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SENATE

S. No. 1582

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Prepared by the Committees on Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking; Public Works; and Finance with Senators Cayetano, Tolentino, Pacquiao and Angara as authors thereof

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NETWORK OF POP-UP BICYCLE LANES AND EMERGENCY PATHWAYS FOR USE DURING THE DURATION OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Safe Pathways Act*”.

2 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The Constitution mandates the State to
3 protect and advance the right of the Filipino people to a balanced and healthful
4 ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature, and to protect and
5 promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among
6 them.

7 In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Action Plan Against COVID-
8 19 provides that the State shall mitigate the consequences and impact of the COVID-
9 19 pandemic on the social, economic, and personal security of the Filipino people.

10 The State recognizes that the current transportation system does not address
11 the need for physical distancing.

12 The State likewise acknowledges the need for infrastructure and a change in
13 mindset to encourage and accommodate alternative modes of transportation such as
14 walking, bicycles, and other non-motorized vehicles, and to provide safe and
15 convenient pathways for commuters, especially health workers and other frontliners,
16 pedestrians and non-motorized travel. It also recognizes the urgency of this need

1 during the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure physical distancing and given the limited
2 forms of transportation available to frontliners and essential workers for so long as
3 there is reduced mobility.

4 Prioritizing walking, biking, and the use of non-motorized vehicles will result in
5 reduced carbon emissions, less use of energy and resources, and provide multiple
6 health benefits and increase quality of life.

7 These are also in line with the State's commitment to the Sustainable
8 Development Goals (SDGs), in particular: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being); SDG
9 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure);
10 SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); SDG 13 (Climate Action); and SDG 17
11 (Partnerships for the Goals).

12 For purposes of this Act, "Non-Motorized Vehicles" includes all forms of travel
13 that do not rely on an engine or motor for movement. This includes, but is not
14 limited to, walking, bicycles, and small-wheeled non-motorized transport (skates,
15 skateboards, push scooters and hand carts).

16 *Sec. 3. Safe Pathways Network.* – Immediately upon the effectivity of this Act,
17 the Department of Transportation (DOTr) with the Department of Public Works and
18 Highways (DPWH), and in coordination with Local Government Units (LGUs), shall
19 identify and create a network of pop-up bicycle lanes that may be used during the
20 duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pop-up bicycle lanes are strictly for bicycles
21 and other non-motorized vehicles only, and shall, as much as practicable, directly
22 connect users to essential destinations such as medical facilities, public and private
23 facilities frequented by people, schools, when they open, and other similar places
24 that may be identified. The lanes may be marked with removable tapes and mobile
25 signs, which can easily be placed and removed as necessary. Other physical barriers
26 may also be used. Electric scooters, electric bicycles, and other similar modes of
27 transport may be allowed subject to the guidelines set by the DOTr and other
28 appropriate agencies.

29 To complement the network of pop-up bicycle lanes, LGUs shall create a
30 designated network of people-oriented emergency pathways along local roads that
31 will provide pedestrians and bicycle and non-motorized vehicle users safe,
32 convenient access to frequented destinations by restricting motorized vehicle

1 passage in these pathways during peak hours. The emergency pathways shall be
2 clearly marked with signage containing restrictions. The DOTr and DPWH shall
3 identify priority areas for implementation.

4 *Sec. 4. Health Facilities Loop.* – The LGUs shall coordinate with health
5 facilities within their jurisdiction to establish pop-up bicycle lanes and emergency
6 pathways that can connect and provide safe access for healthcare workers to
7 hospitals and other health centers.

8 *Sec. 5. Obedience to Traffic Laws, Rules and Regulations.* – All non-motorized
9 vehicle users, including users of electric scooters, electric bicycles, and other similar
10 modes of transport as allowed by the DOTr and other appropriate agencies, shall
11 obey existing traffic laws, rules and regulations, and shall be subject to existing
12 penalties for violations.

13 The DOTr, in coordination with the Metro Manila Development Authority and
14 other appropriate agencies, shall issue guidelines for safe biking and the use of non-
15 motorized vehicles.

16 *Sec. 6. Non-Motorized Vehicle Parking Spaces.* – All public places, government
17 offices, schools, places of work and major commercial establishments, including
18 malls, banks, hospitals, and the like shall provide, as far as practicable, adequate
19 parking spaces for bicycles, other non-motorized vehicles, and electric scooters,
20 electric bicycles, and other similar modes of transport as allowed by the DOTr and
21 other appropriate agencies.

22 *Sec. 7. Role of the Public and Private Sectors.* – Both the public and private
23 sectors shall promote walking and using bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles
24 as an alternative means of travel. They shall develop the necessary infrastructure,
25 facilities and programs for its implementation, including showers, changing areas,
26 and hydration facilities, and shall continue following physical distancing measures
27 during travel.

28 *Sec. 8. Permanent Adoption of Safe Pathways Network.* – The DOTr, DPWH
29 and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), in coordination with
30 the appropriate agencies, shall prepare to permanently adopt the established bicycle
31 lanes and emergency pathways, as may be appropriate. Pursuant to this, the LGUs
32 shall clear all local roads and sidewalks of obstructions, and make the necessary

1 Improvements on existing structures. All non-motorized vehicle parking spaces and
2 other infrastructure shall also be made permanent, as may be appropriate and
3 practicable.

4 Further, the DPWH shall revise its manuals and guidelines for road design and
5 construction to include non-motorized vehicles in the allocation of road space on
6 national and local roads, and to promote the safety of pedestrians and non-
7 motorized vehicle users.

8 The LGUs shall coordinate and issue the necessary measures for the adoption
9 and implementation of the Safe Pathways Network, in compliance with the
10 implementing rules and regulations as provided in Section 9 of this Act.

11 *Sec. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within thirty (30) days from
12 the effectivity of this Act, the DOTr, in coordination with the DPWH, DILG, and other
13 appropriate agencies, shall promulgate and issue the necessary guidelines for the
14 effective implementation of this Act. The implementing rules and regulations issued
15 pursuant to this Section shall take effect thirty (30) days after its publication in two
16 (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

17 *Sec. 10. Appropriations.* - The funds necessary for the initial implementation
18 of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the DOTr and DPWH.
19 Thereafter, funding shall be included in the budget of the DOTr and DPWH under
20 the annual General Appropriations Act.

21 *Sec. 11. Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared
22 unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be
23 affected thereby.

24 *Sec. 12. Repealing Clause.* - All other laws, decrees, orders, rules and
25 regulations, other issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this
26 Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,