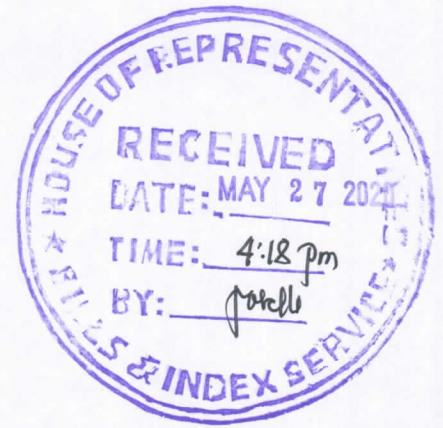


HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6840



Introduced by Representative Manuel Luis T. Lopez

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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In order to prevent the transmission of the novel coronavirus disease also known as COVID-19, the government has imposed necessary public health, safety, and security measures which includes the monitoring and management of transportation. This has unfortunately gravely constrained the mobility of the Filipino people, most especially the masses who are dependent on public transport.

Since the community quarantine began, we have heard stories of health workers either walking for almost an hour to reach their hospitals or sleeping in clinics since their homes are too far to walk;¹ a woman in labor being forced to walk half an hour to reach a clinic;² and a private sector-led initiative donating and lending 417 bicycles to frontliners³.

While the government is urgently providing for more modes of transport for our frontliners, and more public transport vehicles are likewise being allowed to operate, social distancing rules have severely limited the capacity of these modes of transport. Thus, it is likewise important to simultaneously provide safe and convenient pathways for pedestrians and non-motorized travel as walking, biking, and using non-motorized vehicles become important alternatives for commuters.

¹ Kristine Joy Patag, Health workers walk to work, sleep in clinics as quarantine halts transportation, PhilStar, 17 March 2020, <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/03/17/2001601/health-workers-walk-work-sleep-clinics-quarantine-halts-transportation>. Hanah Tabios, PGH nurse dedicated to her job walks part of the way to work, Manila Bulletin, 18 March 2020, <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/03/18/pgh-nurse-dedicated-to-her-job-walks-part-of-the-way-to-work/>.


² Carmela Fonbuena, Manila lockdown diary: 'I went to labour but had to walk to the clinic to give birth', The Guardian, 22 May 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/may/22/manila-lockdown-diary-i-went-into-labour-but-had-to-walk-to-the-clinic-to-give-birth>.

³ Life Cycles PH, <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=120916859550180&set=a.102064204768779>.

It is also important to recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic merely highlights long existing problems of our transportation system. This crisis has provided us an opportunity to re-envision our transportation system and to establish a new normal that would promote the mobility of all Filipinos while providing multiple health benefits, increasing quality of life, limiting use of energy and resources, and reducing carbon emissions.

The proposed measure seeks to identify and create a network of pop-up bicycle lanes and a designated network of people-oriented emergency pathways along local roads that may be used during the COVID-19 pandemic. Once COVID-19 is no longer a threat, the Department of Transportation and Department of Public Works and Highways are mandated to permanently adopt bicycle lanes and emergency pathways towards improving the overall mobility of the Filipino people.

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


HON. MANUEL LUIS T. LOPEZ
Representative
1st District, City of Manila

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

7
8 In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Action Plan Against COVID-19
9 provides that the State shall mitigate the consequences and impact of the COVID-19
10 pandemic to the social, economic, and personal security of the Filipino people.⁴

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

14
15 The State likewise acknowledges the need for infrastructure and a change in mindset
16 to encourage and accommodate alternative modes of transportation such as walking,
17 bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles, and to provide safe and convenient pathways for
18 pedestrians and non-motorized travel. It also recognizes the urgency of this need during the
19 COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure physical distancing and given the limited forms of
20 transportation available to frontliners and essential workers for so long as there is reduced
21 mobility.

22
23 Prioritizing walking, biking and the use of non-motorized vehicles will result in
24 reduced carbon emissions, less use of energy and resources, and provide multiple health
25 benefits and increase quality of life.

