

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6856



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE
ROLANDO M. VALERIANO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The advent of the coronavirus pandemic caused the temporary cessation of businesses, services and establishments. With it was the closure of the entire nation's public transportation system.

After almost three months, the country can no longer afford to incur economic loss. The Extended Community Quarantine was lifted in favor of the Modified ECQ. Thus, since May 16, 2020, the Government allowed certain industries to operate and resume transactions.

However, public transportation remained suspended. This is primarily because commuting in mass transportation poses one of the biggest risk of contracting the deadly disease. Workers are left to look for their own means to travel. The use of bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles have become the most efficient and convenient means of transportation.

As early as 2014, Metro Manila has already established bicycle lanes. However, these routes are only few in coverage. Also, they are not interconnected with one another. And, they are too narrow and unprepared to accommodate the expected influx of the multitude of new bike riders. In sum, these bicycle lanes and pathways are far from being safe.

For example, according to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), there are bicycle lanes that span only one or two kilometers long. There is one from Ortigas to Santolan that spans only 2.105 kilometers. Another is the one along EDSA which is merely stretching 1-kilometer from Magallanes to Ayala Avenue in Makati City. These lanes are remarkably short and does not effectively cover adequate distances.

Other than these two bike lanes, there are only very few. These are the 3.15-kilometer bike lane in Remedios Circle in Malate, Manila; 9.14-kilometer bike lane along Marcos Highway from Evangelista Street to Sumulong Highway in Marikina City; and, 2.92-kilometer bike lane along Commonwealth Avenue from University Avenue to Tandang Sora in Quezon City.

It should be noted that from March 15 to May 13, 2020 alone, MMDA recorded 420 road accidents within the Metro. It is clear that Metro Manila is not the safest place for bicycles.

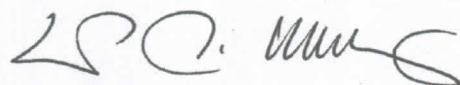
With the expected explosive growth of bicycle commute in the country in the outbreak of the pandemic, there is an urgent need to create safe and new bicycle lanes and pathways.

This bill aims to create, interconnect and integrate bike lanes and emergency pathways to a bigger and expanded networks of pedestrian-friendly lanes. It will reinforce and support the already limited modes of transportation and mobility during the COVID-19 crisis. It will secure safe pathways for cycling providing designated spaces for cycling and protective barriers from careless drivers of motor vehicles.

We now recognize that bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles will form an integral part of transportation during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is part of the new normal and will become a major alternative way to travel around the city to work and avail essential needs.

Furthermore, in the long run, this bill will initiate further solution to the congested traffic and air pollution within Metro Manila. It will usher a cost-effective, clean and healthy new lifestyle for the Filipino. It would hopefully bring about the beginning of the bike culture in the Philippines. This would make our metro cities comparable to bike friendly cities in Asia like Kyoto and Osaka in Japan, Beijing in China, Kaohsiung in Taiwan, Singapore and Jeju in South Korea.

For the foregoing reasons, the immediate passage of this proposed measure is earnestly urged.



ROLANDO M. VALERIANO
Representative

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6856

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE
ROLANDO M. VALERIANO

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 House of Representatives of the Philippines
in Congress assembled:*

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

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

8 In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Action Plan Against
9 COVID-19 provides that the State shall mitigate the consequences and impact
10 of the COVID-19 pandemic to the social, economic, and personal security of
11 the Filipino people.¹

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

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

¹ Section A (4), Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease (IATF) Resolution No. 15, 24 March 2020.

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

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

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

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

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

4 To complement the network of pop-up bicycle lanes, LGUs shall create
5 a designated network of people-oriented emergency pathways along local
6 roads that will provide pedestrians and bicycle and non-motorized vehicle
7 users safe, convenient access to frequented destinations by restricting
8 motorized vehicle passage in these pathways during peak hours. The
9 emergency pathways shall be clearly marked with signage containing
10 restrictions.

11 The DOTr and DPWH shall identify priority areas for implementation.

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

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

23 **Sec. 6. *Permanent Adoption of Safe Pathways Network.*** – The DOTr
24 and DPWH, in coordination with the appropriate agencies, shall prepare to
25 permanently adopt the established bicycle lanes and emergency pathways, as

1 may be appropriate, once COVID-19 is no longer a threat as declared by the
2 proper authorities. Pursuant to this, non-motorized parking spaces and other
3 infrastructure shall also be made permanent as may be appropriate and
4 practicable.

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

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

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

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

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

APPROVED.