

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Fifteenth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. _____ 38



Introduced by Representative Pedro B. Acharon, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to extend monthly pensions and other privileges to Filipino professional athletes who became world champions at one time in their lives.

Athletes risk lives and limbs in order to give honor and glory to their motherland. Boxers in particular go to the rings unmindful of danger to themselves, but only armed with the thought that what they are doing redounds not only to their benefit but to the country as well. Inside the ring however, anything could happen – the boxer loses his sight, even consciousness and ultimately his life. Hence, woe to the champion who become incapacitated or even died without seeing any financial reward in case of incapacity or death.

The prestige that boxing great Manny Pacquiao, our very own compatriot from General Santos City, now our colleague in has brought to the country in the international arena cannot be overemphasized. Undoubtedly, he had restored the Philippines in the world boxing map, earning the adulation and respect not only of his countrymen but of boxing aficionados the world over.

We not only excelled in boxing but in other sports as well. Lydia de Vega, Elma Muros-Posadas, the bowling hall-of-famer Paeng Nepomuceno, Efren "Bata" Reyes – all are world- or regional- class champions themselves. The list is endless but our memories are short.

But champions are champions. They deserve something better than a mere pat in the back or the adulation of his countrymen. They ought to receive something tangible when all the admiring glances and shrieking sounds are gone.

The cases of former Filipino world boxing champions Rolando Navarette, Luisito Espinosa and lately, Z. Gorres who became comatose after a successful fight are cases in point. Navarette is reduced to the life of a pauper-dependent on charitable gestures from his countrymen for his existence and for his medical expenses. Luisito Espinosa is forced to fight mediocre fights just so he could survive in a far away land (the United States). Z.

Gorres is lucky that many generous persons contributed to shoulder some of his hospital bills. Alone and abandoned, they are left with nothing to themselves. Something has to be *done and fast!*

This bill therefore, seeks to grant a monthly pension of Fifteen thousand pesos (P15,000.00) to former world champions upon retirement at age 55 or who become incapacitated to pursue their careers. Likewise, this bill shoulders the hospitalization and medical expenses of said athletes at not more than Two hundred thousand (P200,000.00) Pesos per hospitalization.

In view of the foregoing circumstances, approval of this bill is urgently requested.


PEDRO B. ACHARON, JR.

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HOUSE BILL NO. 38



Introduced by Representative PEDRO B. ACHARON JR.

AN ACT

GRANTING RETIREMENT, HEALTH CARE AND DEATH BENEFITS TO PROFESSIONAL FILIPINO ATHLETES WHO WIN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES IN INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SPORTS COMPETITIONS OR IN OTHER EQUALLY PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

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2 SECTION 1. *Title.*- This Act shall be known as the " Professional Filipino Athletes
3 Retirement, Health Care and Death Benefits Act of 2010".

4 SEC.2. *Declaration of Policy.*- The State shall provide retirement, health care, and death
5 benefits to professional Filipino athletes who win world championship titles in international
6 professional sports competitions or in other equally prestigious world championship games, in both
7 individual or team events, in recognition of the glory and honor they bestowed to their country.

8 SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be
9 defined as follows:

10 (a) Professional Filipino Athletes. - shall refer to athletes who are Filipino citizens and paid
11 a sum of money and other compensation as a salary or prize money for participating in a game,
12 bout, tournament or contest of professional sport, either as an individual contestant or member of a
13 team under a contract entered into with a professional sports promoter/operator or team owner and
14 licensed by the Games and Amusements Board (GAB);

15 (b) Professional Sports - shall refer to individual or team sports, games, contest, bouts,
16 tournaments or competitions whereby the participating athlete is paid sums of money and other
17 forms of compensation as regular salary or prize for participation, which are accredited and
18 recognized by the GAB;

1 (c) International Professional Sports Competitions. - shall refer to international
2 competitions that confer world championship titles in both individual or team events which are duly
3 sanctioned and recognized by international sporting organizations and bodies and accredited by
4 the GAB ;

5 (d) Other Equally Prestigious World Championship Games - shall refer to other
6 international professional sports competitions that confer the same rank or stature as world
7 championship titles and recognized as such by the GAB.

8 (e) International Sporting Organizations. - shall refer to international bodies that are
9 recognized, accredited, and have a mutual working relationship, agreement, and/or memorandum
10 of understanding with the GAB .

