

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2850



Introduced by Lone District of Agusan del Norte Representative
HON. DALE B. CORVERA

AN ACT
PROVIDING MONTHLY SUPPORT TO SENIOR CITIZENS OF
PRESCRIBED MAINTENANCE MEDICINES, FOOD SUPPLEMENTS, AND
VITAMINS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIII, Section 11 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines 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.

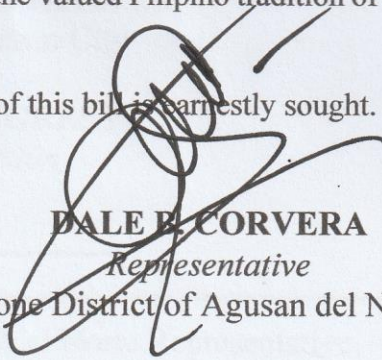
Article XV, Section 4 of the Constitution further declares that it is the duty of the family to take care of its elderly members while the State may design programs of social security for them.

To fulfill these constitutional policies, the government enacted Republic Act No. 7432, otherwise known as "An Act to Maximize the Contribution of Senior Citizens to Nation Building, Grant Benefits and Special Privileges and for Other Purposes", which was expanded by Republic Act No. 9994, otherwise known as the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010", granting benefits and privileges to our senior citizens which are largely characterized by discounts and a monthly stipend for indigent senior citizens.

Although the intention of the law is laudable, the grant of discounts is largely dependent on a senior citizen's disposable income or capacity to buy. For poorer senior citizens who have no extra money to buy leisure goods or those that live below the poverty threshold, the discount benefits become illusory.

Likewise, this serves as an encouragement to the Filipino families and communities who live, care, and support senior citizens to reaffirm the valued Filipino tradition of caring for their elderlies.

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



DALE B. CORVERA
Representative
Lone District of Agusan del Norte

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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 “Monthly Maintenance Support for Senior Citizens Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – As provided under Article XIII, Section 11 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, it is a declared policy 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.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* – This Act shall serve the following objectives:

- (a) To give full support to the improvement of the total well-being of the elderly and their full participation in society, considering that senior citizens are integral part of the Philippine society;
- (b) To provide a healthcare support system for senior citizens to foster their capacity to attain a more meaningful and productive ageing.

SEC. 4. *Monthly Maintenance Support.* – The Department of Health, in coordination with the National Commission of Senior Citizens and Local Government Units, shall provide all registered senior citizens with monthly prescribed maintenance medications, food

supplements, and vitamins essential for the improvement of their total well-being, in the amount not exceeding One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00) per senior citizen at no cost to the senior citizens.

SEC. 5. *Registration of Senior Citizens.* – Local Government Units, through their Office for Senior Citizens' Affairs (OSCA), shall maintain, regularly update, and provide a registry of all senior citizens residing within their territorial jurisdiction.

SEC. 6. *Duty of Senior Citizens and their Guardians.* – It shall be the duty of senior citizens to register and update their records, including most recent valid prescriptions, with the OSCA to be included in the free monthly maintenance support program. Senior citizens who are suffering from mental incapacity or disability in such degree that prevents them from registering or updating their records must be represented by the senior citizen's court appointed. In the absence of such guardian the duty to register and update shall be in accordance with the order established under Article 199 of the Family Code.

For purposes of this Act, a medical prescription is considered valid until six (6) months from the date of its issuance.

In conjunction with this duty, Local Government Units shall adopt mechanisms that will allow easy, fast, convenient, and accessible registration for senior citizens.

SEC. 7. *Role of Rural Health Units and City Health Offices.* – OSCAs shall submit the list of their respective registered senior citizens and requested medicines to the Rural Health Units (RHUs) in municipalities and City Health Offices (CHOs) in cities for consolidation, verification, and removal of duplicate registrations. RHUs and CHOs shall ensure the appropriate distribution of purchased maintenance medicines to senior citizens.

SEC. 8. *Role of DOH Regional Offices.* – To expedite the implementation of the Monthly Maintenance Support Program, the budget for the program shall be placed in the DOH Regional Offices. DOH Regional Offices shall have the capacity to purchase medicines for this program, guided by the list of requested medicines and subject to existing laws, rules and regulations. Maintenance medicines purchased by the DOH Regional Offices shall be immediately released to the RHUs and CHOs upon delivery.

SEC. 9. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the current budget of the DOH. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the DOH, NCSC, DILG and other relevant government agencies, shall formulate the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any section, clause or term of this Act is held to be illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional, such parts not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, issuances, executive orders, letters of instruction, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,