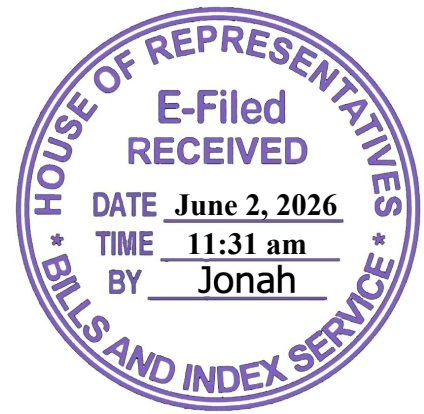


TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL NO. 9640

Introduced by Rep. CARMELO G. LAZATIN, JR.

**AN ACT
GRANTING FREE GLAUCOMA SCREENING FOR SENIOR CITIZENS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness in the Philippines and has affected an estimated number of over one (1) million Filipinos.¹ Unfortunately, only about half of these cases are diagnosed and many patients seek treatment only when the disease is already in advanced stages.

This may be attributed to limited awareness about glaucoma symptoms, lack of access to eye care services, and the expensive cost of diagnostic tests and treatment.² It may also be due to the belief that poor vision and other eye-related problems are part of aging.

With the proposed bill, the State seeks to establish a program for free glaucoma screening for senior citizens to curb the increasing number of blind individuals, especially the indigent who could not afford costly eye treatment, and to afford our elderly citizens a chance to enjoy the beauty of their environment and explore freely without the need for assistance of a relative or caregiver.

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


CARMELO G. LAZATIN, JR.

¹ “How common is glaucoma in the Philippines?” Available at <https://glaucoma.ph/glaucoma-cases-philippines/>

² Ibid.



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

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AN ACT
GRANTING FREE GLAUCOMA SCREENING FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

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

1 *Section 1. Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Free Glaucoma Screening for
2 Senior Citizens Act”

3
4 *Section 2. Declaration of Policies.* – It is the policy of the State to protect and promote
5 the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. To this end, the State
6 shall grant and provide free glaucoma screening for senior citizens.

7
8 *Section 3. Provision of Free Glaucoma Screening for senior citizens.* – The Local
9 Government Units (LGUs) in coordination with the Department of Health (DOH), shall provide
10 free glaucoma screening, which shall be conducted in a DOH-retained hospital, LGU hospital,
11 rural health unit or barangay health station, subject to such standards as may be issued by the DOH.

12
13 Senior Citizens availing of this service must submit proof of eligibility as a senior citizen,
14 as may prescribed in the implementing rules and regulations, provided that access to the service,
15 as far as practicable, be facilitated through the Office for the Senior Citizens Affairs and/or Local
16 Social Welfare and Development Office.

17
18 *Section 4. Appropriations.* – To carry out the provision of this Act, the Local Government
19 Units shall appropriate in their annual budget such sums as may be necessary for each fiscal year.

1 The DOH may include in its annual budget the amounts necessary for technical assistance,
2 capacity-building, and the development of screening standards, subject to existing budgeting rules
3 and regulations.
4

5 *Section 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the
6 effectivity of this Act, the Department of Health and National Commission of Senior Citizens, in
7 coordination with relevant local government units, government agencies, and stakeholders, shall
8 promulgate the implementing rules and regulations to effectively carry out the provisions of this
9 Act.
10

11 *Section 6. Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional
12 or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.
13

14 *Section 7. Repealing clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or parts
15 thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified
16 accordingly.
17

18 *Section 8. Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
19 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
20

21 Approved,