

Philippines: Riders group welcomes motorcycles-for-hire bill

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The riders' rights group Kapatiran sa Dalawang Gulong (Kagulong) welcomed the passage of a bill regulating motorcycles-for-hire at the House of Representatives. House Bill No. 10571 or the "Motorcycles-for-Hire Act" was approved yesterday. A counterpart bill by the Senate had earlier been passed. The step would be a bicameral session to reconcile the two versions.

"We welcome the legalization and regulation of moto-taxis as it will promote and protect the livelihood of many of our fellow riders along with commuters. We call on the Senate and the House to expedite the bicam version and ensure that riders' rights are protected as well," stated Don Pangan, Kagulong secretary-general.

The legalization of motorcycles-for-hire or moto-taxis is among the priority agenda of Kagulong along with the repeal of the Doble Plaka Law, and protection for delivery and courier riders. Kagulong's priority agenda has already received the support of Vice President Leni Robredo and Senator Kiko Panglinan and other senatorial candidates.

Kagulong pledged to monitor the bicam deliberations on the regulation of moto-taxis to guarantee no provisions denigrating the rights and welfare of riders are introduced. Most of Kagulong members are workers using motorcycles as means of mobility or riders engaged in the various apps. In November 2020, the group led some 700 Foodpanda riders in a protest that ended at the Department of Labor and Employment in Manila to seek redress of grievances over reduced pay and opaque rules.

The group is encouraging the formation of riders' cooperatives which will operate as moto-taxi platforms. "We call on our fellow riders to unite for the fight to promote both our rights and our livelihood," Pangan averred.

Partido Manggagawa (PM)

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Partido Manggagawa (PM)

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