

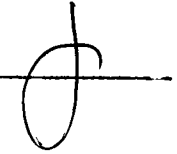
NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

23 NOV -7 P1 :14

SENATE

RECEIVED BY:

P. S. RES. NO. 859



Introduced by Senator JOEL VILLANUEVA

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE/S OF THE SENATE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PLANS AND PROGRAMS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO SOLVE THE WORSENING TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN METRO MANILA AND IN OTHER HIGHLY URBANIZED CITIES OF THE COUNTRY

WHEREAS, Section 6, Article III of the Constitution provides that the right to travel shall not be impaired "except in the interest of national security, public safety, or public health[.]";

WHEREAS, traffic congestion, defined as "a condition in which the number of vehicles attempting to use a roadway at any given time exceeds the ability of the roadway to carry the load at generally acceptable service levels"¹, unnecessarily impedes the right to travel within the country, especially in highly urbanized areas;

WHEREAS, based on the 2022 TomTom Traffic Index,² Manila ranked 9th out of 390 cities around the world and 1st in Southeast Asian cities when it comes to traffic congestion. It took an average time of 27 minutes to travel 10 kilometers in 2022, with commuters spending 100 hours in traffic out of 241 driving hours yearly;³

WHEREAS, data from the Asian Development Outlook 2019 Update report showed that Metro Manila was the most congested city out of 278 cities from 25 developing Asian countries. It implies that drivers in Metro Manila would have to spend almost 100% more time when they travel during peak hours;⁴

¹ Rothenberg, M.J. 1985. Urban Congestion in the United States-What Does the Future Hold?. ITE Journal. July 1985. Volume 55. Number 7, cited in Miller, M.A. and Li, K. 1994. An Investigation Of The Costs Of Roadway Traffic Congestion: A Preparatory Step For IVHBenefit's Evaluation. California Path Program. May 1994. Available at <https://escholarship.org/content/qt1zk368mg/qt1zk368mg.pdf?t=krrrz7> (Accessed on November 5, 2023).

² The TomTom Traffic Index measures cities around the world by their travel time, fuel costs and CO2 emissions.

³ TomTom Traffic Index Ranking 2022. Available at <https://www.tomtom.com/traffic-index/ranking/> (Accessed on November 5, 2023).

⁴ December 12, 2019. Looking for a Fix for Asia's Traffic Woes. Asian Development Blog, Available at <https://blogs.adb.org/blog/looking-fix-asias-traffic-woes> (Accessed on November 6, 2023), citing Fostering Growth and Inclusion

WHEREAS, traffic congestion has significant personal, social, environmental, and economic impacts;

WHEREAS, traffic congestion adversely affects the health of commuters. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), congestion increases the levels of fatigue and anxiety, and causes communication difficulties and sleep disruption.⁵ Another study also found that additional commuting time of 10 minutes because of congestion increases the possibility of suffering from depression by 0.8%;⁶

WHEREAS, according to the study by Fattah, et al., increased chronic stress is a likely result of being exposed daily to the annoyances of traffic. When driving in a traffic jam, people tend to be more impatient because they must wait for traffic movement and deal with other driver's mistakes.⁷ Impatience can "develop into resentment, aggressive driving, and fury, all of which can lead to road rage."⁸

WHEREAS, vehicle emissions release air pollutants such as carbon monoxide (CO), carbon dioxide (CO₂), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or hydrocarbons (HCs), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and particulate matter (PM). Traffic congestion, then, increases pollutant emissions and degrades the quality of air, which contributes to higher morbidity and mortality rates of drivers, commuters, and individuals living near the road;⁹

WHEREAS, billions of pesos in the Philippine economy are lost daily due to traffic. Studies conducted by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) estimated the losses of P2.4 Billion in 2014, P3.5 Billion in 2018, and P4.9 Billion in 2023 per day due to traffic congestion in Metro Manila. By 2030, economic costs are predicted to increase to P6 Billion per day;¹⁰

in Asia's Cities: Theme Chapter of the Asian Development Outlook. Asian Development Bank. Available at <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/524596/ado2019-update-theme-chapter.pdf> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

⁵ Peden, M., et al., World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention. World Health Organization: Geneva, Switzerland, 2004, cited in Gonzalez, S., et al. Understanding the Effect of Traffic Congestion on Accidents Using Big Data. Sustainability. 2021. Available at <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13137500> (Accessed on November 5, 2023).

⁶ Wang, X, et al. Commute patterns and depression: Evidence from eleven Latin American cities. J. Transp. Health 2019, 14, 100607, cited in Gonzalez, S., et al. Understanding the Effect of Traffic Congestion on Accidents Using Big Data. Ensuring Sustainable Development at the Light of New Mobility Trends and Challenges.

⁷ Fattah, et al. Insights into the socio-economic impacts of traffic congestion in the port and industrial areas of Chittagong city, Bangladesh. Transportation Engineering. Volume 9. September 2022. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.treng.2022.100122> (Accessed on November 5, 2023).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Zhang, K. and Batterman, S. Air pollution and health risks due to vehicle traffic. Science of The Total Environment. Volumes 450-451. April 2013. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2013.01.074> (Accessed on November 5, 2023).

