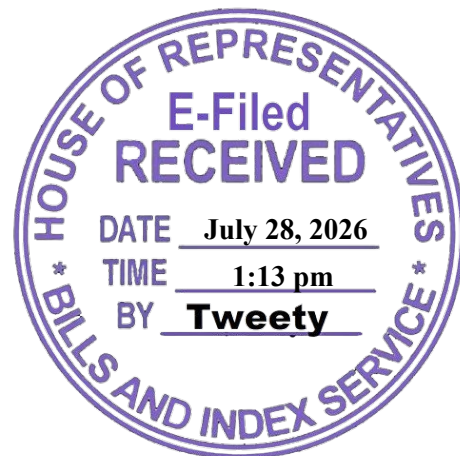


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Twentieth Congress
2nd Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10274



Introduced by Representative **MAURICIO G. DOMOGAN**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 7876, otherwise known as the Senior Citizens Center Act of the Philippines recognizes the important role of community-based centers in promoting the welfare, health, social participation, and productivity of senior citizens. These centers are intended to serve as venues for recreational, educational, health, livelihood, and other support services for older persons.

Despite the clear intent of the law, many cities and municipalities still do not have operational Senior Citizens Community Centers, while others lack adequate facilities, personnel, programs, and resources. The absence of uniform standards and effective oversight has resulted in uneven implementation across local government units, thereby limiting the access of senior citizens to services that are essential to their well-being and active aging.

With the enactment of Republic Act No. 11350 creating the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC), the government now has a dedicated institution tasked with promoting and protecting the rights and welfare of older persons. However, the NCSC requires stronger regulatory authority and clearer mechanisms to ensure the proper establishment, operation, and maintenance of Senior Citizens Community Centers nationwide.

This bill seeks to address these gaps by mandating the establishment of at least one (1) fully operational Senior Citizens Community Center in every city and municipality and by strengthening the oversight, regulatory and enforcement powers of the NCSC over these centers. This measure authorizes the NCSC to prescribe binding minimum standards, conduct announced and unannounced compliance audits, issue compliance directives, and impose administrative sanctions after due notice and hearing.

The bill likewise creates a dedicated Senior Citizens Community Center Program Office under the NCSC to provide technical assistance, manage nationwide implementation, and maintain a comprehensive monitoring system. To support local government units, particularly low-income, geographically isolated, and disadvantaged municipalities, the measure establishes a Senior Citizens Community Center Development Fund that will provide performance-based financial assistance for the construction, rehabilitation, modernization, and operation of community centers.

Furthermore, the bill institutionalizes monitoring, reporting, and accountability mechanisms, including referrals to the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Commission on Audit (COA), and the Office of the Ombudsman in cases of persistent non-compliance or misuse of public funds.

By strengthening community-based support systems for older persons, this measure advances the constitutional mandate to give priority to the needs of the elderly and promotes a society where senior citizens can live with dignity, security, participation, and improved quality of life.

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



MAURICIO C. DOMOGAN

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HOUSE BILL NO. 10274

Introduced by Representative **MAURICIO G. DOMOGAN**

**AN ACT STRENGTHENING SENIOR CITIZENS COMMUNITY
CENTERS AND ENHANCING THE REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF
THE NATIONAL COMMISSION OF SENIOR CITIZENS, AMENDING
FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11350, OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS THE “NATIONAL COMMISSION OF SENIOR CITIZENS
ACT” AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Senior Citizens Community Centers Strengthening Act.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to uphold the dignity, well-being, and active participation of senior citizens by ensuring their access to quality, safe, accessible, and adequately equipped Senior Citizens Community Centers (SCCCs). The State likewise recognizes the need to strengthen institutional mechanisms for the establishment, operation, regulation, and monitoring of such centers through the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC), in partnership with local government units (LGUs) and other government agencies.

SEC. 3. Coverage. This Act shall apply to all cities and municipalities, government agencies, and other entities involved in the establishment, operation, management, and funding of Senior Citizens Community Centers.

SEC. 4. Mandatory Establishment of Senior Citizens Community Centers (SCCC). – Every city and municipality shall establish and maintain at least one (1) fully functional Senior Citizens Community Center compliant with the standards prescribed by the NCSC.

