

SENATE
P.S. Res. No. 379

20 MAY -4 AFO:35

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Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE RESUMPTION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN ORDER TO IMMEDIATELY RESTORE MOBILITY AND LIVELIHOOD WHILE STILL OBSERVING SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES AND OTHER HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

1 WHEREAS, on 9 March, through Proclamation No. 922, President Rodrigo
2 Duterte declared a state of public health emergency after the Department of Health
3 confirmed local transmission of the COVID-19 in the Philippines¹;

4 WHEREAS, less than a week after, on 16 March, President Duterte placed the
5 entire Luzon under an enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) as part of the
6 government's effort to contain the spread of the virus. The lockdown took effect on
7 midnight of 17 March²;

8 WHEREAS, in the implementation of the ECQ, all forms of public transportation
9 have been suspended. According to Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles, this is to
10 discourage people from leaving their houses, except when buying essential goods³;

11 WHEREAS, a month after the lockdown, Google's *Philippine Mobility Report*
12 which used anonymized location data from users who turned on their location history
13 found that as of 17 April, there is a 79% decline in mobility trends for retail and
14 recreational locations, 56% decline for groceries and pharmacies, 53% decline in

¹ Proclamation No. 922. Retrieved from <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/02feb/20200308-PROC-922-RRD-1.pdf>

² Tomacruz, S. (2020 March 16). *Duterte places Luzon on lockdown to battle coronavirus*. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/254726-luzon-total-lockdown-battle-coronavirus-outbreak>

³ Rey, A. (2020 March 16). *Mass transportation suspended in Luzon*. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/254784-mass-transportation-suspended-luzon-coronavirus>

1 public parks and beaches, 85% decline in transit stations, 71% decline in workplace
2 locations, and 39% increase in residential locations⁴;

3 WHEREAS, in the United Kingdom, SYSTRA, a transportation infrastructure
4 consulting firm, predicts a 20% drop in public transportation in post-pandemic UK. Of
5 the 20%, 49% will reduce their use due to concerns of contracting the disease, 24%
6 will work from home, and 14% have found alternative ways of coming to
7 transporting;⁵

8 WHEREAS, with regard to air travel, the International Air Transport Association
9 (IATA) reported that the airline industry will see a 48% reduction in passenger demand
10 due to economic decline and travel restrictions, and a 55% decline in passenger
11 revenue compared to 2019 data⁶;

12 WHEREAS, some countries are already beginning to craft their post-pandemic
13 transportation plans in anticipation of the reopening of the economy;

14 WHEREAS, in the United States, the government is already finalizing guidelines
15 for the resumption of their transit which includes roping off seats, putting markings
16 where people should stand, regular checking of worker's temperature, cleaning
17 compartments after every ride, requiring staff to wear masks, regular maintenance of
18 ventilation system, rear bus boarding system, closing off every other row of seats,
19 reducing maximum occupancy, increasing service frequency on busier routes,
20 installing partitions on station kiosks and operator compartments, among others⁷;

21 WHEREAS, in Italy, the transport ministry is also developing guidelines on the
22 use of public transportation as their lockdown restriction eases. This included
23 electronic ticket machines, installing hand sanitizer dispensers, regular disinfection,
24 boarding and exiting schemes, putting markers for social distancing, and camera

⁴ Google. *Philippine Mobility Report*. Retrieved last 17 April 2020 from https://www.gstatic.com/covid19/mobility/2020-04-17_PH_Mobility_Report_en.pdf.

⁵ Moran, M. (2020 April 27). *20% drop in public transport use predicted post-pandemic*. Retrieved from <https://www.transportxtra.com/publications/local-transport-today/news/65233/20--in-public-transport-use-predicted-post-pandemic/>.

⁶ IATA. (2020 April 14). *COVID-19 Puts Over Half of 2020 Passenger Revenues at Risk*. Retrieved from <https://www.iata.org/en/pressroom/pr/2020-04-14-01/>.

⁷ George, J. and Sun, L. (2020 April 29). *White House is reviewing guidelines for reopening transit*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/trafficandcommuting/white-house-transit-reopening-guidelines/2020/04/28/a41f4f1a-8949-11ea-9dfd-990f9dcc71fc_story.html

1 system and additional personnel to help count passengers. Other cities are also
2 encouraging citizens to walk or use e-bikes or electric scooters⁸;

3 WHEREAS, low cost carrier Air Asia has resumed domestic operations in
4 Malaysia beginning 29 April while enforcing strict safety measures. Each passenger is
5 now required to bring their own mask and wear it before, during and after the flight,
6 including during check-in and bag collection. They airlines is also looking at having
7 cabin crews wear a redesigned personal protective equipment (PPE)⁹;

8 WHEREAS, IATA reported that some airlines are introducing temporary social
9 distancing measures, such as blocking the middle seat to provide more space between
10 passengers and reduce spread of germs; while some are already designing new seat
11 concepts such as reversing the position of the middle seat and installing a transparent
12 shield guard for each seat¹⁰;

13 WHEREAS, in the Philippines, in anticipation of the easing of the ECQ after May
14 15, various groups and individuals have come up with viable suggestions on how to
15 enable mobility while still observing social distancing and health protocols;

16 WHEREAS, Move Metro Manila, an informal coalition of mobility advocates,
17 predicts that a partial resumption of public transport will benefit two (2) million
18 commuters daily – a million essential workers and another million who go out to buy
19 basic necessities of seek medical care¹¹;

