

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6257



Introduced by
REPRESENTATIVE MIKAELA ANGELA B. SUANSING

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
PROVIDING FOR THE PURPOSE FUEL SUBSIDY TO PUBLIC UTILITY VEHICLE
OPERATORS AND DRIVERS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to institutionalize the Public Transport Assistance Program (PTAP), also known as the “Pantawid Pasada” Fuel Program of the national government under Executive Order No. 32, Series of 2011.

The disruptions in the supply chain of crude oil, mainly brought about by the Russia-Ukraine conflict, triggered the steady rise in fuel prices globally. Accordingly, as a net oil importer, this pushed pump prices in the Philippines resulting in record-high figures. The spike in fuel cost has also set off socio-economic repercussions in the country, especially for the transport sector, which has yet to fully recover from the COVID-19 pandemic’s disruptions.

Side by side the pandemic’s effects, the rising fuel cost has vastly affected our public utility vehicles (PUVs). They can hardly cope with the increasing cost of living vis-à-vis their meager income from driving public transportation. Despite the provisional increase to the minimum fare of riding jeepneys, the cost of diesel has steadily increased thereby cancelling out any kind of relief for our drivers.

In view of the foregoing, this bill seeks to institutionalize the Pantawid Pasada Fuel Program or the PTAP, which provides cash assistance to marginalized drivers of PUVs. The noble intention of the bill also shares the spirit of the TRAIN Law, which mandates that PUV drivers shall receive cash assistance from the national government out of the revenues generated from the collection of excise tax on fuel.

While some interest groups have advocated for the suspension of the collection of excise tax, we cannot enact a measure that will precariously impinge upon our current tax base. On the other hand, the PTAP has been proven effective as a safety net to cushion the adverse impact of oil price hikes. Hence, it is fitting to continue this program to help ease the burden of the transport sector without totally cutting off a major revenue source of the national government.

Under the proposed measure, the cash subsidy shall be given to operators and drivers of road-based motor vehicles that provide conveyance to the general public such as buses, taxis, vans for hire, jeepneys, multicab, tricycles and motor taxis for period of ten (10) years. Operators of public utility vehicles maintaining a fleet of more than five (5) units are excluded from availing cash subsidies under this Act.

In recognition of the salient role of the transport sector to the country's progress and development, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



MIKAELA ANGELA B. SUANSING

1st District of Nueva Ecija

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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 “*Pantawid Pasada Fuel Program Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to uplift the standard of living and improve the quality of life of public utility vehicle operators and drivers in recognition of their role as prime movers of the economy. Towards this end, the State shall enact laws that will mitigate the impact of fuel price hike by providing fuel subsidy to qualified public utility vehicle operators and drivers.

SEC. 3. *Public Transport Assistance Program (PTAP).* – The Public Transport Assistance Program (PTAP), as embodied in Executive Order No. 32, Series No. 2011, is hereby established and institutionalized as a regular program of the national government to address the adverse effects of oil price increases to operators and drivers of public utility vehicles. The cash subsidy shall be given to qualified beneficiaries in accordance with the criteria laid down by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB).

SEC. 4. *Qualified Beneficiaries.* – The cash subsidy shall be given to operators and drivers of road-based motor vehicles that provide conveyance to the general public such as bus, jeepneys, and tricycles as determined by the LTFRB. Operators of public utility vehicles maintaining a fleet of more than five (5) units are excluded from availing cash subsidies under this Act. The LTFRB, in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall maintain a list of qualified beneficiaries for a period of ten (10) years and shall conduct a revalidation of beneficiaries every two (2) years.

SEC. 5. *Amount of Subsidy.* – The amount of subsidy shall be based on the following schemes:

- (a) Bus Operators and Drivers – shall receive a one-time subsidy per year which shall not be less than SEVEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P7,500.00) but not more than TEN THOUSAND PESOS (P10,000.00);
- (b) Taxi and Van for Hire Operators and Drivers – shall receive a one-time subsidy per year which shall not be less than FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000.00) but not more than SEVEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P7,500.00);
- (c) Jeepney and Multicab Operators and Drivers – shall receive a one-time subsidy per year which shall not be less than FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000.00) but not more than SEVEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P7,500.00); and
- (d) Tricycle and Motorcycle Taxi (Habal Habal) Operators and Drivers – shall receive a one-time subsidy per year which shall not be less than THREE THOUSAND PESOS (P3,000.00) but not more than FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000.00).

SEC. 6. *Advisory Council.* – An Advisory Council is hereby created to determine the amount of cash subsidy which shall be given to qualified beneficiaries, composed of the following:

- (a) Secretary of Transportation as Chairperson;
- (b) Chairperson of the LTFRB as Co-Chairperson;
- (c) Secretary of Energy;
- (d) Secretary of Labor;
- (e) Secretary of Budget and Management;
- (f) Secretary of Finance; and
- (g) Secretary of the Interior and Local Government; as members.

The Advisory Council shall meet at least twice a year for its regular meeting and may call a special meeting in case of extraordinary increase in the price of fuel. The secretariat of the LTFRB shall act as the secretariat of the Advisory Council.

SEC. 7. *Report of the Program.* – The LTFRB shall annually publish a full report of the PTAP covering its implementation. The report shall be submitted to the President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate.

SEC. 8. *Transparency Program.* – The LTFRB shall regularly and timely post an update on its website a report of financial disclosures and information about the PTAP's beneficiaries based on geographical area, social, economic and cultural circumstances.

SEC. 9. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the DOTr. Thereafter such sum as may be necessary for its continuous implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Chairperson of the LTFRB and the Secretary of the DOTr shall, in coordination with the Members of the Advisory Council, issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and parts or provisions thereof that are contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,