Cities and municipalities with large senior citizen populations, geographically dispersed communities, or special demographic conditions may establish additional centers as may be determined by the NCSC.

The SCCC shall:

- a) Be accessible and compliant with existing accessibility laws and regulations, including universal design principles;
- b) Provide social, recreational, cultural, health, wellness, and livelihood programs;
- c) Serve as an information and referral hub for government services and benefits for senior citizens;
- d) Maintain basic facilities, equipment, and trained personnel as prescribed by the NCSC;
- e) adopt climate- resilient and disaster-ready architectural features.

The SCCCs established under this Act shall complement, and not duplicate existing social protection, health, and community service facilities operated by national government agencies, including but not limited to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Health (DOH), and those established by local government units (LGUs).

SCCCs shall function as integrated community-based hubs that facilitate access to, coordination of, and referral for services provided by these agencies, including social welfare programs, primary health care, rehabilitation, and livelihood support.

The NCSC shall ensure inter-agency coordination and service convergence and may enter into memoranda of agreement with concerned agencies to define roles, avoid program overlap, and maximize resource utilization.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to diminish or supersede the mandates of existing agencies, but rather to enhance service delivery through coordination, integration, and local accessibility.

SEC. 5. Reinforcement of Existing Mandate. - The provisions of Republic Act No. 7876, Republic Act No. 9994, and Republic Act 11350, are hereby strengthened. The establishment of community centers shall no longer be merely directory but shall constitute a mandatory obligation of all cities and municipalities, subject to the oversight and regulatory authority of the NCSC.

SEC. 6. Regulatory Authority of the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC). - The NCSC shall serve as the national regulatory authority over all Senior Citizens Community Centers and shall have the following powers and functions;

a) Standards and Accreditation Authority - Formulate, prescribe, and enforce mandatory minimum standards for the physical infrastructure, personnel complement, accessibility features, and service delivery protocols of all SCCCs. The NCSC shall issue Certificates of Compliance to centers that meet these standards. No SCCC shall operate or receive national government subsidies without a valid Certificate of Compliance;

b) Visitorial and Audit Powers - Conduct announced and unannounced inspections, compliance audits and performance evaluations of SCCCs. For this purpose, the NCSC shall have access to the facilities, books of accounts, and operational records of the center, and may audit the utilization of LGU budget allocations for senior citizens relative to SCCCs;

c) Administrative Sanctions and Corrective Directives- Issue orders of compliance and show cause orders to agencies found in violation of the prescribed standards. The NCSC may impose administrative fines after due notice and hearing and recommends to the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) the deferment, withholding and suspension of discretionary grants or technical assistance for persistent non-compliance;

d) Adjudicatory Oversight – Hear and resolve complaints regarding the mismanagement of SCCCs or the denial of services to senior citizens within these centers. The NCSC may recommend administrative and criminal actions to the Office of the Ombudsman, the Commission on Audit (COA), or the Civil Service Commission (CSC), as appropriate;

e) National Registry and Monitoring System – Maintain a centralized, digitized National Registry of SCCCs and an Integrated Monitoring System to track the real- time status of service delivery, compliance levels, and budget utilization nationwide;

f) Fund Administration – Administer the Senior Citizens Community Center Development Fund (SCCCDF) created under this Act, including the release of funds to compliant LGUs and the direct implementation of pilot projects in underserved areas;

g) Technical Assistance and Capacity- Building – Deploy regional technical assistance teams to help LGUs, especially low-income and geographically

isolated municipalities, in planning, constructing, retrofitting, and operating SCCCs in accordance with national standards; and

h) Exercise such other powers as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act.

SEC. 7. Minimum Standards. Within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the NCSC shall promulgate minimum standards covering, among others:

- a) Building safety and accessibility;
- b) Universal design standards;
- c) Health and wellness services;
- d) Recreational, educational, and livelihood programs;
- e) Nutrition services;
- f) Information and communication facilities;
- g) Staffing requirements;
- h) Financial accountability;
- i) Emergency preparedness; and
- j) Protection of the rights and welfare of senior citizens.

SEC. 8. Senior Citizens Community Center Program Office (SCCCPO). There is hereby created under the NCSC a Senior Citizens Community Center Program Office to oversee planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the SCCC Program.

