Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6027

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representatives
Eduardo “Bro. Eddie” C. Villanueva and Domingo C. Rivera

AN ACT PROTECTING UNATTENDED CHILDREN
IN MOTOR VEHICLES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the past years, the number of deaths arising from suffocation in cars has been increasing. In the United States, around 682 children died from 1998 to 2019, after their parents left them unattended inside a motor vehicle.1 In the Philippines, 10 children have reportedly died from suffocation inside motor vehicles in 2017. In the first quarter of 2019, three young girls were found dead after accidentally locking themselves in a car where they suffocated.2

Thus, there is a need to educate our citizens regarding the safety and health risks of leaving children inside motor vehicles, especially in periods of extreme weather conditions. According to the Spanish Association of Pediatrics3 (Asociación Española de Pediatria), children aged zero to five years old are most likely to incur a rise in body temperature three to five times faster than that of adults due to a lower water reserve and a developing respiratory system. Moreover, a study found that a motor vehicle left for an hour in the sun may heat up to 116 degrees, a temperature that may cause organ failure, brain damage and death to toddlers.

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This bill seeks to prevent the occurrence of death of, or injury to, unsupervised children under nine years old inside motor vehicles, when there are conditions that present a significant risk to the child’s health and safety, or when the vehicle’s engine is running or the vehicle’s keys are in the ignition, or both. Any person who violates the provision of this Act will be penalized with a fine ranging from Ten Thousand Pesos (Php10,000) to Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php50,000) depending on the frequency of violation committed by the offender. This bill also requires all violators of the Act to undergo driver education seminars with the Land Transportation Office (LTO), which shall include education on the dangers of leaving young children unattended in motor vehicles.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

HON. EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA

HON. DOMINGO C. RIVERA
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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:  

SECTION 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Unattended Child in Motor Vehicles Act.”  

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby the policy of the State to defend the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development. To this end, the State shall adopt a more proactive and preventive approach to secure the safety of passengers, especially children, by regulating the operation of vehicle and penalizing persons who leave children unattended inside a motor vehicle. The State shall also inculcate the standards of safe use of motor vehicles and the benefits that may be derived from it through institutional programs and appropriate public information strategies.  

SECTION 3. Unattended Child in Motor Vehicles. – It shall be unlawful for a person to intentionally, recklessly, knowingly or negligently cause or permit to leave a child under nine (9) years of age inside a motor vehicle without being subject to the supervision of a person who is fifteen (15) years old or above, under any of the following circumstances:  

a) When there are conditions that present a significant risk to the child’s health or safety; or
b) When the vehicle’s engine is running or the vehicle’s keys are in the ignition, or both.

For the purposes of this Act, the term “motor vehicle” refers to any land transportation vehicle propelled by any power other than muscular power, excluding tricycle, motorcycle and jeepney.

SECTION 4. Penalty. – Any person who violates the provisions of this Act shall be liable for an administrative fine in the amount of Ten Thousand Pesos (Php10,000.00) for the first offense; Twenty Thousand Pesos (Php20,000.00) for the second offense; and Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php50,000.00) for the third and succeeding offenses.

If, as a result of such violation, less serious or serious injuries result, the offender shall additionally be punished with a penalty of imprisonment of one (1) year. If death occurs as a result thereof, a penalty of imprisonment ranging from two (2) years to six (6) years shall be additionally imposed on the offender.

Nothing herein shall preclude the filing of charges for violation of Act No. 3815, otherwise known as “The Revised Penal Code of the Philippines,” as amended, and other special laws.

All persons in violation of this Act shall also be required to undergo driver education seminars with the Land Transportation Office (LTO), which shall include education on the dangers of leaving young children unattended in motor vehicles.

SECTION 5. Lead Agency. – The Land Transport Office (LTO) shall take the lead in implementing the provisions of this Act. The LTO shall have the authority to deputize members of the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), other metropolitan councils and the responsible officer of local government units (LGUs) to enforce the provisions of this Act.

The LTO shall also be empowered to adjust the amount of fines herein imposed: Provided, That:

a) The adjustment shall be made only once every three (3) years, and after public consultation;

b) The amount of adjustment shall not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the amount sought to be adjusted;

c) A thorough study shall have been conducted indicating that the existing amounts are no longer an effective deterrent; and

d) Current relevant economic indices, such as the Consumer Price Index (CPI), have been considered in the determination of the adjusted amount.

SEC 6. Public Information Campaign. – The LTO, in coordination with the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), the Department of Education (DepEd), Department of
Health (DOH), and other relevant stakeholders, shall regularly undertake a nationwide
information and education campaign regarding the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The LTO, in coordination with
the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of Interior and Local
Government (DILG) and other relevant government agencies, in consultation with
relevant stakeholders, shall issue the implementing rules and regulations for the
effective implementation of this Act within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this
Act.

SEC 8. Separability Clause. – If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act
is declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected
thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC 9. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, or rules and regulations, which are
inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act, are hereby amended or
repealed.

SEC 10. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,