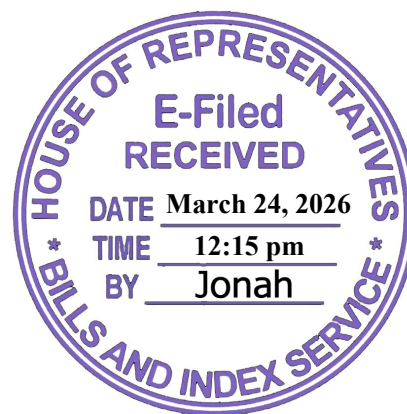


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **8748**



Introduced by **REP. NATHANIEL “Atty. Nat” M. ODUCAO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The right to mobility is integral to the exercise of other fundamental rights, as it ensures access to food, healthcare, education, livelihood, and participation in community life. When transportation systems are unsafe, inefficient, or unaffordable, this right is effectively denied, undermining social equity, public health, and national development.

Recent data show that the Philippines is confronting serious setbacks in commuter safety. Road crash fatalities surged by 35% in 2024, rising from 2,030 in 2023 to 2,747 in 2024, according to the Highway Patrol Group.¹ The annual number of road crash deaths has reached roughly 11,000 persons nationwide. The death rate from traffic collisions is now about 11 per 100,000 persons which is far from the target of 4 per 100,000.²

On mobility efficiency, the EDSA Busway in Metro Manila provided service to over 63 million commuters in 2024, and in January 2025 alone served more than 5.5 million passengers, averaging some 177,000 daily riders.³ While laudable, the scale of demand underscores how much more is needed to shift more commuters to safe, high-capacity public transport.⁴

Air quality has also declined. In 2024, the country’s average PM_{2.5} (fine particulate matter) level rose to 14.8 µg/m³, up from 13.5 µg/m³ in 2023—a nearly 10% worsening.⁵ In Metro Manila, air pollution sometimes reaches “very unhealthy” and “acutely unhealthy” levels, especially during festive periods: for example, during New Year celebrations, PM₁₀ reached up to 390 µg/m³ (more than double guideline limits), and PM_{2.5} reached 186 µg/m³.⁶

¹The Philippine Star (2025) Road crash fatalities up 35% in 2024 – HPG. Available at: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2025/02/02/2418573/road-crash-fatalities-35-2024-hpg> (Last accessed September 23, 2025)

² The Philippine Star (2025) DOH: Philippines regressing on road traffic mortality. Available at: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2025/03/20/2429694/doh-philippines-regressing-road-traffic-mortality> (Last accessed September 23, 2025)

³ Daily Tribune (2025) DOTr: EDSA Busway is Metro Manila's 'most efficient' public transport system. Available at: <https://tribune.net.ph/2025/02/05/dotr-edsa-busway-is-metro-manilas-most-efficient-public-transport-system> (Last accessed September 23, 2025)

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Manila Bulletin (2025) PH sees decline in air quality report. Available at: <https://mb.com.ph/2025/3/19/ph-sees-decline-in-air-quality-report> (Last accessed September 23, 2025)

⁶The Philippine Star (2025) Metro Manila air pollution exceeds normal quality – EMB. Available at: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2025/01/03/2411456/metro-manila-air-pollution-exceeds-normal-quality-emb> (Last accessed September 23, 2025)

These levels significantly exceed WHO guidelines and pose severe health risks.⁷

These combined trends of worsening traffic fatalities, overburdened and inefficient public transport, and deteriorating air quality threaten basic rights to safety, health, and dignity, especially among low-income commuters, pedestrians, cyclists, and persons with disabilities.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Oducado', with a blue circular stamp containing a number '8' to the right.

REP. NATHANIEL “ATTY. NAT” M. ODUCADO
1Tahanan Party List

⁷World Health Organization (2025) WHO unveils updated global database of air quality standards. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news/item/26-02-2025-who-unveils-updated-global-database-of-air-quality-standards> (Last accessed September 23, 2025)

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **8748**

Introduced by **REP. NATHANIEL “ATTY. NAT” M. ODUCCADO**

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MAGNA CARTA FOR DIGNIFIED COMMUTING,
CREATING THE NATIONAL OFFICE OF COMMUTER AFFAIRS,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “*The Dignity in Commuting*
2 *Act.*”

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to recognize
4 that mobility is a fundamental human need and to guarantee and protect the right of every person
5 to travel safely, conveniently, reliably, affordably, and with dignity. The State acknowledges that
6 mobility is essential for individuals to exercise their fundamental freedoms and to access work
7 opportunities and basic services, including health care and education.

