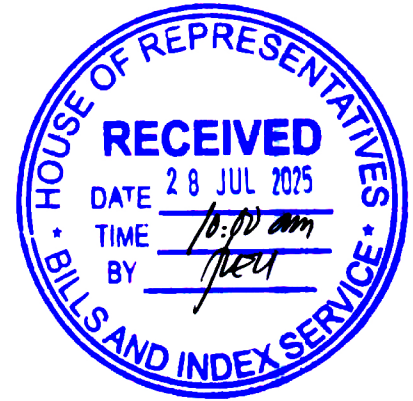


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO: 2372



Introduced by **Representative RAYMOND ADRIAN SALCEDA**

AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8972, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO.
11861, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE SOLO PARENTS' WELFARE ACT, TO
SIMPLIFY THE REGISTRATION PROCESS, ENHANCE BENEFITS AVAILMENT,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 8972, as amended by Republic Act No. 11861 or the “Expanded Solo Parents’ Welfare Act,” is a landmark social protection measure that recognizes the unique challenges faced by solo parents in raising their children single-handedly. It mandates a comprehensive set of services, privileges, and benefits, including financial assistance, discounts, flexible work schedules, and access to social welfare programs.

However, despite the progressive intent of the law, many solo parents continue to struggle in accessing the benefits due to bureaucratic hurdles and inconsistent implementation across local government units (LGUs). Among the most common issues raised by solo parents are:

- Cumbersome documentary requirements that vary from one LGU to another, often requiring sworn affidavits, barangay certifications, and employer endorsements that are costly and time-consuming to secure;
- Long waiting periods for the issuance or renewal of the Solo Parent ID (SPID), which is essential for availing of benefits;
- Limited awareness and lack of inter-agency coordination, leading to frontline agencies and establishments not recognizing the SPID or denying the mandated privileges;
- Inconsistent enforcement of benefits such as discounts, leave privileges, and access to programs such as PhilHealth coverage, scholarship grants, and livelihood support.

These barriers effectively exclude many eligible solo parents, often among the most economically vulnerable, from the protections they are entitled to under the law. This defeats the very purpose of the legislation.

This bill seeks to amend and strengthen the Solo Parents' Welfare Act by simplifying the registration and validation process, harmonizing documentary requirements nationwide, introducing digital registration options, and improving mechanisms for benefit availment and enforcement. It also seeks to enhance coordination among concerned government agencies and ensure stricter compliance by both public and private institutions.

The primary beneficiaries of this measure are the more than 14 million solo parents in the Philippines, many of whom are women, underpaid workers, or members of the informal sector. They bear the dual burden of being breadwinners and primary caregivers, often with little support.

By reducing red tape and strengthening implementation, this bill affirms the State's commitment to social justice and inclusive welfare. It ensures that the spirit of the law, which is to support, empower, and uplift solo parents and their children, is not lost in procedural complexity or local discretion.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


RAYMOND ADRIAN SALCEDA

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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 "Solo Parents' Welfare Act Amendment of 2025."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State shall promote the welfare of solo parents and their children by ensuring accessible, efficient, and equitable access to benefits and services, as provided under Republic Act No. 8972, as amended by Republic Act No. 11861. It shall simplify the registration process through digitization, reduce documentary requirements, and establish automatic approval mechanisms, in accordance with Republic Act No. 11032, otherwise known as the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act. The State shall leverage local government unit resources, foster public-private partnerships, ensure compliance with Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act, and implement anti-corruption safeguards to empower solo parents and enhance their economic and social well-being.

