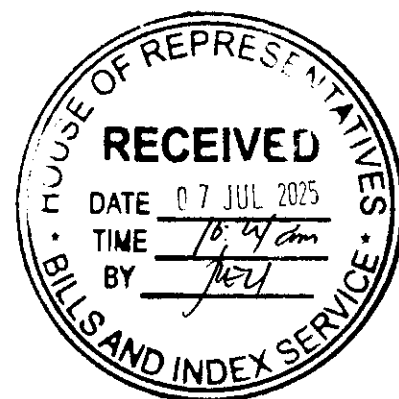




**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila**

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1375



**Introduced by Representative
ZIAUR-RAHMAN "ZIA" ALONTO ADIONG**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Urbanization in the Philippines continues to accelerate, with more than half of the country's population now living in cities. While urban areas serve as engines of economic growth, they also face persistent challenges: congestion, informal settlements, inadequate housing, strained infrastructure, environmental degradation, and vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters. These complex realities require a transformative and holistic approach to urban development—one that is inclusive, equitable, resilient, and sustainable.

This bill, to be known as the "Sustainable Cities and Communities Act," seeks to institutionalize a national framework for building cities and communities that are not only livable but also capable of fostering social equity, environmental stewardship, and economic vitality. It affirms the right to the city for all, especially the poor and marginalized, by mandating inclusive access to urban space, decent housing, quality public services, and meaningful participation in urban governance.

Anchored on the principles of spatial justice, ecological balance, disaster resilience, cultural diversity, and participatory urban governance, the bill provides a long-term vision aligned with *AmBisyon Natin 2040*, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, and the *New Urban Agenda*. It integrates targets and indicators that will enable government agencies and local government units (LGUs) to track progress and ensure accountability.

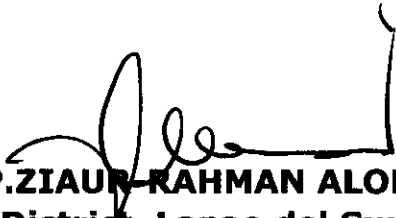
The measure empowers the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), in coordination with NEDA, DILG, PSA, and other relevant agencies, to formulate a National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan (NHUDSP) that harmonizes national and local strategies for sustainable urban development. It likewise institutionalizes financing mechanisms, including national budget allocations, LGU investment requirements, access to international climate and development funds, and incentives for private sector engagement.

Moreover, the bill mandates LGUs to mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in urban planning, promote urban greening and biodiversity, and build infrastructure that is both inclusive and climate-resilient. It also strengthens the role of the National Housing Authority in delivering sustainable and affordable housing for low-income and marginalized communities.

This proposed legislation not only addresses the urgent need for responsive and inclusive urban policy, but also ensures long-term, measurable, and multisectoral efforts in building sustainable cities and communities across the country.

In recognition of the importance and timeliness of this measure, it is worth noting that a version of this bill was passed on Third Reading by the House of Representatives during the 19th Congress.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



REP. ZIAUR RAHMAN ALONTO ADIONG
1st District, Lanao del Sur



**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila**

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1375

**Introduced by Representative
ZIAUR-RAHMAN "ZIA" ALONTO ADIONG**

**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND
COMMUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY**

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

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Sustainable Cities and Communities Act".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State shall, pursuant to the constitutional mandate to undertake a continuing program of urban land reform and housing which will make available to underprivileged and homeless citizens decent and affordable housing, access to basic services, and adequate employment opportunities, and in consonance with the constitutional guarantees on social justice, general welfare, public health, and ecological balance, recognize the right to the city of all which encompasses the collective access to sustainable resources, meaningful participation in urban planning and governance, and social inclusion.

It is likewise declared the policy of the State to promote inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urban development.

To these ends, the State shall ensure the inclusive use of urban space for housing and livelihood, improve access to basic services, develop integrated public transportation systems and green infrastructures, protect ecosystems, and manage risks to climate change and disasters.

