

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2126



Introduced by REP. RODOLFO "OMPONG" M. ORDANES

AN ACT PROVIDING ACCESSIBILITY OF SENIOR CITIZENS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORTATION, INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, AND OTHER FACILITIES AND SERVICES OPEN OR PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 344, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "ACCESSIBILITY LAW"

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1986 Philippines Constitution underscores the importance of protecting and promoting the welfare of senior citizens. Article II, Section 10, mandates the State to promote social justice in all phases of national development. Further, Article XIII, Section 11, affirms that the State shall prioritize the needs of the elderly and other vulnerable sectors. In keeping with these constitutional principles, this proposed measure addresses the challenges senior citizens face in accessing the built environment, transportation, information and communication technology (ICT), and other public facilities and services in the country by proposing amendments to the four-decade-old Batasang Pambansa Bilang 344.

Batas Pambansa Bilang 344, or the "Accessibility Law," was enacted in 1983. This pioneering legislative act laid the foundation for ensuring access to the physical environment for persons with disabilities. However, after four decades, the law requires updating to address the evolving needs of senior citizens, who also experience mobility challenges in a rapidly changing world. With advancements in technology and the increasing complexity of public services, barriers to accessibility have taken on new forms, particularly in ICT and transportation.

This bill proposes to amend Batas Pambansa Bilang 344 to expand its coverage and ensure a more inclusive environment for senior citizens. It seeks to enhance accessibility in the built environment by ensuring that public and private infrastructures, including government offices, commercial establishments, recreational facilities, and residential developments, are designed to accommodate the

needs of senior citizens. It also aims to improve accessibility in transportation systems by mandating transportation providers to adopt measures such as reserved seating, priority boarding, and accessible terminals to ensure that senior citizens can travel with ease and dignity.

Furthermore, the proposed measure addresses information and communication technology barriers by requiring ICT providers to make digital platforms, websites, and mobile applications senior citizen-friendly. The bill also seeks to expand access to other public facilities and services by mandating universal design principles be applied to all facilities and services open to the public, including parks, libraries, and healthcare facilities.

The amendments aim to comply with the country's obligations under international instruments such as the United Nations Principles for Older Persons and promote active aging by empowering senior citizens to participate fully in community life. By removing physical, technological, and systemic barriers, this proposed measure contributes to the realization of a society that values inclusivity and respect for the dignity of every individual.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rodolfo' or 'Omping', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

RODOLFO "OMPONG" M. ORDANES

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OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “ACCESSIBILITY LAW”

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

1 SECTION 1. *Title.* — This Act shall be known as the “Expanded Accessibility
2 for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities Act of 2025.”

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is the policy of the State to ensure the rights
4 and welfare of senior citizens and persons with disabilities by providing them access
5 to the built environment, transportation, information and communication technology,
6 and other public facilities and services. In line with this, the State shall adopt measures
7 to remove barriers that hinder their full participation in society.

8 SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* — For the purposes of this Act:

9 (a) *Accessibility* — refers to the ability of senior citizens and persons with
10 disability to access buildings, institutions, establishments, and public
11 utilities

12 (b) *Accessibility Features* — refer to the design of products, devices, services, or
13 environments that ensure senior citizens and persons with disability can
14 fully and independently use them.

15 (c) *Built Environment* — includes man-made surroundings that provide the
16 setting for human activity, such as buildings, parks, and transportation
17 systems.

18 (d) *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* — refers to all forms of
19 technology used to create, store, exchange, and utilize information in
20 various forms, including digital platforms, websites, and mobile
21 applications.

22 (e) *Persons with Disability* — refer to those with long-term physical, mental,

1 intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various
2 barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an
3 equal basis with others.

- 4 (f) *Senior Citizens* — refers to any Filipino citizen at least sixty (60) years old as
5 defined under Republic Act No. 9994 or the “*Expanded Senior Citizens Act of*
6 *2010.*”

7 SEC. 4. **Coverage.** — This Act applies to all government and privately owned
8 buildings for public use, including common areas in residential condominiums,
9 buildings, roads, and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, public
10 libraries, housing, medical facilities, restaurants, theaters, parks, workplaces, to
11 transportation, to information and communications, including information and
12 communication technologies and systems, and other facilities and services open or
13 provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.

