

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5735



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Introduced by Pangasinan Fifth District Representative  
HON. RAMON V. GUICO III

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

In 2018, the Commission on Population (POPCOM) had revealed that the Philippines is moving toward an increasingly aging population. POPCOM projections showed that by the end of 2018, there were more or less 8,013,059 Filipinos over the age of 60, which is 8.2% of the national population. The Philippine Statistics Authority likewise projects that the country's aging population will triple to 22.6 million by 2045.

This growing trend is bringing to fore a unique challenge to the government, that is, to better secure to the elderly a decent standard of living. Towards this ideal, the 1987 Constitution secured the right of the elderly to social security reflected in relevant laws such as Republic Act No. 10645 and Republic Act No. 9994. R.A. 9994 or the Expanded Senior Citizens in particular is considered a progressive legislation, which featured a 20% discount and VAT-exemption on medical-related expenses, transportation, and food, among others. It also provided for a social pension for indigent senior citizens amounting to P500.00 a month.

In particular, the Social Pension Program is important because a sizeable number of Filipinos are not eligible to receive social pension from SSS, GSIS, and other pension funds. Illustratively, only 29% of senior citizens are receiving pensions. This lack of coverage is primarily due to the fact that most Filipinos are informally employed or do not have sufficient sources of income to sustain their pension plans. Furthermore, pension alone does not guarantee income security, especially with the rising prices of basic commodities.

Moreover, from an initial 134,000 beneficiaries in 2011, the social pension program by the year 2017 has reached about 2.8 million or 33% of indigent senior citizens. Combined with the 29% pension coverage of the SSS, GSIS, and other pension funds, there remains about 38% or 3 million senior citizens without any form of pension.

To address this coverage gap, it would be best to expand the coverage of the social pension program to all senior citizens without social pension. The present system of identifying indigent senior citizens is highly inaccurate because the household data used does not sufficiently reflect the real vulnerabilities of senior citizens. There have been instances, as observed by implementers and senior citizens themselves that a relatively well-off elderly receives pension supposedly for indigent ones. The excessively subjective definition of being an "indigent senior citizen" exposes the program's design to clientelism and corruption. To avoid this, the criteria for the coverage of the social pension must be simple and clear.

Moreover, a measly sum of P500.00 is not enough to cover for the expenses of being an elderly person in the country. Basic necessities including medicines are costly and will certainly degrade the quality of life for such persons. Numerous senior citizens are also living alone without support from their children or other relatives while some, even at such an advanced age, continue to have dependents. It is therefore necessary that we at least accord to them at least P2500.00 to help support them.

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



Rep. Ramon V. Guico III



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AN ACT

INCREASING THE MONTHLY SOCIAL PENSION OF INDIGENT SENIOR CITIZENS  
AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432, AS AMENDED BY  
REPUBLIC ACT NOS. 9257 AND 9994, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "EXPANDED  
SENIOR CITIZENS ACT OF 2010"

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

1        **SECTION 1.** Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7432, as amended by Republic Act Nos. 9257 and  
2 9994, otherwise known as the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010" is hereby amended to read as  
3 follows:

4  
5                "Sec. 2. *Definition of Terms.* – For the purposes of this Act, these terms are defined as  
6 follows:

7  
8                "xxx

9  
10                [(h) indigent senior citizens refers to any elderly who is frail, sickly, or with disability,  
11 and without pension or permanent source of income, compensation or financial  
12 assistance from his/her relatives to support his/her basic needs, as determined by the  
13 Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in consultation with the  
14 National Coordinating and Monitoring Board.]

15  
16                **(H) SOCIAL PENSION REFERS TO THE MONETARY GRANT FROM THE**  
17 **GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT THE DAILY SUBSISTENCE AND MEDICAL**  
18 **NEEDS OF SENIOR CITIZENS WHICH SHALL AMOUNT TO NO LESS**  
19 **THAN TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P2,500.00) PER MONTH."**

20  
21        **SEC. 2.** Section 5 of Republic Act No. 7342, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as  
22 follows:

23  
24                "Sec. 5. *Government Assistance.* – The government shall provide the following:

25  
26                "xxx

1 “(h) Additional Government Assistance

2  
3 “(1) Social Pension

4  
5 “[Indigent] ALL senior citizens, WITHOUT PENSION FROM THE SOCIAL  
6 SECURITY SYSTEM, GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM, AND  
7 OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM shall be  
8 entitled to a monthly SOCIAL PENSION AMOUNTING TO NO LESS THAN  
9 TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P2,500.00) to [augment] SUPPORT  
10 [the] THEIR daily subsistence and medical needs [of senior citizens, subject to a review  
11 every two (2) years by Congress, in consultation with the DSWD].

12  
13 “THE DSWD, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET  
14 AND MANAGEMENT (DBM), INCLUDING OTHER RELEVANT  
15 STAKEHOLDERS SHALL REVIEW AND WHEN NECESSARY, ADJUST THE  
16 AMOUNT OF SOCIAL PENSION EVERY THREE (3) YEARS AFTER THE  
17 EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE VARIOUS  
18 NEEDS OF SENIOR CITIZENS AND RELEVANT ECONOMIC INDICATORS,  
19 AS REPORTED AND PUBLISHED BY PERTINENT GOVERNMENT  
20 AGENCIES OR AUTHORITIES: *PROVIDED*, THAT THE SOCIAL PENSION  
21 SHALL NOT BE LESS THAN THE AMOUNT INITIALLY SPECIFIED IN THIS  
22 ACT.

23  
24 “THE COVERAGE OF THE SOCIAL PENSION PROGRAM SHALL ALSO BE  
25 SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY THE DSWD, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE  
26 DBM AND OTHER RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS, AND WHEN NECESSARY,  
27 ADJUSTED TO INCLUDE THOSE WHO ARE RECEIVING BELOW BASIC  
28 PENSION AND THOSE WHO HAVE DEPENDENTS.

29  
30 xxx.”

31 SEC. 3. *Repealing Clause*.—All laws, decrees, executive orders or parts thereof inconsistent  
32 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

33 SEC. 4. *Separability Clause*.—If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or  
34 unconstitutional, the other parts not otherwise affected shall remain in full effect and force.

35 SEC. 5. *Effectivity*.—This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the  
36 Official Gazette or at least two newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*