8 In pursuit of this policy, the State shall ensure the protection of all commuters and promote
9 the mobility of people of all ages, physical abilities, genders, and economic backgrounds. The
10 welfare of commuters shall be safeguarded at all times, particularly in decisions concerning the
11 planning, development, and provision of mobility infrastructure and transportation services.

12 **SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – As used in this Act:

- 13 (a) *Active Transport* shall refer to non-motorized means of travel, including walking or
14 using a bicycle;
15 (b) *Activity Center* shall refer to an area in a city or municipality where people gather
16 regularly for work, worship, education, social events, trade, exercise, leisure, or other
17 similar activities;
18 (c) *Advance Notice* shall refer to the provision of early information regarding any
19 consultation with stakeholders at least ten (10) working days prior to such consultation;
20 (d) *Commuter* shall refer to a person who needs to travel from one place to another, often
21 using a combination of transportation modes;
22 (e) *Greenway* shall refer to a road, street, or path with ample greenery and shade where
23 private motorized transport is not allowed, that also serves as a recreational space or a

- 1 public park in order to welcome and encourage environmentally sustainable
2 transportation modes, especially walking and cycling;
- 3 (f) *High-Volume Transport Corridor* shall refer to walkways, paths, roads, bridges, streets,
4 or mass transportation terminals where the flow of people is at least 2,000 persons per
5 hour per direction during peak travel periods;
- 6 (g) *Local Office* shall refer to the Local Office of Commuter Affairs in each city or
7 urbanized municipality;
- 8 (h) *Micro Mobility* shall refer to travel using electronic or non-motorized vehicles
9 weighing not more than 100 kilograms;
- 10 (i) *Mobility* shall refer to the ability of a person to travel from one place to another to
11 conduct daily and extraordinary activities and business;
- 12 (j) *Mobility Infrastructure* shall refer to physical facilities, such as foot paths, bicycle
13 lanes, roads, public utility vehicle (PUV) loading/unloading bays, PUV terminals, and
14 public transport systems, that support and enhance a person's mobility;
- 15 (k) *National Office* shall refer to the National Office of Commuter Affairs;
- 16 (l) *Passenger* shall refer to persons who avail public transportation services;
- 17 (m) *Private Motorized Transport* shall refer to travel using motorized vehicles weighing
18 more than 100 kilograms;
- 19 (n) *Public Transport* shall refer to travel using public transportation services;
- 20 (o) *Public Transportation Service Drivers* shall refer to persons who operate public
21 transportation vehicles;
- 22 (p) *Public Transportation Services* shall refer to public sector and franchised private sector
23 services that transport people over land or water, including jeepneys, PUVs, buses,
24 minibuses, railways, ferries, taxis, and tricycles;
- 25 (q) *Public Transportation Service Terminals* shall refer to areas where passengers (i) board
26 and disembark public transportation vehicles, or (ii) purchase tickets for public
27 transportation services;
- 28 (r) *Public Transportation Service Vehicles* shall refer to the vehicles used to provide public
29 transportation services to the public;
- 30 (s) *Transport Operators* shall refer to persons or entities who provide public transportation
31 services to the public;
- 32 (t) *Urbanized Municipality* shall refer to a municipality in the Philippines where the
33 aggregate area zoned as residential, commercial, or industrial exceeds forty percent
34 (40%) of the total land area of the municipality; and
- 35 (u) *Vulnerable Road Users* shall refer to students, senior citizens, and persons with
36 disabilities.

37 **SEC.4. National Office of Commuter Affairs.** – To administer and implement the
38 provisions of this Act, and to monitor and ensure compliance of the country with international
39 standards set for mobility, there is hereby created the National Office of Commuter Affairs under
40 the Department of Transportation (DOTr), which shall have the following functions:

- 41 (a) Coordinate with the respective government agencies dealing with road, rail, air,
42 and maritime transportation policy to ensure the safe, efficient, and comfortable
43 travel of commuters;
- 44 (b) Operate help desks for commuters;

- (c) Assist commuters whenever the safety and efficiency of travel is compromised;
 - (d) Undertake massive information dissemination campaigns on commuter education;
 - (e) Ensure legal assistance for commuters, when necessary; and
 - (f) Ensure adequate representation of commuters in any public consultation that will impact their welfare and interest.
- The National Office shall be under the direct supervision of an Assistant Secretary.

