

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2376



Introduced by **Representative RAYMOND ADRIAN SALCEDA**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PENSION FOR ALL SENIOR CITIZENS,
PROVIDING FOR ITS AUTOMATIC ADJUSTMENT BASED ON INFLATION,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution affirms that the State shall "prioritize the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children" and uphold their right to social protection. In line with this, Republic Act No. 9994 or the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010" was enacted to grant additional privileges to elderly Filipinos, including social pension for indigent senior citizens.

However, the current system is means-tested, with only select indigent senior citizens eligible to receive the ₱1,000 monthly social pension under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). This exclusionary approach has led to significant gaps in coverage, inconsistent implementation, and delays in the distribution of benefits. Many qualified senior citizens are unable to access the pension due to outdated lists, unclear guidelines, lack of local validation, and insufficient funding.

This bill proposes to establish a universal social pension for all Filipino senior citizens to ensure that every elderly Filipino receives financial support in their later years. It also mandates automatic inflation-based adjustments to ensure the pension retains its real value over time.

This measure is important for several reasons:

- According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, a significant number of senior citizens live below the poverty line or rely entirely on informal or unstable sources of income. Many are no longer able to work due to health conditions but are still excluded from government support.
- Means-testing often fails to capture all those in need and creates bureaucratic barriers. A universal approach ensures equity, transparency, and administrative efficiency.

- Many households are burdened with the financial cost of caring for aging parents or grandparents. A modest but consistent pension can ease this burden and improve the overall welfare of multigenerational families.

The primary beneficiaries of this bill are the estimated 12 million senior citizens in the Philippines, including those who are currently not classified as indigent but still face financial difficulties due to high healthcare costs, lack of retirement income, or family dependency.

Examples abound of the program's inadequacy under the current system:

- Senior citizens in rural barangays report not being included in the DSWD pensioner lists, despite having no source of income.
- Some LGUs lack capacity to regularly validate or update the indigent lists, causing many deserving seniors to be excluded for years.
- During public consultations, elderly constituents often raise that they have submitted documents multiple times, only to be denied due to narrow definitions of “indigent” or incomplete paperwork.

By making the social pension universal and inflation-adjusted, this bill provides a dignified, rights-based approach to aging. It reflects the nation's respect for its elders and ensures they are not left behind in economic planning and social protection.

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



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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 “Universal Social Pension for Senior Citizens Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to recognize the contributions of senior citizens to nation-building and to promote their dignity by ensuring their right to social protection. The State shall ensure that all Filipino senior citizens receive a basic level of income support through a universal, non-means-tested monthly pension.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

(a) *Senior Citizen* refers to any Filipino citizen who is sixty (60) years of age or older, whether residing in the Philippines or abroad at the time of application;

(b) *Social Pension* refers to a regular monthly stipend provided by the government to qualified beneficiaries under this Act;

(c) *Inflation* refers to the annual change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as officially published by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

SEC. 4. *Universal Social Pension.* – All Filipino senior citizens shall be entitled to a monthly social pension in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos (₱2,000.00), regardless of income, civil status, health condition, or residency.

SEC. 5. *Automatic Annual Indexation.* – The monthly social pension provided under this Act shall be adjusted annually to account for inflation, based on the previous year’s CPI as

determined by the Philippine Statistics Authority. The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall issue the corresponding adjusted monthly pension rate every January, effective for the same fiscal year.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Agency.* – The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) shall be the primary implementing agency of this Act. It shall be responsible for:

- (a) Establishing a simplified enrollment and disbursement system;
- (b) Maintaining a central database of senior citizens, integrated with the National ID system and the Listahanan;
- (c) Coordinating with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Philippine Postal Corporation, Land Bank of the Philippines, and accredited financial service providers for payout mechanisms; and
- (d) Submitting an annual accomplishment and audit report to Congress.

SEC. 7. *Funding.* – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be charged against:

- (a) The annual General Appropriations Act (GAA), under a dedicated budget item of the DSWD;
- (b) Unprogrammed appropriations, if necessary; and
- (c) Other legally available sources, including sin tax proceeds or dividends from government-owned and controlled corporations, subject to existing laws.

SEC. 8. *Prohibition Against Double Counting.* – The pension received under this Act shall be considered separate and distinct from contributory pensions under the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), Social Security System (SSS), or private retirement plans. No offset shall be made against existing retirement or contributory pension benefits.

SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, in coordination with the DBM, PSA, and relevant stakeholders, shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations.

SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,