⁴ Section A (4), Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease (IATF)
Resolution No. 15, 24 March 2020.

1
2 These are also in line with the State's commitment to the Sustainable Development
3 Goals (SDGs), in particular: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being); SDG 7 (Affordable and
4 Clean Energy); SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure); SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities
5 and Communities); SDG 13 (Climate Action); and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

6
7 For purposes of this Act, "Non-Motorized Vehicles" includes all forms of travel that do
8 not rely on an engine or motor for movement. This includes, but is not limited to, walking,
9 bicycles, and small-wheeled non-motorized transport (skates, skateboards, push scooters
10 and hand carts).

11
12 *Sec. 3. Safe Pathways Network.* – Immediately upon the effectivity of this Act, the
13 Department of Transportation (DOTr) with the Department of Public Works and Highways
14 (DPWH), and in coordination with Local Government Units (LGUs), shall identify and create
15 a network of pop-up bicycle lanes that may be used during the duration of the COVID-19
16 pandemic. The pop-up bicycle lanes are strictly for bicycles and other non-motorized
17 vehicles only, and shall connect users to essential destinations such as medical facilities,
18 public and private facilities frequented by people, school, when they do open, and other
19 similar places that may be identified. The lanes may be marked with removable tapes and
20 mobile signs, which can easily be placed and removed as necessary. Other physical barriers
21 may also be used.

22
23 The pop-up bicycle lanes must have the necessary space to accommodate the
24 expected increase of users and the need for physical distancing at least one (1) meter apart.

25
26 To complement the network of pop-up bicycle lanes, LGUs shall create a designated
27 network of people-oriented emergency pathways along local roads that will provide
28 pedestrians and bicycle and non-motorized vehicle users safe, convenient access to
29 frequented destinations by restricting motorized vehicle passage in these pathways during
30 peak hours. The emergency pathways shall be clearly marked with signage containing
31 restrictions.

32
33 The DOTr and DPWH shall identify priority areas for implementation.

34
35 *Sec. 4. Non-Motorized Vehicle Parking Spaces.* – All public places, government offices,
36 schools, places of work and major commercial establishments, including malls, banks,
37 hospitals, and the like, shall provide adequate parking spaces for bicycles and other non-
38 motorized vehicles as far as practicable.

39
40 *Sec. 5. Role of the Public and Private Sectors.* – Both the public and private sectors shall
41 promote walking and using bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles as an alternative
42 means of travel. They shall develop the necessary infrastructure, facilities and programs for
43 its implementation, including showers and changing areas and shall continue following
44 physical distancing measures during travel.

45
46 *Sec. 6. Permanent Adoption of Safe Pathways Network.* – The DOTr and DPWH, in
47 coordination with the appropriate agencies, shall prepare to permanently adopt the
48 established bicycle lanes and emergency pathways, as may be appropriate, once COVID-19
49 is no longer a threat as declared by the proper authorities. Pursuant to this, non-motorized

1 parking spaces and other infrastructure shall also be made permanent as may be appropriate
2 and practicable.

3
4 Sec. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within thirty (30) days from the
5 effectivity of this Act, the DOTr shall promulgate and issue the necessary guidelines for the
6 effective implementation of this Act. The implementing rules and regulations issued
7 pursuant to this Section shall take effect thirty (30) days after its publication in two (2)
8 national newspapers of general circulation.

9
10 Sec. 8. *Appropriations.* - The funds necessary for the initial implementation of this Act
11 shall be charged against the appropriations of the DOTr, DPWH, and LGUs as needed.
12 Thereafter, funding shall be included in the budget of the DOTr and DPWH under the annual
13 General Appropriations Act.

14
15 Sec. 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional
16 or otherwise invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

17
18 Sec. 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All other laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations,
19 other issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
20 repealed or modified accordingly.

21
22 Sec. 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
23 the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,