

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. 3064



Introduced by: Congressman **BIENVENIDO M. ABANTE, JR.**

AN ACT
PROVIDING SUBSIDY ALLOWANCE FOR ALL ELDERLY FARMERS,
FISHERFOLKS, AND DRIVERS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

"When I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not."

-Psalm 71:18a (KJV)

This was the prayer and request by King David, who is described as a man after God's own heart, a shepherd, a warrior, and the second king of Israel chosen by God through the prophet Samuel. He recognized the fragility of being an elderly person and their increased vulnerability to physical, mental, and emotional challenges due to the aging process.

In the same manner, our Government must also recognize its elderly citizens, particularly our elderly farmers, fisherfolk who are the bedrock of our food security, and our elderly drivers who are the fulcrum and linchpin of our transportation sector that affects economic activities, social well-being, and overall progress. Their unwavering dedication and hard work have been the backbone of our nation's sustenance and progress.

Regretfully, the number of farmers worldwide is also getting older. According to the Department of Agriculture, the average age of a farmer in our country today is 57. A lot of elderly people—older farmers in particular—keep working for their families and giving back to their communities and country despite limitations and difficulties brought on by a variety of circumstances, such as but not limited to age, strength, and health problems.

In the same quandary are our fisherfolks. Filipino fisherfolk face two challenges when going to the sea. First, artisanal fisherfolks' small boats aren't equipped to go to farther territories. Second, despite unequal battlegrounds, they brave the seas to join the commercial fishing vessels to earn a little from a flawed commission system.¹ It will then be considerably more difficult on the part of our elderly fisherfolk. Sadly,

¹ <https://earthjournalism.net/stories/rich-seas-poor-fishers-the-impact-of-fisheries-subsidies-in-the-philippines>.

despite their contribution to food security, they remained one of the poorest and most vulnerable in the country. In 2018, the Philippine Statistics Authority estimated that Filipino fisherfolk had a 26.2% poverty incidence, considered to be one of the highest among the basic sectors.

On the other hand, in a case study that was conducted, it was found that Jeepney drivers were likely to suffer from musculoskeletal discomfort due to the poor design of their workspace and the system used for fare collection. Their current workspace did not conform to Filipino drivers' anthropometric measurements, and the drivers were subjected to awkward driving postures, due to the location of the controls and the task of collecting fares.² This predicament is more aggravating for our elderly drivers who, despite their old age, stayed true to their responsibility to provide food for their families.

Thus, this Bill seeks to uplift the morale of our resilient elderly farmers, hard-working elderly fisherfolks, and road-warrior elderly drivers, considering their significant contributions that go beyond the fields, seas, and roads. These elderly individuals represent the heartbeat of our nation, and as we acknowledge their efforts, we must also ensure that their twilight years are marked by dignity and respect. Moreover, this Bill is not just a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity for the sustainability and prosperity of our economy. By investing in their morale through a subsidy allowance, we not only honor their legacy but also fortify the foundation upon which the future of our beloved country will thrive.

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



BIENVENIDO M. ABANTE, JR.

² Seva, R., Axalan, D. M., Landicho,. Case Study. (2021) Workplace Efficiency Improvement for Jeepney Drivers in Metro Manila, De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines.

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “**Subsidy Allowance for Elderly Farmers, Fisherfolk, and Drivers Act of 2025.**”

SEC. 2 Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state to recognize the invaluable contributions of elderly farmers, fisherfolks, and drivers in vital recognition of the important role they play in sustaining food security and economic growth and development.

SEC. 3 Subsidy Allowance. - A monthly subsidy allowance of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000) is hereby granted to all elderly farmers pursuant to Section 4 of this Act.

SEC. 4 Coverage. – The grant of subsidy allowance authorized in this Act shall be limited to:

- a.) Elderly farmers aged 60 years old and above who are natural persons, depending on farming as their primary source of income, and on the sale, barter, or exchange of agricultural products.

Includes cut flower, growers, nursery operators, commercial tree planters, seed producers, and small agricultural producers as tenants, sharecroppers, peasants, small owner cultivators, or any self-employed individual who, by himself or with his family, provides the primary labor requirements of his business enterprise.

- b.) Elderly fisherfolks aged 60 years and above who directly or personally and physically engaged in taking and/or culturing and processing fishery and/or aquatic resources as their primary source of income.

- c.) Elderly drivers aged 60 years and above who are licensed operators of a motor vehicle, whether for private use or for hire to the public as their primary source of income.

SEC. 5 *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Agriculture, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Budget and Management shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act within thirty (30) days from the date of its effectivity.

SEC. 6. *Periodic Review for Increases.* – The Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Commissioners of the National Commission of Senior Citizens are hereby mandated to conduct a periodic review of the subsidy allowance, taking into account the current inflation rate, and if warranted, recommend the necessary increase in the amount of the allowance.

SEC. 7. *Appropriations.* – Upon effectivity of this Act, the amount necessary for its implementation shall be charged against the appropriations of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Transportation for the current fiscal year. Thereafter, the funds shall be provided in the annual General Appropriation Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, memorandum orders, memorandum circulars, administrative orders, ordinances, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the right to adequate food and the provisions of this Act, are hereby deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,