, and other similar modes of transport, whether powered by fossil fuel or electricity, are prohibited from using the bicycle lanes unless otherwise designed for sharing with such modes of transport; and

b. *Walkways*. Walkways shall be designated or constructed for the use of pedestrians, including the use of strollers and other children's mobility equipment. Walkways may also be shared with non-motorized vehicles and electric personal mobility devices, subject to the guidelines set by the LGUs and taking into account the safety of pedestrians.

c. *Slow streets*. To complement the network of bicycle lanes, LGUs shall create a designated network of people-oriented slow streets, which may be temporary or permanent, that will provide safe and convenient access and use of specific local roads. Speed limits, access on certain days or hours in the day by motorized vehicles in slow streets, or any combination of such measures shall be determined by the concerned LGU. Motor vehicles of residents, delivery and trash collection vehicles servicing the area of the slow streets, and emergency services shall have access to slow streets subject to restrictions to be imposed by the LGU.

Slow streets shall be clearly marked with signage specifying the restrictions. LGUs shall identify priority areas for implementation within their jurisdiction. The DOTr and DPWH may provide assistance in the identification of slow streets.

SEC. 5. Institutional Facilities Pathways Priority. – LGUs shall coordinate with public and private institutions within their jurisdiction frequented by the public, such as but not limited to healthcare facilities and institutions, schools, churches, and government offices, to establish bicycle lanes, walkways and slow streets that can connect and provide safe access for the employees, customers, and clients of such institutions as well as the general public, and to encourage the establishment of end-of-trip facilities within such institutions.

Special attention shall be given towards the safety of healthcare workers and patients who use active transport to hospitals and other healthcare facilities.

SEC. 6. Traffic Laws, Rules and Regulations. – All users of non-motorized vehicles and electric personal mobility devices shall obey traffic laws, rules and regulations and shall be subject to existing penalties for violation.

The LGUs, in consultation with the DOTr and other appropriate agencies, shall issue ordinances for the safe use of bicycle lanes and the use of non-motorized vehicles and electric personal mobility devices.

1 **SEC. 7. *Bicycle Racks and other End-of-Trip Facilities.*** – All public places,
2 government offices, schools, places of work, mass transit and public utility vehicle terminals,
3 and commercial establishments, including but not limited to malls, banks, and hospitals, shall
4 provide, as far as practicable, secure bicycle or multi-use racks and other end-of-trip
5 facilities, as needed.

6 **SEC. 8. *Role of Public and Private Sectors.*** – Both the public and private sectors
7 shall promote active transport as a sustainable and healthy means of transportation and
8 develop the Safe Pathways Network as provided under Section 4 of this Act, by putting up
9 the necessary infrastructure facilities and programs. Further, the said sectors shall also
10 provide, as far as practicable, additional support, benefits, subsidies, and training that will
11 promote active transport.

12 LGUs shall incorporate the creation of Safe Pathways Network and their
13 corresponding infrastructure in their local development plans.

14 **SEC. 9. *Information and Education Campaign.*** – The DOTr, in coordination with
15 other government agencies and the private sector, shall establish an information and
16 education campaign on the importance of a shift to a sustainable and healthy mode of
17 transportation, and the establishment and use of the Safe Pathways Network. The campaign
18 shall be designed for all present and potential active transport users, traffic enforcers,
19 motorists, non-motorized vehicle and electric personal mobility device users, the commuting
20 public, and the community in general.

21 **SEC. 10. *Design and Construction of Permanent Bicycle Lanes and Walkways.*** –
22 Permanent bicycle lanes and walkways shall be designated or constructed with safety as the
23 paramount concern. As much as practicable, permanent bicycle lanes and walkways shall be
24 physically separated from the main road through physical barriers or shall be elevated or
25 otherwise constructed separately from the main road.

26 In areas where the physical separation of bicycle lanes and walkways is not possible,
27 the roads shall be adapted, as far as practicable, for shared use with active transport users.
28 Painted road markers may also be used for roads with limited space.

29 The DPWH, in coordination with the DOTr and LGUs, shall revise its manuals and
30 guidelines for road design and construction to include non-motorized vehicles and electric
31 personal mobility devices in the allocation of road space on national and local roads, and to
32 promote the safety of active transport and electric personal mobility device users.

33 **SEC. 11. *Sources of Funding.*** – The funds necessary for the implementation of this
34 Act shall be sourced from the amounts set aside by LGUs for infrastructure projects within
35 their jurisdiction, as well as from the appropriations of the DOTr and DPWH under the
36 General Appropriations Act, and the Special Road Fund from the Motor Vehicle User's
37 Charge as provided under Republic Act No. 8794, as amended.

38 **SEC. 12. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is declared
39 unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be affected
40 thereby.

1 **SEC. 13. *Repealing Clause.*** – All other laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations,
2 other issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
3 repealed or modified accordingly.

4 **SEC. 14. *Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
5 publication in three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,