

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **7489**



Introduced by

Senior Citizens Party-List Representative RODOLFO “OMPONG” M. ORDANES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is home to more than twelve million senior citizens and around 1.4 million persons with disabilities (PWDs). These segments of the population have unique needs and challenges, particularly when it comes to travel. One of the ways to address these challenges is to provide travel tax and terminal fee exemptions for senior citizens and PWDs. Under current laws, senior citizens and PWDs are entitled to a 20% discount on the travel tax and terminal fee. However, this discount may not be enough to make travel affordable and accessible for these vulnerable sectors of society.

Statistics show that as of 2019, the number of international departures from the Philippines was approximately 10.2 million, while the number of domestic departures was around 30.4 million. However, senior citizens and PWDs are constrained from travelling as they have to consider the significant financial burden of travel tax and terminal fees being charged by airports and ports, in addition to the significant financial obligations they already have due to their situation.

Providing travel tax and terminal fee exemptions for senior citizens and PWDs will not only make travel more accessible and affordable for them, but it will also promote their rights and welfare. By removing financial barriers, these exemptions will allow them to enjoy the benefits of travel, such as experiencing different cultures, reconnecting with loved ones, and accessing medical treatment.

Moreover, studies have shown that travel has positive effects on the physical and mental well-being of senior citizens and PWDs. According to a report by the Global Coalition on Aging, travel can help prevent cognitive decline, reduce stress, and promote social engagement among seniors. For PWDs, travel can provide opportunities for social interaction, learning, and personal growth.

The proposed measure seeks to provide full travel tax and terminal fee exemptions for both domestic and international travel to senior citizens and PWDs to enable them to travel freely and without financial burden, while also promoting their well-being and dignity.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rodolfo Ompong M. Ordanes', written over the printed name.

RODOLFO "OMPONG" M. ORDANES

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AN ACT

EXEMPTING SENIOR CITIZENS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FROM PAYMENT OF TRAVEL TAX AND TERMINAL FEES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT (RA) NO. 9994, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT GRANTING ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SENIOR CITIZENS, FURTHER AMENDING RA NO. 7432, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT TO MAXIMIZE THE CONTRIBUTION OF SENIOR CITIZENS TO NATIONAL BUILDING, GRANT BENEFITS, AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities Travel Tax and Terminal Fees Exemption Act”.

SEC 2. Section 5 of Republic Act No. 9994, as amended, to read as follows:

"Sec. 5. Government Assistance. – the Government shall provide the following assistance to those caring for and living with senior citizens:

(h) Additional Government Assistance

(4) Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities shall be automatically exempted from Travel Tax and Terminal Fees imposed in all Philippine

Airports and Ports, provided that, that they present any identification document which will identify them as such.”

SEC 3. *Supplementary Application.* – For purposes of this Act, the Revised Penal Code, and other applicable laws, shall have supplementary application.

SEC. 4. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, such declaration shall not invalidate other parts thereof which shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC 5. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,