

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 6978

Introduced by Hon. Julianne "Jam" L. Baronda

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Millions of Filipinos endure daily commuting that is unsafe, inefficient, costly, and undignified due to transport systems that have long prioritized private motor vehicles over people. This has resulted in traffic congestion, poor pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, unreliable public transport, increased road crashes, and unequal access to mobility—especially for the poor, students, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities.

The **Filipino Commuters’ Rights and Welfare Act of 2025** seeks to establish a commuter-centered framework for transportation policy and investment. It recognizes mobility as a basic human need and affirms the rights of commuters to safe, accessible, affordable, reliable, and inclusive transport services; clean air during travel; timely information; and meaningful participation in transport-related decision-making.

The bill mandates the prioritization of public transport, walking, cycling, and other light mobility modes in the use of public road space, infrastructure design, and budgeting. It sets minimum service and accessibility standards, strengthens road safety and environmental protections, institutionalizes responsive grievance mechanisms, and creates Offices of Commuter Affairs and a National Transport Data and Planning Center to ensure accountability and evidence-based planning.

By shifting transport policy from vehicle-centered to people-centered, this measure promotes social equity, public health, environmental sustainability, and economic productivity. Immediate passage of this bill is therefore earnestly sought.


JULIENNE “JAM” L. BARONDA
Representative
Lone District of the Iloilo City

49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSEBILL NO. 6978

59
60
61

Introduced by Hon. Julianne "Jam" L. Baronda

62
63
64
65
66
67
68

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A COMMUTER-CENTERED POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR
TRANSPORTATION POLICY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

69
70
71

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

72
73
74

ARTICLE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

75
76
77

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known and cited as the “Filipino Commuters’ Rights and Welfare Act of 2025”.

78
79
80
81

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to guarantee safe, convenient, reliable, affordable and dignified mobility for all. Recognizing this as a fundamental human need vital for accessing freedoms, work, and essential public services.

82
83
84
85

To uphold this, the State commits resources to protect commuters, ensure universal mobility across age, physical ability, gender, or economic standing, safeguard the commuting public’s welfare in transport decisions, and strengthen citizen participation.

86

Section 3. *Definitions.* - For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- 87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
- 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 that needs to travel from one place to another, often using a combination of transportation modes to get to his/her 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 recreational space or a public park, in order 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 kg.
- 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 motorized vehicles weighing more than 100 kg.
- k. "Public Transport" - refers to public sector and franchised private sector services that transport people over land or water, including jeepneys, UVs, buses, minibuses, railways, ferries, taxis and tricycles.
- 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.

ARTICLE II
RIGHTS OF COMMUTERS

Section 4. *Right to Adequate and Responsive Public Transportation and Mobility Services.* - The State shall ensure that adequate public transportation services are available to meet the needs of its citizens. Public transportation services and infrastructure plans and programs should be prepared and updated on an annual basis in order to satisfy the evolving mobility requirements in our communities, especially in urban areas.

It will be the responsibility of metropolitan authorities and local government units to measure, analyze and update the mobility requirements in each locality and to develop plans and programs to address the mobility requirements of their citizens.

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 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 do 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 is able to 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 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 comfortably accommodate at least two bikes side by side;
- i. Transport services are inclusive, so that they are 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 are not excluded from their use.

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 preserving or improving travel time impact on private motorized transport. The State shall generally avoid the implementation of projects that produce a positive

161 impact on the travel time of users of private motorized modes at large expense to Public
162 Transport, bicycles, and pedestrians.

163
164 Section 5. *Right to Safe, Convenient and Affordable Public Transport Services.* - The
165 State shall ensure that Public Transport services are safe, dignified, convenient, comfortable and
166 reliable, while remaining affordable to the general public.

167
168 Concessional or discounted fares shall be offered for disadvantaged or special groups (i.e.,
169 students, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, poor households). The State shall provide
170 subsidies to compensate for discounts offered to special or disadvantaged groups.

171
172 The State shall reward the use of Public Transport via financial and non- financial
173 incentives to promote the frequent use of Public Transport. The State shall ensure that it is more
174 economical for commuters to use Public Transport more frequently rather than less frequently.

175
176 The State shall apply financial and non-financial disincentives to reduce the use of private
177 motorized transport. Funding earned from such disincentives must be utilized for funding of
178 Mobility Infrastructure in favor of Active Transport and Public Transport. The State shall ensure
179 that it is more economical for commuters to use Active Transport or Public Transport more
180 frequently than to use private motorized transport.

