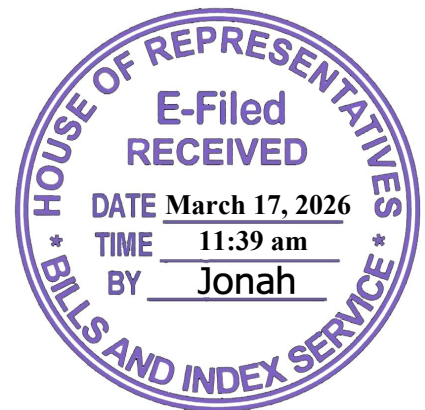


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8587



Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON “COCO” M. YAP

AN ACT

**PROTECTING AND PROMOTING THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF COMMUTERS,
SETTING MINIMUM SERVICE AND INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC
TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY FACILITIES, CREATING MECHANISMS FOR
COMMUTER REPRESENTATION AND COMPLAINTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Mobility is essential to everyday life. Millions of Filipinos rely on public transportation to get to work, school, hospitals, and other basic services. However, many commuters continue to face daily challenges such as heavy traffic, unsafe or poorly maintained facilities, lack of reliable passenger information, and limited opportunities to raise concerns or seek assistance. These conditions not only make commuting stressful and unsafe, but they also limit economic opportunities and worsen inequality, especially for low-income workers who depend heavily on public transport.

This bill, to be known as the “**Magna Carta of Commuters**,” seeks to protect and promote the rights and welfare of the commuting public. It establishes clear standards for safe, accessible, and commuter-friendly public transportation services and facilities. The measure ensures that commuters have access to clean terminals and sanitary facilities, adequate passenger information during service disruptions, safe infrastructure, and proper channels for complaints and assistance. It also strengthens the participation of commuters in transport planning and policy discussions so that their voices are heard in decisions that directly affect their daily lives.

The bill builds on existing laws that already recognize commuter rights. For example, the Free Public Toilets Act (Republic Act No. 11311) guarantees that passengers may

use regular sanitary facilities in transport terminals free of charge. It also reinforces accessibility standards under the Accessibility Law (Batas Pambansa Blg. 344) to ensure that persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups can travel safely and conveniently. At the same time, the measure harmonizes with the roles of key transport agencies, including the Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, to ensure coordinated and effective implementation.

Ultimately, this Magna Carta seeks to shift transportation policy toward a system that prioritizes people rather than cars—one that provides safe, reliable, and inclusive mobility for all while supporting economic growth and environmental sustainability. By recognizing and protecting the rights of commuters, this measure aims to uplift the everyday experience of millions of Filipinos who depend on public transportation.

In view of the foregoing, **ug sa ngalan sa SERBISYONG TINUORAY**, the undersigned respectfully requests the immediate passage of this measure.


CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP
Representative, Second District of Southern Leyte

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

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. Short Title. — This Act shall be known as the *“The Magna Carta of Commuters.”*

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is the policy of the State to ensure safe, dignified, accessible, reliable, and affordable mobility for the commuting public, and to guarantee meaningful participation of commuters in policy and decision-making processes affecting public transportation and mobility infrastructure.

In all transport planning, regulation, enforcement, and service delivery, the welfare and safety of commuters shall be a paramount consideration, consistent with law and the respective mandates of national agencies, local government units (LGUs), and metropolitan authorities.

SECTION 3. Scope. — This Act shall apply to: (a) national government agencies involved in transportation and mobility infrastructure; (b) LGUs; (c) government-owned and controlled corporations engaged in transport; (d) public utility vehicle (PUV) operators and transport network service providers, where applicable; and (e) owners, operators, or administrators of public transport terminals, stations, stops, rest areas, and similar facilities.

CHAPTER II DEFINITION OF TERMS

SECTION 4. Definition of Terms. — For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- (a) ***Commuter*** refers to a person who travels from one place to another for work, study, livelihood, access to services, or other lawful purpose, using public transport, active transport, or a combination thereof.
- (b) ***Active Transport*** refers to non-motorized travel, including walking and cycling.
- (c) ***Mobility Infrastructure*** refers to physical facilities supporting movement, including sidewalks, crossings, bicycle lanes, PUV stops and terminals, rail stations, ports, and intermodal facilities.
- (d) ***Public Transport*** refers to public sector and franchised or authorized private transport services over land, rail, and water, including, as applicable, jeepneys, buses, UV express, railways, ferries, taxis, and tricycles, subject to regulation.
- (e) ***High-Volume Transport Corridor*** refers to a corridor, facility, or terminal with passenger flow of at least two thousand (2,000) persons per hour per direction during peak periods, as determined under the IRR.
- (f) ***Advance Notice*** refers to notice of a public consultation or hearing, given at least ten (10) working days prior to the activity, stating the subject, proposed action, venue/platform, and how to submit comments.

CHAPTER III

RIGHTS OF COMMUTERS AND CORRELATIVE DUTIES

SECTION 5. Right to Safe, Accessible, and Dignified Mobility. — Commuters shall have the right to public transport services and mobility infrastructure that are safe and dignified and that reasonably respond to mobility needs, subject to applicable planning standards and available resources.