¹⁰ Japan International Cooperation Agency. Changing the World Together. Available at https://www.jica.go.jp/Resource/philippine/english/office/others/c8h0vm0000d3hdsdw-att/brochure_2020_01.pdf (Accessed on November 6, 2023); Project for Comprehensive Traffic Management Plan for Metro Manila, Final Report Summary. Available at <https://openjicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/12374831.pdf> (Accessed on November 6, 2023); Transportation. Socioeconomic Research Portal for the Philippines. Available at https://serp-p.pids.gov.ph/feature/public/index-view?featuretype_id=1&slug=transportation#:~:text=Over%20the%20years%2C%20the%20country's,PHP%202.4%20billion%20per%20day. (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

WHEREAS, a good transport structure is a fundamental component of the tourism industry.¹¹ Tourism heavily relies on transportation to bring tourists from one destination to another.¹² According to a study on tourist behavior, the state of traffic influences the decision of tourists.¹³ With comfort on their minds and limited time on their hands, tourists would drop itineraries should there be traffic congestion on the way to their destinations. It is more likely that tourists would choose cities with efficient transport systems;

WHEREAS, several national government programs have been implemented to ease traffic congestion in the country, such as the Department of Transportation's (DOTR) EDSA Bus Carousel, a bus rapid transit system, from 2020 to 2022,¹⁴ and the Department of the Interior and Local Government's Bike Lane Awards, that encourages local government units to promote and provide means for active transport;¹⁵

WHEREAS, as an additional measure to ease traffic congestion, the Civil Service Commission issued Memorandum Circular No. 6, s. 2022, adopting the Policies on Flexible Work Arrangements in the Government. It provided guidelines on flexible work arrangements, including work-from-home and compressed or four-day workweek;¹⁶

WHEREAS, plans and roadmaps to minimize road traffic are also in the pipeline. DOTR is working on creating an active transport infrastructure master plan or a roadmap on active transport for the next 5 to 10 years.¹⁷ Meanwhile, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is coordinating with Metro Manila mayors for their commitment in implementing the Comprehensive Traffic Management Plan for Metro Manila, a project funded by JICA;¹⁸

WHEREAS, traffic congestion is expected to increase this holiday season despite the several national and local government programs aimed to minimize traffic jam. Just this September 2023, MMDA reported the exacerbation of traffic congestion in Metro Manila as the month of December is fast approaching;¹⁹

¹¹ Jangra, R., et al. The role of transportation in developing the tourism sector at high altitude destination, Kinnaur. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-023-03099-y> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

¹² Rodrigue, J.P. *Tourism and Transport. The Geography of Transport Systems*. Available at <https://transportgeography.org/contents/applications/tourism-transport/>. (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

¹³ Cheng, J. et al. A multi-agent model of traffic simulation around urban scenic spots: From the perspective of tourist behaviors. *Heliyon*. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e20929> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

¹⁴ Gaspay, S., et al. Reforms in Metro Manila's bus transport system hastened by the Covid-19 pandemic: A policy capacity analysis of the EDSA busway. *Research in Transportation Economics*. Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10277182/> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

¹⁵ June 22, 2023. DILG urges LGUs to promote active transport to ease traffic congestion. Department of the Interior and Local Government. Available at <https://www.dilg.gov.ph/news/DILG-urges-LGUs-to-promote-active-transport-to-ease-traffic-congestion/NC-2023-1103> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

¹⁶ Available at <https://www.csc.gov.ph/phocadownload/userupload/irmo/mc/2022/MC%20No.%2006,%20s.%202022.pdf> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

¹⁷ July 6, 2023. Coming soon: Road map for active transport. *Inquirer*. Available at <https://business.inquirer.net/408766/coming-soon-road-map-for-active-transport> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

¹⁸ November 19, 2022. NCR mayors commit to fully implement 5-year Metro Manila traffic plan. *Manila Bulletin*. Available at <https://mb.com.ph/2022/11/19/ncr-mayors-commit-to-fully-implement-5-year-metro-manila-traffic-plan> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

¹⁹ September 28, 2023. Traffic gridlock worsens. *The Manila Times*. Available <https://www.manilatimes.net/2023/09/28/photos/traffic-gridlock-worsens/1912254> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

WHEREAS, last year, MMDA warned commuters of a 10% to 20% increase in traffic volume or about 417,000 to 430,000 vehicles passing through EDSA daily due to the holiday season;²⁰

WHEREAS, the Department of Tourism also reported that last year, international arrivals peaked in December since Filipinos and tourists opted to spend their holiday vacation in the Philippines;²¹

WHEREAS, there is a need to review the policies and revisit the programs and plans of DOTr, MMDA, DILG, and other relevant agencies on ameliorating heavy traffic conditions in the Philippines;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES, that the appropriate Committee/s of the Senate conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the plans and programs of the government to solve the worsening traffic congestion in Metro Manila and in other highly urbanized cities of the country.

Adopted,


JOEL VILLANUEVA

²⁰ December 15, 2022. MMDA sees 20% spike in EDSA traffic. PhilStar. Available at <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/12/15/2230841/mmda-sees-20-spike-edsa-traffic> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).

²¹ January 2, 2023. PH exceeds target with 2.6-M international arrivals in 2022. Philippine News Agency. Available at <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1191853> (Accessed on November 6, 2023).