SEC.5. Local Office of Commuter Affairs. – To administer and implement this Act in the local level, each city and urbanized municipality shall establish its own Local Office of Commuter Affairs, which shall be under the direct supervision of the city or municipal administrator.

SEC.6. Right to Adequate Public Transportation Services. – The State shall ensure that adequate public transportation services are available to meet the needs of commuters. For purposes of this Act, public transportation services shall be considered adequate when:

- (a) Public Transportation service vehicles are:
 - a. Sufficient in quantity and frequency, to ensure that commuter waiting time at stops and terminals does not exceed ten (10) minutes even during peak demand periods;
 - b. Accorded priority in the use of road space and traffic signal operations, to ensure that commuters are able to traverse fifteen (15) kilometers within one (1) hour, including all scheduled stops; and
 - c. Designed to accommodate all persons, including those with disabilities or special needs;
- (b) Public transportation service terminals and stops are:
 - a. Available within five hundred (500) meters from any residence or activity center;
 - b. Connected to another public transportation service terminal within three hundred (300) meters to promote seamless connectivity of travel; and
 - c. Properly equipped, adequately sized, well maintained, and designed to promote commuter safely and comfort and accommodate all persons, including persons with disabilities or special needs.

SEC.7. Right to Affordable Public Transportation Services. – The State shall ensure that public transportation services are affordable to the general public.

Vulnerable road users shall continue to benefit from concessional or discounted fares, as provided for by law.

The State shall promote the use of public transportation services by providing financial and non-financial incentives to ensure that it is more economical for commuters to use public transportation services more frequently than to use private motorized transport.

1 **SEC.8. *Right to Alternative Public Transportation Services.*** – When public transportation
2 services are deficient, the State shall provide alternatives to ensure the mobility of the people,
3 including the use of public resources, such as government-owned vehicles, and through State
4 charter or lease of private vehicles.

5 **SEC.9. *Right to Road Safety.*** – The State shall ensure that road crashes are eliminated. The
6 DOTr, through the National Office, shall implement a comprehensive road safety program and
7 shall implement the activities under the five pillars of the Philippine Road Safety Action Plan,
8 namely: Road Safety Management, Safer Roads, Safer Vehicles, Safer Road Users, and Post-Crash
9 Response.

10 The State shall also promote safe and efficient driving behavior by public transportation
11 drivers through mandatory training programs and more stringent licensing. The National Office, in
12 coordination with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), is hereby
13 mandated to monitor the location and speed of public transportation vehicles, and the status of their
14 public transportation drivers in real time, by requiring the installation of electronic vehicle tracking
15 devices and CCTVs. The State shall repeal all laws, rules, and regulations which incentivize public
16 transportation drivers in relation to ridership or fare revenue, to eliminate dangerous on-street
17 competition and behavior among public transport drivers.

18 **SEC.10. *Right to Proper Mobility Infrastructure.*** – The State shall provide proper
19 mobility infrastructure to promote the welfare of commuters. In all renovations of existing
20 infrastructure or construction of new infrastructure, the improvement of travel time impact on
21 public transport service users, cyclists, and pedestrians shall be prioritized.

22 Road infrastructure shall be designed and engineered to ensure the safety and access of
23 non-motorized commuters, as well as the disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. Every road where a
24 speed limit of over 20 kilometers per hour (kph) and under 60 kph is imposed shall feature an
25 unobstructed walking path at least 2.5 meters wide in each direction. Every road where a speed
26 limit of over 60 kph is imposed shall feature dedicated bike lanes wide enough to accommodate at
27 least two bikes.

