



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

20th CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2958

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER A. LAGBAS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In recent years, the number of young Filipinos appears to be significantly lower, while that of the elderly has been expanding.¹ In 2020, Filipinos 60 years of age and older comprised 8.5 percent of the population, or 9.2 million, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.² The percentage share of this age group is expected to increase to about 19.6 percent of the projected midyear population in 2055.³

Filipinos' love for the elderly is undeniable. But in the Philippines, more and more elderly people lack access to health care, suffer from social isolation, economic insecurity, and, in some cases, neglect or abandonment. Many of our elderly have no golden years to speak of. In fact, the concept of retirement may as well be alien to a substantial number of older Filipinos who are still working even at advanced ages. The increase in statistics will still grow over the years because aging is inevitable.

While Republic Act No. 9994, or the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010," provides for a range of social protections, there remains a gap in the provision of localized, accessible, and dedicated spaces where the elderly can receive integrated care, support, and engagement.

It is, therefore, imperative for the government to address the evolving needs of our elderly or senior citizens.

This bill proposes the establishment of *Balay Amuma*, community-based centers for the elderly in every city and municipality. "*Amuma*" is a Visayan term meaning to care for, nurture, or tend to with affection,

¹Philippine News Agency, "*PSA: Share of Children in PH Population Declines, Elderly Rises,*" [pna.gov.ph](https://www.pna.gov.ph), August 18, 2022, <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1181314> (accessed July 19, 2025).

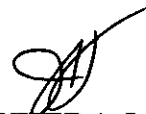
² Id.

³ Philippine Statistics Authority, "*Philippine Population Projected to Be Around 138.67 Million by 2055 Under Scenario 2,*" psa.gov.ph, June 27, 2023, <https://psa.gov.ph/content/philippine-population-projected-be-around-13867-million-2055-under-scenario-2> (accessed July 19, 2025).

which should be the guiding principle in the establishment and operation of the centers for the elderly. The centers will serve as safe spaces where senior citizens can receive primary health services, participate in recreational and wellness activities, and access social services in a dignified and inclusive environment. The measure likewise provides for residential care to indigent, abandoned, or neglected elderly and introduces an allowance for family members or designated caregivers willing to care for senior citizens.

This bill seeks to promote the rights, dignity, and well-being of our elderly while recognizing their continued contribution to society and affirm the commitment of the State to build a caring and age-inclusive Philippines.

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



HON. JENNIFER A. LAGBAS
Representative
First District, Misamis Oriental



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HOUSE BILL NO. 2958

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER A. LAGBAS**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING *BALAY AMUMA* FOR THE ELDERLY IN ALL CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES, PROVIDING MINIMUM STANDARDS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE, 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 “*Balay Amuma Act of 2025.*”

SEC. 2. *Statement of Policy.* — It is the policy of the State to prioritize the elderly in the adoption of an integrated and comprehensive approach to health and social development, which endeavors to make essential goods, health, and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. The State likewise recognizes the vital role of the elderly in preserving cultural heritage, strengthening family and community ties, and shaping national identity. It shall therefore ensure that programs and policies are responsive to their evolving needs and uphold their right to a safe, supportive, and empowered life in their later years.

A whole-of-society approach shall be adopted to promote the well-being of elders through coordinated action by local government units (LGUs), civil society, the private sector, and the families and communities to which they belong. The State shall foster collaboration among relevant stakeholders to ensure that the elderly receive continuous care, support, and opportunities for meaningful engagement in social, cultural, and civic life.

Towards this end, the State shall establish centers for the elderly to be known as *Balay Amuma* in every city and municipality, which shall serve as dedicated, age-friendly facilities that provide accessible health care, wellness services, and recreational activities. These *Balay Amuma* shall also serve as venues for

delivering social protection programs, enhancing social inclusion, and promoting the overall quality of life of senior citizens.

