

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
20TH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



House Bill No. **1404**

Introduced by: **REP. JOEL R. CHUA**

Explanatory Note

This Bill seeks to amend Republic Act No. 7432 or the Expanded Senior Citizen Act of 2010 by further expanding its coverage and providing for additional benefits. This Representation proposed a similar measure during the 19th Congress but, due to lack of material time, the Bill remained in the House Committee level.

This Bill is the same as what was submitted during the 19th Congress. As such, my explanation stated in the original is herein reiterated:

More than a decade ago, the Congress triumphantly passed Republic Act No. 9994 or the Expanded Senior Citizen Act of 2010 which granted social pension to indigent senior citizens. In 2022, the Congress increased the amount received through the social pension from Five Hundred Pesos to One Thousand Pesos. However, this benefit remains to be limited to *indigent* senior citizens.

This restriction burdens many of our senior citizens who, despite not having any source of income, are not considered indigents because of other financial assistance they may receive¹. In reality, this financial assistance is limited and inconsistent.

The rising prices of basic commodities and services is a burden to every Filipino family. In January 2023, the Philippine inflation rate was recorded at 8.7%, the highest since 2008². The Constitution mandates 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 which provide adequate social services, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for *all*. Senior citizens comprise 8.5 percent or around 9.2 million of our total population. Amidst changing times, they become exposed to more and more vulnerabilities.

¹ Section 2(h) of Republic Act No. 9994, as amended, defines Indigent senior citizen as “any elderly who is frail, sickly or with disability, and without pension or permanent source of income, compensation or financial assistance from his/her relatives to support his/her basic needs, as determined by the Department of Social Welfare and development (DSWD) in consultation with the National Coordinating and Monitoring Board.”

² Rita, J. (2023, February 7). Inflation climbs to 8.7% in Jan. 2023, highest since Nov. 2008 —PSA . Retrieved from GMA News Online: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/economy/859911/inflation-climbs-to-8-7-in-jan-2023-highest-since-nov-2008-psa/story/>

In crafting this Bill, this representation considered the challenges and realities of our modern times. Thus, this Bill offers measures of inclusivity to ensure that our senior citizens not only adapt but thrive. First, it expands the grant of social pension to include all senior citizens. Second, it embraces the effective local government practice of granting free movie access to the elderly. Lastly, it grants discount to the purchase of mobile phones by senior citizens.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



REP. JOEL R. CHUA
3rd District of Manila

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AN ACT
EXPANDING THE COVERAGE OF THE SENIOR CITIZEN SOCIAL PENSION
TO INCLUDE NON-INDIGENTS, AND GRANTING ADDITIONAL
PRIVILEGES, THEREBY FURTHER AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432, AS
AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

Section 1. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 7432, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“Section 4. Privileges for the Senior Citizens. -

The senior citizens shall be entitled to the following:

(a) the grant of twenty percent (20%) discount and exemption from the value-added tax (VAT), if applicable, on the sale of the following goods and services from all establishments, for the exclusive use and enjoyment or availment of the senior citizen

x x x

(10) on the purchase of cellular/mobile phones provided, that it shall be limited to a single purchase per store;

x x x

(l) death benefit assistance of a minimum of **Five thousand pesos (Php5,000.00)** shall be given to the nearest surviving relative of a deceased senior citizen which amount shall be subject to adjustments due to inflation in accordance with the guidelines to be issued by the DSWD.

(m) privilege of free movie-access or pass to any film of their choice in any house or theater or cinema throughout the Philippines, which may be availed of only on Mondays or Thursdays.

x x x''

Section 2. Section 5 of the same Act, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"Section 5. *Government Assistance.* – The government shall provide the following:

x x x

(h) Additional Government Assistance
(1) Mandatory Social Pension

ALL [Indigent] senior citizens shall be entitled to a monthly stipend amounting to not less than One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) to augment the daily subsistence and other medical needs of senior citizens.

The DSWD shall, subject to the approval of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), in consultation with other stakeholders, review and, when necessary, adjust the amount of the social pension every two (2) years after the effectivity of this Act, taking into account the present consumer price index as published by the PSA and relevant economic indicators, as reported and published by pertinent government agencies and authorities.

(2) Mandatory PhilHealth Coverage

ALL [indigent] SENIOR CITIZENS shall be covered by the national health insurance program of PhilHealth. The LGUs where the indigent senior citizens resides shall allocate the necessary funds to ensure the enrollment of their indigent senior citizens in accordance with the pertinent laws and regulations.

(3) x x x "

Section 3. Amendment of IRR. – Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the NCSC shall, in consultation with the DSWD, DBM, local government units, and other concerned government agencies, as well as nongovernment organizations and people's organizations duly accredited by the DSWD, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

Section 4. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 5. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders or rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 6. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,