

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

20th Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3598



Introduced by: Rep. Antonio T. Kho, Rep. Elisa "Olga" T. Kho

AN ACT

Establishing the Philippine Bridge Safety and Regulatory Authority (PBSRA), Defining Its Powers and Functions, Providing Funds Therefor, and Prescribing Penalties for Violations

EXPLANATORY NOTE

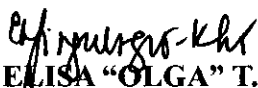
The recent collapse of several bridges across the country, most notably the Cabagan–Santa Maria Bridge in Isabela, has exposed a critical weakness in how we manage the safety of our nation's bridge infrastructure. These incidents are not isolated. They point to long-standing gaps in technical oversight, inspection routines, and accountability that can no longer be ignored.

This proposed measure seeks to establish the **Philippine Bridge Safety and Regulatory Authority (PBSRA)**—a centralized and independent body composed of technically capable professionals tasked with ensuring that every bridge in the country is properly planned, safely designed, carefully constructed, regularly inspected, and adequately maintained.

A key function of the PBSRA will be to implement a **Bridge Health and Safety Monitoring System**, a proactive tool to detect structural weaknesses before they become fatal. It will also introduce digital tracking systems for better transparency and impose legal penalties on those who fail to uphold the standards set by this law.

We owe it to the families affected, to the communities cut off, and to future generations to act now. For their safety, and for the integrity of our public infrastructure, I strongly urge the immediate passage of this bill.


REP. ANTONIO T. KHO
1st District, Masbate


REP. ELISA "OLGA" T. KHO
2nd District, Masbate

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE BRIDGE SAFETY AND REGULATORY
AUTHORITY (PBSRA), DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING
FUNDS THEREFOR, AND PRESCRIBING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

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

SECTION 1. Short Title - This Act shall be known as the "**Philippine Bridge Safety and Regulatory Authority Act of 2025.**"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy

The State recognizes the vital role of bridges in national connectivity, public safety, and economic development. It shall be the policy of the State to:

- a) Ensure that all public bridges are planned, designed, constructed, and maintained to the highest engineering and safety standards;
- b) Establish a central regulatory authority with technical independence and enforcement powers over bridge infrastructure;
- c) Mandate transparency, accountability, and use of advanced technologies in bridge project monitoring such as but not limited to real-time digital monitoring and third-party audits;
- d) Enforce penalties for acts of negligence, non-compliance, and data falsification that compromise public welfare.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms As used in this Act:

- a) Bridge – Any structure including viaducts and flyovers that spans a physical obstacle to facilitate movement;
- b) Critical Deficiency – A defect that significantly compromises the structural integrity of a bridge;
- c) Independent Peer Review – A technical evaluation conducted by PBSRA-accredited experts or qualified firms that have no financial, contractual, or professional ties to the original project's designers, contractors, or implementing agencies;

- d) Digital Monitoring System – A centralized digital platform for real-time project tracking, data collection, and structural health monitoring.

SECTION 4. Creation of the Philippine Bridge Safety and Regulatory Authority (PBSRA)

The Philippine Bridge Safety and Regulatory Authority (PBSRA), an independent regulatory and quasi-judicial body, is hereby created and tasked with ensuring the safety, integrity, and resilience of all public bridges in the country.

The PBSRA shall function with fiscal and operational autonomy and shall be an attached agency preferably to the Office of the President solely for purposes of policy coordination and administrative reporting.

This institutional structure shall mirror other specialized infrastructure authorities such as the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) for dams and canals, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) for marine structures, and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) for airports. Just as these agencies centralize planning and regulation of vital infrastructure systems, the PBSRA shall perform a parallel role for all public bridges across the country.

The Authority shall be situated in Metro Manila to ensure effective and efficient implementation of its mandate.

SECTION 5. Powers and Functions of the PBSRA

The Authority shall have the following powers and functions:

a) Planning and Design Oversight

- Formulate and update national standards for bridge planning and design;
- Require mandatory independent peer review for all public bridge projects exceeding ₱10 million;
- Approve or reject bridge designs based on technical compliance and safety criteria.

b) Construction and Quality Control

- Conduct unannounced inspections during construction;
- Enforce stop-work orders for violations or critical deficiencies;
- Require third-party quality assurance testing for structural materials.

c) Maintenance and Safety Monitoring

- Implement a mandatory yearly inspection program for all existing bridges;
- Maintain a National Bridge Database and Structural Health Rating System;
- Deploy real-time digital monitoring devices for major bridges and those located in hazard-prone areas.

d) Legal and Enforcement Authority

- Impose administrative sanctions, fines, and suspensions;
- Recommend blacklisting of erring contractors and professionals to the DPWH and relevant licensing boards;
- Refer criminal negligence cases to the Department of Justice.

