

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **6813**



Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Mobility is not merely a logistical concern; it is a condition for the exercise of many fundamental rights. When mobility is denied or constrained, access to essential services such as education, employment, and healthcare is likewise restricted. In the Philippines, commuting remains a deeply inequitable and inefficient experience, especially for vulnerable sectors including the less fortunate, elderly, women, youth, persons with disabilities, and workers who rely on Public Transport (PCIJ, 2021).¹ In Metro Manila alone, economic losses from traffic congestion were estimated at ₱3.5 billion per day in 2017, projected to rise to ₱5.4 billion per day without structural reforms. These costs reflect both financial and human consequences: long hours lost in traffic, unsafe or inaccessible infrastructure, and limited freedom of movement for millions of Filipino commuters. (JICA, 2019).²

This bill establishes a Magna Carta for Commuters, affirming the right of every person to safe, reliable, convenient, accessible, inclusive, and affordable mobility. It creates a comprehensive framework of commuter rights, including but not limited to the right to adequate Public Transport services; the right to infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, and persons with disabilities; the right to clean air during travel; the right to timely travel information; and the right to redress in cases of service breakdown. The measure also mandates that Active Transport and Public Transport be prioritized in the allocation of public road

¹ PCIJ (2021). Terminal: The constant agony of commuting amid the pandemic – a photo essay. <http://pcij.org/2021/05/18/terminal/>. Date last accessed: August 4, 2025.

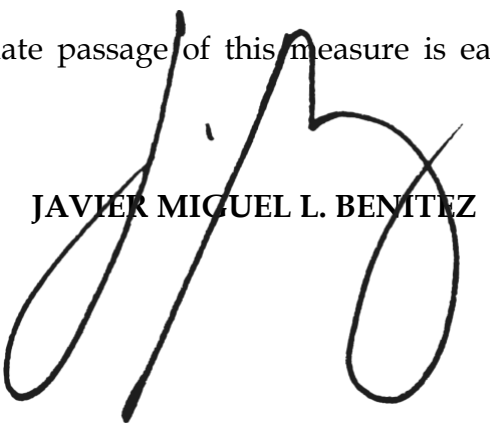
² JICA (2019). FOLLOW-UP SURVEY ON ROADMAP FOR TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT FOR GREATER CAPITAL REGION (GCR) FINAL REPORT SUMMARY. https://openjicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/1000041638_03.pdf. Date last accessed: August 4, 2025.

space, and that the planning, engineering, and operation of transport systems be responsive to the needs of non-motorized and vulnerable users.

This bill is a counterpart to the Senate version introduced by Senator Mark Villar and consistent with parallel measures filed in the 20th Congress. It affirms the State's obligation to promote a just and dynamic social order and to uphold the dignity and rights of all persons.³ It also operationalizes the policy commitments articulated in the Philippine Road Safety Action Plan 2023–2028 and advances a long-overdue rights-based, commuter-centered mobility framework.

Several similar or related measures were filed in both chambers of the 19th Congress seeking to institutionalize a Magna Carta for Commuters or advance commuter rights and mobility equity. These include proposals for walkable and bikeable communities, commuter welfare standards, and public transport reforms. However, the majority of these bills remained pending with the House Committee on Transportation. The reintroduction of this measure builds on prior efforts by consolidating key provisions into a comprehensive rights-based framework and addressing persistent policy gaps in national mobility planning and implementation.

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



JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ

³ 1987 Constitution, Article II, Section 9 and Section 11.

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AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MAGNA CARTA OF COMMUTERS

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 “*Proteksyon Para sa Pasahero Act.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State hereby recognizes mobility as a basic human need. Without mobility, citizens cannot access basic services such as healthcare and education or exercise fundamental freedoms. Thus, the State shall ensure that mobility is accessible to people of all ages, abilities, genders, and economic statuses, and not only to those who are physically fit, have private motor vehicles, or have financial means.

The State further recognizes the right of the commuters to travel safely, conveniently, and reliably. To this end, the State shall develop and establish mobility infrastructure and transportation services to promote commuter welfare and improve mobility. The welfare of the commuter shall also be the paramount objective in all decisions regarding mobility infrastructure and transportation services.

