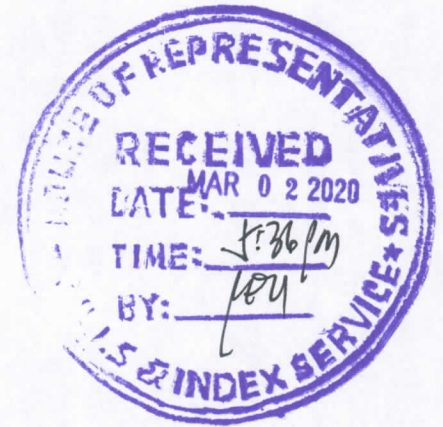


Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6436



INTRODUCED BY
REP. ALFRED VARGAS

AN ACT
GRANTING UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PENSION TO SENIOR CITIZENS,
FURTHER AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432, AS AMENDED BY
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9994, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS
"THE EXPANDED SENIOR CITIZENS ACT OF 2010"

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Various economic and social developments over the past decades have led to higher life expectancy for the Filipinos. Yet, this increase in life expectancy, coupled with reduction in fertility rates, means that the Philippines is projected to have a gradually ageing population by 2045¹. This means that for the years to come, a majority of Filipinos will grow old and will have to face major challenges of poverty and inequality brought about by the lack of support and social protection for the elderly.

While the elderly face greater health problems that come with old age, some of them still want or need to continue working, given the opportunity, but are faced with barriers of age discrimination as well as the mandatory retirement age of 65. If they failed to secure a social pension while they were younger, they can only avail of a monthly stipend amounting to Five Hundred Pesos (Php500.00) once they prove themselves to be "frail, sickly or with disability, and without pension or permanent source of income, compensation or financial assistance from his/her relatives." In some cases, the existing validation process has resulted in many senior citizens not being included in the list, or worse, included people who do not fall within the definition indigent senior citizens as provided by law.

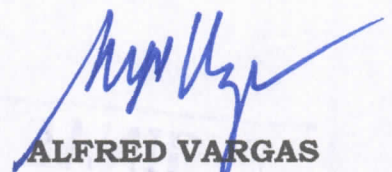
¹ Philippine Statistics Authority, "2010 Census-Based Population Projections in Collaboration with the Inter-Agency Working Group on Population Projections."

Ten years after the Expanded Senior Citizens Act was signed into law, the social pension for indigent senior citizens has in some way helped the elderly, but it remains lacking in terms of establishing social protection for all. The current social protection system provides invaluable support to a selection of vulnerable older people, but still has a long way to go toward making a substantial contribution to addressing the economic challenges of the elderly in the Philippines.

A universal social pension would help alleviate these problems faced by the elderly by establishing a system that offers virtually no exclusion errors. It provides social security for low-income informal sector workers, while creating eligibility criteria that are transparent, easy to understand, and limits opportunities for corruption and clientelism. More importantly, it affirms the right of the elderly to social security as it removes the criterion of having to prove oneself to be frail or sickly just to be given stipends. Thus, this bill aims to secure not only social protection, but the dignity of the senior citizens of the country.

This bill seeks to grant universal social pension for senior citizens, whether or not they are indigent, by proposing a minimum of One Thousand Pesos (Php1,000.00) per month to all senior citizens, subject to review every two years, taking into consideration factors such as inflation and availability of funds.

Recognizing the immense and noble contributions of older persons to the country, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



ALFRED VARGAS

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“EXPANDED SENIOR CITIZENS ACT OF 2010”**

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

SECTION 1. Number (1), Paragraph (H), Section 5 of the Republic Act No. 7432, as amended by Republic Act No. 9994, otherwise known as the “Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010,” is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“Section 5. Government Assistance. – The government shall provide the following:

x x x

(h) Additional Government Assistance

(1) Social Pension

“[Indigent senior] ALL SENIOR citizens shall be entitled to a monthly stipend amounting to A MINIMUM OF One Thousand Pesos (PhP1,000.00) to augment their daily subsistence and other medical needs, which stipend shall be subject to review every two (2) years by Congress, in consultation with the DSWD. **PROVIDED, THAT SUCH SENIOR CITIZEN DOES NOT RECEIVE A PENSION OF MORE THAN THREE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED (PHP3,500.00) FROM THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE**

**INSURANCE SYSTEM, THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, AND
OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM”**

X X X

SECTION 2. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 3. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders or rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 4. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,