SECTION 6. Organizational Structure

The PBSRA shall be governed by a Board of Directors, which shall serve as the principal policymaking body of the Authority.

(a) Composition of the Board of Directors:

Chairperson – Must possess strong professional qualifications to be determined by the President in consultation with the Board. Must have at least 10 years of relevant experience in civil and structural engineering, preferably with experienced in the design and construction of bridges.

Five (5) Members representing the following sectors:

- Public Transportation accredited organization
- Structural Engineering Profession — licensed civil/structural engineer from an accredited professional organization
- Legal and Regulatory Compliance
- Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience
- Academe — representative from a recognized academic institution with expertise in structural or civil engineering

All members shall be appointed by the President and serve a fixed term of six (6) years without reappointment.

(b) Management:

- The Administrator shall serve as the chief operating officer of the Authority, responsible for the implementation of the Board's policies and day-to-day operations. The Administrator must be a licensed civil or structural engineer with at least 10 years of experience in infrastructure design, construction, or regulation.

(c) Technical and Administrative Units:

The PBSRA shall maintain the following technical divisions:

- Bridge Planning and Design Division
- Bridge Safety, Inspection and Forensics Investigation Division
- Quality Control Division
- Policy Research and Standards Division
- Legal and Enforcement Division
- Internal Audit and Risk Management Unit
- Digital Monitoring and Analytics Division
- Human Resources
- Other administrative units/offices

The Authority shall ensure adequate staffing, training, and continuous capacity development to uphold technical competence and institutional independence.

To promote efficiency and avoid redundancy with existing government agencies, the PBSRA may:

- Engage technical consultants and independent experts;

- Enter into inter-agency partnerships through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs);
- Outsource specialized functions such as peer reviews, digital analytics, and forensic testing;
- Partner with academic institutions and professional organizations for technical validation and capacity building

SECTION 7. Funding and Budget

- a) An initial amount of ₱5,000,000,000 shall be appropriated from the General Appropriations Act. b) Subsequent funding shall be sourced from:
- 1% of the annual DPWH infrastructure budget;
 - Fees collected from inspections, certifications, and design reviews;
 - Penalties and administrative fines imposed by the Authority;
 - Up to 10% of bridge toll revenues from national toll bridges, subject to existing laws.

SECTION 8. Penalties

- a) Any individual or firm found to have:
- Knowingly used substandard or falsified materials:
Shall be penalized with a fine equivalent to 200% of the material value and imprisonment of six (6) to twelve (12) years.
 - Falsified inspection, testing, or design reports:
Shall face lifetime disqualification from public infrastructure projects and imprisonment of six (6) to twelve (6) years.
 - Willfully ignored PBSRA-issued stop-work or repair orders:
Shall be fined ₱1,000,000 per violation and held criminally liable for gross negligence.
- b) In cases where a bridge collapse results in at least one (1) fatality or serious injury, and such collapse is linked to any of the violations enumerated in Section 9(a), the responsible individual(s) or entity shall be subject to the maximum penalties provided under this Act, including:
- Imprisonment of twelve (12) years without eligibility for parole,
 - Permanent disqualification from holding any public or private contract involving infrastructure, and
 - A fine of not less than ₱10,000,000. Such incidents shall automatically trigger criminal, civil, and administrative investigations by the appropriate government agencies.
- c) These penalties shall be without prejudice to civil and administrative remedies under other applicable laws.

SECTION 9. Transitory Provisions

- a) All existing public bridges must be inspected and rated by the PBSRA within three (3) years of this Act's effectivity.

- b) All ongoing and upcoming bridge projects must comply with PBSRA technical standards within six (6) months of issuance of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR).

SECTION 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations

The PBSRA Board shall promulgate the IRR of this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

SECTION 11. Separability Clause

If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 12. Repealing Clause

All laws, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. Effectivity

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

APPROVED.