Further, the State shall pursue programs to celebrate diversity and cultural heritage, foster creativity, innovation, and participation in urban planning and

policy-making, and maintain public order and safety through the prevention of crime, violence, and discrimination.

SEC. 3. Coverage. – All cities and municipalities, with a majority of barangays classified as urban by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), hereinafter referred to as urban areas, are hereby mandated to align their plans, programs, and activities towards the full implementation of this Act.

SEC. 4. Guiding Framework for Sustainable Cities and Communities. – To fulfill its economic, political, and social functions, a local government unit covered under this Act shall conform with and implement plans, programs, and activities, guided by Ambisyon 2040, the Philippine Standards for Sustainable Cities and Communities, and the following guiding principles:

(a) Inclusive urban circular economy which creates decent jobs with fair wages; supports entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation; ensures safe and non-discriminatory working environments; and promotes resource-efficient industries and consumption;

(b) Spatial justice which promotes multiple use of land to prevent forced evictions, displacement, marginalization, and gentrification; and ensures that urban development provides vulnerable and marginalized sectors the access to safe, adequate and affordable housing under different tenurial arrangements, giving priority to on-site resettlement, as well as universal healthcare, accessible education, adequate infrastructures, sustainable livelihoods, food security and nutrition; and safe and inclusive public spaces that foster social cohesion;

(c) Urban renewal which includes slum upgrading to improve housing, infrastructures, and services; urban greening, including the promotion of urban agriculture for food security and communal wellness; and the development of inclusive, safe, accessible and enjoyable open spaces and parks;

(d) Urban mobility and connectivity which provides for inclusive, safe, accessible, affordable, efficient and sustainable public transportation through the development of adequate transportation infrastructures, utilities and intermodal transportation systems, including non-motorized modes of transportation to strengthen global and urban-rural linkages and management;

(e) Digital connectivity through the establishment and maintenance of information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and fast, secure, stable, and affordable internet connectivity to strengthen global and urban-rural linkages;

(f) Urban safety which ensures freedom of all persons, regardless of gender, age, health status, income, nationality, ethnicity, and political, religious or sexual orientation from crimes and all forms of violence and discrimination in the workplace and public spaces;

(g) Ecological balance which requires the sustainable management of natural resources; protection and conservation of biodiversity, natural ecosystems, and landscapes; proper waste management and sanitation; provision of green infrastructures; and the development and use of renewable energy

sources in transportation, industry, and households to reduce carbon footprint and improve water and air quality;

(h) Disaster resilience and climate change adaptation by capacitating urban areas to adapt to and manage threats and risks posed by climate change and disasters upon the citizenry, especially vulnerable groups, and to facilitate post-disaster rehabilitation and recovery;

(i) Cultural diversity which respects, protects, and promotes the diverse livelihoods, customs, memory, identities, expressions, and sociocultural forms of its inhabitants; the preservation of tangible cultural heritage, such as artistic creations, historical sites and monuments; and safeguards intangible cultural heritage, such as oral traditions, performing arts, indigenous knowledge, and traditional skills, as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts, and cultural spaces associated therewith;

(j) Participatory urban governance which involves political participation in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of urban policies, and the budgeting of urban programs to promote transparency, effectiveness, and inclusiveness in the engagement of a diverse set of inhabitants and their organizations, especially of urban poor and marginalized groups, upholding communal spirit and supporting community-building; and

(k) Alignment of economic, social, and environmental policies between and among national, regional, city, and municipal government units, facilitating the achievement of the goals of each unit.

The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), in consultation with relevant government agencies, local government units, civil society organizations, the private sector, and the academe, within 180 days from the effectivity of this Act, harmonize existing national housing and urban development plans with this Act and formulate, in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and the PSA, a National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan (NHUDSP) to operationalize the goals of this Act, taking into consideration the unique and evolving economic, social, and institutional contexts of the country.

The NHUDSP shall provide short, medium, and long-term strategic plans to achieve the goals of this Act.

The NHUDSP shall also generate estimates and projections to determine present and future demand for infrastructures and services in urban areas, and shall identify policy and program interventions to address challenges to sustainable urban development, and specific periodic targets and indicators and investment requirements thereof.

