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**SENATE**

**S. No. 309**

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**Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri**

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**AN ACT**

**RESTORING AND REHABILITATING THE EXISTING LINES OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL RAILWAYS, EXTENDING FURTHER THE SOUTHERN LINE TO MATNOG, SORSOGON AND ESTABLISHING THE RAILWAY EXTENSION LINE FROM CALAMBA CITY TO BATANGAS CITY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4156 ENTITLED "AN ACT CREATING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL RAILWAYS, PRESCRIBING ITS POWERS, FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES, AND PROVIDING FOR THE NECESSARY FUNDS FOR ITS OPERATION" AS AMENDED BY R. A. NO. 6366, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This Bill seeks to modernize the Philippine National Railways system by restoring, rehabilitating and extending the existing lines in Luzon.

It is currently just a shadow of itself. It used to have 400 railroad crossings from Manila to Legazpi city. After years of decline, the PNR revived its operations and several years ago resumed operations consisting of the Metro South Commuter (MSC) line or South Main Line between Manila and Laguna and the Bicol Commuter Service (BCS) between Naga City and Sipocot. Despite the series of recent accidents like derailments and obsolescence due to natural calamities and bureaucratic neglect, the PNR to this day still ferries thousands of commuters daily.

Today, its Manila operation runs from Tutuban station in Caloocan City to Alabang with only 42 railroad crossings and with seven trains. It promised to launch the operation of its electric hybrid trains in June six years ago, awaiting the day for it to run within a modernized railways system.<sup>1</sup> The Metals Industry Research and Development Center of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) recently completed building 5 hybrid coaches with a maximum capacity of 880 passengers.<sup>2</sup>

"Worn-out railroad tracks" is just one of the negative features of the PNR railways system in Luzon, but that has engendered a decline in trust from the many provinces it had served before. The aim of the bill is to overhaul the railway system and convert it to standard-gauge with future improvement from current single-track to double-track system.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2016/06/26/1596759/dost-pnr-launch-hybrid-electric-train> (Accessed June 29, 2016)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rappler.com/nation/221663-pnr-to-use-first-philippine-made-train-march-2019> (Accessed June 27, 2019)

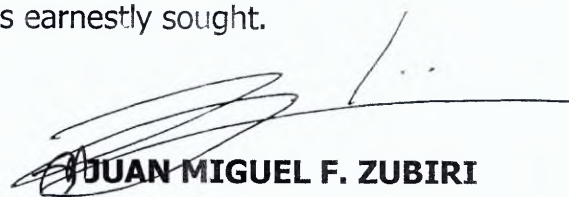
In February 2019, the PNR started the construction of the 38-kilometer Tutuban-Malolos segment reaching to Clark International Airport in Pampanga, which is part of the northern segment of the 109-kilometer North-South Commuter Railway. The Tutuban-Malolos segment will cut travel time from Malolos to Manila by almost an hour, from 95 minutes to just 35 minutes. The San Pablo-Lucena line was recently inaugurated as a 44-kilometer inter-provincial commuter railway of Laguna and Quezon provinces with a fare at One Hundred pesos only (Php 100.00).

The pace, direction and sustainability of economic development is greatly affected by the state of a country's transportation infrastructure, as elucidated even by the United Nations in its Five-Year Action Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in 2012<sup>4</sup>. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, explicitly mentioned sustainable transport as a main determinant of success in achieving "SDG targets on food security, health, energy, economic growth, infrastructure, and cities and human settlements".<sup>5</sup> On efficiency, safety, environmental and trade competition aspects, the railways system is recognized globally as the more preferred mode of land transportation. A modern railways system will encourage greater passenger and cargo mobility, promote market integration, speed up delivery of government services and reduce pollution and carbon footprint coming from the transport sector<sup>6</sup>.

