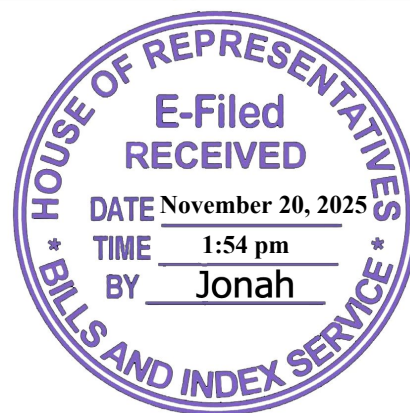


**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City**

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session**

House Bill No. 6251



**Introduced by
REPRESENTATIVE MIKAELA ANGELA B. SUANSING**

**AN ACT
RATIONALIZING THE BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES OF SENIOR CITIZENS AND
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution recognizes the role of the family, particularly its elderly members and those who live with disability, as vital in nation-building. Article XIII, Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to “adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all people at affordable cost.” In line with this, the Constitution likewise directs the State to give priority to the needs of the underprivileged, the elderly, the disabled, women, and children.

Over the years, several pieces of legislation have been enacted to address the welfare of senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PWDs), including Republic Act No. 7432, as amended by R.A. Nos. 9257 and 9994, and Republic Act No. 7277, as amended by R.A. Nos. 9442 and 10754. These laws have granted numerous discounts, incentives, and support services to both sectors.

However, the implementation of these laws has revealed several issues. Beneficiaries often encounter inconsistencies in the application of discounts, challenges in claiming exemptions during promotional offers, lack of accessibility in availing benefits through digital means, and varied local government interpretations that hamper uniform service delivery. The digital divide, in particular, remains a significant barrier to inclusive access for senior citizens and PWDs.

This measure seeks to harmonize and rationalize the existing legal framework to ensure that benefits and privileges for senior citizens and PWDs are consistently applied, easily accessible, and responsive to the evolving digital landscape. It introduces unified provisions on discounts, tax treatment, and government assistance while setting clearer thresholds for consumption-based entitlements. Moreover, it mandates the adaptation of the eGov PH Super

App to ensure inclusive access to government services through digital platforms, equipped with features sensitive to the needs of these sectors.

Notably, the bill also lays down mechanisms for digital identification, assistance by legal guardians, and data protection safeguards. It underscores the need for proactive government support, especially during times of disaster and economic strain, by leveraging existing local disaster risk reduction resources.

By enacting this proposed measure, the State not only consolidates the legal guarantees for the elderly and persons with disabilities but also reaffirms its commitment to an inclusive and socially just society—where age or disability does not diminish one's dignity nor one's access to essential goods, services, and opportunities.

This bill was approved on Third and Final Reading during the 19th Congress. In view of the foregoing, the early passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



MIKAELA ANGELA B. SUANSING

1st District of Nueva Ecija

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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AN ACT
RATIONALIZING THE BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES OF SENIOR CITIZENS AND
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to acknowledge the fundamental rights of senior citizens and persons with disabilities, ensuring their equal access to government services, discounts, and privileges in recognition of their invaluable contribution to society.

The State shall promote inclusivity, equity, and accessibility to goods and services to enable senior citizens and persons with disabilities, through standardized benefits and incentives, to enjoy adequate social services, decent standard of living, and improved quality of life.

SEC. 2. *Privileges for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities.* – Senior citizens and persons with disabilities shall be entitled to the following:

- (a) Twenty percent (20%) discount and exemption from the value-added tax (VAT) on goods and services, as provided under Section 4 of Republic Act (RA) No. 7432, otherwise known as the “Senior Citizens Act,” as amended, and Section 32 of RA No. 7277, otherwise known as “Magna Carta for Persons with Disability,” as amended, which shall be applied on the final price of the goods or services after a promotional offer or discount, if any has been provided, including membership privilege, and dining cards, extended by business establishments, upon presentation of a valid identification card verifying the status of the senior citizens or persons with disabilities: *Provided,* That the input tax attributable to VAT-exempt transactions granted to senior citizens and persons with disabilities shall not be allowed as credit against the output tax but should be treated as deductible expense. In no case shall a promotion or discount offered by a business establishment to the general public be considered in compliance

with Section 4 of RA No. 7432, as amended, and Section 32 of RA No. 7277, as amended;

