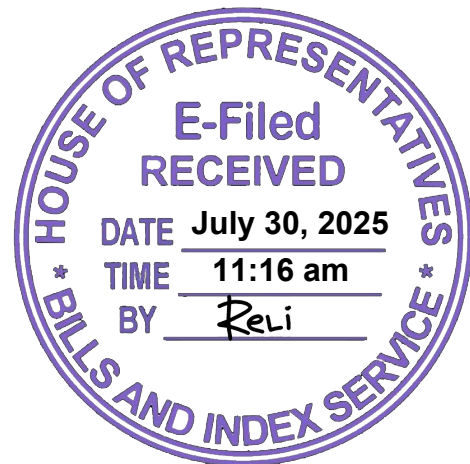


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2607**



Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has long upheld the welfare of its senior citizens and persons with disabilities through landmark legislation such as Republic Act No. 7432, as amended, or the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010," and Republic Act No. 7277, as amended, or the "Magna Carta for Persons with Disability." These laws have provided significant benefits and privileges, recognizing the invaluable contributions of these sectors to nation-building and ensuring their dignity and well-being.

However, a significant segment of our population faces a compounded challenge: senior citizens who are also living with disabilities. This demographic often encounters a unique set of difficulties that go beyond what is adequately addressed by existing laws. The intersection of aging and disability can lead to increased healthcare costs, greater need for assistive devices, difficulties in mobility, heightened vulnerability, and a reduced capacity for independent living.

While current laws provide general support, they do not specifically address the cumulative burdens and specialized needs of this particular group. This proposed measure, the "Enhanced Support for Disabled Senior Citizens Act," seeks to bridge this gap by providing additional, targeted benefits and privileges to senior citizens with disabilities. It acknowledges that the challenges faced by this sector are distinct and require a more comprehensive and integrated approach.

In view of the aforesaid, the approval of this measure is hereby earnestly sought.


SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.

Republic of the Philippines
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. **2607**

Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

AN ACT GRANTING ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SENIOR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES, FURTHER AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "EXPANDED SENIOR CITIZENS ACT OF 2010," AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "MAGNA CARTA FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Enhanced Support for Disabled Senior Citizens Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote and protect the rights and welfare of senior citizens, particularly those with disabilities, and to provide them with the necessary support and assistance to enhance their quality of life, ensure their active participation in society, and uphold their dignity. The State recognizes the unique challenges faced by senior citizens who are also living with disabilities and commits to implementing comprehensive and integrated programs and services that address their specific needs.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

(a) "Senior Citizen with Disability" refers to any Filipino citizen who is sixty (60) years old or above and is suffering from long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others, as certified by a licensed physician or relevant government agency.

(b) "Basic Necessities and Prime Commodities" shall have the same meaning as provided in Republic Act No. 7581, as amended, otherwise known as the "Price Act."

(c) "Essential Medical and Assistive Devices" refers to medical supplies, equipment, and devices, including but not limited to, wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids, prosthetics, orthotics, medical alert systems, adaptive technologies, and other devices as may be determined by the Department of Health (DOH) in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

(d) "Home Care Services" refers to health and social services provided to senior citizens with disabilities in their homes, including personal care, nursing care, therapy services, and domestic assistance.

(e) "Rehabilitation Services" refers to a comprehensive range of services aimed at optimizing the functioning and well-being of individuals with disabilities, including physical, occupational, speech, and psychosocial therapy.

SEC. 4. *Additional Benefits and Privileges.* - In addition to the existing benefits and privileges granted to senior citizens under Republic Act No. 7432, as amended, and to persons with disability under Republic Act No. 7277, as amended, a senior citizen with disability shall be entitled to the following:

(a) Enhanced Medical and Health Care Support:

(1) Fifty Percent (50%) Discount on Essential Medical and Assistive Devices. - A fifty percent (50%) discount shall be granted on the purchase of essential medical and assistive devices for the exclusive use of the senior citizen with disability. This discount shall be on top of any promotional discount provided by the establishment.

(2) Free Annual Comprehensive Medical Check-up. - All senior citizens with disabilities shall be entitled to a free annual comprehensive medical check-up in all government hospitals and health facilities. The Department of Health (DOH) shall issue the necessary guidelines for its implementation.

(3) Priority in Medical Services. - Senior citizens with disabilities shall be given absolute priority in queues and services in all medical and health facilities, both public and private.

(b) Increased Utility Discount: A minimum of ten percent (10%) discount relative to the monthly utilization of water and electricity, provided that the meter is registered under the name of the senior citizen with disability residing therein, and the monthly consumption does not exceed Two Hundred (200) kilowatt-hours of electricity and Fifty (50) cubic meters of water. This discount shall be exclusive of any other promotional discounts.

- (c) Additional Discount on Basic Necessities and Prime Commodities. - An additional five percent (5%) special discount on the purchase of basic necessities and prime commodities, subject to the maximum purchase amount and guidelines set by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Agriculture (DA), in consultation with the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC) and the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA). This discount shall be in addition to the existing five percent (5%) discount for basic necessities and prime commodities.
- (d) Expanded Home Care and Rehabilitation Services:
 - (1) Subsidized Home Care Services - The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), in coordination with local government units (LGUs), shall establish and implement a program to provide subsidized home care services for indigent senior citizens with disabilities, based on an assessment of their needs.
 - (2) Access to Free Rehabilitation Services - All government rehabilitation centers and facilities shall provide free rehabilitation services to senior citizens with disabilities. Private rehabilitation centers are encouraged to offer discounted rates for their services.
- (e) Prioritized Access to Social Pension: Indigent senior citizens with disabilities shall be given priority in the availment of the social pension program of the government, in addition to their existing benefits.
- (f) Free Public Transportation for Essential Travel - Senior citizens with disabilities shall be entitled to free rides on all land, sea, and air public transportation for essential medical and rehabilitation appointments, provided that appropriate documentation from the attending physician or rehabilitation center is presented. The Department of Transportation (DOTr) shall issue the implementing rules and regulations for this provision.

SEC. 5. - *Non-Diminution of Existing Benefits.* - Nothing in this Act shall be construed to reduce, diminish, or in any way impair any existing benefits and privileges granted to senior citizens and persons with disability under existing laws, rules, and regulations.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Agencies.* - The National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC) and the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) shall be the lead agencies in the implementation of this Act, in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Transportation (DOTr), local government units (LGUs), and other relevant government agencies.

SEC. 7. Appropriations. - The funds necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. Local government units shall likewise appropriate the necessary funds for the localized implementation of the programs and services mandated by this Act.

SEC. 8. Penalties. - Any person, establishment, or institution that violates any provision of this Act shall suffer the penalties provided under Republic Act No. 7432, as amended, and Republic Act No. 7277, as amended.

SEC. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC) and the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), in consultation with other concerned government agencies, non-government organizations, and people's organizations, shall formulate and issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

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, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 12. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,