SEC. 5. Targets and Indicators. – In preparing the NHUDSP, the DHSUD, NEDA, DILG, and the PSA shall be guided by the principles provided under Section 4 of this Act, as well as the targets and indicators set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda of the United Nations:

(a) Urban population living in slums - measured in terms of proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing;

(b) Public transport access - measured in terms of proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age, income group, and persons with disability;

(c) Sustainable urbanization rates - measured in terms of ratio of land

consumption rate to population growth rate;

(d) Urban planning and management - measured in terms of proportion of cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically;

(e) Protecting cultural heritage - measured in terms of total public and private expenditure per capita spent on the preservation, protection, and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage;

(f) Deaths and injuries from disasters - measured in terms of number of deaths, missing persons, and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population;

(g) Economic losses from disasters - measured in terms of direct economic loss in relation to global gross domestic product, damage to critical infrastructure, and number of disruptions to basic services, attributed to disasters;

(h) Solid waste management - measured in terms of proportion of urban solid waste regularly collected and with adequate final discharge out of total urban solid waste generated;

(i) Urban air quality - measured in terms of the annual mean levels of fine particulate matter;

(j) Open spaces in cities - measured in terms of average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age, and persons with disability;

(k) Safe spaces in cities - measured in terms of proportion of persons who are victims of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, persons with disability, and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months;

(l) Urban and regional planning - measured in terms of proportion of population living in cities that implement urban and regional development plans integrating population projections and resource needs, by size of city;

(m) Integrated disaster risk management - measured in terms of adoption and implementation of national disaster risk reduction strategies;

(n) Local disaster risk management - measured in terms of adoption and implementation of local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies;

(o) Urban economy - measured in terms of percentage of the labor force in the education and Research and Development sectors, and unemployment rate and number of businesses;

(p) Innovation-gear education - measured in terms of the number of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics higher education degree programs being offered by an educational institution in the city;

(q) Use of renewable energy - measured in terms of percentage of consumed energy from renewable sources;

(r) Universal healthcare - measured in terms of number of in-patient hospital beds and physicians;

(s) Food security - measured in terms of percentage of city budget spent on initiatives on urban agriculture;

(t) Water and wastewater management - measured in terms of water consumption per capita, percentage of households with access to basic water supply, percentage of treated wastewater that is reused;

(u) Access to ICT services - measured in terms of proportion of population that has access to fast, secure, stable, and affordable internet services to cater and accommodate online or digital transactions or services necessary for the conduct of daily activities in the modern society; and

(v) Such other targets and indicators as determined by DHSUD, NEDA, DILG, and PSA consistent with the principles that guide sustainable cities and communities as provided in Section 4 of this Act: Provided, That at any time, but not more than

once every five years, such targets and indicators may be reviewed or revised as the need arises to conform to changes and new developments brought about by the latest trends in institutionalizing sustainable cities and communities.

SEC. 6. Financial Mechanisms and Funding. – The national government shall allocate sufficient funds to support the programs, activities, and projects necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this Act. The funding will be sourced from the annual national budget, grants, donations, and other sources of funding for sustainable urban development initiatives. The allocation will also cover capacity-building efforts, research and development, monitoring, and other activities related to the establishment of sustainable cities and communities.

(a) A portion of the funds shall be dedicated to the implementation of the National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan (NHUDSP), which shall focus on urban planning, community building, poverty reduction, and resource management.

(b) Local government units (LGUs) shall allocate a percentage of their annual budgets for urban development, public transportation, housing, and climate resilience programs that contribute to sustainable cities and communities.

(c) The Department of Finance (DOF) shall explore and facilitate access to international climate finance and urban development funds to support the goals of this Act.

(d) Local and international private sector investments shall be encouraged, with the government providing incentives for environmentally sustainable business practices, urban infrastructure projects, and the adoption of green technologies.

SEC. 7. Monitoring and Reporting. – The implementation of this Act shall be monitored and evaluated annually by the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) in coordination with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). The monitoring mechanism will ensure that local government units (LGUs) are aligning their programs with the objectives of the Act and achieving the targets set in the NHUDSP.

