

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 1952



Introduced by Representative **VILMA SANTOS-RECTO**
6th District of Batangas

AN ACT
EXTENDING THE VALIDITY PERIOD OF A DRIVER'S LICENSE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 23 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4136, AS AMENDED BY BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 398, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "LAND TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC CODE"

Explanatory Note

The Land Transportation Office (LTO) is the lead government agency mandated to implement and enforce all land transportation laws, rules and regulations including, among others, the registration of motor vehicles and the issuance of permits and licenses to motor vehicle drivers. Under current laws and agency rules and regulations, all driver's licenses (non-professional and professional) are valid for three (3) consecutive years reckoned from the birthdate of the licensee, unless sooner revoked or suspended. However, if any holder of a professional or non-professional driver's license has not committed any violation during the three (3) year period, the said holder shall be entitled to a renewal of such license for a five (5) year period.¹

It is quite unfortunate that for more than a year now, the LTO has been plagued with a myriad of complaints from motor vehicle owners and drivers regarding its apparent inability to issue both vehicle license plates and driver's license cards within a reasonable period of time. To address the shortage of driver's license cards, the LTO is currently issuing validated stamped receipts that serve as a provisional driver's license.

The shortage of LTO license cards started in 2013 after the Commission on Audit disallowed payments to a previous supplier, Amalgamated Motors Philippines, Inc. for lack of a valid contract. Thereafter, a new supplier (Allcard Plastics Philippines, Inc.) won the bidding for the right to supply LTO license cards for P336.8 million. However, just a few months after awarding the contract to Allcard, a Manila Regional Trial Court (RTC) issued a writ of preliminary injunction against LTO ordering the latter to refrain from paying Allcard under the terms of the driver's license supply contract. The Manila RTC was of the view that there was no approved budget for the project denominated by the Department of Transportation and Communication (DOTC) as procurement of driver's license cards. For fear that the company might not get paid under the supply contract, Allcard stopped supplying LTO with license cards resulting in a backlog in the issuance of license cards to millions of motorists².

¹ Republic Act No. 4136, as amended by B.P. Blg. 398. Land Transportation Office Administrative Order No. AVT - 2015-031.

² "LTO exec fears delayed issuance of driver's license cards." Dated October 20, 2015.

<http://www.philstar.com:8080/headlines/2015/10/30/1516361/lto-exec-fears-delayed-issuance-drivers-license-cards>

In order to allow the LTO to properly address its legal woes, improve its services and promote efficiency, this bill seeks to amend Section 23 of Republic Act No 4136, as amended, by increasing the validity period of driver's licenses from three (3) years to five (5) years reckoned from the birthdate of the licensee, without any condition. Extending the validity of driver's license cards will ultimately lessen the cost both on the part of the government and the motorists in general.

Furthermore, the public expects efficient delivery of services from the government. It is for this reason that Congress enacted Republic Act No. 9485, otherwise known as the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 (ARTA). ARTA was passed to promote transparency through the adoption of simplified procedures that will reduce red tape and expedite transactions in government. Minimizing the frequency of the public's transactions with the LTO will definitely translate to a dramatic reduction of red tape within the agency.

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



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1 **SECTION 1.** Section 23 of Republic Act No. 4136, otherwise known as the "Land
2 Transportation and Traffic Code," as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

3 "Sec 23. Issuance of driver's license, fees and validity. – If, after such
4 examination the Director or his deputies find that the applicant possesses
5 the necessary qualification and proficiency in the operation of motor
6 vehicles, is able to read and write any of the official languages or a major
7 dialect and knows how to read and interpret various traffic signs, signals
8 and road markings, a professional or nonprofessional license may be
9 issued to such applicant upon payment of the fee prescribed in accordance
10 with law, but prior to the issuance of said license, the applicant shall
11 present himself in person and have his photograph taken by the bureau.
12 All driver's licenses issued shall be signed in the presence of the Director
13 or his deputies and shall bear, among others, the full name, date of birth,
14 height, weight, sex, color of eyes, blood type, complete current address,
15 right hand thumbprint of the licensee, license number, and its date of issue
16 and expiration.

17 "In the issuance of licenses, the Bureau shall use such process or adopt
18 such measure as will prevent any alteration or falsification of a license or
19 will enable the Bureau to detect any unauthorized license.

20 "Except for student permits and new licenses, all driver's licenses shall be
21 valid for [three (3)] **FIVE (5)** consecutive years reckoned from the
22 birthdate of the licensee, unless sooner revoked or suspended. [*Provided,*
23 *however,* That, subject to Section twenty-six hereof, any holder of a
24 professional or nonprofessional driver's license who has not committed
25 any violation during the three (3) year period shall be entitled to a renewal
26 of such license for five-year period.]

27 **XXX"**

1 **SEC. 2. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Secretary of the Department of
2 Transportation, shall, upon the recommendation of the Land Transportation Office Assistant
3 Secretary, promulgate not later than thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act the necessary
4 rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

5 **SEC. 3 *Repealing Clause.*** All laws, executive orders, decrees, instructions, issuances,
6 rules and regulations contrary or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby likewise
7 repealed or modified accordingly.

8 **SEC. 4. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) after its complete publication
9 either in the *Official Gazette*, or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

10 *Approved,*