

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

H. B. No. 569

Introduced by HONORABLE JUAN EDGARDO "SONNY" M. ANGARA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution recognizes the significant role that senior citizens play in society. It reaffirms the duty of the family to provide care and support for their older persons.

In furtherance of this constitutional recognition, the Citizens' Law of 1992 and the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003 was passed in Congress. These laws grant twenty percent (20%) discount to senior citizens when purchasing goods and services, medical and dental services, transport fare, funeral and burial services, among others.

However, the grants and privileges under the two laws are insufficient to ensure better twilight days for the senior citizens because of the lack resources. The enjoyment of discount privileges is not maximized since they cannot afford the services covered by the previously mentioned laws. The challenge then is for the government to provide financial assistance to the needy senior citizens.

The idea is not new. Twelve Asian governments have introduced social assistance through regular cash transfers. A few schemes offer universal coverage, while others are directly targeted at poverty alleviation. Some involve millions of people, as in India, while others reach much smaller populations. The design is to provide a regular income and guarantee income security, social protection and poverty prevention by giving sufficient minimum income for the elderly, paying particular attention to socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

Financial assistance may appear costly for the government. Nevertheless, a large number of countries both in Asia and around the world have amply demonstrated that there is a positive impact of cash transfers in the reduction of poverty as well as social and economic development. A recent UN sponsored seminar in Bangkok concluded that social pensions are an affordable and cost effective way of delivering social protection to the elderly.

This bill seeks to extend the same benefits and provide social protection for the poorest among senior citizens.

Let us be cognizant of the fact that they contribute substantially to both family and society and that it is our duty to continue our tradition to support them in their twilight days.


JUAN EDGARDO "SONNY" M. ANGARA
Representative
Lone District, Province of Aurora

Introduced by Honorable JUAN EDGARDO "SONNY" M. ANGARA

AN ACT
TO ENCOURAGE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MONTHLY
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE NEEDY SENIOR CITIZENS, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFORE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the **"Needy Senior Citizens Financial Assistance Act."**

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. The Philippines, as a signatory of the *Second World Assembly on Ageing of 2002* fully supports its income security, social security and poverty alleviation program which provides that:

Sufficient minimum income for all older persons, paying particular attention to socially and economically disadvantaged groups. (Objective 2 #52)

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall have the following significance as used in this Act:

- a) "Applicant" - means a person who has applied for a benefit under this Act;
- b) "Guarantor" - shall refer to any government-accredited senior citizens organization that issues a certification of guarantee to any senior citizen who wishes to avail of the business loan benefits of this Act.
- c) MSWD - means Municipal Social Welfare and Development.
- d) "Needy Senior Citizen" - as used in this Act, shall refer to any senior citizen without adequate resources to survive as determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).
- e) "Senior Citizen"- shall refer to any person defined in Section 3 of RA 7876 or the Senior Citizens Act.
- f) "Beneficiary" - means a senior citizen whose application for a monthly financial assistance has been approved.

SEC. 4. *Establishment of Monthly Financial Assistance.* . The government shall provide monthly social assistance to financially disadvantaged senior citizen. Qualified senior citizen shall be issued a special Identification Card entitling them to the amount of *One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (PhP 1,500.00)* monthly.

SEC. 5. *Eligibility to Avail of the Monthly Allowance.* All financially disadvantaged senior citizens may avail of the monthly allowance provided they have the following qualifications:

- (a) Filipino citizen;
- (b) At least sixty (60) years of age;
- (c) Must be unemployed and without adequate means for survival;
- (d) Must be within the poverty threshold as determined by the DSWD; and
- (e) A holder of special ID issued by the appropriate government agency.

SEC. 6. *Business Loan Grants.* The government assistance extended by this Act to the senior citizens shall also include loan grants to the amount of Fifteen Thousand Pesos (PhP 15,000.00). The amount of loan may be extended to any qualified senior citizen, as provided for in Section 5 of this Act, who shall engage in any income generating activity: Provided however, that the applicant shall present a medical certificate showing that he / she has no serious illness. The medical certificate should be issued by a government-accredited medical clinic within thirty (30) days prior to the application: Provided further, that the applicant shall submit a certification of guarantee of loan by any government-accredited senior citizens' organization. Application for loan under this Section shall be filed with the DSWD.

SEC. 7. *Loan Obligation and Mode of Repayment.* Business Loan grants shall be of zero percent (0%) interest and without collateral. Repayment shall be on weekly staggered basis.

SEC. 8. *Mechanics.* Distribution system adequate to meet the exigencies of every locality shall be devised by the DSWD in collaboration with the MSWDs.

SEC. 9. *Appropriation.* The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following the approval of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulation.* Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, after due consultations, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, proclamations, issuances, rules, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its full publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes first.

Approved,