The State further guarantees the rights of all citizens, including the commuter sector, to participate in the policy formulation, planning, implementation, management, monitoring, evaluation, and decision-making processes of all institutions, programs, projects, and services that affect the rights,

welfare, and privileges of commuters. To implement the foregoing policy, the State shall provide the necessary mechanisms, human and financial resources, and legal measures to enable its citizens to enjoy the rights embodied in this Act fully.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean;

(a) *Active Transport* – refers to non-motorized means of travel, including walking or using a bicycle;

(b) *Activity Center* – refers to a place in a city or municipality where people gather regularly for work, worship, education, social events, trade, exercise, leisure, or other common interests and purposes;

(c) *Advance Notice* – refers to the provision of early information regarding any consultations with stakeholders, for which the period from the announcement or delivery of the invitation to the consultation event will be a minimum of 10 working days;

(d) *Commuter* – refers to a person who needs to travel from one place to another, often using a combination of transportation modes to get to their destination;

(e) *Greenway* – refers to a road, street, or path with ample greenery and shade where private motorized transport is not allowed, that also serves as a recreational space or a public park, to welcome and encourage environmentally sustainable transportation modes, especially walking and cycling;

(f) *High-Volume Transport Corridor* – refers to walkways, paths, roads, bridges, streets, or mass transportation terminals where the flow of people is at least 2,000 persons per hour per direction during peak travel periods;

(g) *Micromobility* – refers to travel using electronic or non-motorized vehicles weighing not more than 100 kilograms;

(h) *Mobility* – refers to the ability of a person to travel from one place to another to conduct daily and extraordinary activities and business;

(i) *Mobility Infrastructure* – refers to physical facilities, such as foot paths, bicycle lanes, roads, PUV loading/unloading bays, PUV terminals, and public transport systems, that support and enhance a person's mobility.

(j) *Private Motorized Transport* – refers to privately owned motorized vehicles weighing more than 100 kilograms;

(k) *Public Transport* – refers to public sector and franchised private sector services that transport people over land or water, including but not limited to jeepneys, utility vehicles, buses, minibuses, railways, ferries, taxis, and tricycles; and

(l) *Urbanized Municipality* – refers to a municipality in the Philippines where the aggregate area in the municipality zoned as residential, commercial, or industrial exceeds 40% of the total land area of the municipality.

SEC 4. *Right to Public Transportation Services that Satisfy Commuters' Mobility Requirements.* – The State shall ensure that adequate public transportation services are available to meet the needs of its citizens in the most prompt, convenient, and accessible manner possible.

The State shall ensure that:

(a) Every town and municipality will have a community-wide network of safe sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and roads to enable secure and convenient travel around the city entirely by foot, bicycle, or by other forms of light mobility;

(b) Public Transport services are available within a 500-meter walk from any residence or activity center in a city;

(c) Public Transport services are connected to another public service within a 300-meter walk to promote seamless connectivity;

(d) Public Transport services are in sufficient quantity and frequency so that commuter waiting time at stops and terminals does not exceed 10 minutes during peak demand periods;

(e) Public Transport is accorded priority in the use of road space and traffic signal operation so that it can traverse 15 kilometers within 1 hour, including all scheduled stops;

(f) Public Transport services are supported by properly equipped, adequately sized, and well-maintained terminals and stops, with attention to the safety and comfort of commuters;

(g) Every road with a speed limit of over 20 kilometers per hour (kph) and under 60 kph shall feature dedicated pedestrian infrastructure, in the form of an unobstructed walking path of at least 2.5 meters wide in each direction;

(h) Every road with a speed limit of under 60 kph shall feature dedicated bike lanes which are wide enough to accommodate at least two bikes side by side comfortably;

(i) Transport services are inclusive, so that they are conveniently accessible to persons of all ages and abilities. Public Transport infrastructure and vehicles shall be designed and implemented so that persons with disabilities or special needs, including senior citizens, are not excluded from their use; and

(j) In all renovations of existing infrastructure or construction of new infrastructure, preserving or improving the travel time impact on Public Transport, bicycles, and pedestrians shall be prioritized over protecting or enhancing the travel time impact on private motorized transport. The State shall generally avoid implementing projects that increase travel time for users of private motorized modes at the expense of Public Transport, bicycles, and pedestrians.

SEC. 5. The State shall ensure that Public Transport services are safe, dignified, convenient, comfortable, easily accessible, and reliable, while remaining affordable to the general public.