- (b) Special discount on purchase of basic necessities and prime commodities, which shall be applied on the final price of the goods or services after a promotional offer or discount extended by business establishments;
- (c) Twenty percent (20%) discount and exemption from the VAT on the utilization of transportation services, including the payment for parking fees in establishments with public parking facilities such as malls, hospitals, hotels, and other similar places, and the use of expressways and skyways;
- (d) The grant of fifteen percent (15%) discount on the monthly utilization of water and electricity supplied by public utilities: *Provided*, That the individual meters for the foregoing utilities are registered in the name of the senior citizen or person with disability residing therein: *Provided, further*, That the discount shall apply to: (1) electricity usage of up to the first one hundred kilowatt-hour (100kwh), and (2) water usage of up to the first thirty cubic meters (30m³): *Provided, furthermore*, That the privilege is granted per household regardless of the number of senior citizens or persons with disabilities residing therein;
- (e) Additional deduction from gross income of employers of senior citizens and persons with disabilities, equivalent to twenty-five percent (25%) of the total amount paid as salaries and wages: *Provided*, That senior citizen and person with disability identification (ID) cards are attached; and
- (f) Exemption from fees on training for socioeconomic programs by government agencies.

SEC. 3. Government Assistance for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities. – The government shall provide the following assistance to senior citizens and persons with disabilities:

- (a) The DOH, in coordination with the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, shall provide free medical and dental services, diagnostic and laboratory fees such as x-rays, computerized tomography scans and blood tests, to indigent senior citizens and persons with disabilities in all government facilities;
- (b) The National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC) and the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), in consultation with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, shall design and implement training programs that shall provide senior citizens and persons with disabilities with vocational skills to enable them to obtain gainful employment or engage in livelihood activities; and
- (c) Local government units (LGUs) shall provide social safety assistance to cushion the effects of recessions, disasters, and calamities among senior citizens and persons with disabilities. The social safety assistance which shall include food, medicines, and financial assistance for domicile repair shall be sourced from the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund of LGUs where the senior citizen or person with

disability resides, subject to the guidelines to be issued by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

SEC. 4. *Threshold of Discounts for Basic Necessities and Prime Commodities.* – The total amount of discounted purchases of senior citizens and persons with disabilities for basic necessities and prime commodities shall not exceed the amount of Two thousand five hundred pesos (P2,500) per calendar week without carry over of the unused amount: *Provided*, That the said amount shall be spent on items commensurate to the personal and exclusive consumption of the senior citizen or person with disability: *Provided, further*, That said amount shall be adjusted by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Agriculture, and Department of Energy every five (5) years to its present value using the Consumer Price Index, as published by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

SEC. 5. *Tax Treatment for the Special Discount on Purchase of Basic Necessities and Prime Commodities.* – Business establishments may claim the discounts granted under subsections (a), (c), and (j) of Section 4 of RA No. 7432, as amended, and Section 32 of Republic Act No. 7277, as amended, as deduction based on the net cost of goods sold or services rendered: *Provided*, That the cost of the discount shall be allowed as deduction from gross income for the same taxable year that the discount is granted: *Provided, further*, That the total amount of the claimed tax deduction net of VAT, if applicable, shall be included in their gross sales receipts for tax purposes and shall be subject to proper documentation and to the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, as amended.

SEC. 6. *Adapting the eGov PH Super App for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities.* – The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall ensure access to the eGov PH Super App and incorporate dedicated sections within the platform with user-friendly interface including adjustable text sizes, voice assistance, and other features for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, which shall provide:

- (a) Access to various national and local government services, including healthcare, livelihood, and social services;
- (b) Informational resources on their rights and privileges; and
- (c) Link with various establishments for seamless access and interaction.

Senior citizens and persons with disabilities may continue to avail of government services and assistance through their respective local government units.

The DICT shall develop a roadmap in two (2) phases, to wit:

- (a) Database integration and issuance of digital ID cards. – The DICT shall integrate the eGov PH Super App with the National Identification database of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and the Philippine Registry for Persons with Disabilities of the Department of Health (DOH).

Senior citizens shall be issued digital copies of their IDs powered by the National ID within the eGov PH Super App.

Persons with disabilities shall apply for their digital IDs on the eGov PH Super App. The local government units (LGUs) shall be authorized to verify and approve these applications via the e-LGU system within the eGov PH Super App: *Provided*, That in cases where a medical certificate is not required to prove disability, the persons with disabilities shall apply manually in their respective LGUs for physical verification. Upon approval, digital copies of the persons with disability IDs shall be issued to the applicants through the eGov PH Super App.

The digital copy of the senior citizen ID or person with disability ID shall be considered as a valid proof of identity of any senior citizen or person with disability for purposes of availing the rights and privileges that one is entitled to under the law.

