



Inclusive Cities
Advocacy Network



JOINT STATEMENT AGAINST THE PUV MODERNIZATION PROGRAM

Statement for Immediate Release

Date: November 18, 2023

Media contact: Alyssa Darunday, (+63) 966 463 9494

We, Panatang Luntian Coalition, PARA - Advocates for Inclusive Transport (PARA), and Inclusive Cities Advocacy Network (ICAN), along with transport groups, environmental organizations, commuter groups, mobility advocates, civil society organizations, students, workers, urban poor people, professionals, artists, and activists stand in solidarity with transport workers and join the nationwide strike to protest the government's failed implementation of its PUV Modernization Program. **We call for the immediate scrapping of the December 31 deadline for franchise consolidation and the PUV Modernization Program in its entirety.**

In 2017, the government implemented the Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP) thru the Department of Transportation (DOTr) issued Department Order No. 2017-11, also known Omnibus Guidelines on the Planning and Identification of Public Road Transportation Services and Franchise Issuance or the Omnibus Franchising Guidelines (OFG). The modernization program was conceptualized, and launched, under the pretense of:

1. Mitigating the environmental damage caused by the pollution emitted by the PUVs;
2. Providing a more comfortable and dignified experience for commuters; and
3. Improving the livelihood and welfare of the transport workers.

But since its implementation 6 years ago, we have yet to see concrete results on the objectives of PUVMP.

PUVMP is a false solution to the climate crisis. The government cannot claim to address pollution while refusing to address its own car-centric policies and infrastructure. While vehicle emissions indeed contribute 88%¹ of the air pollution in Metro Manila, and 37%² of greenhouse gasses nationwide, Public Utility Vehicles only comprise 2%³ of total vehicle volume in the country, while the remaining 98% are private vehicles.

¹ Curbing pollution via modern mass transportation. <https://motioncars.inquirer.net/60134/mass-transport-pollution>

² An Inventory and Assessment of National Urban Mobility in the Philippines.

https://changing-transport.org/wp-content/uploads/E_K_NUMP-Inventory-and-Assessment_Philippines_2018_EN.pdf

³ IN NUMBERS: Why jeepney phaseout is anti-poor, will do little for environment.

<https://www.rappler.com/business/numbers-why-government-phaseout-jeepneys-anti-poor-do-little-environment/>

PUVMP is forcing commuters to bear the economic burden of modernization. The enormous financial cost of the modernization to be shouldered by jeepney drivers and operators will create a further increase in fares: adjusted for current inflation, the minimum fare for the jeepney will range from P40.00 to P50.00 in order for jeepney operators to recoup their losses.⁴

PUVMP is forcing transport workers to give up their livelihoods. Jeepney operators who seek to participate in the PUVMP are not only tasked to scrap their traditional jeepneys, and buy new modernized jeepneys costing P2.5 to P5.0 million each, but also to shoulder the fees in forming cooperatives/corporations, and the costs associated in procuring a terminal and motor pool, among others. Under the so-called modernization program, ordinary transport workers are pushed into taking debt, allowing big corporations and individuals to take over, and profit from the industry. Since 2017, the government has deployed only 9,813 units of modernized jeeps, only 3.27% of the 300,000 jeepneys nationwide pre-pandemic.

In more than 6 years since the implementation of the PUV Modernization Program, **the government has met none of the goals that they themselves have set**, while continuously disenfranchising the livelihoods of transport workers in progress, and worsening the longstanding transport crisis in the country.

We remind the government that the interests of commuters and transport workers should be at the forefront of its policies and infrastructure. In place of the PUV Modernization Program, the national government must design an inclusive, people-centered, worker-led, and sustainable mass public transportation program.

#JustTransitionNow
#Fight4ProPeopleTransport
#NoToPUVPhaseout
#NoClimateJusticeWithoutSocialJustice

⁴ Addressing the “blind side” of the government’s jeepney “modernization” program.
<https://cids.up.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/UP-CIDS-Discussion-Paper-2021-02.pdf>

Filipino version

Ang Panatang Luntian Coalition, PARA - Advocates for Inclusive Transport, at Inclusive Cities Advocacy Network (ICAN), kasama ng mga transport groups, environmental organizations, commuter groups, mobility advocates, civil society organizations, mga mag-aaral, manggagawa, maralita, professional, artista, at aktibista, ay nakikiisa sa ating mga transport workers at sasama sa nationwide strike upang iprotesta ang palpak na pagpapatupad ng gobyerno ng kanilang PUV Modernization Program. **Nananawagan kami para sa agarang pagbasura ng franchise consolidation deadline sa Disyembre 31 at ng PUV Modernization Program sa kabuuan nito.**

