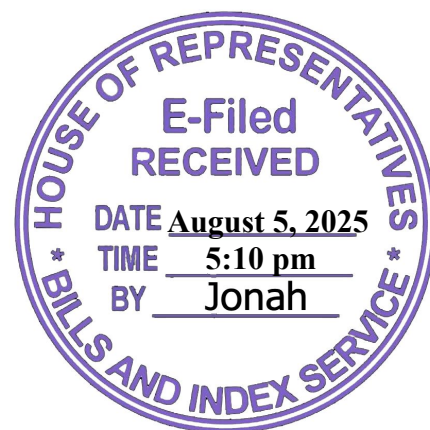


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 3140

Introduced by **REP. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO**

**AN ACT
PROVIDING FREE IMMUNIZATION TO ALL SENIOR CITIZENS,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 4 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432, AS
AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9257, FURTHER AMENDED BY REPUBLIC
ACT NO. 9994, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "EXPANDED SENIOR
CITIZENS ACT OF 2010," PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 1 Article XIII, Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution states that "[t]he 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. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers."

Senior citizens, as among the most at-risk and immunocompromised sectors of the population, are particularly susceptible to infectious diseases such as influenza, pneumonia, shingles, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, and diphtheria. Many of these illnesses can have severe or even fatal effects for older adults, whose immune systems often become weaker as they age. Immunization is one of the most effective ways to protect them from these preventable diseases and reduce the burden on the healthcare system, particularly in the face of a growing aging population.

As of February 2025, the Department of Health (DOH) continues to advance adult immunization efforts. Coverage for the Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine (PPV) has reached 66% among eligible indigent senior citizens, while the influenza vaccine has been administered to 65.57% of the target population, including senior citizens¹. Despite these gains, sustained and intensified efforts at both national and

¹ UNICEF (24 April 2025) *Immunization Equity, Possible through Local and National Leaders' Push* — DOH, UNICEF, WHO accessed last 3 August 2025 from: <https://www.unicef.org/philippines/press-releases/immunization-equity-possible-through-local-and-national-leaders-push-doh-unicef-who>

local levels remain essential.

This bill seeks to institutionalize the provision of free immunization services for all senior citizens, in consonance with the mandates of the Universal Health Care Law. By integrating this much-needed health service into the existing entitlements under the Expanded Senior Citizens Act, the measure reaffirms the State's commitment to upholding the health, dignity, and well-being of the elderly, and ensures their continued access to preventive healthcare necessary for longer, healthier, and more productive lives.

Safeguarding the health of our senior citizens is the least we can do in recognition of their invaluable contributions to nation-building. Their welfare must not be overlooked or diminished. I respectfully believe that our senior citizens deserve sustained protection, particularly in matters of preventive healthcare and immunization.

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



HON. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO

Representative
1st District, Sorsogon

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

Section 1. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

Consistent with the Constitution which mandates that there shall be priority for the needs of the elderly, the State shall endeavor to provide free vaccination to all senior citizens. In recognizing the vulnerabilities of senior citizens, the State shall protect their health by ensuring that they have a protective line of defense against viruses and other diseases through free vaccination.

Sec. 2. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 7432, as amended by Republic Act No. 9257, further amended by Republic Act No. 9994 otherwise known as the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010", shall be hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 4. Privileges for the Senior Citizens. –

The senior citizens shall be entitled to the following;

xxx

(f) the DOH **OR ANY APPLICABLE PROGRAM OF THE PHILHEALTH, SHALL ENSURE THE ADMINISTRATION OF FREE VACCINATION** against the **influenza virus, TETANUS, DIPHTHERIA, PERTUSSIS, HERPES ZOSTER,** and pneumococcal disease, **AND OTHER SIMILAR APPROVED VACCINATIONS WHICH THE DOH DEEMS NECESSARY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ALL** [indigent] senior citizen patients;"

Sec. 3. Appropriations. - The amount needed for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of DOH in the current and subsequent General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, the amount needed for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the budget of the concerned departments in the annual General Appropriations.

Sec. 4. Implementing Rules and Regulations – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

Sec 5. Repealing Clause - All laws, decrees, orders, ordinances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Sec. 6. Effectivity Clause - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette.

Approved,