Concessional or discounted fares shall be offered for disadvantaged or special groups, such as students, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities, in accordance with law. The State shall endeavor to provide subsidies or incentives to offset discounts offered to special or disadvantaged groups, other than those provided under existing laws.

The State shall also reward the use of Public Transport through financial and non-financial incentives to promote its frequent use. The State shall ensure that it is more economical for commuters to use Public Transport more frequently rather than less frequently.

During periods when transportation services are deficient, the State shall employ alternative approaches to provide additional mobility options for its citizens, including using public resources to fill temporary service gaps, such as government-owned vehicles or government-chartered or leased private vehicles.

The State shall also promote and ensure safe and efficient driving among Public Transport drivers through mandatory training and stricter licensing requirements. Streets shall also be designed in accordance with international best practices for road safety to reduce dangerous driving behavior.

SEC. 6. *Right to Infrastructure for Pedestrians, Cyclists, and Persons with Disabilities.* - The State shall ensure that roads are accessible to persons with impaired mobility, among others, and that adequate and appropriate bicycle lanes are available.

For this purpose, the State shall:

(a) Accord priority to the development of adequate sidewalks and networks of bicycle lanes that encourage Active Transport and provide safe and direct access to priority destinations, such as housing, education, business centers, markets, and grocery stores, and Public Transport nodes;

(b) Ensure that all Public Transport stops are accessible to persons with disabilities and impaired movement, including senior citizens;

(c) Prioritize ease of access by pedestrians, especially at Public Transport stops and government facilities, over mobility of private motorized transport;

(d) Ensure that safe and adequate walking and cycling infrastructure is incorporated in the design and implementation of road transport projects at national and local government levels;

(e) Ensure that the comprehensive land use plan of every city includes the development of a city-wide network of safe sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and road lanes to enable travel around the city entirely by foot, bicycle, or by other forms of light mobility; and

(f) Ensure that travel by walking or cycling is no less direct to destinations than travel by private motorized transport. No commuter shall be made to travel above or below street level to cross any street or intersection if it is possible to implement an at-grade crossing. No commuter, when traveling by walking or cycling, shall be made to diverge from his or her route of travel if a commuter traveling by private motorized vehicle would have enjoyed a more direct trip.

In cities and urbanized municipalities, the State shall ensure that the infrastructure of each barangay includes;

(a) safe foot paths or sidewalks, free of obstructions, well-protected from automobiles, compliant with universal design guidelines, and friendly and accessible to pregnant women, senior citizens, and persons with strollers or wheelchairs;

(b) networks of greenways to encourage active transport modes (walking and cycling);

(c) proper lighting on all roads and footpaths to allow safe travel even after dark;

(d) tactile paving on sidewalks of high-volume transport corridors for the benefit of pedestrians who are blind;

(e) bicycle racks in every transportation hub or terminal and every commercial, community, and activity center. Such racks shall be provided at street level if possible, and at most one level above or below the street; and

(f) Safe intersections and pedestrian crossings, such as provision of raised pedestrian platforms, highly visible warning signages, adequate street lighting, mid-crossing refuges, traffic calming for motorized vehicles, and curb outstands to reduce road pavement crossing width.

In addition, the State shall promote light mobility by requiring that buildings have adequate bicycle racks that can accommodate ten percent (10%) of the anticipated users of such buildings.

SEC. 7. *Right to a Fair Share of Public Road Space.* – The State shall ensure that public road space is used in a manner that delivers the most significant socio-economic benefit. The State shall also ensure and prioritize the safety of road users. For this purpose, it shall ensure that the design, engineering, and operation of road infrastructure are appropriate to achieve the goal of road safety and access for non-motorized and vulnerable users.

Because roads are a scarce public asset, the State shall ensure that road space is prioritized for modes of travel (e.g., public transport, walking, cycling) that move more people and maximize the asset's productivity and social benefit. The planning and design of roads must prioritize the needs of pedestrians, micro mobility users, and Public Transport users. Public Transport shall also have priority over private motor vehicles in the use of road space.

The State shall ensure that there is no private appropriation of public roads space and foot paths for parking, commerce, or other activities that will restrict public use of, or access to, the road.

SEC. 8. *Right to Breathe Clean Air during Travel.* – The State shall take measures to ensure that commuters can travel using Public Transport or active transport (e.g., walking or cycling) without compromising their health.