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

- a) *Balay Amuma* — shall refer to the center for senior citizens established under this Act;
- b) *Eldercare* — shall refer to the provision of primary health care and support services that especially caters to the needs of senior citizens;
- c) *Elderly* or *senior citizen* — shall refer to a resident citizen at least sixty (60) years of age, as defined under Republic Act (R.A.) No. 9994 otherwise known as the “Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010”;
- d) *Less severe illness* — shall refer to a health problem, issue, or condition that does not carry a high risk of mortality and does not negatively impact the life and daily function of an individual;
- e) *Office for Senior Citizen Affairs (OSCA)* — shall refer to the office established by R.A. 7432 known as the “Senior Citizen Act”, as amended by R.A. No. 9994;
- f) *Primary health services* or *primary health care* — shall refer to the initial contact of an individual with an accessible and coordinated health system to manage health problems or issues that are less severe or uncomplicated, including, but not limited to, the following: (i) Diagnosis and treatment of health problem; (ii) Prevention of health problems; (iii) Early intervention; and (iv) Managing ongoing and long-term conditions;
- g) *Qualified Caregiver* — shall refer to a family member, neighbor, or volunteer who is officially designated as the primary caregiver of a qualified elderly person and who meets the minimum qualification standards prescribed under this Act; and
- h) *Qualified Elderly* — shall refer to a senior citizen who meets the eligibility criteria for residential care and/or caregiver support under this Act

SEC. 4. *Establishment of Local Centers for the Elderly (Balay Amuma).* — The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in collaboration with the LGUs, shall initially establish and maintain at least one (1) *Balay Amuma* in all cities and municipalities: *Provided*, That the establishment of *Balay Amuma* in cities and municipalities shall be prioritized according to an established multi-year roadmap, or as resources may allow.

SEC. 5. *Special Committee on Balay Amuma (SC-Balay Amuma).* — For purposes of program and policy integration, there is hereby created a Special Committee on *Balay Amuma* to be composed of the following:

- a) Secretary of the DSWD, as Chairperson;
- b) Secretary of DOH, as Vice Chairperson;
- c) Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), as Member;
- d) Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), as Member;
- e) National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC) Chairperson, as Member; and
- f) One representative of the private sector who is a senior citizen to be appointed by the President, as Member.

The Committee shall ensure that the relevant government agencies shall establish at least one (1) *Balay Amuma* in every city and municipality especially dedicated to provide eldercare, recreational activities, social services, and assistance to senior citizens. *Provided*, That the *SC-Balay Amuma* shall provide non-monetary incentives, such as Seal of Excellence Awards scheme to LGUs and other agencies and organizations to encourage the establishment and maintenance of better *Balay Amuma* services and facilities.

The *SC-Balay Amuma* shall regularly convene at least once (1) every year. The *SC-Balay Amuma* Chairperson may call a special meeting whenever necessary. *Provided*, That members are notified in writing at least three (3) days prior to the said meeting.

SEC. 6. Minimum Standards for *Balay Amuma*. — The establishment shall be a wellness hub with health services, with the following minimum standards:

- a) A sufficient number of qualified staff shall be on duty at all times to render appropriate services in the *Balay Amuma*;
- b) Facilities, rooms, and spaces which are accessible, especially to the elderly, and Persons with Disability, and elderly with cognitive impairment, and appropriate signage;
- c) Basic health and recreational facilities which are appropriate for the elderly, including adequate space for indoor activities and, as far as practicable, open spaces and garden area for outdoor activities;
- d) Appropriate health facilities for elderly needing medical attention and for use for medical consultation and geriatric care services;
- e) Basic utility, such as water and electricity;
- f) Referral system with the *Balay Amuma*, including coordination for ambulance and emergency transport services, subject to availability and feasibility;
- g) Dedicated pharmacy that can facilitate the application of the mandated 20% senior citizen discount;
- h) A designated fund or mechanism to support emergency care needs of senior citizens;
- i) Establishment of partnerships with hospitals for referral and coordinated care; and
- j) Senior Citizen Data and information management system that shall contain, store, and secure the health and other relevant data of the elderly, in accordance with the provisions of R.A. No. 10173, otherwise known as the “Data Privacy Act of 2012.”

Medical services provided within the *Balay Amuma* and their providers shall be accredited by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth).

SEC. 7. Co-Working and Community Engagement Spaces. — Each *Balay Amuma* shall include within its facilities a Co-Working and Community Engagement Space dedicated to providing an inclusive environment where the elderly or senior citizens can freely exchange ideas, work alone or with other elder groups, and participate in discussions relevant to their sector. The space shall be equipped with basic office tools, internet access, and other materials and equipment conducive to continued productivity.

