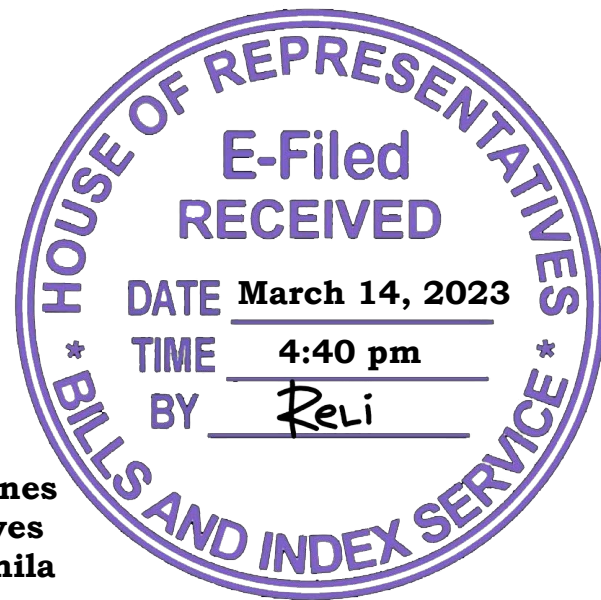




**Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila**

**Nineteenth Congress
First Regular Session**

HOUSE BILL NO. 7591



Introduced by Representative Rudys Caesar G. Fariñas I

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This proposed measure seeks the creation of the Office of Commuter Affairs. It is the policy of the State to raise the standard of services provided by public transportation companies and to guarantee that users of all public transportation systems have safe, effective, dependable, and comfortable travels. Therefore, there is a need to establish a government agency that shall oversee the welfare of the riding public, address their concerns and extend the necessary assistance. The salient features this bill are:

- The powers and functions of the Office of Commuter Affairs that are relevant to commuters in the different forms of transportation available.
- The organizational structure of the Office of Commuter Affairs that designates an Assistant Secretary of the Department of Transportation as the head, and two Executive Directors to facilitate operations and administrative services.
- Command Centers that will serve as a repository of information, as they work with local government units and various governmental agencies. In addition, the command center will use complaints, comments, and suggestions from the riding public to develop policies.

Hence, the passage of this measure is sought.

RUDYS CAESAR G. FARIÑAS I



**Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila**

**Nineteenth Congress
First Regular Session**

HOUSE BILL NO. 7591

Introduced by Representative Rudys Caesar G. Fariñas I

**AN ACT
CREATING THE OFFICE OF COMMUTER AFFAIRS, DEFINING ITS POWERS
AND FUNCTIONS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act may be cited as the “Office of Commuter
2 Affairs Act.”

3
4 SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to improve the quality
5 of services offered by public transport providers and ensure that the riding public
6 enjoys a safe, efficient, reliable and comfortable travels when using any mode of
7 public transportation. Towards this end, there is a need to establish a
8 government agency which shall oversee the welfare of the riding public, address
9 their concerns and extend them necessary assistance.

10
11 SEC. 3. Office of Commuter Affairs. – There is hereby created the Office of
12 Commuter Affairs, hereinafter referred to as the Office, as an attached agency of
13 the Department of Transportation, which shall regulate the quality of services
14 offered by public transport and oversee the welfare of the riding public by
15 addressing their concerns and providing them necessary assistance.

16
17 SEC. 4. Powers and Functions. – The Office shall exercise the following powers
18 and functions:

- 19
20 a. Assist the riding public and monitor transport providers nationwide to
21 ascertain that safety precautions and measures are installed to guarantee
22 the safety and efficiency of travel;
23
24 b. Coordinate with government agencies, including local government units,
25 responsible for and dealing with all kinds of road, rail, air and maritime

- 1 transportation to ensure safe, efficient and comfortable travel of
2 commuters;
- 3 c. Visit and inspect road stations, rail stations, seaports and airports to
4 check if these are compliant with existing laws, rules and regulations;
5
- 6 d. Report to the proper regulatory agencies any violation of existing laws,
7 rules and regulations committed by a public transport;
8
- 9 e. Recommend to the proper regulatory agencies appropriate measures to
10 improve the services of public transportation service;
11
- 12 f. Monitor transport facilities nationwide to ensure that they provide
13 appropriate access to all persons with disability;
14
- 15 g. Perform accident reconstruction of road crashes and train accidents and
16 issue subpoena duces tecum and subpoena ad testificandum for the
17 purpose;
18
- 19 h. Assist in the investigation of aviation and maritime accidents;
20
- 21 i. Undertake commuter education programs for the public to inform them of
22 their rights and responsibilities as commuters;
23
- 24 j. Provide legal assistance to any commuter who is a victim of public
25 transport accidents, whenever needed;
26
- 27 k. Operate help desks for the riding public;
28
- 29 l. Establish a command center communication facility responsible for
30 disseminating helpful information to the riding public such as traffic
31 situations, public safety and the like;
32
- 33 m. Coordinate with other government agencies to ensure the implementation
34 of this Act;
35
- 36 n. Establish field offices as may be necessary, consistent with the
37 requirement of economy and efficiency; and
38
- 39 o. Perform such other functions as may be necessary to carry out the
40 provisions of this Act.
41

42 SEC. 5. Organizational Structure. – The Office shall be headed by an Assistant
43 Secretary of the Department of Transportation who is a natural-born citizen, of
44 good moral character, and with recognized competence in any of the field of
45 transportation engineering, transportation security, or transportation accident
46 reconstruction. The Assistant Secretary shall be assisted by an Executive
47 Director for Operations and an Executive Director for Administration. The
48 following services shall be established to assist the Executive Directors:
49

- 50 a. Operations:
51 1. Commuter Affairs Service;
52 2. Commuter Education Service; and
53 3. Commuter Communications Service.
54
- 55 b. Administrative:

1. Finance Service;
2. Legal Service.

The Office of Commuter Affairs may establish field offices in key development areas in Northern Luzon, Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao which shall be headed by a Deputy Executive Director to better serve the riding public in these areas.

SEC. 6. Staffing Pattern of the Office. – Within three (3) months from the approval of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall determine and finalize the staffing pattern of the Office and submit the staffing pattern to the Department of Budget and Management for approval.

The Office may hire consultants who are of proven competence in any of the field of transportation engineering, transportation security, transportation accident reconstruction or accident cause analysis for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 7. Training and Education. – The Office shall spearhead a continuous training and education for its officers and employees, and other personnel of government agencies, including local government units, on matters related to public transportation, to equip them with the required skill in performing their functions in serving the riding public.

The Office shall conduct commuter education and disseminate information on the rights and obligations of the riding public and issue timely advisories on traffic situations, public safety and other information beneficial to the riding public.

For this purpose, the Office may establish a training and education center where the training and education of government personnel whose functions are related to public transportations may be conducted. The training and education center may also be used to educate the riding public.

SEC. 8. Command Center. – The Office shall maintain a command center which shall serve as the repository of information gathered from different government agencies and shall be responsible for the dissemination of information to the riding public. The command center shall gather information from the complaints, comments and suggestions of the riding public which may be used as basis for crafting policies. All government public transportation agencies shall make available their data and information and provide the same to the Office.

SEC. 9. Appropriation. – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the current appropriations of the Department of Transportation. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within six (6) months from the approval of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall promulgate the rules and regulations implementing the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 11. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,