The State shall ensure that all Public Transport vehicles comply with emission standards set by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources

("DENR"), Department of Trade and Industry ("DTI"), and/or the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board ("LTFRB").

The State shall also formulate and implement programs and policies to encourage citizens to commute by cycling or other lighter vehicles, thereby reducing vehicle-related pollution. The State shall also provide facilities and programs that support and incentivize the use of cleaner alternative fuels, other renewable energy sources, and electric vehicles.

The State shall measure air quality along major transport corridors in all cities and provide this information to the public in real time. When air quality exceeds safe levels set by internationally accepted standards, particularly those of the World Health Organization, the State shall activate emergency procedures to reduce public exposure, especially the young and the elderly, to unclean air.

SEC. 9. *Right to Information for Efficient and Convenient Travel.* - The State shall provide timely and adequate information so that commuters can make good travel plans and choices about modes and routes. For this purpose, the State shall;

(a) Make publicly available information on all Public Transport services, including route maps, fares, schedules, and real-time vehicle location and availability, including traffic situation, for the convenience of commuters;

(b) Ensure that such information is prominently displayed at all stops of public transport services and at other locations deemed necessary or beneficial to commuters;

(c) Establish technical standards and regulations for the display of street maps at strategic locations in each neighborhood, for the reference of residents and visitors; and

(d) Ensure that, at airports and terminals, 24-hour information/assistance counters will be available to serve the needs of travelers.

SEC. 10. *Right to Special Attention during Service Breakdowns and to Compensation for Deficiencies in Service.* - In the event of a breakdown in a

Public Transport service, passengers shall be entitled to receive promptly and without delay, from the transport operator, a full refund of the fare and assistance in securing onward journeys.

Stranded passengers shall be promptly informed of the method by which they will be redirected to their final destination. Suppose onward journeys are unavailable or unreasonably delayed for more than twelve (12) hours. In that case, the transport operator shall provide its passengers with access to food and water, and a waiting area with clean restrooms and adequate ventilation.

SEC. 11. *Right to Representation and Participation.* - The State shall ensure that the welfare and interests of commuters are considered in all decision-making related to mobility and transportation services. Commuters shall be adequately consulted on all matters affecting their welfare and mobility.

SEC. 12. *Annual Public Transportation Services and Infrastructure Plans and Programs.* - The Department of Transportation (“DOTr”), in coordination with local government units and other concerned stakeholders, shall prepare, annually, a national public transportation services and infrastructure plan and program to satisfy the evolving mobility requirements in the country, especially in urban areas.

Local government units shall also prepare their own local public transportation services and infrastructure plan to ensure the mobility of their citizens, taking into account their situation, needs, and stages of development.

Metropolitan authorities and local government units shall also be responsible for measuring, analyzing, and updating mobility requirements in each locality, and for developing plans and programs to address their citizens' mobility requirements.

SEC. 13. *Vision Zero in Road Safety.* - The State shall adopt the Vision Zero in road safety, which aims to achieve a highway system with no fatalities or serious injuries involving road traffic. For this purpose, the State shall implement a comprehensive road safety program and allocate funding to implement activities under the five pillars of the Philippine Road Safety Action. Plan, namely

Road Safety Management, Safer Roads, Safer Vehicles, Safer Road Users, and Post-Crash Response.

SEC. 14. *Implementing Agencies.* – The DOTr, DENR, DTI, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Interior and Local Government, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, and other metropolitan councils shall be the implementing agencies for this Act, with DOTr as the lead implementing agency with responsibility for coordinating and monitoring all implementation activities.

The foregoing agencies shall include in their respective budgets funds for the effective implementation of this Act.

Within two (2) years from the effectivity of this Act, all concerned government agencies, including local government units, shall ensure that relevant technical standards, guidelines, and manuals are amended to incorporate the requirements of this Act.

SEC. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within one hundred and eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOTr and the other implementing agencies, upon consultation with relevant government agencies and other stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 16. *Penal Provisions.* – Any person in violation of any of the provisions of this Act shall be fined not less than Ten Thousand Pesos (PHP 10,000) but not more than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (PHP 500,000).

If the offender is a public official, he/she shall also suffer the penalty of perpetual disqualification from holding public office and dismissal from government service, after due process.

SEC. 17. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 18. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, memoranda, circulars, and other issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 19. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,