28 The State shall develop adequate sidewalks and bicycle lane networks that encourage active
29 transport and provide safe and direct access to priority destinations, such as housing, schools,
30 business centers, and public transportation terminals. Such walking and cycling infrastructure shall
31 be included in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan of every city and urbanized municipality
32 incorporated in the design and implementation of road transport projects at national and local
33 government levels. The Local Office of a city or urbanized municipality shall ensure that each
34 barangay includes:

- 35 (a) Safe, well-protected, and unobstructed community-wide foot paths, sidewalks,
36 and bicycle lanes, compliant with universal design guidelines, to enable travel
37 around the city or urbanized municipality entirely by foot, bicycle, or other
38 forms of micro mobility;
- 39 (b) Networks of greenways to promote healthy commuting and encourage active
40 transport;
- 41 (c) Proper lighting on all roads and footpaths to allow safe travel even after dark;

- (d) Tactile paving on sidewalks along high-volume transport corridors for the benefit of blind pedestrians;
- (e) Bicycle racks in every public transportation terminal or stop and activity center that can accommodate at least ten (10%) of its anticipated users; and
- (f) Safe intersections and pedestrian crossings, equipped with raised pedestrian platforms, highly visible advance warning signages, adequate street lighting, mid-crossing refuges, traffic calming, and curb outstands to reduce road pavement crossing width.

The State shall require all government offices and buildings to be equipped with shower facilities for commuter used. The DOTr, through the National Office, and the Local Offices shall develop and support measures to incentivize the private sector to include shower facilities in their respective activity centers.

SEC.11. *Right to a Fair Share of Public Road Space.* – The State shall ensure that public road space is efficiently used. Modes of transportation that move more people, such as public transportation services, active transport, and micro mobility, shall have priority over the use of road space.

Public road space and foot paths shall not be appropriated or acquired for parking, commerce, or other activities which restrict public use of, or access to public roads.

SEC.12. *Right to Breathe Clean Air During Travel.* – In line with the provisions of Republic Act No. 8749, otherwise known as the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999, the State shall take measures to ensure that commuters are able to travel using public transportation services or active transport without compromising their health, by:

- (a) Strengthening enforcement measures for private motorized transportation and public transportation vehicles to comply with the emission standards set by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and/or the LTFRB, whichever affords greater protection for clean air;
- (b) Measuring air quality along the major transport corridors in all cities and provide this information to the public in real time; and
- (c) Activating emergency procedures to reduce public exposure to emissions when air quality exceeds safe levels.

SEC.13. *Right to Information for Efficient and Convenient Travel.* – The State shall provide timely and adequate information to commuters to enable them to develop safe, convenient, and efficient travel plans, including selection of transportation modes and routes, by:

- (a) Requiring all public transport services to prominently display route maps, fares, schedules, and real time vehicle location and availability, in all transportation service terminals and other strategic locations;
- (b) Establishing technical standards and regulations for the display of street maps at strategic locations in each neighborhood;
- (c) Ensuring that all public transportation terminals, ports, and airports have a twenty-four (24) information assistance counter to serve commuter needs; and

- 1 (d) Ensuring the collection, processing, and availability to the public of data on mobility,
2 including geo-referenced on road crashes, air pollution levels, public transportation
3 service travel times.

4 **SEC.14. *Right to Compensation for Public Transportation Service Breakdowns.*** – The
5 State shall ensure that passengers are compensated in case of service breakdowns in public
6 transportation services. During public transportation service breakdowns, transport operators shall:

- 7 (a) Give passengers a full refund of the fare for the trip affected by the breakdown;
8 (b) Assist the affected passengers in reaching their final destination;
9 (c) Inform passengers how they will be redirected to their final destination; and if the
10 passengers are stranded for more than (1) hour.

11 **SEC.15. *Right To Participation in Decision-Making Processes Involving Mobility and***
12 ***Public Transportation Services.*** – The State shall consult commuters and consider their welfare
13 and interest in all decision-making processes involving mobility and public transportation services
14 by;

- 15 (a) Giving commuters, including civil society organizations, advance notice which shall
16 contain all relevant information on any proposed policy, regulation, project, or service
17 affecting mobility at the local or national level;
18 (b) Allowing commuters to comment and make suggestions on the proposed policy,
19 regulation, project, or service, through official traditional and social media channels
20 and other similar channels;
21 (c) Responding to comments and suggestions from commuters within twenty (20) working
22 days from receipt; and
23 (d) Setting public consultation meetings at a time and place that will maximize
24 participation from commuters.