All public transport facilities and services shall comply with accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities (PWDs) and other persons with impaired mobility, consistent with existing accessibility law. No permit or authorization for covered facilities shall be issued without compliance with such accessibility requirements.

SECTION 6. Minimum Standards for Terminals, Stations, Stops, and Rest Areas.

— Owners, operators, or administrators of land transport terminals, stations, stops, and rest areas shall provide clean, adequate, and safe sanitary facilities for passengers, consistent with applicable standards.

It shall be unlawful to collect fees from passengers for the use of regular sanitary facilities in such land transport terminals, stations, stops, rest areas, and roll-on/roll-off (RORO) terminals, subject to the exceptions provided by law.

SECTION 7. Right to Information and Assistance. — Commuters shall have the right to timely, accurate, and accessible information on routes, fares, service advisories, and disruptions. Transport operators and terminal/station administrators shall post service information at conspicuous places and through digital channels, as practicable, consistent with standards to be issued in the IRR.

SECTION 8. Service Disruptions; Minimum Passenger Assistance. — In case of a service breakdown or disruption attributable to the transport operator or facility administrator, affected passengers shall be entitled to: (a) timely advisories; (b) reasonable assistance to secure onward travel; and (c) access to a safe waiting area and sanitary facilities.

For land transport terminals and similar facilities, access to regular sanitary facilities shall remain free as provided by law, upon compliance with reasonable verification measures.

SECTION 9. Participatory Rights; Public Consultations. — Commuters and commuter groups shall be given advance notice and reasonable opportunity to submit comments on proposed routes, service rationalization, fare changes, major infrastructure projects, and other actions that materially affect commuter welfare, in the manner provided in the IRR.

The concerned agency shall publish a summary of received comments and a response matrix within a reasonable period to be set in the IRR.

CHAPTER IV INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

SECTION 10. Office of Commuter Affairs (OCA). — There is hereby created an Office of Commuter Affairs under the Department of Transportation (DOTr), which shall serve as the central commuter assistance, complaints referral, and policy coordination unit.

LGUs are encouraged to establish a local commuter assistance desk or unit, which may be lodged in an existing office, consistent with local autonomy and budgetary capacity.

SECTION 11. Powers and Functions of the OCA. — The OCA shall:

- (a) operate commuter assistance desks and receive complaints;
- (b) refer complaints to the appropriate regulator or enforcement body and monitor resolution;
- (c) develop commuter service standards and templates for advisories and public consultations;
- (d) coordinate with concerned agencies on commuter welfare programs; and
- (e) prepare an annual “State of Commuters Report” with key indicators, subject to data availability.

SECTION 12. Harmonization with Existing Mandates; Metro Manila. — Nothing in this Act shall be construed to diminish the powers and functions of agencies as provided by existing law.

For Metro Manila, transport and traffic management functions with metro-wide impact shall be exercised in accordance with the MMDA’s statutory mandate, and LGU participation in traffic enforcement shall be subject to deputation and coordination as provided by law and jurisprudence.

CHAPTER V

IMPLEMENTING RULES, ENFORCEMENT, AND PENALTIES

SECTION 13. Implementing Agencies. — The DOTr shall be the lead implementing agency. The DPWH, DILG, MMDA, DENR, DTI, and concerned LGUs shall provide support within their respective mandates.

SECTION 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). — Within one hundred eighty (180) days from effectivity, the DOTr, in consultation with concerned agencies, transport operators, commuter groups, civil society, and the academe, shall promulgate the IRR.

The IRR shall include measurable standards and phased compliance schedules, taking into account sectoral regulators and the practice of issuing sector-specific rules where appropriate.

SECTION 15. Delegation and Standards. — The IRR shall operationalize this Act by setting (a) minimum service information standards; (b) minimum assistance during disruptions; (c) consultation procedures; and (d) complaint handling protocols, consistent with the principle that administrative rules must be anchored on sufficient legislative standards.

SECTION 16. Prohibited Acts. — The following acts are prohibited:

- (a) refusal to comply with the free-use-of-regular-sanitary-facilities requirement where applicable;
- (b) willful posting or dissemination of materially false service advisories that endanger commuters; and (c) retaliation against complainants or witnesses who file good-faith complaints under this Act.

SECTION 17. Penalties. — Any person or entity found to have willfully violated this Act or its IRR, after due notice and hearing, shall be subject to:

- (a) for establishments or operators: a fine of not less than Fifty thousand pesos (₱50,000.00) but not more than Two hundred thousand pesos (₱200,000.00) per offense, without prejudice to suspension or cancellation of permits/franchises under existing laws; and

- (b) for public officials: administrative liability under existing civil service and related laws, without prejudice to criminal liability if the act constitutes an offense under other laws.

SECTION 18. Separability Clause. — If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 19. Repealing Clause. — All laws, rules, regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 20. 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,