

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
House of Representatives
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3342



Introduced by Representative Alfredo D. Vargas III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Constitution declares that *"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 cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women and children."*¹

A paper penned by University of the Philippines professor, Dr. Clarita M. Carlos, asserts that the health status of the elderly has been identified as one of the major issues confronted by this sector². Dr. Carlos further asserts that:

*"As people age, their bodies undergo changes which can make them less resistant to chronic, debilitating and disabling conditions. Consequently, the elderly tend to be more at high risk of developing disabilities and contracting diseases. With the growing awareness for elderly concerns and needs, there is a greater demand for appropriate policies and legislative initiatives to promote the welfare of the elderly."*³

In trying to address the issues confronted by those belonging to the Senior Citizens Sector, Republic Act No. (R. A.) 7432 was enacted. It was recently amended by R. A. 9994 to provide more benefits, privileges and assistance for the elderly. In the said bill, one of the privileges extended to the sector is the mandatory Philhealth coverage for indigent senior citizens⁴. Much as the purpose of this provision is commendable, senior citizens who are not indigents are not covered by this provision and thus, cannot avail of this health privilege.

This explicit limitation should be reconsidered. In order to address this, a bill requiring mandatory enrollment of **ALL** (not only those who are indigent) senior citizens in the

¹ Section 11, Article XVIII of the 1987 Philippine Constitution

² Carlos, CM 1999, Concerns of the Elderly in the Philippine, *Philippine Social Sciences Review*, vol. 56, nos. 1-4, pp. 1-40

³ Ibid.

⁴ Subparagraph h(2), Section 5 of Republic Act No. 9994

National Health Insurance Program is proposed. As a consequence, all funds necessary in carrying out the implementation of this proposal shall be sourced from the National Health Insurance Fund.

This representation, including the bill's proponent from the Senate, Senator Ralph G. Recto, earnestly seeks the speedy passage of this bill.



ALFREDO D. VARGAS III

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY PHILHEALTH COVERAGE FOR ALL SENIOR
CITIZENS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432, AS AMENDED
BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9994, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "EXPANDED SENIOR
CITIZENS ACT OF 2010"

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

SECTION 1. Section 5, sub-paragraph h(2) of Republic Act No. 7432, as amended,
is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SECTION 5. **Government Assistance.** – The government shall provide the
following:

"xxx

"(h) Additional Government Assistance

"(1) xxx

"(2) Mandatory Philhealth Coverage

"All [indigent] senior citizens shall be covered by the national
health insurance program of Philhealth. FUNDS NECESSARY
TO ENSURE THE ENROLLMENT OF ALL SENIOR CITIZENS
SHALL BE SOURCED FROM THE NATIONAL HEALTH
INSURANCE FUND OF PHILHEALTH [The LGUs where the
indigent senior citizen resides shall allocate the necessary
funds to ensure the enrollment of their indigent senior
citizens], in accordance with pertinent laws and regulations.

"(3) xxx.

SECTION 2. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof of which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 3. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,