11 SEC. 4. *Retirement Benefits.* - Professional Filipino athletes as defined under this Act,
12 who win in international professional sports competitions shall, upon reaching the age of fifty-five
13 (55), receive the following retirement benefits:

14 A. FOR INDIVIDUAL EVENTS – a lifetime monthly pension of at least fifteen
15 thousand pesos (php15,000.00) for the individual winner;

16 B. FOR TEAM EVENTS – a lifetime monthly pension of at least ten thousand
17 pesos (php10,000.00) for each team member;

18 *Provided,* That for athletes who win in both individual and team events, the retirement
19 benefits for individual events shall apply.

20 Athletes who are actively employed at the time they reach the age of fifty-five (55) and
21 have availed of the retirement benefits under this Act may continue with such employment
22 *Provided,* That the retirement benefits under this Act shall be separate and distinct from the
23 mandatory retirement benefits provided by existing laws.

24 SEC. 5. *Health Care Benefits.* – Immediately upon winning in any international
25 professional sports competitions, professional Filipino athletes shall be covered by the National
26 Health Insurance Program of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH) through
27 a special program sponsored by the GAB, which will provide the required local government
28 premium counterpart to be directly remitted to the PHILHEALTH. Upon reaching the age of fifty-
29 five (55), the athlete shall be an honorary member of the program, subject to existing rules and
30 regulations of the PHILHEALTH.

31 In case of hospitalization of the professional Filipino athlete in any hospital or clinic, any
32 amount in excess of the Philhealth benefit shall be shouldered by the Philippine Charity
33 Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) under its Individual Medical Assistance Program (IMAP): *Provided,*

1 That the PCSO shall shoulder a maximum of Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00) per
2 qualified patient per year: *Provided, further*, That the requirement for qualification and grant of the
3 health care assistance to be extended by the PCSO shall be made consistent with and subject to
4 *compliance with PCSO's existing rules and guidelines*: *Provided, finally*, That any qualified
5 beneficiary shall have the option to waive the benefits mentioned under this section.

6 SEC. 6. *Death Benefits*. - Upon the death of a professional Filipino athlete, his or her
7 primary beneficiaries shall be entitled to a lump sum death benefit of Thirty Thousand Pesos
8 (Php30,000.00) to cover funeral services/expenses: *Provided*, That, if he or she has no primary
9 beneficiaries, his or her secondary beneficiaries shall be entitled to said benefits.

10 For purposes of this Act, primary beneficiaries shall refer to legitimate spouse, legitimate
11 or illegitimate children. Secondary beneficiaries shall refer to the parents, and in their absence, to
12 the brothers or sisters of professional athletes.

13 SEC. 7. *Retroactive Effect*. - The benefits provided under this Act shall retroact to all
14 living professional Filipino athletes who, prior to the enactment of this Act, have won in any
15 international professional sports competition, upon compliance with the requirements that shall be
16 prescribed by the GAB in its Implementing Rules and Regulations: *Provided*, that, the winning
17 professional athlete was duly licensed by the GAB at the time of the competition and the sports
18 participated in was recognized and accredited by the GAB.

19 Sec. 8. *Adjustment of Retirement Benefits*. The adjustment in retirement benefits
20 provided in Section 4 hereof may be authorized, subject to the approval of the President, upon the
21 joint recommendation of the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and
22 the Chairman of the GAB, based on studies, consultations and public hearings with relevant
23 agencies, entities and concerned athletes or coaches. However, no memorandum, order or
24 issuance shall diminish the prescribed retirement benefits.

25 Sec. 9. *Appropriations*. The Chairman of the GAB shall immediately include in the
26 Board's program the implementation of the benefits under this Act, the funding of which shall be
27 included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

28 SEC. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*. - The GAB, in consultation with the Senate,
29 the House of Representatives and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate and issue the
30 Implementing Rules and Regulations within ninety (90) days upon approval of this Act.

31 SEC. 11. *Separability Clause*. - If any provision or part of this Act shall be held
32 unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions, which are not affected thereby, shall continue to be in
33 full force and effect.

1 SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and
2 regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
3 repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

4 SEC. 13. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at
5 least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

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7 Approved,
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