14 SEC. 5. ***Granting Permits and Licenses to Build, Renovate, and Operate Built***
15 ***Environment to Ensure Accessibility.*** — To promote the realization of the rights of
16 senior citizens and persons with disabilities to participate fully in the social life and
17 the development of the societies in which they live and the enjoyment of the
18 opportunities available to other citizens, no license or permit shall be granted or issued
19 unless the owner or operator thereof shall include the installation and incorporation
20 of accessibility features in the design and work plan for the construction, repair, or
21 renovation of public and private buildings for public use. The following structures
22 shall be included in securing permits and licenses to build:

- 23 a. all educational institutions, especially public schools, state universities,
24 training institutions accredited by the Department of Education (DepEd),
25 Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and Technical Education and
26 Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and other educational and training
27 institutions;
28 b. airports and terminals for buses, trains, ships, ferries, public utility vehicles
29 (such as aircraft, public jeepneys, buses, trains, and other local mode of
30 transportation);
31 c. recreational centers, sports complexes, gymnasiums, public multi-purpose
32 buildings, evacuation centers;
33 d. shopping centers, public markets, and related establishments;
34 e. public parking places, parks, tourist destinations and accommodations, and
35 restaurants;
36 f. hospitals, barangay health units, diagnostic centers, medical clinics,
37 rehabilitation centers, and other health facilities intended for public use;
38 g. government offices, workplaces, action centers, and all other facilities that
39 provide services to the public.

40 SEC. 6. ***Accessibility in Buildings Intended for Public Use.*** — All buildings, as
41 defined in Republic Act No. 6541 or the “National Building Code of the Philippines,”
42 sports and recreational facilities, including outdoor and indoor facilities provided or
43 open to the public shall be made accessible and safe to all users by providing the
44 following accessibility features to enhance the mobility and safety of all senior citizens
45 and persons with disabilities:

- 46 a. parking space for vehicles driven by or carrying senior citizens and persons
47 with disabilities, including those using mobility devices;
48 b. ramps with handrails;

- c. escalators and elevators;
- d. directional tactile leading to toilets, stairs, elevators, and other facilities;
- e. wheelchair-accessible toilets with grab bars (at least two cubicles in common toilets for male and female) with sink wash area accessible for wheelchair users and other types of disabilities;
- f. non-skid tiles on walkways and inside the toilets;
- g. entrance door in compliance with the agreed measurements;
- h. wheelchair-accessible rooms for hotels and other accommodations;
- i. audio warning signals;
- j. signages usable for senior citizens and persons with disability;
- k. and other accessibility features that may be provided in this Act.

SEC. 7. *Accessibility to Transportation.* — All land, sea, and air transport vehicles shall have accessibility features such as priority boarding, reserved seating, accessible terminals, and other accommodations to ensure the ease of mobility and facilitate safe boarding and disembarkation of senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

SEC. 8. *Accessibility to Information Communication and Technology.* — The Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) shall ensure that information and communication technology providers make digital platforms, websites, and mobile applications accessible to senior citizens and persons with disabilities, incorporating features such as larger text sizes, voice-assisted technology, and simplified user interfaces, which shall also align with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

SEC. 9. *Monitoring and Compliance.* The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) shall lead the creation of monitoring and compliance teams in coordination with the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC), National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), and the local government units to ensure the full implementation of the law.

SEC. 10. *Penalty Clause.* — Any person violating any provision of this Act or the rules and regulations shall suffer the following penalties:

- a. For the first violation, a fine of not less than Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand (Php 250,000.00) but not exceeding Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 500,000.00) or imprisonment of not less than six (6) months but not more than two (2) years, or both at the discretion of the court.
- b. For any subsequent violations, a fine of not less than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 500,000.00) but not exceeding One Million Pesos (Php 1,000,000.00) or imprisonment for not less than two (2) years but not more than six (6) years, or both at the discretion of the court.
- c. If the violator is a corporation, organization, or similar entity, the officers shall be liable, including the building administrator and local government unit (LGU) building officials directly involved.
- d. If the violator is an alien or a foreigner, he/she will be deported immediately after the sentence is served without further deportation proceedings.

SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be included in the budget of all government agencies. Thereafter, such

1 amount shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its
2 enactment into law.

3 SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — The DPWH, in coordination
4 with the DOTr, DICT, DILG, NCSC, NCDA, and relevant government agencies and
5 stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the
6 provisions of this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

7 SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared invalid
8 or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force
9 and effect.

10 SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and
11 regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby
12 repealed or modified accordingly.

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

15 *Approved,*