

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. **10893**

Introduced by Rep. Gus S. Tambunting

AN ACT ABOLISHING THE USE OF PURCHASE SLIP BOOKLET FOR AVAILING SPECIAL PRIVILEGES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDs), CREATING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE E-SENIOR CITIZENS AND PWDs DATABASE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 9993 or the “Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010” was enacted to grant benefits and special privileges to the elderly in response to the State’s constitutional mandate to provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life.¹ In achieving said objectives, the State is mandated to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health security, which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health, and other social services available to all people at an affordable cost. Additionally, the State is mandated to give priority to the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women and children.²

Availing privileges granted under the laws can sometimes pose unnecessary challenges and burdens to our qualified elderly. The so-called Senior Citizens’ “Purchase Booklet” is one of the documents required by a retailer every time a purchase of basic necessities and prime commodities is made.³ It is also used by the retailer to record the kind of over-the-counter medicine purchased by the elderly, how many, when and where it was purchased, and monitor the last purchase made for a certain medicine.⁴

A senior citizen must present to the retailer or service provider his/her Purchase Booklet that bears his/her name to avail a special discount and such other privileges or entitlements provided under the law. The booklet serves as a proof of eligibility and identity of qualified senior citizens. However, despite its apparent usefulness, the system has become less and less convenient over time, considering that our seniors may sometimes tend to forget to bring their booklets. As such, the retailer may temporarily deny the privilege. This scenario denies the grant of privileges to our elderly,

¹ See Article II, Section 10 of the 1987 Constitution.

² See Article II, Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution.

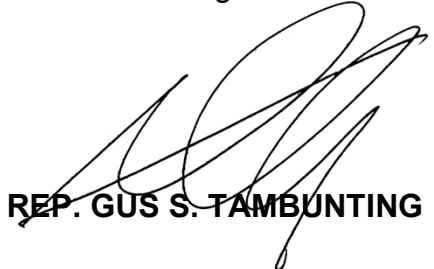
³ Section 5 of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Administrative Order No. 03, series of 2005.

⁴ See Department of Health Administrative Order No. 2010-0032 dated 09 October 2010.

especially when dealing with situations that require immediate attention such as the purchase emergency and maintenance medication.

The proposal further aims to include the Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), considering that they often face barriers that can make it more challenging for them to access services and special privileges. Thus, the law will ensure that they have better access to the benefits and services provided for by applicable laws.

The system of Purchase Slip Booklet is now obsolete. As technology has advanced, many transactions can now be done electronically. Integrating technology to the advantage of our elderly is the goal of this proposal. The policy of the state may be better achieved when we integrate technology in the system for monitoring, storing, and reporting data in relation to the purchase of medicine and other essential goods covered by discounts and tax exemptions under the law.



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DATABASE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This law shall be known as “*The E-Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) Database Act*”.

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – As provided in the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, it is the declared policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living and an improved quality of life. In the Declaration of Principles and State Policies in Article II, Sections 10 and 11, it is further declared that the State shall provide social justice in all phases of national development and that the State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights.

Article XIII, Section 11 of the Constitution provides 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. Article XV, Section 4 of the Constitution Further declares that it is the duty of the family to take care of its elderly members while the State may design programs of social security for them.

Further, the State recognizes the value and potential of the role of digitalization in enhancing the healthcare services in the Philippines. The State seeks to leverage digital platforms to improve the delivery of healthcare services in the Philippines and to ensure the timely, efficient, and effective grant of special privileges among the elderly and persons with disabilities (PWDs).

Section 3. *Abolition of the Purchase Slip Booklet System.* – The use of purchase slip booklets for senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PWDs) to claim discounts and benefits under the law is hereby discontinued. For the purposes of this Act, the term “Purchase Slip Booklets” refers to physical booklets, pamphlets, stubs, or any document required as a condition to avail the special discounts granted to senior citizens and PWDs. *Provided*, that the term shall not include valid identification documents such as, but not limited to, identification cards as competent proof of identity and eligibility.

Section 4. *The creation of the “E-Senior Citizens and PWDs Databases.”* – There shall be digital platforms called the “E-Senior Citizens Database” and the “E-PWDs Database”, which will serve as the centralized digital databases for senior citizens and PWDs in the Philippines. For this purpose, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and the Department of Information and Communications Technology shall develop and implement digital platforms replacing the Purchase Booklet.

Section 5. *Data Privacy.* The data collected and stored in the E-Senior Citizens and PWDs Databases shall be limited to information necessary for the provision of benefits and services, including, but not limited to personal identification details, contact information, and the kinds of goods and services availed of for monitoring purposes. The collection, processing, storage of data, and data sharing shall be done in compliance with the Republic Act No. 10173 or the “Data Privacy Act of 2012”, its Implementing Rules and Regulation, and related issuances.

Section 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,