

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*First Regular Session* )



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**HOUSE BILL No. 6115**

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**INTRODUCED BY HON. RICARDO S. CRUZ, JR.**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Articles II and XII of the 1987 Philippine Constitution affirm that the State shall promote a just and dynamic social order aimed at alleviating poverty and improving the quality of life for all, through the provision of adequate social services and employment. Furthermore, it mandates Congress to prioritize legislation that upholds human dignity and addresses social, economic, and political inequalities. In line with this, the State is tasked to implement a continuing program of urban land reform and housing that ensures access to affordable, decent housing and basic services, especially for underprivileged and homeless citizens.

A study jointly conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Organization for Migration, and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, entitled *Overview of Internal Migration in Philippines*,<sup>1</sup> highlights that the urban population in the Philippines has increased by over 50 million in the last 50 years. This rapid urban migration resulted from the widespread misconception that urban areas offer better opportunities for the rural populations. However, this has instead led to the increase in the incidence of poverty and inequality, as well as homelessness and informal settlement in major cities.

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<sup>1</sup> Overview of Internal Migration in Philippines (A policy brief jointly produced by UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, and UN-Habitat). (n.d.). *UNESCO*.  
<https://bangkok.unesco.org/sites/default/files/assets/article/Social%20and%20Human%20Sciences/publications/philippines.pdf>

The 2020 Census of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) revealed that the urban population grew by 7.2 million from 2015 to 2020, with a total of 58.93 million people or 54 percent of the national population now residing in urban barangays.<sup>2</sup>

The Philippines, a signatory to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is committed to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our national development plans and policies. One of these goals is SDG 11, which aims to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”<sup>3</sup>

This bill seeks to fulfill our international obligations with regard to the SDGs, and address the problems brought about by rapid urban growth. It underscores the importance of transitioning our current cities and communities into safe and sustainable environments. It promotes improved quality of life, resilience to disaster risk and climate change, the efficient use of natural resources, and the enhancement of environmental, social, and economic well-being in our cities.

In line with the policy adopted by its original proponent Senator Pia S. Cayetano, this bill therefore serves as a counterpart measure. It is for the reasons stated above that the passage of this measure is earnestly sought.

  
**RICARDO S. CRUZ, JR.**

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<sup>2</sup> Urban Population of the Philippines (2020 Census of the Population and Housing). (2022). *Philippine Statistics Authority*.  
[https://psa.gov.ph/system/files/phcd/2022-12/1\\_PR\\_Urban%2520Population\\_RML\\_063022\\_ONS-signed.pdf](https://psa.gov.ph/system/files/phcd/2022-12/1_PR_Urban%2520Population_RML_063022_ONS-signed.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Sustainable Development Goal 11. (n.d.). *United Nations*.  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgl>

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

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as “Sustainable Cities and Communities Act.”

Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The 1987 Constitution mandates the undertaking of an urban land reform and housing program that provides decent, affordable housing, and basic services to underprivileged and homeless citizens in urban centers and resettlement areas, while also ensuring access to employment opportunities.

Pursuant thereto, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to make cities safe and sustainable by ensuring access to safe and affordable housing, and upgrading slum settlements.

The State shall likewise invest in public transport, create green public spaces, and improve urban planning and management in a way that is both participatory and inclusive.

Sec. 3. *Model for Sustainable Cities and Communities.* – All cities and communities shall transition into sustainable cities and communities. A sustainable city or community shall have the following:

- a) Affordable housing;
- b) Accessible healthcare services and facilities;
- c) Accessible social services to all, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged;
- d) Child care facilities, youth centers, centers for senior citizens and other sectors;
- e) Urban planning and infrastructure that enhances resilience to natural disasters and climate change;
- f) Inclusive design and services that respect cultural, gender, and ability diversity;
- g) Efficient, accessible, and affordable public transport system;
- h) Alternative means of transportation, other than private and public vehicles, such as by walking, biking, and other eco-friendly and non-motorized modes;
- i) Safe, accessible, and enjoyable areas of open space;
- j) Preference for use of renewable resources;
- k) Waste management system, where circular economy practices are adopted to minimize waste, and encourage reuse and responsible production and consumption;
- l) Systems and regulations to ensure clean air and safe, potable water;
- m) Capacity for local food production, through but not limited to urban farming and the creation of community gardens;
- n) Energy efficient homes;
- o) Strong community linkages to deal with issues such as peace and order; and
- p) Access to sports and cultural activities.

