

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

3075

House Bill No. _____



Introduced by Representative Estrellita B. Suansing

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution, as the highest law of the land, provides the following provisions for senior citizens, to wit:

"Article II. Declaration of Principles and State Policies

"Section 10. The State Shall Promote Social Justice In All Phases Of National Development.

"Section 11. The State Values the Dignity of Every Human Person and Guarantees Full Respect for Human Rights.

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"Article XIII. Social Justice and Human Rights

"Section 11. The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable costs. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The state shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers.

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"Article XV. The Family

"Section 4. The family has the duty to care for its elderly members but the State may also do so through just programs of social security."

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The Global AgeWatch Index¹ 2015 revealed that the Philippines ranked 6th among 23 Asia-Pacific countries, and 50th overall among 94 countries worldwide, as the best country for older people.² Out of the four domains used by the Global AgeWatch Index in ranking the well-being of older people, the country ranks highest in the enabling environment domain, which reflects the satisfaction of older people with civic freedom in the region; ranks high in the capability domain, reflecting the coping capacity and capability of older people; and ranking as one of the lowest in the income security domain (due to low pension coverage) and in the health domain (due to low life expectancy at age 60).³

The same Index also shows that the world population is ageing at that by the year 2050, the number of older people aged 60 and above shall comprise 21.5%, or nearly 2.1 billion, of the total world population.

In view thereof, the State should engage in a more vigorous role in protecting, preserving and even improving the welfare of senior citizens in the country. This bill seeks to provide adequate and effective social services to all members of society, especially senior citizens, so they may live prosperously and enjoy the fruits of their labor. For this purpose, the State undertakes to establish, initiate and support programs, including endeavors, aimed at promoting and advancing the social and economic well-being of senior citizens.

If enacted into law, the bill will reduce poverty and vulnerability to risks of senior citizens, as well as enhance their social status and rights and promoting and protecting them against hazards and sudden loss of income, thereby improving their capacity to manage risks.

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


ESTRELLITA B. SUANSING
1st District, Nueva Ecija

¹ The Global AgeWatch Index is the first global index to rank countries according to the social and economic well-being of older people, developed and constructed from international data sets drawn from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the World Bank, World Health Organization, International Labour Organization, UNESCO and the Gallup World Poll.

² Global AgeWatch Index 2015 Insight Report

³ <http://www.helppage.org/global-agewatch/population-ageing-data/country-ageing-data/?country=Philippines>

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING AND INSTITUTIONALIZING LONG-TERM CARE FOR SENIOR
CITIZENS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as “The Long-Term Care
2 for Senior Citizens Act.”

3 **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** – The State recognizes the invaluable
4 contribution of senior citizens to the national development program. Accordingly, it is
5 hereby declared the policy of the State to provide adequate and effective social
6 services to all members of society, especially senior citizens so they may live
7 prosperously and enjoy the fruits of their labor. For this purpose, the State undertakes
8 to establish, initiate, and support programs, including endeavors, aimed at promoting
9 and advancing the social and economic well-being of senior citizens.

10 **SECTION 3. Definition of Terms.** – For purposes of this Act, the following
11 terms shall be construed to mean as follows:

12 A. *Senior citizen* refers to any person as defined in Section 3 of Republic
13 Act No. 7876, otherwise known as the Senior Citizen Center Act.

14 B. *Long-term care* refers to a sustained provision of comprehensive
15 programs and services to senior citizens with the view of enabling them to have
16 dignified, healthy, and secured lives.

17 C. *Dependent senior citizen* refers to those persons who are frail, sickly,
18 suffering from any disability, or have no other means to support their individual basic
19 needs.

20 **SECTION 4. National Long-term Care Program Framework.** – A national
21 long-term care program for senior citizens is hereby established, which shall embody
22 the following core programs and services, among others:

1 A. **Social Protection.** – This shall cover programs that seek to reduce
2 poverty and vulnerability to risks and enhance the social status and rights of senior
3 citizens by promoting and protecting them against hazards and sudden loss of income
4 and improving senior citizens' capacity to manage risks.

5 1. **Social Welfare.** – Curative and preventive interventions that seek to
6 support the special needs of senior citizens and to reduce risk associated with old age
7 shall be provided. These shall include activities aimed at protecting senior citizens
8 from abuse, exploitation and discrimination. Moreover, provision of support services
9 and prevention against physical, emotional and financial abuse, sexual exploitation,
10 neglect and abandonment of senior citizens shall be established within the family and
11 at the community level. Towards this end, trainings and awareness campaigns shall
12 be initiated to raise the public's awareness of the problems confronting senior citizens
13 and to equip the public with the necessary know-how to prevent and detect problem
14 areas concerning senior citizens.

15 2. **Livelihood Job Generation Program.** – Senior citizens shall be
16 specifically targeted in livelihood programs and other poverty alleviation programs.
17 Further, livelihood programs shall guarantee a minimum income and shall be designed
18 in a manner that increases senior citizens' productivity.

19 3. **Social Insurance.** – Existing social insurance programs shall be
20 modified and expanded to guarantee that senior citizens shall be adequately protected
21 from loss of income and unemployment as a result of old age. Economic and financial
22 support through other innovative social insurance and pension schemes especially
23 designed for families caring for dependents/disabled senior citizens shall likewise be
24 endeavored.

25 4. **Social Safety Nets.** – Stop-gap mechanisms or urgent and immediate
26 responses shall be instituted to shield senior citizens from vulnerabilities arising from
27 disasters, emergencies, and displacement due to development projects and natural
28 and man-made calamities.

29 B. **Senior Citizens and Development.** – This shall include mainstreaming
30 activities such as lifelong, education programs for aging preparation and non-formal
31 education at the local level for those sixty (60) years old and above and development
32 and programs which will allow senior citizens to remain actively engaged in as many
33 social, economic, and community activities as possible.

34 C. **Advancing Health and Well-Being.** – An integrated and innovative
35 elderly-focused health and social services shall be made available at the local level.
36 Particular emphasis shall be made on disease prevention, health promotion and
37 wellness of mind, body and spirit. Health services shall comprise preventive, curative
38 and rehabilitative health care services in all government and private hospitals, local

health facilities and other community-based facilities. The said program shall contemplate the following, among others.

1. Homecare and hospice for the frail and dependent elderly and medical and psychological support for patients requiring continued medical assistance after discharge; and

2. Development and provision of geriatric training at the family and community levels.

D. *Enabling and Supportive Environment.* – Provision of home nursing for the elderly, facilities for respite care, programs on counseling, professional guidance and emotional support and low-cost, community-based activities integrated into existing community health programs as well as strengthening of inter-generational relationships shall be pursued.

Nothing above prevents the agencies tasked to implement the provisions of this Act from introducing other social services and programs designed to promote the National Long-Term Care Program for senior citizens.

SECTION 5. *Implementing Agencies.* – The National Long-Term Care Program for senior citizens shall be implemented jointly by the Department of Finance, Department of Health, Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the various local government units. The National Inter Agency Monitoring Board created under Republic Act No. 9257, otherwise known as the Expanded Senior Citizens Act, shall take the lead in monitoring the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter, the local government units shall undertake the maintenance of the institutions established under this Act.

SECTION 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, after due consultations with the other implementing agencies, shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the orderly implementation of this Act.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, issuances, orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

1 **SECTION 10. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
2 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

3 Approved,