The SCCCPO shall:

- a) Develop infrastructure and operational templates consistent with national standards;
- b) Certify compliance of SCCCs and issue Certificates of Compliance;
- c) Deploy regional technical assistance teams;
- d) Coordinate with relevant national government agencies for integrated service delivery;
- e) Maintain the National Registry and Monitoring System; and
- f) Perform such other functions as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act.

SEC. 9. Senior Citizens Community Center Development Fund (SCCCDF).

– A Senior Citizens Community Center Development Fund is hereby established to be managed and administered by the NCSC. The SCCCDF shall serve as a performance-based financial assistance mechanism for LGUs.

9.1. Conditions Precedent for Access - An LGU may only access the SCCCDF upon fulfilment of the following conditions;

- a) Land Title or Usufruct – Submission of a Transfer Certificate of Title (TCT) or a valid Deed of Usufruct in favor of the LGU for a land area of not less than five hundred (500) square meters, specifically designated for the SCCC;
- b) Approved Site Development Plan – Presentation of an architectural and engineering plan that conforms to the National Building Code and the NCSC's mandatory minimum standards for senior-friendly accessibility;
- c) Local Ordinance and Appropriation – Proof of a duly enacted local ordinance establishing the SCCC and a Sangguniang Resolution committing local counterpart funds for its maintenance and other operating expenses;
- d) Technical Validation – A certification from the SCCCPCMO that the proposed location is strategically situated for maximum accessibility to the senior citizen population; and
- e) Compliance Record – For existing SCCC's seeking upgrades, a passing rating in the most recent NCSC compliance audit and timely submission of previous annual reports.

9.2. Funding Priority- SCCCDF shall prioritize allocation based on the following hierarchy;

- a. Unserved and underserved areas;
- b. 4th, 5th, and 6th Class municipalities;
- c. LGUs with the highest density of senior citizens relative to total population;
- d. LGUs with no existing functional senior citizen facility.

9.3. Permissible Use of Fund - SCCCDF shall be used strictly for:

- a) Capital Outlay – Construction of new SCCC's or retrofitting of existing structures to meet NCSC standards;
- b) Assistive Technology Equipment – Procurement of medical-grade fitness equipment, digital literacy stations, and geriatric health monitoring tools; and

c) Seed Funding for Livelihood – Initial capital for community-based social enterprises managed by senior citizen cooperatives or organizations.

9.4. Budget Release Guidelines - The release of funds from the SCCCDF shall be subject to the following guidelines:

a. Programmed Appropriations – All releases shall be made in accordance with the approved General Appropriations Act (GAA) and the corresponding allotment release program issued by the DBM.

b. Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) – Funds shall be released through the issuance of a SARO and corresponding Notice of Cash Allocation (NCA), subject to compliance with the requirements set forth under this Act and pertinent budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations.

c. Performance- Based Release – The release of funds shall be performance-based and may be made in tranches, subject to:

1. Compliance with the conditions precedent provided in this Section.

2. Certification by the SCCCPMO of satisfactory progress or compliance with prescribed standards; and

3. Submission of required financial and physical accomplishment reports.

d. Direct Release to Implementing LGUs – Funds shall be released directly to qualified LGUs or, in the case of national implementation, to the NCSC, subject to existing government accounting and auditing rules.

e. Non-Compliance – Failure to comply with the prescribed requirements shall be grounds for the suspension, withholding, or cancellation of fund releases, without prejudice to the imposition of administrative sanctions under this Act.

f. Coordination with DBM and COA – The Commission shall coordinate with DBM and COA to ensure that all fund releases are consistent with applicable budgeting, accounting, and auditing standards.

