

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **4305**



Introduced by Representative Florida P. Robes

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Filipino culture traditionally expects children to look after elderly parents. Unfortunately, many of our senior citizens are still taking care of their children and grandchildren, and would do anything to provide for their family's needs. In many public markets in the country, you would see old and aged women selling all kinds of stuffs, not for their survival, but to provide for their families which are usually extended. Stories about old women peddling their dignity symbolize the lack of opportunities for them. Older men are forced to be involved in drug pushing or other petty crimes to earn a living. Others choose to continue to find means of livelihood because they do not want to depend on dole outs and charities.

In fact, the aging population is a serious concern for a developing country like the Philippines. Unfortunately, there are no job opportunities for the elderly to be employed. Republic Act No. 9257 or the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003 provides that the government shall provide information and matching services to enable senior citizens who have the capacity and desire to work, or be re-employed to be productive members of the society. A recently passed law, Republic Act No 10911, prohibits discrimination against any individual in employment on account of age. These laws aim to respond to the need to empower the elderly. However, employers will still have the discretion in hiring them depending on the needs as there are stringent rules to be followed and be complied with. Even if you put aside the age requirement, there are other criteria that senior citizens applying for any job may not be able to comply at all because most of the available jobs tend to cater to younger people. Without a specific employment program designed for the elderly, these laws can be rendered futile. Hence, the policy objective of this proposal is to mandate both

public and private institutions to design, formulate or institutionalize an employment program where our senior citizens can be tapped.

But why hire senior citizens when you can hire younger ones? Will this proposal take away employment opportunities for the younger generation? I strongly believe that if we provide our senior citizens avenues where they can still be active, our society will be at an advantage. To genuinely achieve development, we should adopt a holistic approach where no one is left behind by tapping into that "wealth of experience". Elderly employees are more emotionally matured, more independent, competent, skilled and dedicated. Just like a popular saying in Singapore, a country which recognizes and values the elderly, "Live till old, learn till old." I take this as my inspiration for this proposal.

Considering the aforementioned, the passage of this proposal into law is earnestly sought.


FLORIDA P. ROBES

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**AN ACT INSTITUTING AN ELDERLY EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy – It is hereby a declared policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living and improved quality of life. As such, the State shall promote the welfare of elderly persons by taking comprehensive measures that are designed to secure and stabilize employment opportunities for them.

SEC. 2. Objective.- The primary objective of this Act is to motivate and encourage senior citizens or the elderly to continue contributing to the betterment and advancement of this country by giving them full support to improve their total well-being and to recognize the integral role they play as part of the Philippine Society.

SEC. 3. Elderly Employment. – All government agencies and private corporations shall be mandated to institute an employment program that will ensure the employment of senior citizens who have the qualifications, capacity, and interest to be employed. Employment opportunities for the elderly shall include but not limited to clerical or secretarial works, consultancy, cleaning or janitorial services, event organizing, teaching, kitchen help, sales assistance, call center jobs, and such other jobs or volunteer works that may not be detrimental to their physical well-being.

A task force that will look into the employability of senior citizens shall be created under the auspices of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to redesign jobs and human resource systems suitable to them. Furthermore, DOLE, in coordination with other government agencies such as, but not limited to, the Technology and Livelihood Resource Center (TLRC) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), shall assess, design and implement training programs that will provide skills and welfare or livelihood support for senior citizens.

SEC. 4. Incentives to Private Entities. – The incentives as provided under Republic Act No. 9257 to private entities that will employ senior citizens shall be entitled to an additional deduction from their gross income, equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of the total amount paid as salaries and wages to senior citizens subject to the provision of Sec. 34 of the National Internal Revenue Code, as amended: Provided, however, That such employment shall continue for a period of at least six (6) months: Provided further, that the annual income of a senior citizen does not exceed the poverty level as determined by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) for that year.

Sec. 5. Monitoring and Evaluation. The DOLE and CSC shall monitor and evaluate the employment programs for senior citizens annually.

SEC 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The DOLE and the CSC, in consultation with both public and private institutions, shall formulate the guidelines to fully implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 7. Separability Clause. - If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 8. Repealing Clause. - Section 5, paragraph (a) of Republic Act No. 9257 is hereby amended. Also, all other laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,