(a) Each LGU shall submit an annual progress report to the DHSUD and NEDA detailing their activities, achievements, and any challenges encountered in implementing sustainable urban development programs.

(b) The report shall also include the financial allocation, spending, and resource mobilization strategies for sustainable urban development projects.

(c) A national assessment of the progress towards achieving sustainable cities and communities shall be submitted by the DHSUD to the President and Congress every year.

SEC. 8. Role of the Private Sector and Civil Society. – The private sector and civil society organizations (CSOs) play a crucial role in the successful implementation of this Act. Their participation shall be encouraged and strengthened in the following ways:

(a) The private sector shall be encouraged to invest in sustainable urban infrastructure, green technologies, public-private partnerships (PPPs), and in fostering innovation in urban solutions.

(b) Civil society organizations, including community-based groups, environmental NGOs, and labor organizations, shall be consulted in the urban planning process and actively involved in decision-making on issues affecting local communities.

(c) The government shall create platforms for dialogue and collaboration between the public and private sectors and CSOs to promote inclusive urban governance and transparent implementation of urban development projects.

SEC. 9. Integration of Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction. – Urban areas shall integrate climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies in their planning, policies, and programs. LGUs shall be encouraged to:

(a) Develop and implement climate-resilient infrastructures, such as green and blue spaces (e.g., parks, rivers, and wetlands), flood control systems, and sustainable drainage systems.

(b) Mainstream CCA and DRR in local zoning and building regulations to ensure that all new constructions are resilient to climate impacts such as flooding, heatwaves, and storms.

(c) Provide early warning systems and emergency response protocols to mitigate the impact of natural disasters, including the provision of evacuation plans and shelters for vulnerable populations.

SEC. 10. Role of the National Housing Authority. – The National Housing Authority (NHA) shall take the lead in implementing the urban development projects under this Act, particularly in providing affordable housing for marginalized and low-income families. It shall also support the rehabilitation and upgrading of informal settlements in partnership with local governments, civil society organizations, and private sector partners.

(a) The NHA shall develop and implement a comprehensive and integrated housing program that prioritizes sustainable and affordable housing solutions.

(b) It shall ensure that these housing projects are aligned with the principles of environmental sustainability, accessibility, and inclusivity for persons with disabilities, women, children, and senior citizens.

SEC. 11. Resilience to Natural and Man-Made Disasters. – The State shall ensure that urban areas are resilient to both natural and man-made disasters through comprehensive disaster risk management plans. The plans should include, but are not limited to:

(a) Identifying vulnerable areas and populations and providing the necessary measures for their protection;

(b) Investing in resilient infrastructures, such as flood barriers, earthquake-resistant buildings, and disaster-resistant transportation systems;

(c) Promoting the use of resilient materials and construction techniques in public and private buildings;

(d) Establishing local early warning systems and disaster management training programs to educate residents on preparedness.

SEC. 12. Urban Greening and Biodiversity. – To ensure that cities remain sustainable, urban greening programs shall be institutionalized in every urban area. These programs shall involve planting trees, creating green spaces, and improving urban ecosystems to increase biodiversity and ensure the well-being of city residents. The State shall ensure that:

(a) Local governments allocate a portion of their budgets for urban greening projects.

(b) There is a focus on preserving and enhancing the biodiversity of cities by protecting existing green spaces, parks, forests, and urban wetlands.

(c) Public and private sectors collaborate in creating eco-friendly infrastructures that integrate nature-based solutions to combat climate change and improve urban livability.

SEC. 13. Penalties for Non-Compliance. – Any government official or agency found violating the provisions of this Act shall be subject to penalties, including fines, suspension, or dismissal from service. Private sector entities and individuals who fail to comply with the rules and regulations set forth in this Act shall be subject to fines, sanctions, and legal action as appropriate.

CHAPTER II

FINAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), in consultation with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and other relevant stakeholders, shall issue the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 15. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 16. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or other issuances inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 17. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,