

**REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
QUEZON CITY**

**SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

HOUSE BILL NO. 3707



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ESTRELLITA "GING" B. SUANSING

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to extend benefits and privileges to professional Filipino athletes who have given honor, glory and pride to the Philippines by winning world championship titles in international professional sports competitions and other equally prestigious world championship games in both individual and team events.

The Philippines became famous in the boxing arena because of the championship fights won by the likes of Gabriel "Flash" Elorde, Luisito Espinosa, Gerry Peñalosa, Nonito Donaire, and most notable of all, our esteemed colleague, Manny Pacquiao from the Lone District of Sarangani.

Other names who excelled in their own fields and became champions are Lydia de Vega and Elma Muros-Posadas – Track and Field; Rafael "Paeng" Nepomuceno and Olivia "Bong" Co – Bowling; Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Rubilen Amit – Billiards; and Eugene Torre – Chess. The list of professional Filipino athletes with world-class talents is endless, and they, at one time or another, earned our, as well as the rest of the world's, respect and adulation.

Most sports are physical in nature and many of our Filipino athletes risk their lives to become champions. Moreover, unlike other career professionals, the career lifespan of a professional athlete is short. Many do not reach the age of 40 before retiring, giving way to the much stronger and younger athletes. Some are forced to retire because they have passed the height of their careers. Others are just given bad breaks in life after winning a title.

While many of them are greatly compensated by the prize they win in these competitions, they deserve more than just a "hero's welcome," crowd adulation and a pat on the back for a "job well done."

The cases of former Filipino world boxing champions Rolando Navarette, Luisito Espinosa and 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 medical expenses. Luisito Espinosa is forced to fight mediocre fights just so he could survive living in the United States. Z. Gorres is fortunate that many generous persons contributed to shoulder some of the medical bills he incurred.

Our champions should not have to endure this. At their twilight years, the country which they have given honor, glory and pride must be able to provide them some sort of support.

The purposes of this bill are to extend medical insurance and medical assistance to hospitalized professional Filipino champions; grant a monthly pension of Fifteen Thousand Pesos (Php 15,000.00) to individual world champions and Ten Thousand Pesos (Php 10,000.00) to each member of team events world champions at the retirement age of fifty (50); and death benefits to help in funeral services/expenses.

This measure recognizes the honor, glory and pride professional Filipino athletes have given our country, and also reassures them that their efforts are not forgotten.

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


ESTRELLITA "Ging" B. SUANSING

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AN ACT

GRANTING HEALTH CARE, RETIREMENT, 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 be assembled:*

1 **SECTION 1. Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "**Professional Filipino**
2 **Athletes Health Care, Retirement and Death Benefits Act of 2013.**"

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - The State shall provide health care,
5 retirement and death benefits to professional Filipino athletes who win world
6 championship titles in international professional sports competitions or in
7 other equally prestigious world championship games, in both individual and
8 team events, in recognition of the glory and honor they bestowed to the
9 Philippines.

10
11 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** For purposes of this Act, the following terms
12 shall be defined as follows:

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

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

6
7 (c) International Professional Sports Competitions - shall refer to
8 international competitions that confer world championship titles in
9 both individual and team events which are duly sanctioned and
10 recognized by international sporting organizations and bodies and
11 accredited by the GAB;

12
13 (d) Other Equally Prestigious World Championship Games - shall refer
14 to other international professional sports competitions that confer the
15 same rank or stature as world championship titles and recognized as
16 such by the GAB;

17
18 (e) International Sporting Organizations - shall refer to international
19 bodies that are recognized, accredited, and have a mutual
20 relationship, agreement, and/or memorandum of understanding with
21 the GAB.

22
23 **SEC. 4. Health Care Benefits.** Immediately upon winning in any
24 international professional sports competition, professional Filipino athletes
25 shall be covered by the National Health Insurance Program of the Philippine
26 Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH), through a special program
27 sponsored by the GAB, which will provide the required local government
28 premium counterpart to be directly remitted to the PHILHEALTH. Upon
29 reaching the age of fifty (50), the athlete shall be an honorary member of the
30 program, subject to existing rules and regulations of the PHILHEALTH.

31
32 In case of hospitalization of the professional Filipino athlete in any
33 hospital or clinic, any amount in excess of the PHILHEALTH benefit shall be
34 shouldered by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) under its
35 Individual Medical Assistance Program (IMAP); *Provided*, That the
36 requirement for qualification and grant of the health care assistance to be
37 extended by the PCSO shall be made consistent with and subject to
38 compliance with PCSO's existing rules and guidelines; *Provided, further*,
39 That any qualified beneficiary shall have the option to waive the benefits
40 mentioned under this section.
41

1 **SEC. 5. Retirement Benefits.** Professional Filipino athletes as defined under
2 this Act, who win in international professional sports competitions shall,
3 upon reaching the age of fifty (50), receive the following retirement benefits:

4
5 A. For individual events - a lifetime monthly pension of at least
6 Fifteen Thousand Pesos (Php 15,000.00) for the individual winner;

7
8 B. For team sports events - a lifetime monthly pension of at least Ten
9 Thousand Pesos (Php 10,000.00) for each team member;

10
11 *Provided, That* for athletes who win in both individual and team
12 events, the retirement benefits for individual events shall apply.

13
14 Athletes who are actively employed at the time they reach the age of
15 fifty (50) and have availed of the retirement benefits under this Act may
16 continue with such employment: *Provided, That* the retirement benefits
17 under this Act shall be separate and distinct from the mandatory retirement
18 benefits provided by existing laws.

19
20 **SEC. 6. Death Benefits.** Upon the death of the professional Filipino athlete,
21 the primary beneficiaries shall be entitled to a lump sum death benefit of
22 Thirty Thousand Pesos (Php 30,000.00) to cover funeral services/expenses:
23 *Provided, That*, if there are no primary beneficiaries, the secondary
24 beneficiaries shall be entitled to the said benefits.

25
26 For purposes of this Act, the primary beneficiaries shall refer to
27 legitimate spouse, legitimate or illegitimate children. Secondary beneficiaries
28 shall refer to the parents, and in their absence, to the brothers or sisters of
29 the professional Filipino athlete.

30
31 **SEC. 7. Retroactive Effect.** The benefits provided under this Act shall
32 retroact to all living professional Filipino athletes who, prior to the
33 enactment of this Act, have won in any international professional sports
34 competition, upon compliance with the requirements that shall be
35 prescribed by the GAB in its Implementing Rules and Regulations: *Provided,*
36 *That* the winning professional Filipino athlete was duly licensed by the GAB
37 at the time of the competition and the sports event participated in was
38 recognized and accredited by the GAB.

39
40 **SEC. 8. Adjustment of Retirement Benefits.** The adjustment in retirement
41 benefits provided in Section 5 hereof may be authorized, subject to the
42 approval of the President, upon the joint recommendation of the Secretary of
43 the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Chairman of the

1 GAB, based on studies, consultations and public hearings with relevant
2 agencies, entities and concerned athletes or coaches. However, no
3 memorandum, order or issuance shall diminish the prescribed retirement
4 benefits.

5
6 **SEC. 9. Appropriations.** The Chairman of the GAB shall immediately include
7 in the Board's program the implementation of the benefits under this Act,
8 the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations
9 Act.

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

15
16 **SEC. 11. Separability Clause.** If any provision or part of this Act shall be
17 held unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions, which are not affected
18 thereby, shall continue to be in full force and effect.

19
20 **SEC. 12. Repealing Clause.** All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
21 rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the
22 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

23
24 **SEC. 13. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
25 publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

26
27 Approved,