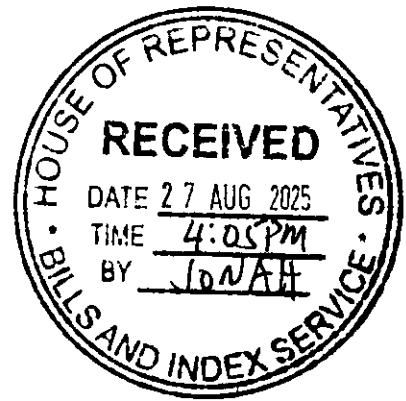


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4112



Introduced by: Rep. Keith Micah "Atty. Mike" D.L. Tan

AN ACT

GRANTING UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PENSION TO SENIOR CITIZENS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432, AS AMENDED, ENTITLED "AN ACT TO MAXIMIZE THE CONTRIBUTION OF SENIOR CITIZENS TO NATION BUILDING, GRANT BENEFITS AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Elderly Filipinos have long contributed immeasurably to the fabric of our nation, upholding values, nurturing families, and enriching communities. In return, it is our solemn duty as a society and government to ensure their dignity, security, and well-being, especially in their later years. This initiative seeks to advance this obligation by extending a safety net to all senior citizens, regardless of their economic status.

At present, Republic Act No. 7432, otherwise known as the "Senior Citizens Act," and its amendments, including Republic Act No. 9994 or the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010," provide certain benefits and privileges to the elderly. The Expanded Senior Citizens Act introduced the social pension program, limited only to indigent senior citizens who receive a modest allowance of Php 500.00 per month. While this was a welcome development, it has proven inadequate in addressing the growing needs of our elderly population, particularly as inflation and rising costs of living continue to erode their purchasing power. Many so-called "non-indigent" seniors still face hidden vulnerabilities, living with limited support despite not qualifying as indigent under the strict definitions of law.

This proposed amendment responds to these realities by establishing a universal social pension program. This approach removes the risk of exclusion or error in targeting beneficiaries and guarantees that no elderly Filipino is denied the dignity and protection they deserve in their twilight years.

In addition, a universal system provides efficiency and transparency in administration. It removes the stigma associated with being labeled as "poor" or

"indigent" and treats all senior citizens as equally worthy of assistance from the State. By extending this benefit universally, the measure enhances the self-respect of our elderly, reduces social and economic inequality, and reinforces inclusive growth that benefits the nation as a whole.

As a mechanism of social protection and economic empowerment, this initiative will help senior citizens cope with the ever-increasing cost of living, particularly with the rising prices of essential commodities. It will also provide them with greater security in times of vulnerability, allowing them to live with dignity and continue to contribute positively to their families and communities.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith D.L. Tan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Keith Micah "Atty. Mike" D.L. Tan
4th District, Quezon

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

SECTION 1. Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7432, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 2. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, these terms are defined as follows:

"(a) xxx xxx

"(h) *Indigent senior citizen* refers to any elderly who is [frail, sickly or with disability, and] without pension or permanent source of income, compensation or financial assistance from his/her relatives to support his/her basic needs, as determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in consultation with the [National Coordinating and Monitoring Board] NATIONAL COMMISSION OF SENIOR CITIZENS (NCSC).

"(i) PENSION PROVIDER REFERS TO ANY GOVERNMENT OFFICE OR AGENCY, OR ANY PRIVATE ENTITY WHICH PROVIDES PENSIONS TO ENTITLED RECIPIENTS ON THE BASIS OF CONTRIBUTIONS, GRATUITY, OR AS MANDATED BY ANY GOVERNING LAW OR ISSUANCE, INCLUDING THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (SSS), THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM (GSIS), AND THE PENSION AND GRATUITY MANAGEMENT CENTER (PGMC), AMONG OTHERS; AND

“(j) UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PENSION REFERS TO A NON-CONTRIBUTORY MONTHLY MONETARY GRANT FROM THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT THE DAILY SUBSISTENCE AND MEDICAL NEEDS OF SENIOR CITIZENS WHICH SHALL NOT BE LESS THAN ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1,000.00) PER MONTH”.

SEC. 3. Section 5(h)(1) of Republic Act No. 7432, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 5. Government Assistance. - The government shall provide the following:

“(a) xxx

xxx

“(h) Additional Government Assistance

“(1) MANDATORY UNIVERSAL Social Pension

[Indigent senior citizens shall be entitled to a monthly stipend amounting to Five hundred pesos (Php500.00) to augment the daily subsistence and other medical needs of senior citizens, subject to a review every two (2) years by Congress, in consultation with the DSWD.]

ALL SENIOR CITIZENS SHALL BE ENTITLED TO A UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PENSION EQUIVALENT TO A MONTHLY STIPEND AMOUNTING TO AT LEAST ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1000.00) UPON THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, REGARDLESS OF ANY OTHER PENSION BENEFITS THEY MAY RECEIVE FROM OTHER PENSION PROVIDERS: PROVIDED, THAT ANY SENIOR CITIZEN MAY WAIVE THIS UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PENSION.

THE DSWD SHALL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT (DBM), AS WELL AS OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, REVIEW AND IF NECESSARY, ADJUST THE AMOUNT OF UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PENSION EVERY TWO (2) YEARS AFTER THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE VARIOUS NEEDS OF SENIOR CITIZENS AND RELEVANT ECONOMIC INDICATORS, AS REPORTED AND PUBLISHED BY PERTINENT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND AUTHORITIES: PROVIDED, THAT THE SOCIAL PENSION SHALL NOT BE LESS THAN THE AMOUNT INITIALLY SPECIFIED IN THIS ACT. THE IMPLEMENTATION, DISTRIBUTION, AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SOCIAL PENSION SHALL BE TRANSFERRED FROM THE DSWD TO THE NATIONAL COMMISSION OF SENIOR CITIZENS (NCSC) WITHIN A PERIOD NOT EXCEEDING THREE (3) YEARS FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT.

“x x x.”

SEC. 4. *Appropriations.* — The universal social pension for senior citizens shall be added to the regular appropriations of the DSWD in the general appropriations act, and thereafter, to the National Commission of Senior Citizens, upon full transfer of the implementation, distribution, and management of the social pension.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Chairperson of the National Commission of Senior Citizens shall formulate and adopt amendments to the existing rules and regulations implementing Republic Act No. 11916 to carry out the objectives of this Act, in consultation with other relevant agencies and stakeholders.

SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* — Republic Act No. 7432, as amended by Republic Act Nos. 9257 and 9994, otherwise known as the “Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010”, and Republic Act No. 11916 are hereby amended. All other laws, ordinances, orders, rules, regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,