Sec. 4. *Indicators.* – The Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEVDep), taking into consideration SDG 11 of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, shall set targets based on the following indicators to determine if a city or community has fully transitioned into a sustainable city or community:

- a) Urban population living in slums – measured by the proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing;
- b) Public transport access – measured by the proportion of the population that has convenient access to public transport, with data disaggregated by sex, age, and persons with disabilities;
- c) Sustainable urbanization rates – measured by the ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate;
- d) Urban planning management – measured by the proportion of cities with a direct participation of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically;
- e) Protecting cultural heritage – measured by the 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 natural disasters – measured by the number of deaths, missing persons, and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population;
- g) Economic losses from natural disasters – measured by the direct economic loss relative to global Gross Domestic Product, the extent of damage to critical infrastructure, and the number of disruptions to basic services, all attributed to disaster events;
- h) Solid waste management – measured by the proportion of total urban solid waste that is regularly collected and managed through appropriate final disposal practices;

- i) Urban air pollution – measured by 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 ,with data disaggregated by sex, age, and persons with disabilities;
- k) Safe spaces in cities – measured by the proportion of individuals, with data disaggregated by sex, age, disability status, and location, who have experienced any form of harassment within the past 12 months;
- l) Urban and regional planning – measured by the proportion of population living in cities that implement urban and regional development plans integrating population projections and resource needs by the size of city;
- m) Integrated disaster risk management – measured by the adoption and implementation of national disaster risk reduction strategies;
- n) Local disaster risk management – measured by the adoption and implementation of local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies; and
- o) Such other targets based on indicators to be determined by the DEVDep, consistent with the model of sustainable cities and communities provided in Section 3 of this Act.

*Sec. 5. Planning and Sustainable Development Officer. –*

- a) Each city and municipality shall appoint a Planning and Sustainable Development Officer, with the following qualifications:
  - i) A citizen of the Republic of the Philippines;
  - ii) A resident of the city or municipality where he/she will be appointed;
  - iii) Possesses good moral character;
  - iv) Holder of a college degree preferably in urban or environmental planning, development studies, economics, public

administration, or any related course from a recognized college or university;

- v) First grade civil service eligible or its equivalent; and
- vi) Acquired at least five (5) years' experience in development planning or in any related field.

b) The Planning and Sustainable Development Officer shall take charge of the Planning and Sustainable Development Office, and shall:

- i) Formulate and integrate economic, social, physical, and other development plans and policies for consideration of the city or municipality that will detail their transition to sustainability, taking into account the qualities for a model sustainable city or community, as provided in Sections 3 and 4 of this Act;
- ii) Ensure that the principles of inclusivity, resiliency and sustainability are integrated in local development plans and policies, which shall include the review and adoption of policies that seek to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and other similar targets identified by the national government and the people of the city or municipality;
- iii) Apply the concept and methodologies of futures thinking, which takes a long-term, multi-perspective approach to consider different outcomes, conduct continuing studies, research, and training programs necessary to evolve and innovate plans and programs for implementation, with the goal of achieving the city or municipality's desired future;
- iv) Integrate and coordinate all sectoral plans and studies undertaken by the different functional groups or agencies;
- v) Monitor and evaluate the implementation of different development programs, projects, and activities in the city or municipality in accordance with the approved development plans;

- vi) Prepare comprehensive plans and other development planning documents for the consideration of the local development council;
  - vii) Analyze the income and expenditure patterns, and formulate and recommend fiscal plans and policies for consideration of the finance committee of the city or municipality, as provided under the Local Government Code of 1991, as amended;
  - viii) Promote people's participation in development planning within the city or municipality; and
  - ix) Exercise supervision and control over the secretariat of the local development council.
- c) The Planning and Sustainable Development Officer shall also exercise such other duties and functions and perform other powers as provided for under the Local Government Code of 1991, as amended, and those that are prescribed by law or ordinance.

*Sec. 6. Support from the National Government.* – The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall provide the necessary technical assistance and resource augmentation to Local Government Units (LGUs) to assist them in transitioning into sustainable cities and communities.

The DEVDep and other related agencies are also hereby mandated to extend the necessary support and provide relevant input towards the effective implementation of this Act.

*Sec. 7. Incentives for Transitioning into Sustainable Cities or Communities.* – LGUs shall, as far as practicable, transition existing local government offices and facilities to accommodate sustainable infrastructure and more sustainable practices such as the use of solar panels, rainwater harvesting, use of sustainable building materials, and enhanced ventilation and insulation, among others. New local government offices and facilities shall be constructed with a focus on sustainability. LGUs shall likewise transition, as far as practicable, to paperless transactions in their operations, without compromising the quality and timely delivery of services.

LGUs shall also encourage private establishments within their jurisdiction, through monetary or non-monetary incentives, to transition to and adopt more sustainable infrastructure and practices.

The DILG shall develop a grant or cash award incentive scheme for LGUs that are able to achieve their annual targets set by the DEVDep related to transitioning into sustainable cities and communities.

Sec. 8. *Authority to Enter into Contracts and Agreements.* – LGUs are hereby authorized to enter into contracts or agreements and receive grants, as may be necessary for the attainment of the objective of this Act.

Sec. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, decrees, executive orders, presidential issuances, rules and regulations or any part thereof, which are inconsistent herewith, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Sec. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason or reasons, any part or provisions of this Act shall be declared or held unconstitutional or invalid, other provision or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Sec. 11. *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,