(b) Availment of discounts from establishments through the eGov PH Super App. – The DICT shall enable the integration of business establishments in the eGov PH Super App to enhance the accessibility of discounts to senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Upon integration, these establishments shall verify the identity of senior citizens and persons with disabilities with the electronic Know-Your-Customer Facility or e-KYC in the eGov PH Super App and use the app as an alternative mechanism to the use of purchase booklet for the grant of discounts. The discounts shall include the following:

1. Twenty percent (20%) discount and value-added tax (VAT) exemption on medicine purchases in all drugstores, as provided under Republic Act (RA) No. 9994, otherwise known as the “Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010,” and RA No. 10754, otherwise known as “An Act Expanding the Benefits and Privileges of Persons with Disability (PWD)”;
2. Five percent (5%) special discount on basic necessities and prime commodities, as provided under Joint Memorandum Circular No. 01, Series of 2022, entitled “Guidelines on the Provision of the Mandatory Statutory Benefits and Privileges of the Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities on their Purchases through Online (E-Commerce) and Phone Call/SMS.”

Finally, all further developments in the eGov PH Super App shall cater to the needs and accessibility of senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

SEC. 7. Assistance of a Legal Guardian. – The legal guardian, as defined by the Family Code of the Philippines and other pertinent laws, shall assist the senior citizen or person with disability, who encounters difficulties in navigating the eGov PH Super App. It shall also be the duty of the legal guardian to monitor the benefits and privileges granted to the senior citizen and person with disability by law. In the absence of a legal guardian, or court-appointed guardian, or pending the appointment of one, the senior citizen or person with disability may authorize anyone of legal age.

SEC. 8. Tax Administration. – For purposes of tax monitoring compliance, business establishments shall record on the eGov PH Super App the transactions related to the goods purchased and services performed with twenty percent (20%) discount and exemption from

VAT, and the five percent (5%) special discount on basic necessities and prime commodities, granted to senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

SEC. 9. *Equality Clause.* – Any discount or privilege, or the equivalent thereof, granted under other existing laws, or which may hereafter be granted to either senior citizens or persons with disabilities under any subsequent law, shall be accorded immediately and unconditionally to the other sector.

SEC. 10. *Penalties.* – The penalty of imprisonment ranging from one (1) year to three (3) years and a fine of not less than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) but not more than Two million pesos (P2,000,000.00) shall be imposed on persons who knowingly and unlawfully violate data confidentiality or security data systems, or breaks in any way into any system where personal and sensitive information of the senior citizens and persons with disabilities are stored.

SEC. 11. *Transitory Provisions.* –

- (a) The pertinent agencies and stakeholders shall have a twelve (12)-month transitory period, starting from the effectivity of this Act, to ensure compliance with its provisions.
- (b) In order to maintain uninterrupted access to features for senior citizens and persons with disabilities until the full implementation of the eGov PH Super App, senior citizens and persons with disabilities may continue utilizing their respective IDs issued by the concerned LGUs for purchasing goods and services from business establishments.

SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The NCSC and the NCDA, in consultation with the DICT, Department of the Interior and Local Government, DSWD, DTI, DOH, Department of Finance, Bureau of Internal Revenue, and other relevant agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act: *Provided*, That the failure of the concerned agencies to promulgate the said rules and regulations shall not prevent the implementation of this Act upon its effectivity.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any section, clause, or provision of this Act is declared illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional, such parts not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – The pertinent provisions of the following laws are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly:

- (a) Section 4 of RA No. 9994, insofar as applicability of promotional discounts, grant of discount on utilities, and exemption from training fees are concerned, and Section 5 of the same Act, insofar as providing social safety assistance, and tax deduction granted to private companies are concerned;

- (b) Sections 1 and 32 of RA No. 10754, entitled “An Act Expanding the Benefits and Privileges of Persons with Disability (PWD)”, insofar as grant of discount to medical and dental services in all government facilities, and grant of discount to rehabilitation services in government hospitals and higher discount granted by the commercial establishment are concerned;
- (c) Sections 9 and 24 of RA No. 7277, insofar as providing vocational rehabilitation, and grant of free postal charges are concerned;
- (d) Section 2(h)(1) of RA No. 11916, entitled “An Act Increasing the Social Pension of Indigent Senior Citizens and Appropriating Funds Therefor, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 7432”;
- (e) Section 32(j) of RA No. 9442, entitled “An Act Amending Republic Act No. 7277, Otherwise Known as the ‘Magna Carta for Disabled Persons, and for Other Purposes’”; and
- (f) Section 4(l) of RA No. 9257, entitled “An Act Granting Additional Benefits and Privileges to Senior Citizens Amending for the Purpose 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’”.

All other laws, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,