25 **SEC.16. *Public Transportation Services and Infrastructure Plan.*** - Within one- hundred
26 eighty (180) days from the effectivity of the rules and regulations implementing this Act, in
27 consultation with relevant government agencies, the National Office and Local Offices shall
28 publish a Public Transportation Services and Infrastructure Plan, which should satisfy the evolving
29 mobility requirements at the national and local levels, respectively. To ensure that these
30 mobility requirements are kept up to date, the National and Local Offices shall publish an updated
31 Public Transportation Services and Infrastructure Plan on or before December of each year. The
32 Public Transportation Services and Infrastructure Plan shall ensure that all the rights mentioned in
33 Section V of this Act shall be enforced.

34 **SEC.17. *Implementing Agencies.*** – In the implementation of the provisions of this Act,
35 the DOTr shall lead and coordinate the implementation activities of the Department of Public
36 Works and Highways, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Metropolitan Manila
37 Development Authority, and concerned local government units.

38 **SEC. 18. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - The DOTr, in consultation with the
39 other implementing agencies and concerned agencies, civil society organizations, and

1 stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations within one hundred eighty
2 (180) days from the effectivity of this Act.

3 **SEC. 19. *Penalties.*** – The following penalties shall apply to transport operators, drivers,
4 vehicle owners, and government officials for violations of this Act, as follows:

5 (a) Any transport operator whose public transportation service terminals violate Sections
6 6(b)(iii), 13(a), and 13(c) of this Act shall be fined One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) for
7 the first offense; Two hundred thousand peso (P200,000.00) for the second offense; and Five
8 hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) and suspension of the franchise for a period of one (1) year
9 for the third and succeeding offenses;

10 (b) Any transport operator whose public transportation service vehicles violate Sections
11 6(a)(iii), 9, and 12 of this Act shall be fined One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) for the first
12 offense; Two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00) for the second offense; and Five
13 hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) and suspension of the franchise for a period of one
14 (1) year for the third and succeeding offenses;

15 (c) Any transport operator or public transportation services driver who fails to honor
16 concessional or discounted fares under Section 7, Paragraph 2 of this Act shall be fined One
17 hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) for the first offense; Two hundred thousand pesos
18 (P200,000.00) for the second offense; and Five hundred thousand pesos (PS00,000.00) and
19 suspension of the franchise or driver's license for a period of one (1) year for the third and
20 succeeding offenses.

21 (d) Any transport operator or public transportation services driver who fails to compensate
22 commuters for public transportation service breakdowns under Section 14 of this Act shall be fined
23 One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) for the first offense; Two hundred thousand pesos
24 (P200,000.00) for the second offense; and Five hundred thousand pesos (PS00,000.00) and
25 suspension of the franchise or driver's license for a period of one (1) year for the third and
26 succeeding offenses;

27 (f) Any person who appropriates or acquires public road space and foot paths for parking,
28 commerce, or other activities which restrict public use of, or access to, public roads shall be fined
29 One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) for the first offense; Two hundred thousand pesos
30 (P200,000.00) for the second offense; and Five hundred thousand pesos (PS00,000.00) for the third
31 and succeeding offenses;

32 (g) Any registered owner of private motorized transport or public transportation service
33 vehicles who fails to meet the emission standards referred to in Section 12 of this Act shall be fined
34 One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) for the first offense; Two hundred thousand pesos
35 (P200,000.00) for the second offense; and Five hundred thousand pesos (PS00,000.00) for the third
36 and succeeding offenses; and

37 (h) Any government official or employee who violates Sections 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14,
38 and 15 of this Act shall be fined One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) for the first offense;
39 Two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00) for the second offense; and Five hundred thousand

1 pesos (PS00,000.00) for the third s and succeeding offenses. In addition to these fines,
2 an administrative complaint may also be filed against government officials or employees who
3 violate this Act.

4 **SEC. 20. Appropriations.** - The initial amount necessary for the implementation of this Act
5 shall be charged against the current appropriation of the DOTr: Provided, That the fines that may
6 be collected in the enforcement of this Act shall be used exclusively for its implementation:
7 Provided, further, That such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this
8 Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

9 **SEC.21. Separability Clause.** - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or
10 invalid, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

11 **SEC. 22. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, and rules
12 and regulations inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

13 **SEC. 23. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete
14 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

15 *Approved,*