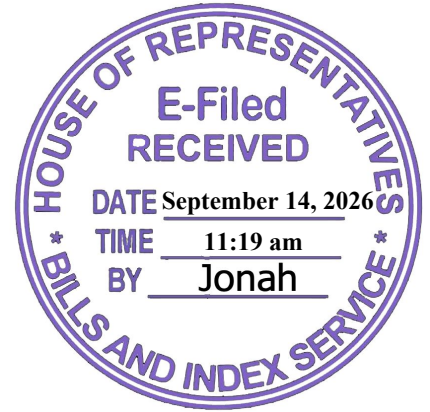


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **11273**



Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to provide accessible and comprehensive eye care services for senior citizens with functional visual impairments. It establishes a National Eye Health Program for Senior Citizens which aims to improve early detection, treatment, rehabilitation, and vision support services to help older Filipinos maintain their independence and quality of life.

Visual impairment is one of the leading causes of disability among older persons and is often caused by preventable or treatable conditions such as cataracts, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and age-related macular degeneration. According to the World Health Organization, at least 2.2 billion people worldwide have a vision impairment, and over one (1) billion cases could have been prevented or have yet to be addressed.¹ In the Philippines, the growing senior citizen population underscores the need to strengthen accessible eye care services to prevent avoidable blindness and vision loss.²

Despite existing public health programs, many elderly Filipinos continue to experience barriers to eye care due to financial constraints, limited access to specialists, and inadequate community-based vision services. This measure addresses these gaps by institutionalizing a dedicated national program under the Department of Health to deliver essential eye services and improve the functional capacity and overall well-being of older persons.

Protecting the eyesight of senior citizens enables them to remain active, productive, and independent members of society while reducing preventable disability and improving their quality of life. Establishing a comprehensive

¹ World Health Organization. (2026, February 10). Blindness and vision impairment. Accessed via <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/blindness-and-visual-impairment>. Accessed on 6 July 2026.

² Cruz, G.T. (2025), 'The Shifting Demographics of the Philippines: Towards and Ageing Society', in Cruz, G.T., C.J.P. Cruz, and Y.Saito (eds.), *Ageing and Health in the Philippines: Wave 2*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia.

national eye health program is a timely investment in healthy aging and dignified elderly care.

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



HON. ERIC G. YAP

Republic of the Philippines
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. **11273**

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A NATIONAL EYE HEALTH PROGRAM FOR SENIOR
CITIZENS WITH FUNCTIONAL VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 “*Eye Health Program for Senior Citizens Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of every senior citizen to accessible, affordable, equitable, and quality eye health services. The State shall establish a comprehensive eye health program that emphasizes prevention, early detection, timely treatment, rehabilitation, and continuing vision care to reduce avoidable blindness and visual impairment among older persons.

SEC. 2. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

- a. Eye health for senior citizens refers to the provision of medical and non-medical but essential services to senior citizens who have a functional visual impairment;
- b. Functional visual impairment refers to an impairment of sight that substantially interferes with a senior citizen’s ability to perform specific daily living skills and tasks. Persons who are not regarded as legally blind, pursuant to this paragraph, but who experience such an impairment of sight, shall be deemed eligible for the program pursuant to this Act; and
- c. Senior Citizens refer to individuals over sixty (60) years of age.

SEC. 3. *National Eye Health Program for Senior Citizens.* – There is hereby established, under the Department of Health (DOH), a National Eye Health Program for Senior Citizens with functional visual impairments.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Agency.* – The DOH shall implement the program enunciated in the preceding section of this Act in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government as part of its services intended to benefit the elderly.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DOH shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Appropriations.* – The sum of Fifty million pesos (Php 50,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury for the first three (3) years of implementation of this Act immediately following its enactment. Thereafter, the sums necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual appropriations of the DOH as a separate and distinct item.

SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,