20 WHEREAS, there are two measures which the government can pursue to
21 effectively implement social distancing: first, to reduce crowding by increasing the
22 frequency of public transport vehicles; and second, to encourage active transport
23 modes like walking and cycling¹² by establishing a network of car-free "Safe Streets"¹³;

⁸ Belenky, S. (2020 April 27). *The Coronavirus Pandemic Is Forcing Cities To Rethink Public Transportation*. Retrieved from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/coronavirus-italy-public-transportation-bikes-cars_n_5ea6b1f1c5b66d0b7b43abcc

⁹ Philippine Daily Inquirer. (2020 April 30). *Low-cost Malaysian airline starts flying again, passengers need to bring own masks*. Retrieved from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1267223/low-cost-malaysian-airline-starts-flying-again-passengers-need-to-bring-own-masks#ixzz6LBH7MCtN>

¹⁰ Smith, L. (2020 April 27). *Flying after COVID-19 will never be the same. Here's what airplane seats could look like*. Retrieved from <https://www.fastcompany.com/90496843/flying-after-covid-19-will-never-be-the-same-heres-what-airplane-seats-could-look-like>

¹¹ Move Metro Manila. *Public Transportation and the Modified Community Quarantine (MCQ)*. Proposal was submitted to the Senate Committee on Public Services last 16 April 2020.

¹² Siy, R. (2020 March 14). *Mobility in the time of Covid-19*. Retrieved from <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/03/14/business/business-top/mobility-in-the-time-of-covid-19/702925/>

¹³ Move Metro Manila. *Public Transportation and the Modified Community Quarantine (MCQ)*. Proposal was submitted to the Senate Committee on Public Services last 16 April 2020.

1 WHEREAS, Top Gear Philippines, an automobile feature magazine, outlined the
2 changes that may happen in the transportation industry after the pandemic. To this,
3 they mentioned the rise in personal transport, disinfection as part of regular vehicle
4 maintenance, shift to cashless transactions, improvement of sidewalks, elevated
5 crossings and street lights, among others¹⁴;

6 WHEREAS, on 30 April 2020, the Department of Transportation (DOTR) issued
7 Guidelines for the gradual resumption of public transportation in areas where a general
8 community quarantine (GCQ) is in place;

9 WHEREAS, the DOTr Guidelines provide for the operation of trains and other
10 public utility vehicles (PUVs) like buses and modern jeepneys at 50% capacity, use of
11 government vehicles in case of lack of transport vehicles, mandatory wearing of
12 facemasks, use of automatic fare collection system or pay-upon-boarding system, use
13 of terminal body scanners, disinfection of vehicles before and after trips, installation
14 of acetate division, two-passenger-per-row rule for vans, taxis, and TNVS, use of
15 bicycles, and prohibition of back-riding in motorcycles¹⁵;

16 WHEREAS, these PUVs still need to secure a special permit before operating to
17 ensure that they are compliant to the additional terms and conditions as may be issued
18 by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID)¹⁶;

19 WHEREAS, the DOTR guidelines include rules in airports which require regular
20 temperature checking at all terminals, mandatory wearing of PPEs for airport
21 employees and masks for passengers, availability of rapid testing centers inside
22 airports, and strict observation of social distancing during flights¹⁷;

23 WHEREAS, the guidelines should also anticipate renewed extensions of the ECQ
24 or future reversion to ECQ from a GCQ and ensure that such guidelines will always

¹⁴ Laurel, D. (2020 April 6). *Endure and adapt: 10 ways PH transportation will change once this pandemic is over*. Retrieved from <https://www.topgear.com.ph/features/feature-articles/ph-transportation-covid-19-pandemic-a962-20200406-lfrm>

¹⁵ Marquez, C. (2020 April 30). DOTr wants strict public transport protocols in GCQ areas. Retrieved from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1267581/dotr-wants-strict-public-transport-protocols-in-gcq-areas>

¹⁶ Marquez, C. (2020 April 30). PUVs must apply for special permits to operate in GCQ areas—LTFRB. Retrieved from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1267521/puvs-must-apply-for-special-permits-to-operate-in-gcq-areas-ltfrb#ixzz6LBljfStN>

¹⁷ Marquez, C. (2020 April 30). DOTr wants strict public transport protocols in GCQ areas. Retrieved from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1267581/dotr-wants-strict-public-transport-protocols-in-gcq-areas>

1 allow uninterrupted mobility for frontliners and other Authorized Persons Outside
2 Residence (APOR);

3 WHEREAS, all guidelines must be complemented with revenue support given
4 that public utility vehicle operations are dependent on operating at maximum
5 passenger capacity. The guidelines must provide a revenue model that will ensure
6 viability of operations while still ensuring that health protocols are followed;

7 WHEREAS, opportunity lies in crisis and the transportation industry is at a
8 critical position to recover, retool, reinvent, and reboot itself in order to cater to the
9 new normal;

10 WHEREAS, a data-driven, evidenced-based, and more lasting institutional post-
11 pandemic mobility plan must immediately be crafted in consultation with experts and
12 stakeholders to lay down and converge important insights, concerns and issues as
13 regards the use of mass transportation in the new normal;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, as it is hereby resolved,
15 to direct the Senate Committee on Public Services to conduct an inquiry, in aid of
16 legislation, on the resumption of public transport in order to immediately restore
17 mobility and livelihood while still observing social distancing measures and other
18 health and safety protocols.

Adopted.


GRACE POE