SEC. 8. Scope of Services. — All *Balay Amuma* established under this Act shall be equipped with at least the most basic facilities that can cater to less severe, uncomplicated, and/or out-patient medical

services, reliable financial assistance, social services, and worthwhile recreational activities. These services shall be delivered in accordance with the minimum standards and care delivery prescribed under Section 5 and Section 9 of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Quality of Care.* — Quality of care is a fundamental principle in all services provided to residents of *Balay Amuma*. Based on a comprehensive assessment of each resident, the center shall ensure that treatment and care are:

- a) In accordance with professional standards of practice;
- b) Guided by a comprehensive, person-centered care plan tailored to the resident's health, emotional, and social needs;
- c) Respectful of the resident's dignity, autonomy, and informed choices; and
- d) Regularly evaluated and updated based on the resident's changing condition and preferences.

The DOH, in coordination with the NCSC and DSWD, shall formulate quality benchmarks and monitoring mechanisms to ensure safe, effective, timely, and responsive care delivery in all *Balay Amuma*.

SEC. 10. *Role of the Office of the Senior Citizen Affairs (OSCA).* — The Office of the Senior Citizen Affairs (OSCA) established in every city and municipality shall serve as the primary liaison and referral office for senior citizens. It shall likewise maintain and make available an updated directory of health, social welfare, and support services offered within the jurisdiction.

The OSCA shall work in close coordination with the *Balay Amuma* to support the delivery of their frontline services. It shall designate personnel or representatives, where appropriate, to assist in providing direct services, case monitoring, and coordination within the facility, ensuring the needs of residents are upheld.

SEC. 11. *Staffing* — All *Balay Amuma* established under this Act shall have four (4) staff groups on a daily, rotational basis, comprising of at least one (1) doctor, one (1) nurse, and two (2) trained barangay health workers.

The LGU concerned shall hire all *Balay Amuma* staff as job order, casual, contractual, or regular employees. Barangay health workers currently serving the city or municipality shall be given preference in the hiring under this Act.

Provided, That the DOH shall extend appropriate assistance to LGUs, particularly third- to fifth-class municipalities, in meeting the operational and staffing requirements necessary for the effective establishment and maintenance of the *Balay Amuma*.

SEC. 12. *Residential Care for the Elderly.* — Senior citizens who are qualified under this Act, specifically those without family support, homeless, neglected, or abandoned, as certified by the OSCA and DSWD, shall be eligible for full-time residency at the *Balay Amuma*.

Each *Balay Amuma* shall allocate dedicated residential spaces for such senior citizens. The DSWD, in coordination with the concerned LGU, shall ensure that food, shelter, and necessary medical and social support are provided.

SEC. 13. Allowance for Qualified and Designated Caregivers. — A monthly allowance may be granted to a qualified caregiver, such as a family member, neighbor, or volunteer, who is designated as the primary caregiver of a qualified elderly person, whether or not the elderly individual is a resident of a *Balay Amuma* facility. *Provided*, That the caregiver must meet the minimum standards and requirements and must have completed basic eldercare training, as prescribed in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of this Act. The allowance shall likewise be granted in accordance with the rules and guidelines to be promulgated.

SEC. 14. Monitoring and Evaluation. — The DSWD, in coordination with the NCSC and DOH, shall establish a regular monitoring and evaluation program for all *Balay Amuma* to ensure compliance with service standards and quality of care guidelines.

The monitoring program shall include, but not be limited to:

- a) Annual inspections and performance audits;
- b) Resident satisfaction and grievance reporting mechanisms;
- c) Standardized quality indicators, including health outcomes, resident well-being, and staff competency; and
- d) Public reporting of compliance ratings and corrective actions.

SEC. 15. Tax Exemption of Balay Amuma. — The *Balay Amuma* shall be exempted from the payment of customs duties, taxes, and tariffs on the importation of equipment and supplies used actually, directly, and exclusively by the *Balay Amuma* pursuant to this Act, including those donated to the *Balay Amuma*.

SEC. 16. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — Within sixty (60) days upon approval of this Act, the DSWD, consistent with Republic Act (R.A.) No. 9994, otherwise known as the “Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010, in coordination with the NCSC, DOH, DPWH, and the DILG, shall prepare and issue such rules and regulations necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

Thereafter, the DPWH shall ensure the commencement of the establishment of *Balay Amuma* within the fiscal year after appropriating the corresponding budget.

SEC. 17. Appropriations. — The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against those authorized in the current appropriations of the DOH, DSWD, DPWH and other implementing partner agencies as provided in this Act. Thereafter, the amount necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in their respective budgetary allocations as separate line items in the Annual Appropriations Act.

SEC. 18. Separability Clause. — If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts hereof not affected thereby shall remain valid.

SEC. 19. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders, administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

SEC. 20. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,