181
182 During periods when transportation services are deficient, the State shall employ
183 alternative approaches for enabling additional mobility options for its citizens, including through
184 the use of public resources to fill temporary gaps in services, such as through government-owned
185 vehicles or through the government charter or lease of private vehicles.

186
187 The State will promote safe and efficient driving behavior by Public Transport drivers
188 through mandatory trainings and more stringent licensing. All Public Transport vehicles will be
189 required to install electronic vehicle tracking devices and CCTVs that will enable concerned
190 authorities to conduct real-time monitoring of vehicle location, vehicle speed, and driver status.

191 Dangerous on-street competition and behavior among Public Transport drivers shall be
192 eliminated through the removal of any incentive for drivers that is related to ridership or fare
193 revenue. Streets must be designed in accordance with international best practices in road safety
194 design to reduce the occurrence of dangerous driving behavior.

195
196 Section 6. *Right to Infrastructure for Pedestrians, Cyclists and Persons with Disabilities.*
197 - The State shall accord priority to the development of adequate sidewalks and networks of
198 bicycle lanes that encourage Active Transport and that provide safe and direct access to priority
199 destinations such as housing, education, and business centers as well as Public Transport nodes.

200
201 The State shall ensure that all Public Transport stops are accessible to persons with
202 disabilities and impaired movement. The State shall ensure that ease of access by pedestrians
203 especially at Public Transport stops and government facilities is prioritized over mobility of
204 private motorized transport.

205
206 The State shall ensure that safe and adequate walking and cycling infrastructure is
207 incorporated in the design and implementation of road transport projects at national and local
208 government levels. The State shall ensure that the Comprehensive Land Use Plan of every city
209 includes the development of a city-wide network of safe sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and roads
210 lanes to enable travel around the city entirely by foot, bicycle or by other forms of light mobility.

211
212 The State shall ensure that travel by walking or cycling is no less direct to destinations
213 than travel by private motorized transport. No commuter shall be made to travel above or below
214 street level to cross any street or intersection if it is possible to implement an at-grade crossing.
215 No commuter, when traveling by walking or cycling, shall be made to diverge from his or her
216 route of travel if a commuter traveling by private motorized vehicle would have enjoyed a more
217 direct trip.

219 The State shall require all government offices and buildings to have shower facilities for
220 the use of commuters. If these buildings receive citizens in the delivery of front-line services,
221 these shower facilities must be open to the public. The State shall offer incentives to private
222 sector for the provision of shower facilities in their offices and buildings.
223

224 In Philippine cities and urbanized municipalities, the State shall ensure that the
225 infrastructure of each barangay includes:

- 226 a. Safe foot paths or sidewalks, free of obstructions, well-protected from automobiles,
227 compliant with universal design guidelines, and accessible by pregnant women, elderly,
228 and persons with strollers or wheelchairs;
- 229 b. Networks of greenways to encourage active transport modes (walking and cycling)
- 230 c. Proper lighting on all roads and footpaths to allow safe travel even after dark;
- 231 d. Tactile paving on sidewalks of high-volume transport corridors for the benefit of
232 pedestrians who are blind;
- 233 e. Bicycle racks in every transportation hub or terminal and in every commercial,
234 community and activity center. Such racks shall be provided at street level if possible,
235 and at most one level above or below the street; and
- 236 f. Safe intersections and pedestrian crossings such as provision of raised pedestrian
237 platforms, highly visible advance warning signages, adequate street lighting, mid
238 crossing refuges, traffic calming for motorized vehicles and curb outstands to reduce road
239 pavement crossing width.
240

241 The State shall not require parking for cars to be built in any buildings, and shall
242 encourage commercial development and the built environment to accommodate non-car travel.
243 The State shall promote light mobility by requiring that buildings provide bicycle racks that can
244 accommodate 10% of the anticipated users of any building.
245

246 The State shall adopt the Vision Zero in road safety and ensure that road crashes are
247 eliminated particularly those of vulnerable road users. The State shall implement a
248 comprehensive road safety program and will allocate funding to implement activities under the
249 five pillars of the Philippine Road Safety Action Plan namely Road Safety Management, Safer
250 Roads, Safer Vehicles, Safer Road Users, and Post-Crash Response. The State must also create a
251 National Road Safety Unit under the Department of Transportation and must also implement a
252 national road crash database for road safety planning.
253