Noong 2017, ipinatupad ng gobyerno ang Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP) sa pag-isyu ng Department Order No. 2017-11 na kilala bilang Omnibus Guidelines on the Planning and Identification of Public Road Transportation Services and Franchise Issuance o ang Omnibus Franchising Guidelines (OFG). Inilunsad nila ang modernization program sa ilalim ng mga kadahilanang:

1. Mababawasan ang pinsala sa kapaligiran na dulot ng polusyon galing sa PUVs;
2. Mas giginhawa at bibigyang dignidad ang pagbibiyahe ng mga komyuter; at
3. Mapabubuti ang kabuhayan at kapakanan ng mga transport workers.

Ngunit 6 na taon na ang nakaraan mula noong pagpapatupad nito, at wala pa rin tayong nakikitang konkretong resulta sa mga layunin nila para sa PUVMP.

Ang PUVMP ay isang huwad na solusyon sa krisis sa klima. Hindi puwedeng sabihin ng gobyerno na tutugunan nila ang polusyon habang kasalukuyang nakasentro sa mga pribadong sasakyan ang kanilang mga patakaran at mga pinapatayong imprastraktura. Habang totoo na ang mga vehicle emissions ay nag-aambag ng 88%⁵ ng polusyon sa hangin sa Metro Manila, at 37%⁶ ng greenhouse gasses sa buong bansa, ang Public Utility Vehicles ay binubuo lamang ng 2%⁷ ng kabuuang dami ng sasakyan sa bansa, habang ang natitirang 98% ay mga pribadong sasakyan.

Sa ilalim ng PUVMP, napipilitan ang mga commuter na pasanin ang presyo ng modernisasyon. Inaasahan na ang napakalaking gastos sa pag-modernize ay sasagutin ng mga tsuper at operator ng jeepney, at magreresulta sa lalong pagtaas ng pamasahe. Alinsunod sa inflation, magiging P40.00 hanggang P50.00 ang minimum fare para sa jeep upang ang mga jeepney operator ay mabawi ang kanilang ginastos.⁸

⁵ Curbing pollution via modern mass transportation. <https://motioncars.inquirer.net/60134/mass-transport-pollution>

⁶ An Inventory and Assessment of National Urban Mobility in the Philippines.

https://changing-transport.org/wp-content/uploads/E_K_NUMP-Inventory-and-Assessment_Philippines_2018_EN.pdf

⁷ IN NUMBERS: Why jeepney phaseout is anti-poor, will do little for environment.

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⁸ Addressing the “blind side” of the government’s jeepney “modernization” program.

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Sa ilalim ng PUVMP, napipilitan ang mga transport workers na isuko ang kanilang kabuhayan. Kung sasali ang mga operatos sa PUVMP, kakailanganin na i-scrap nila ang kanilang mga traditional jeepneys, at bumili ng modernized jeepneys na naghahalagang P2.5 hanggang P5.0 milyon bawat isa. Bukod dito, kailangan pa nilang sagutin ang mga bayarin sa pagbubuo ng mga kooperatiba/korporasyon, at ang mga gastos kasama sa pag-procure ng terminal at motor pool, atbp. Sa ilalim ng tinatawag na “modernization” program, napipilitang umutang ang mga ordinayong transport workers, na nagbibigay daan para sa mga malalaking korporasyon at mgaindibidwal na manatili sa kapangyarihan at lalong kumita mula sa industriya. Mula noong 2017, 9,813 units pa lang ng modernized jeeps ang nai-deploy ng gobyerno, katumbas ng 3.27% lang ng 300,000 jeepneys nationwide pre-pandemic.

Sa loob ng higit na 6 na taon mula pagpapatupad ng PUV Modernization Program, **hindi naabot ng gobyerno ni isa sa mga layunin na sila mismo ang nagtakda**, habang patuloy na nanganganib ang kabuhayan ng mga transport workers, at patuloy rin na lumalala ang matagal nang krisis sa transportasyon sa bansa.

Pinapaalalahanan namin ang gobyerno na ang interes ng mga pasahero at transport workers ay dapat na nangunguna sa kanilang mga patakarang ipinapatupad at mga imprastrakturang ipinapatayo. Kapalit ng PUV Modernization Program, ang pambansang pamahalaan ay dapat magdisenyo ng isang inclusive, people-centered, worker-led, at sustainable mass public transportation program.