SEC. 3. *Amendments to Section 3 (Definition of Terms).* – Section 3 of Republic Act No. 8972, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"[SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – Whenever used in this Act, the following terms shall mean as follows:

(a) "Solo parent" - any individual who falls under any of the following categories:

- (1) A woman who gives birth as a result of rape and other crimes against chastity even without a final conviction of the offender: Provided, That the mother keeps and raises the child;
- (2) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to death of spouse;
- (3) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood while the spouse is detained or is serving sentence for a criminal conviction for at least one (1) year;
- (4) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to physical and/or mental incapacity of spouse as certified by a public medical practitioner;
- (5) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to legal separation or de facto separation from spouse for at least one (1) year, as long as he/she is entrusted with the custody of the children;
- (6) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to declaration of nullity or annulment of marriage as decreed by a court or by a church as long as he/she is entrusted with the custody of the children;
- (7) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to abandonment of spouse for at least one (1) year;
- (8) Unmarried mother or father who has preferred to keep and rear her/his child/children instead of having others care for them or give them up to a welfare institution;
- (9) Any other person who solely provides parental care and support to a child or children;
- (10) Any family member who assumes the responsibility of head of family as a result of the death, abandonment, disappearance or prolonged absence of the parents or solo parent. A change in the status or circumstance of the parent claiming benefits under this Act, such that he/she is no longer left alone with the responsibility of parenthood, shall terminate his/her eligibility for these benefits.

(b) "Children" - refer to those living with the parent, below eighteen (18) years of age, or eighteen (18) years and above but are incapable of self-support and/or with physical/mental disability or incapacity.

(c) "Parental care and support" - refers to the role of the parent in taking care of the physical, emotional, psychological, social, spiritual and economic needs of the child/children.

(d) "Parental leave" - shall mean leave benefits granted to a solo parent to enable him/her to perform parental duties and responsibilities where physical presence is required.

(e) "Flexible work schedule" - is the right granted to a solo parent employee to vary his/her arrival and departure time without changing the total number of work hours in a workday.]"

SEC. 3. DEFINITION OF TERMS. – WHENEVER USED IN THIS ACT, THE FOLLOWING TERMS SHALL MEAN AS FOLLOWS:

(a) SOLO PARENT REFERS TO ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO FALLS UNDER THE CATEGORIES SPECIFIED IN SECTION 4 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8972, AS AMENDED, AND IS REGISTERED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OR A LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE;

(b) SOLO PARENT IDENTIFICATION CARD (SPIC) REFERS TO THE OFFICIAL IDENTIFICATION ISSUED TO REGISTERED SOLO PARENTS, VALID FOR ONE YEAR AND RENEWABLE, USED TO AVAIL OF BENEFITS UNDER THIS ACT;

(c) DIGITAL REGISTRATION SYSTEM REFERS TO THE ONLINE PLATFORM DEVELOPED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, FOR STREAMLINED SOLO PARENT REGISTRATION AND BENEFITS AVAILMENT;

(d) AUTOMATIC APPROVAL MECHANISM REFERS TO THE PROCESS BY WHICH SOLO PARENT REGISTRATION IS APPROVED BASED ON VERIFIED DATA FROM EXISTING GOVERNMENT DATABASES, WITHOUT REQUIRING ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTARY SUBMISSIONS; AND

(e) LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE (LSWDO) REFERS TO THE OFFICE UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS, INCLUDING SOLO PARENT REGISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

SEC. 4. *Amendments to Section 5 (Solo Parent Identification Card).* – Section 5 of Republic Act No. 8972, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"[SEC. 5. Solo Parent Identification Card. – The DSWD shall issue a Solo Parent Identification Card to every solo parent who shall apply for such with the DSWD, subject to the submission of documents as may be prescribed in the implementing rules and regulations of this Act. The validity of the card shall be one (1) year from issuance and may be renewed annually subject to submission of requirements as may be prescribed in the implementing rules and regulations.]"

SEC. 5. SOLO PARENT IDENTIFICATION CARD. – THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT, IN COORDINATION WITH LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICES, SHALL IMPLEMENT A

SIMPLIFIED REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR SOLO PARENTS. THE PROCESS SHALL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

(a) A DIGITAL REGISTRATION SYSTEM SHALL BE ESTABLISHED, ACCESSIBLE VIA A WEB PORTAL OR MOBILE APPLICATION, ALLOWING SOLO PARENTS TO APPLY FOR A SOLO PARENT IDENTIFICATION CARD ONLINE;

(b) DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS SHALL BE REDUCED TO A VALID GOVERNMENT-ISSUED IDENTIFICATION AND A SELF-DECLARATION OF SOLO PARENT STATUS, SUBJECT TO VERIFICATION;

(c) AN AUTOMATIC APPROVAL MECHANISM SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED, UTILIZING DATA FROM THE PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT DATABASES TO VERIFY ELIGIBILITY WITHOUT ADDITIONAL SUBMISSIONS; AND

(d) REGISTRATION SHALL BE COMPLETED WITHIN THREE (3) WORKING DAYS FROM APPLICATION, WITH THE SOLO PARENT IDENTIFICATION CARD ISSUED DIGITALLY OR PHYSICALLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11032.