254 Section 7. *Right to a Fair Share of Public Road Space.* - The State will ensure that public
255 road space is used in a manner that delivers the greatest socio-economic benefit. The State shall
256 ensure that safety of road users, especially non-motorized and vulnerable users, shall be
257 prioritized over the mobility of motorized modes of transport. The State shall employ treatments
258 to the design, engineering and operation of road infrastructure in order to achieve the goal of
259 road safety and access for non-motorized and vulnerable users.
260

261 Because roads are a scarce public asset, the State shall ensure that road space is
262 prioritized for modes of travel (e.g., public transport, walking, cycling, etc.) that move more
263 people and maximize the productivity and social benefit of the public asset. The planning and
264 design of roads must prioritize the needs of pedestrians, micromobility users, and Public
265 Transport users above the needs of private motor vehicles. Public Transport shall have priority
266 use of road space over private motor vehicles.
267

268 The State will ensure that there is no private appropriation of public road space and foot
269 paths for parking, commerce or other activities that will restrict public use of, or access to, the
270 road.
271

272 Section 8. *Right to Breathe Clean Air During Travel.* - The State shall take measures to
273 ensure that commuters are able to travel using Public Transport or active transport (walking or
274 cycling) without compromising their health.
275

276 The State shall ensure that all Public Transport vehicles comply with the emission
277 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), whichever is more stringent.

The State shall provide programs which reduce the volume of motorized vehicles to reduce vehicle-related pollution emissions. The State shall also provide facilities and programs which support and incentivize the use of cleaner alternative fuels. Recognizing that non-exhaust emissions make up a significant portion of total pollutant emissions and that the levels of such emissions are dependent on vehicle weight, the State shall provide programs that encourage the reduction of average vehicle weight and encourage citizens to commute using cycling or other lighter vehicles.

The State will measure air quality along the major transport corridors in all cities and provide this information to the public in real time. When air quality exceeds safe levels according to internationally-accepted standards, particularly from the World Health Organization, the State will activate emergency procedures with the aim of reducing the exposure of the public, especially the young and the elderly, to unclean air.

Section 9. *Right to Information for Efficient and Convenient Travel.* - The State will provide timely and adequate information so that commuters are able to make good travel plans and choices about modes and routes. The State shall make publicly available information on all Public Transport services, including route maps, fares, schedules, and real time vehicle location and availability, for the convenience of commuters. The State shall ensure that such information is prominently displayed at all stops of public transport services and at other locations deemed necessary or beneficial to commuters.

The State will establish technical standards and regulations for the display of street maps at strategic locations in each neighborhood, for the reference of residents and visitors.

The State will ensure that, at all ports, airports, and terminals, a 24-hour information/assistance counter will be available to serve the needs of travelers.

The State shall establish a National Transport Data and Planning Center (NTDPC) which will collect and process the mobility data for evidence-based transport planning which can quickly adapt to the evolving mobility requirements in our communities. The NTDPC shall ensure that data in aid of policy and research on mobility be open and be made available to the public. These kinds of data include reliable and accurate road crash data in <http://roadsafety.gov.ph>, air pollution levels, and Public Transport routes and travel time information, among others.

Section 10. *Right to Special Attention During Service Breakdowns and to Compensation for Deficiencies in Service.* - The State shall ensure that, in case of a breakdown in a Public Transport service, passengers will be entitled to receive from the transport operator a full refund of the fare and assistance in securing onward journeys.

Stranded passengers should be informed in a timely manner about how they will be redirected to their final destination. If onward journeys are unavailable for more than one (1) hour, the transport operator should provide food, water, and access to a waiting area with restrooms and ventilation. Any student or employee should not be penalized for arriving late by their school or employer if the reason for their tardiness was a disruption in a Public Transport service.

Section 11. *Right to Representation and Participation.* - The State shall ensure that the welfare and interest of commuters are considered in all decision-making related to mobility and transportation services. To this end, commuters have a right to advance notice and information on any proposed policy, regulation, project or service at local or national level that affect their mobility, including full details on how they will be affected by the proposed initiative. Affected commuters have a right to provide their comments and suggestions of the proposed initiative. Affected commuters must receive a response to such comments from the concerned public official within 20 working days.