9.5. Fund Programming and Utilization Rules – The programming, allocation, and utilization of the SCCCDF shall be governed by the following rules;

a. Annual investment Programming- The NCSC shall prepare an annual SCCC Investment Program, consistent with national development priorities and aligned with the Philippine Development Plan, indicating priority projects, target beneficiaries, and corresponding budget allocations.

b. Priority Allocation Framework – Fund allocation shall strictly follow the prioritization criteria under this Section and shall ensure equitable regional distribution and preferential support to unserved and underserved areas.

c. Multi-Year Programming – The NCSC may adopt a multi-year programming approach for large-scale infrastructure projects, subject to existing budgeting laws, rules, and regulations.

d. Utilization Restrictions – Funds shall be used strictly for the purposes enumerated under this Section, provided, that no portion of the fund shall be used for personnel services, regular maintenance and other operating expenses of LGUs, or any purpose not directly related to the establishment, upgrading, or equipping of SCCCs.

e. Financial Management and Reporting – Recipient LGUs shall maintain separate books of accounts for SCCCDF funds and shall submit periodic financial and physical accomplishment reports in accordance with COA and DBM requirements.

f. Reversion of Unutilized Funds – Unobligated or unutilized funds after a specified period, as may be determined in the IRR, shall revert to the SCCCDF and be made available for reallocation to other qualified LGUs.

g. Transparency and Accountability – NCSC shall ensure public disclosure of fund allocations, releases, and project status through its official website and other appropriate platforms, in line with transparency and good governance principles.

SEC. 10. Performance- Based Incentives. - The NCSC may grant incentive funding, awards, and technical assistance to LGUs demonstrating outstanding compliance, innovation, and excellence in providing programs and services for senior citizens.

SEC. 11. Integration Into the Seal of Good Local Governance. – The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall integrate compliance with the provisions of this Act, including the establishment, operation, maintenance, and continued operation with the minimum standards for SCCCs prescribed by NCSC, as one of the assessment indicators under the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG), subject to the overall framework and criteria of the SGLG Program.

For this purpose, the DILG shall, in coordination with the NCSC, formulate the appropriate indicators, verification mechanisms, and performance benchmarks to measure local government compliance. The NCSC shall provide

the DILG with the results of its compliance audits and such other information as may be necessary for the evaluation of LGUs under the SGLG.

SEC. 12. Compliance and Accountability – Local Government Units shall submit annual reports to NCSC on the operational status, budget utilization, and performance of their SCCCs.

Persistent non-compliance with the standards prescribed by NCSC may be referred to DILG for administrative action, to COA for audit of fund utilization, or to the Office of the Ombudsman for neglect of duty, in accordance with existing laws.

NCSC shall submit an annual report to Congress detailing:

- a) The number and status of operational SCCCs nationwide;
- b) Compliance status of all LGUs, including a list of non-compliant LGUs;
- c) Budget utilization of the SCCCDF;
- d) Program outcomes and performance indicators, including the percentage of senior citizens served;
- e) Audit findings;
- f) Recommendations for policy reforms; and
- g) Other relevant information necessary to improve implementation.

SEC. 13. Transition Period and Phased Compliance. – All LGUs shall be given a transition period of three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act to fully comply with the requirements on the establishment and operationalization of SCCCs in accordance with the standards prescribed by the NCSC.

Compliance shall be implemented in phases, as follows;

- a. First Year – Planning and compliance with documentary requirements, including enactment of local ordinances, identification of site or usufruct arrangements, and submission of development plans;
- b. Second Year – Commencement of construction, retrofitting, or upgrading of facilities, and initial compliance with infrastructure and accessibility standards;
- c. Third Year – Full operationalization of the SCCC, including staffing, program delivery, and issuance of certification of compliance by the NCSC.

During the transition period, priority access to the SCCCDF and technical assistance shall be granted to LGUs classified as 4th, 5th, and 6th class

municipalities, as well as those in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas.

No administrative fines or sanctions shall be imposed for non-compliance during the transition period, *Provided*, That the LGU demonstrates good faith efforts and measurable progress toward compliance, as certified by the NCSC

Upon lapse of the transition period, full enforcement of all regulatory, compliance, and administrative sanction provisions under this Act shall take effect.

NCSC may grant a limited extension of not more than one (1) additional year to LGUs facing extraordinary circumstances, such as natural disasters, armed conflict, or severe fiscal constraints, subject to justification and evaluation.

SEC. 14. Appropriations. – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the NCSC. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued operation of the SCCCPO and the SCCCDF shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 15. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within one hundred twenty (120) days from the effectivity of this Act, the NCSC, in consultation with the DILG, DBM, DOH, DSWD, COA, and other relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations.

SEC. 16. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 17. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executives orders, administrative issuances, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 18. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,