THE RENEWAL AND UPDATING OF THE SOLO PARENT IDENTIFICATION CARD SHALL BE STREAMLINED. THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES SHALL BE ADOPTED:

(a) ANNUAL RENEWAL SHALL BE CONDUCTED THROUGH THE DIGITAL REGISTRATION SYSTEM, REQUIRING ONLY A CONFIRMATION OF CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY;

(b) CHANGES IN STATUS, SUCH AS ADDITIONAL DEPENDENTS OR UPDATED CONTACT DETAILS, SHALL BE UPDATED ONLINE WITHIN TWO (2) WORKING DAYS; AND

(c) LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICES SHALL PROVIDE IN-PERSON ASSISTANCE FOR SOLO PARENTS WITHOUT DIGITAL ACCESS, ENSURING INCLUSIVITY.

SEC. 5. *Amendments to Section 6 (Comprehensive Package of Social Development and Welfare Services)*. – Section 6 of Republic Act No. 8972, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"[SEC. 6. Comprehensive Package of Social Development and Welfare Services. – A comprehensive package of social development and welfare services for solo parents and their families will be developed by the DSWD, DOH, DepEd, CHED, TESDA, DOLE, DTI, NHA, and other related government agencies and non-government organizations, which shall include:

(a) Livelihood development services which include training on livelihood skills, basic business management, value orientation and the provision of seed capital or job placement.

(b) Counseling services which include stress management, legal services, parent effectiveness services, and counseling services for individuals with special needs, including victims of abuse and violence.

(c) Parent effectiveness services which include the provision and expansion of knowledge and skills of the solo parent on early childhood development, behavior management, health care, rights and privileges of solo parents and their children, marriage and family life, and responsible parenthood.

(d) Critical incident stress debriefing which includes preventive stress management strategy designed to assist solo parents in coping with crisis situations and cases of abuse with the end in view of promoting the family's psychosocial well-being.

(e) Special projects for vulnerable or differently-abled solo parents and their children which include temporary shelter, legal assistance and other forms of support for solo parents who are victims of abuse, persons with disability, or those with special needs.]"

SEC. 6. COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE SERVICES. – A COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE SERVICES FOR SOLO PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES SHALL BE DEVELOPED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION, TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY, AND OTHER RELATED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS. THESE SERVICES SHALL BE MADE READILY AVAILABLE THROUGH THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

(a) A CENTRALIZED BENEFITS PORTAL SHALL BE INTEGRATED INTO THE DIGITAL REGISTRATION SYSTEM, ALLOWING SOLO PARENTS TO APPLY FOR EDUCATIONAL, MEDICAL, AND LIVELIHOOD BENEFITS ONLINE;

(b) EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS, INCLUDING SCHOLARSHIPS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR CHILDREN OF SOLO PARENTS, SHALL BE FUNDED THROUGH THE SPECIAL EDUCATION FUND AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

(c) MEDICAL BENEFITS, INCLUDING FREE CONSULTATIONS AND PRIORITY ACCESS TO PHILHEALTH SERVICES, SHALL BE COORDINATED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11223;

(d) LIVELIHOOD TRAINING AND MICROFINANCE SUPPORT SHALL BE PROVIDED THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, PRIORITIZING SOLO PARENTS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS; AND

(e) FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS, SUCH AS TELECOMMUTING AND PART-TIME OPTIONS, SHALL BE PROMOTED IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS SHALL ENHANCE BENEFITS DELIVERY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. THE FOLLOWING INITIATIVES SHALL BE UNDERTAKEN:

(a) LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICES SHALL ESTABLISH SOLO PARENT HELP DESKS TO ASSIST WITH REGISTRATION AND BENEFITS APPLICATIONS;

