

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **5868**



Introduced by Representative Estrellita B. Suansing

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is in the twilight of one's years that one worries if he or she can exit this life with a semblance of dignity. In a society where the marginalized exist in such large numbers, its senior citizens often have to suffer the tragic journey of enduring inadequate medical treatment in their latter years.

RA No. 7432, as amended, entitled "*An Act to Maximize the Contribution of Senior Citizens to Nation Building, Grant Benefits and Special Privileges and for other Purposes*," provides that all senior citizens shall be covered by Section 5 of said law and even RA 7875, as amended, otherwise known as the "*National Health Insurance Act of 1995*," provides that members of PhilHealth are entitled to outpatient care services, specifically, Section 10 of RA 7875, as amended.

However, the above stated statutes are pockmarked with loopholes, thus the need to close such, by adding more specific services. This proposed measure shall include other ambulatory forms of assistance, enumerated types of dental accommodations and even optometric services as part of the Outpatient Benefit Package for senior citizens. This bill, aside from providing full services, makes it crystal clear to the hospitals and physicians that they are obliged to provide such services, as some of them have been adopting a Fabian policy or turning a blind eye to the needs of elderly patients.

Shortage of available funds could put senior citizens in a dire situation of having to make difficult choices in order to prolong their lives. We don't want *Lolo* or *Lola* to choose between buying food or maintenance medicine; acquiring diapers or antibiotics; and having a place to stay or undergo dialysis. In the end, they are usually reduced to penury. Hence, this bill.

For the sake of our senior citizens who wish to have minimum stress in the autumn of their lives, the approval of this bill is strongly recommended.


ESTRELLITA B. SUANSING

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AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE PHILHEALTH OUTPATIENT CARE BENEFIT PACKAGE
FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy.** It is hereby declared the policy of the
2 State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development
3 which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services
4 available to all the people at affordable cost and to provide free medical care to
5 indigents. Towards this end, the State shall provide a comprehensive dental care
6 and optometric services for senior citizens through the Philippine Health Insurance
7 Corporation.

8 **SECTION 2. Outpatient Benefit Package for Senior Citizens.** The
9 Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) shall include in its outpatient
10 care benefit package for senior citizens the following services:

11 a. Health Care Services

- 12 i. Services of health care professionals;
13 ii. Diagnostic, laboratory, and other medical examination services;
14 iii. Personal preventive services;
15 iv. Prescription drugs and biologicals subject to the limitations
16 described in Section 37 of Republic Act No. 7875; and
17 v. Other ambulatory services

18 b. Dental Care Services such as, but not limited to:

- 19 i. Routine care and evaluation (i.e. oral prophylaxis, gum
20 treatment, temporary and permanent filling, tooth extraction);
21 ii. Diagnostic, laboratory and other dental services (i.e. dental x-
22 ray);
23 iii. Prosthodontics (dentures); and
24 iv. Oral surgery

25 c. Optometric Services

1 **SECTION 3. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** The Department of
2 Health, together with the PhilHealth, shall promulgate the necessary implementing
3 rules and regulations within sixty (60) days upon the approval of this Act.

4 **SECTION 4. Separability Clause.** If any portion or provision of this Act or
5 application thereof shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the validity of the
6 other parts or provisions shall continue to be in full force and effect.

7 **SECTION 5. Repealing Clause.** All laws, decrees, executive issuances,
8 rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
9 hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

10 **SECTION 6. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
11 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,