#JustTransitionNow
#Fight4ProPeopleTransport
#NoToPUVPhaseout
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Read our full statement below:



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The modernization program was conceptualized, and launched, under the pretense of: (1) mitigating the environmental damage caused by the pollution emitted by the PUVs; (2) providing a more comfortable and dignified experience for commuters; and (3) improving the livelihood and welfare of the transport workers.

ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The PUV modernization program claims that modernizing the transport system, which replaces the traditional jeepneys with 'modern' PUVs will solve the traffic situation, and minimize its environmental impacts. Environmental groups have long pointed out scientific data, and evidence that proves otherwise.

For instance, the current approach unfairly burdens commuters and transport workers, while both stakeholders immensely suffer from the effects of decades-long car-centric transport system, and poor urban planning and design. These are systemic issues which contribute greatly to the transport crisis, and the environmental damage that it causes. The new vehicle models are not adapted to the climate and road conditions of the Philippines, as reported on ground, shown by their susceptibility to break down in the face of floods.

While vehicle emissions indeed contribute 88% of the air pollution in Metro Manila, and 37% of greenhouse gasses nationwide, Public Utility Vehicles only comprise 2% of total vehicle volume

in the country, while the remaining 98% are private vehicles. Private cars also occupy 80% of our finite road space while composing only 30% of passenger trips, while commuters, and other road users who do not have access to cars have to compete for the remaining 20% of space.

In Metro Manila alone, the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) recorded a total of 3,087,980 motorized vehicles counted across the major thoroughfares in 2019, while a total of 3,535,755 motorized vehicles were counted in 2022, equivalent to a total of 14.5% increase in vehicular volume in the span of 3 years. In the same period, the supply of Public Utility Jeepneys (PUJs) dropped from an estimated high of 300,000 units to 150,000 units nationwide.

In 2022, a joint report from the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (CAMPI) and Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA) shows that local vehicle sales in 2022 jumped by 31.3% from 2021, equating to a total of 352,596 units sold.

The government cannot claim to address pollution while refusing to address its own car-centric policies and infrastructure. The decades-long neglect of public transport has led to a negative cycle of ever increasing numbers of private vehicles, reduced space for commuters, pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users, leading to an increased reliance on the use of private vehicles, simultaneously causing and further exacerbating the vehicular congestion in Metro Manila.

ON COMMUTERS' WELFARE

Jeepneys are the most popular form of transport in the Philippines. Prior to the pandemic, the minimum fare for jeepneys ranged from P8.00 to P10.00 for the first four kilometers, with 685 jeepney routes in Metro Manila allowing commuters to secure a ride within 500 meters. The continuous displacement of transport workers not only affect the transport workers themselves, but the underserved communities of urban poor people, informal workers, students, among others who rely on the jeepneys as the the most accessible and cheapest form of public transport.

As a result of the continuous oil price hike, and economic inflation, several transport groups, at present, are petitioning for a P5.00 increase in the minimum fare for jeepneys, and an additional P1.00 for every succeeding kilometer, for a total of P17.00 for the first four kilometers, and a total of P2.8 for every succeeding kilometer. The modernization program will further worsen the increasing cost of transport.

According to a research conducted by Ted Mendoza of UP CIDS in 2021, the enormous financial cost of the modernization to be shouldered by jeepney drivers and operators will create a further increase in fares: adjusted for current inflation, the minimum fare for the jeepney will range from P40.00 to P50.00 in order for jeepney operators to recoup their losses.

In comparison, the average daily nominal wage of an ordinary commuter only amounts to P421.00, one-third (35.5%) of the P1,187.00 computed family living wage, as computed by

IBON Foundation. Even more so, an estimated 38% of the working population is employed in the informal sector, lacking the benefit of a minimum wage, while 42.6% of the workers are contractual.

In addition, the poor implementation of the false modernization has already forced a significant amount of PUVs to go under, causing further transport shortage. This trend will continue so long as the implementing government agencies refuse to listen to the clamor of the people.

ON TRANSPORT WORKERS' WELFARE

Since 2017 up to present: (1) only 9,813 modernized units are operating across the country, a far cry from the estimated 300,000 units of traditional jeepneys prior to the implementation of the modernization program; (2) the consolidation rate remains at 48% of units out of 154,907 total PUJs nationwide; (3) while the Local Public Transport Route Plan (LPTRP) and Route Rationalization, both which are part of the PUVMP, has achieved only 9.84% approval rate nationwide.

In the The 2024 National Expenditure Plan (NEP), the DOTr is allotted almost twice the budget from the 2023 General Appropriations Act (GAA) budget of Php 106 billion to the proposed 2024 NEP of P214.30 billion budget. Out of P214.30 billion, only P6.06 billion or 2.83% of the entire budget, is allocated to the improvement of public mass transport, active transport, and support for transport workers thru service contracting and subsidies, while P0.00 or 0% is allotted to the PUV Modernization Program.

This is a testament to the failure in the implementation of the PUVMP. The involved government agencies have not held up their end of their deal in the implementation of the project, and yet, insists on the December 31, 2023 deadline for the franchise consolidation.

At its core, the franchise consolidation as the first step, and requirement, before being part of the program, is exploitative, unjust, and irrational. It requires individual operators to join or form corporations or cooperatives per route, consolidating all the individual franchises into one (per route). The process of surrendering individual franchises puts jeepney operators in a precarious position, most of which only owns one jeepney.

Losing their individual franchises is already tantamount to phase-out, as they lose the right to operate their jeepneys as public transport. Operators, who in several decades, managed and funded their own jeepneys are then forced to submit, as drivers, to the corporation/cooperative that are formed and financed primarily by large corporations/industry players. On the ground, modernized jeepney drivers report earning less income per day, burdened by higher 'boundary fees' owing to the heavy financial costs associated with joining the modernization program.

Jeepney operators who seek to participate in the PUVMP are not only tasked to scrap their traditional jeepneys, and buy new modernized jeepneys (at least fifteen modernized units are required per route) costing P2.5 to P5.0 million each, but also shoulder the fees in forming

cooperatives/corporations, and the costs associated in procuring a terminal and motor pool, among others. Failure to procure the modernized units in time results in penalties that are again shouldered by the transport workers. Jeepney operators are given 6, 9 and 12 months to modernize 25%, 50%, and 100% of the fleet, respectively.

Under the so-called modernization program, ordinary transport workers are pushed into taking debt, allowing big corporations, and individuals to take over, and profit from the industry.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS PUBLIC SERVICE

In more than 6 years since the implementation of the PUV Modernization Program, the government has met none of the goals that they themselves have set, while continuously disenfranchising the livelihoods of transport workers in progress, and worsening the longstanding transport crisis in the country.

We remind the government that the interests of commuters and transport workers should be at the forefront of its policies and infrastructure. In place of the PUV Modernization Program, the national government must design an inclusive, people-centered, worker-led, and sustainable mass public transportation program.

We urge other groups, organizations, and individuals to stand in solidarity with the transport workers and commuters. Join the nationwide transport strike on November 20 to 22!

#JustTransitionNow
#Fight4ProPeopleTransport
#NoToPUVPhaseout
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SIGNATORIES AS OF NOVEMBER 29, 2023

Sign the statement here: <https://bit.ly/NoToPUVMPSign>

ORGANIZATIONS:

1. Panatang Luntian Coalition
2. Inclusive Cities Advocacy Network (ICAN)
3. PARA - Advocates for Inclusive Transport (PARA)
4. Pro - People Engineers and Leaders (PROPEL)
5. Kalikasan PNE
6. Classic Barkadahan
7. Green Party of the Philippines
8. Alliance of Nationalist and Genuine Labor Organizations (ANGLO)
9. Bayanihan Para sa Kalikasan Movement Inc.
10. UP Diliman University Student Council
11. Kadamay National
12. Ulirat Collective
13. Blue Mobility
14. SAMASA PUP
15. Samahan ng mga DH sa Gitnang Silangan - Philippines (SANDIGAN)
16. Ilog Pasiglahin
17. Center for Environmental Concerns - Philippines Inc.
18. Youth Strike for Climate Philippines
19. Alliance for Consumers' Protection
20. Tambisan sa Sining
21. NoFace Records
22. NNARA Youth UP Manila
23. Artista ng Rebolusyong Pangkultura (ARPAK)
24. Sining na Naglilingkod sa Bayan (SINAGBAYAN)
25. Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR)
26. Samahan at Ugnayan ng mga Konsyumer Para sa Ikauunlad ng Bayan (SUKI Network)
27. Christian Political Science Society
28. Agham Youth - Katipunan
29. Agham Youth - UP Diliman
30. NILAD
31. Council for People's Development and Governance
32. EMC² Fraternity
33. Climate Change Network for Community-Based Initiatives (CCNCI)
34. Pangasinan People's Strike for the Environment
35. Make It Safer Movement (MISMO)
36. Student Christian Movement of the Philippines (SCMP)
37. BAYAN Hong Kong and Macau
38. UE - Caloocan College of Fine Arts, Architecture and Design Student Council (CFADSC)
39. DAKILA - Philippine Collective for Modern Heroism

40. UE - Caloocan Central Student Council
41. UE - Manila University Student Council
42. Youth Advocates for Climate Action Philippines (YACAP)
43. Agham Youth PUP (AY PUP)
44. Medical Mission Sisters
45. PNU - Luntian
46. Agham Youth National
47. Climate Change Network for Community-Based Initiatives (CCNCI)
48. Junior Philippine Geographical Society - UP Diliman(JPGS-UPD)
49. Philippine Medical Students' Association-UERM
50. UP Geology Majors' Society (UP GeMS)
51. PNFSP, Inc.