It is time for the railways system to serve our need for an integrated transportation system. In addition, our commitments to mainstream disaster risk reduction and management into our development plans will be served well by a modern railways system that could transport personnel, equipment and supplies rapidly in case of emergencies to save lives, properties, livelihood and communities. These advantages of railways systems have been well considered as declared in the Philippine Development Plan by the National Economic Development Authority, in Chapter 5 on Infrastructure Development, thus: "The viability of establishing an efficient long-distance, high-speed mass rail transit system, integrated with the mass transit commuter rail system in Metro Manila, shall be explored alongside the rationalization of the roles of various government agencies and entities concerned with mass rail transport development. The feasibility of freight-rail services for all strategic logistics corridors will also be considered."<sup>7</sup>

The proposed bill lays the necessary ground for the modernization of the Luzon railways system by providing a timetable and mandating that funds be made available by the Executive branch to the PNR as may be needed for the proper implementation of this Act.

For these reasons, enactment of this Bill is earnestly sought.



**JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.rappler.com/business/223554-tutuban-malolos-pnp-constructions-starts-february-15-2019> (Accessed June 27, 2019)

<sup>4</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabletransport> (Accessed June 29, 2016)

<sup>5</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabletransport> (Accessed June 27, 2019)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.shop-etf.com/en/free-publications/rail-transport-and-environment-facts-figures.html> (Accessed June 29, 2016)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.neda.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/CHAPTER-5.pdf> (Accessed June 29, 2016)

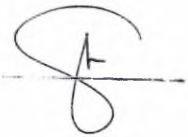


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*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1           **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Railways  
2 Modernizaion Act of 2022".

3           **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to  
4 attain inclusive growth and reduce poverty through infrastructure development by  
5 providing a sustainable transport system that is safe, efficient, and competitive. In order  
6 to effectively integrate and to uplift the quality of life of the inhabitants of the island of  
7 Luzon, specifically Northern and Southern Luzon, the State shall develop the railways  
8 system connecting the aforementioned areas with MegaManila.

9           **SEC. 3. Restoration, Rehabilitation and Extension of Railways.** - The Philippine  
10 National Railways (PNR) shall undertake simultaneously the respective programs of work  
11 for existing and new lines, thus:

12 a) The PNR is directed to implement its mandate of restoring and rehabilitating the  
13 existing railway lines of the PNR in Luzon as provided under Republic Act No. 6366,

1 entitled "An Act to Provide for the Rehabilitation And Modernization Of The Philippine  
2 National Railways by Amending Section One, Three, Five, Nine, Eleven, Twelve, Fourteen,  
3 and Seventeen of Republic Act Numbered Forty-One Hundred Fifty-Six, Entitled 'An Act  
4 Creating The Philippine National Railways, Prescribing Its Powers, Functions And Duties,  
5 And Providing For The Necessary Funds For Its Operations' ".

6 b) There shall be established new railway extension lines under this Act, as follows:

7 1. A railways extension line from Cumon, Daraga, Albay to Matnog, Sorsogon via  
8 Bulan, Sorsogon, and

9 2. A railways extension line from Calamba City to Batangas City.

10 **SEC. 4. Appropriations.** - The necessary funds as equity of the Republic of the  
11 Philippine for the use of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to finance the restoration  
12 and rehabilitation of existing lines is hereby appropriated from the unappropriated funds  
13 of the National Treasury.

14 The Department of Budget and Management shall include in the National  
15 Government annual budget of expenditures the necessary fund increasing the authorized  
16 capital stock of the PNR, to be determined by a Feasibility Study for the purpose, and the  
17 same amount be made available as may be needed by the PNR, for the establishment of  
18 new railways extension lines as provided under Section 3 of this Act.

19 **SEC. 5. Period of Implementation.** - The new railways extension lines as found in  
20 Sec. 3 (a) and (b) of this Act shall be established, constructed and made fully operational  
21 within eighteen (18) months from the effectivity of this Act.

22 **SEC. 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - The Department of  
23 Transportation, in consultation with concerned government agencies and stakeholders,  
24 shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act, within sixty (60) days  
25 from the effectivity of this Act.

1           **SEC. 7. *Congressional Oversight.*** - The Congressional Oversight Committee on  
2 The Official Development Assistance (ODA) Law shall exercise oversight on the  
3 implementation of this Act.

4           **SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.*** - If any portion of this Act is declared unconstitutional  
5 or invalid, the portions or provisions which are not affected shall continue to be in full  
6 force and effect.

7           **SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, executive orders and rules and  
8 regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or  
9 modified accordingly.

10           **SEC. 10. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete  
11 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation and the Official Gazette.

12           Approved,