(b) CHILDCARE SUPPORT PROGRAMS, INCLUDING SUBSIDIZED DAYCARE SERVICES, SHALL BE FUNDED THROUGH THE SPECIAL EDUCATION FUND AND IMPLEMENTED IN ALL BARANGAYS;

(c) COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORT GROUPS FOR SOLO PARENTS SHALL BE ORGANIZED TO PROVIDE PSYCHOSOCIAL AND PEER SUPPORT; AND

(d) ANNUAL SOLO PARENT SUMMITS SHALL BE CONDUCTED TO GATHER FEEDBACK AND IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY, FACILITATED BY LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICES.

SEC. 6. *Mandates for Implementation.* – To ensure the effective implementation of this Act, the following mandates shall be enforced:

(a) **National Government Agencies.** National agencies shall lead policy implementation and coordination. The following responsibilities shall be assigned:

- (1) The Department of Social Welfare and Development shall develop and maintain the Digital Registration System, ensuring compliance with Republic Act No. 10173;
- (2) The Department of Information and Communications Technology shall provide technical support for the Digital Registration System and ensure cybersecurity;
- (3) The Department of Education shall prioritize educational benefits for children of solo parents, funded through existing programs and the Special Education Fund;
- (4) The Department of Health shall integrate solo parent medical benefits into the Universal Health Care Program; and
- (5) The Department of the Interior and Local Government shall monitor LGU compliance and incorporate solo parent welfare metrics into the Seal of Good Local Governance.

(b) **Local Government Units.** LGUs shall operationalize registration and benefits delivery. The following mandates shall be enforced:

- (1) Local Social Welfare and Development Offices shall be fully functional, with trained staff to manage solo parent registration and support services;
- (2) A Solo Parent Welfare Plan, aligned with the Local Development Plan and approved by the local sanggunian, shall be submitted;
- (3) A registry of solo parents shall be maintained, synchronized with the Digital Registration System, in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development;
- (4) A portion of the Special Education Fund, as determined by the local school board in accordance with Republic Act No. 5447, shall be allocated for solo parent benefits, including educational and childcare programs; and
- (5) LGUs achieving high compliance with solo parent welfare programs, as evaluated through the Seal of Good Local Governance, shall be prioritized for national grants and capacity-building programs.

(c) **Private Sector and Civil Society.** Non-government stakeholders shall support implementation. The following roles shall be encouraged:

- (1) Private sector partners shall provide scholarships, training, and employment opportunities for solo parents through public-private partnerships;
- (2) Civil society organizations shall conduct advocacy and monitoring to ensure effective benefits delivery; and
- (3) Media organizations shall promote awareness of solo parent rights and benefits through public information campaigns.

SEC. 7. *Inter-Agency Convergence Program.* – The Solo Parent Welfare Convergence Program, chaired by the Department of Social Welfare and Development, is hereby established, with the Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Information and Communications Technology, Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Labor and Employment, and Department of Budget and Management as members. The Program shall undertake the following:

- (a) An annual Solo Parent Welfare Implementation Plan targeting high-priority areas with significant solo parent populations shall be published;
- (b) Special Education Fund allocations and national agency budgets for solo parent

programs shall be coordinated under a unified framework;

(c) The Digital Registration System's performance shall be evaluated annually to ensure efficiency and accessibility; and

(d) LGU performance shall be monitored using the Department of the Interior and Local Government's Seal of Good Local Governance metrics, with specific indicators for solo parent welfare.

SEC. 8. *Anti-Corruption Safeguards.* – Disbursements from the Special Education Fund and national agency budgets for solo parent programs shall comply with Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and be subject to audit by the Commission on Audit. Local government units, schools, and agencies shall publish fund utilization reports on their official websites to ensure transparency and accountability.

SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Information and Communications Technology, Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Trade and Industry, and Department of Labor and Employment, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations to ensure effective execution of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act, including the development of the Digital Registration System, shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Department of Information and Communications Technology. Subsequent funding shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act, supplemented by Special Education Fund allocations from local government units.

SEC. 11. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

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

SEC. 13. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,