If a public consultation will be held regarding any initiative affecting the mobility of commuters, the consultation meeting shall be held at a time, even on a weekend or after office hours, and at a convenient and accessible venue that will maximize the participation and feedback from affected commuters. In parallel commuter feedback shall be solicited through social media and other channels for information exchange.

Section 12. *Right to a Responsive Feedback and Grievance Mechanism.* – The State shall guarantee that all commuters will have access to efficient, transparent and responsive mechanisms for providing feedback, suggestions and grievances concerning public transportation services and infrastructure.

The State shall ensure the:

- a. Establishment of Accessible Channels- The DOTr, in coordination with other relevant implementing agencies, shall establish and maintain easily accessible channels for the commuting public to submit their feedback, complaints and suggestions. These channels shall include a dedicated online portal that is user friendly and available 24/7, enabling submission in text, photos and videos, with real time tracking of submissions and a toll-free hotline for immediate reporting of urgent concerns. Physical desks and kiosks that are readily identifiable located at all major public transport terminals, interchanges, hubs, and high-volume transport corridors. These physical points shall ensure accessibility for commuters who may not have digital access.
- b. Clear Response and Resolution Protocols- The DOTr shall develop and implement clear protocols for acknowledging, processing, and resolving all submitted feedback and grievances. These protocols shall include defined timeframes for initial response and complaint resolution, and an escalation process for unresolved issues. The privacy, and where appropriate, anonymity of complainants shall be ensured and protected, and mechanisms shall be in place to protect individuals reporting misconduct or safety violations.
- c. Data Utilization for Improvement - All feedback and grievance data shall be systematically collected, categorized, and analyzed. The subsequent analysis made by the relevant agencies shall serve as basis for identifying systemic issues, which shall inform the necessary policy adjustments, evaluating the performance of public transport operators and implementing agencies, and guiding the continuous improvement in public transportation services and infrastructure.
- d. Integration with National Transport Data and Planning: The data collected through this mechanism shall be integrated with the National Transport Data and Planning Center (NTDPC) to further enhance evidence-based transport planning and adapt to the fast-evolving mobility requirements of the commuting public. The NTDPC shall ensure that this relevant data, in aid of policy and research efforts, is made openly available in an anonymized format.

ARTICLE III INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

Section 13. *Establishment of the Office of Commuter Affairs.* - An Office of Commuter Affairs shall be established at the DOTr at the national level, as well as in all city and municipal government units. The Office of Commuter Affairs shall be under the direct supervision of an Assistant Secretary at the national level, and a city/municipal administrator at the local level.

Section 14. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Office of Commuter Affairs* - The Office of Commuter Affairs shall be tasked to perform the following functions and responsibilities:

- a. Coordinate with the respective government agencies dealing with road, rail, air, and maritime transportation policy to ensure safe, efficient and comfortable travel of commuters;
- b. Operate Help Desks for the riding public;
- c. Assist the commuters whenever the safety and efficiency of travel is compromised;

- d. Undertake massive commuter education programs for the travelling public to know their rights and responsibilities;
- e. Ensure legal assistance for commuters, when necessary; and
- f. Ensure adequate representation of commuters in any public consultation that will impact on the welfare and interest of commuters.

Section 15. *Implementing Agencies.* — The DOTr, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), DTI, and concerned local government units 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 State shall ensure that the core concepts of this framework are integrated in the annual government budget process. The State shall ensure that compliance with the provisions of this Act is included in the annual performance targets of all relevant national and local government agencies. The State shall ensure that the Implementing Agencies will annually be allocated budget to strengthen organizational capacities and to sufficiently fund the establishment and operations of the NTDPC, the Office of Commuter Affairs, and other related offices.

The State shall ensure that relevant technical standards, guidelines, and manuals of national and local agencies are amended to incorporate all requirements under this Act.

Section 16. Penal Provisions. - Any person or government agency who has found to be in violation of any of the provisions of this Act shall be fined not less than Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000) but not more than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P500,000).

If the offender is a public official, he/she shall be dismissed from government service, in addition to the penalties above stated.

Section 17. *Separability Clause.* - Any portion or provisions of this Act that may be declared unconstitutional or invalid shall not have the effect of nullifying other portions or provisions hereof as long as such remaining portions or provisions can still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.

Section 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.

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

Approved,