INDIVIDUALS:

1. Reycel Hyacenth Nacario Bendaña
2. Chasty Franco, commuter
3. Ian Cyrus Barcelos, commuter
4. Alyssa Belda, commuter and active transport advocate
5. Jose Mari Oñate, commuter
6. Temi Escoto, commuter
7. Junah Delfinado, commuter
8. Honey Tañedo, commuter
9. Christian Andrei A. Cudal, commuter, STI College Caloocan
10. Bea Panlaqui, commuter
11. Albea Terryfer B. Velasco, commuter
12. Mary Sunshine P. Reyes, UP Diliman University Student Council Chairperson
13. Stef Regaspi, commuter
14. Seth Melchizedek T. Alegado, commuter
15. Ervin F. Grana
16. Dominic Gutoman
17. Caryl May S. Hablado
18. Cindy Pornelos, commuter
19. Alyssa Darunday, commuter and climate mobility advocate
20. Cwylle Alcain, commuter
21. Danilo Ramos
22. Ferdinand Gaite
23. Cwylle Alcain, commuter
24. Junah Delfinado, commuter
25. Edlyn Samonte, architect
26. Sean Alsim, commuter
27. Mycol Velasco, commuter
28. Christian Jiro Flores, commuter
29. Matt Andrei Miclat, commuter
30. Gracea Golpo, commuter

31. Adrienne Cruz, commuter
32. Trisha Sanchez, commuter
33. Leila Hyuna Perez, commuter
34. Mykey Cuento
35. Nadine Grace Piad
36. Grace Angellie T. Aquino
37. Martha Balagat, commuter
38. Erickvae Ricafort, CFADSC President
39. Alyssa Kate Dela Cruz, student
40. Gat Nisperos, commuter
41. Kimberly Mae Ortego
42. Katrina Mawac
43. Eli Santos, commuter
44. Grant Seth Micahelo Hereda, student and commuter
45. Lea Llagas, commuter
46. Xands Casambre Bisenio, commuter
47. Cham Navarrosa, commuter
48. Diana Aller, commuter
49. Richard James Mendoza, Digital Media Supervisor
50. Jefferson Estela
51. Riyan Krisa Aquino
52. Cristina Batalla
53. John Patrick Canteros, Visiting Research Fellow, UP Diliman
54. Lance Go, commuter
55. Abigail Ablang, commuter
56. Michelle S. Eusebio, commuter
57. Laurence Bruce S. Acosta, commuter
58. Len Ollano, commuter
59. Rafael Dimalanta, Policy Researcher
60. Shayna Tria, commuter
61. Gabie Domino
62. Max Faminiano, commuter
63. Maded Batara III, commuter
64. Riza Fausto, driver
65. Neema Villarin, commuter
66. Anntonette Ponce, commuter
67. Normel Bermundo, National External Coordinator, YACAP
68. Nichole Tania Adaban, commuter
69. Leziel L. Nabigan, commuter
70. Bea Sacdalan
71. Victor Ylasco IV, commuter
72. Aiyanna Pajimola, commuter
73. Katrina Deñoso, commuter
74. Annetta Relado, commuter

75. Kirsten Ongkeko
76. Airish Doningo, Conmuter
77. Aiyanna Pajimola, Commuter
78. Victor Ylasco IV, Commuter
79. Bea Sacdalan
80. Alia Macapundag, commuter
81. Steven T. Lagrimas, Commuter
82. Iesu Rex Judiel Cruz, Commuter
83. Arnold San Pedro
84. Fernando, Andrea Petina S., PMSA-UERM
85. Rise Dicen, Commuter
86. Fiona Fuentes
87. Pearl Aura Fenis, Commuter
88. Yeka Magtira, Commuter
89. Alexandra Roque, Commuter
90. Anne Magpantay, Commuter and Environmental Activist
91. Roi Lance V. Manuel, Commuter
92. Seleena Kate Male
93. Kim Garachico, BIEN ILOILO



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