

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

Seventeenth Congress
_____ Session

H.B. No. **5594**



Introduced by Congressman Dakila Carlo E. Cua

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE
SOCIAL WELFARE AND BENEFIT SYSTEM,
CONSOLIDATING ALL SOCIAL RIGHTS,
PRIVILEGE, AND OBLIGATIONS THERETO,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to establish a national social welfare and benefit system in the Philippines, consolidating all social rights, privilege, welfare, and benefits enjoyed in the Philippines, as well as all the corresponding obligations ascribed thereto.

The unification of all social rights, privileges, welfare, and benefits will not only simplify executive administration, but will also reduce government expenditures, and enhance efficiency and convenience in transacting with the government.

The Philippine social welfare and benefit system will effectively accord all citizens a unitary social identification, eliminating the need to register different identification numbers with the various government agencies. Additionally, this system will also be used by the government to efficiently and effectively deliver all its social welfare programs.

The consolidation of all social rights, privileges, welfare, and benefits will serve as an economic tool in moving our country forward. Thus, the immediate passage of this Bill is earnestly sought.


DAKILA CARLO ENRIQUEZ CUA

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Social Welfare and Benefit System Act of 2017*”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to provide timely, efficient, effective, and responsive public service to its citizens, promote a just and dynamic social order to ensure the prosperity of the nation and free its citizens from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, and to simplify government, commercial, and other transactions both in the public and private sectors.

SECTION 3. *Philippine Social Welfare and Benefit System*– There shall be a national social welfare and benefit system, consolidating all social rights, privileges, benefits, and obligations enjoyed in the Philippines.

The national social welfare and benefit system shall provide all citizens with a single official identification, which shall be used for the following purposes:

- a) Transacting with any government agency;
- b) For voting identification purposes;
- c) Application, services and benefits offered by the existing GSIS, SSS, PhilHealth, and PAGIBIG;
- d) Tendering income tax payments to the BIR;

- e) Admission in any government hospital, health centers or similar institutions;
- f) Identification for admission in all schools, colleges, learning institutions and or universities, whether public or private;
- g) Proof of identity, status, age, address, and eligibility to social benefits;
- h) Enjoyment of any social privilege, such as but not limited to the practice of profession, carrying and use of firearms, and driving in the public;
- i) Enjoyment of any other social benefits and welfare given by the government;
- j) Other similar transactions or uses which may be defined in the implementing rules and regulations.

In addition, the social welfare and benefit system shall likewise store the biometrics data of all registered applicants.

SECTION 4. *Registration* – All Filipinos, whether residing in the Philippines or abroad, shall register with the Philippine Social Welfare Benefit System. In case of a minor or incompetent person, the parent or legal guardian of a minor or an incompetent person shall file the application on his or her behalf. In case of newly born persons, the medical institution or clinic, if applicable, shall cause the registration of the newly born individual.

The PSA shall determine, validate and administer the data and materials required for the issuance of the Card. The DFA, in coordination with the PSA, shall handle registration of Filipinos residing abroad. The DFA and PSA shall create a special office unit which shall be responsible for accepting and processing applications, and releasing the Cards to the applicants.

Upon registration, the applicant shall be issued a permanent, non-transferrable Social Welfare and Benefit Card.

SECTION 5. *Social Welfare and Benefit Card* – The Social Welfare and Benefit Card shall, on its face, show the photograph, name, date of birth, gender, card number, nationality, residence address, dependents, signature of the holder, and any social benefits that may be enjoyed by the holder.

The Card shall be renewed every year, except in cases of minors, which shall be renewed every five (5) years. In addition, the Card shall be renewed under the following circumstances:

- a) When there is a change in status or citizenship;
- b) When there is a change in name, by virtue of a court order or otherwise such as but not limited to marriage and adoption;

- c) When there is a change in residential address of the holder;
- d) When there is a change in any benefits or privileges enjoyed by the holder;
- e) When there is a change in the facial features of the holder due to accident, medical intervention, or otherwise;
- f) Lost or destroyed card;
- g) Other similar circumstances.

The Card shall be honoured as sufficient proof of identity, status, age, and eligibility to certain social benefits such as but not limited to senior citizen discount, PWD discounts, and medical and medicinal discounts.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Agency* – The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) shall be the primary agency mandated to implement the provisions of this Act. The PSA shall coordinate with the appropriate existing government agencies such as but not limited to the COMELEC, NBI, SSS, PhilHealth, GSIS, LTO, PRC, BIR, PPS, DFA, local civil registry, and all local government units in the proper implementation of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Protection against Unlawful Disclosure of Information or Records* – Any person or entity who obtained any information or record related with the national social welfare and benefit system shall not use, publish, disseminate or share in any manner such record or information, except in the following cases:

- a) When the holder of the Card expressly authorizes in writing such use, disclosure or dissemination;
- b) In the event of accident, disaster or fortuitous events, when information on the medical history of the holder are needed by medical institutions and health service workers;
- c) In extreme cases of emergency, when public health, order or safety so requires; and
- d) Upon order of competent court.

Any information obtained as a result of unlawful disclosure under this Act shall be inadmissible as evidence in any judicial proceedings.

SECTION 8. *Penal Provisions* – Any person who willingly and knowingly uses false information in applying for the issuance of a National Social Welfare and Benefit Card or obtains one through fraud shall be punished with a fine of not less than fifty thousand pesos [P50,000.00] but not more than five million pesos [P5,000,000.00] and an imprisonment of not less than six (6) months and one day but not more than two (2) years, at the discretion of the court.

Any person, whether public official or employee or otherwise, who connives with the offender in committing any fraud or the improper use of the national social welfare and benefit card, causes the issuance of an unauthorized Card, or approves the application for the same despite knowledge of the existence of fraud or false information, shall suffer the same penalty as provided above.

The failure of any public official or employee, through fraud or gross negligence, to create, maintain, update, protect and safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of information contained in the system shall suffer the same penalty in its maximum, and shall suffer an additional penalty of perpetual disqualification from government service.

The penalties imposed under this Section shall be in addition to those imposed on acts punishable by existing penal and other laws, including acts of omission.

SECTION 9. *Appropriations* – The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* – Within ninety [90] days from the effectivity of this Act, the PSA, in consultation with the DICT, DFA, NEDA, DILG, DSWD, DOST, COMELEC, GSIS, SSS, PhilHealth, Bureau of Immigration, NBI, PNP, PRC, DOJ, local civil registry and local government unit, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations and exchange existing technologies and best practices on the issuance of identification cards to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 11. *Separability Clause* – If, for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, parts or provisions of this Act which are not affected shall be in full force and effect.

SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, implementing rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen [15] days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two [2] newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved.