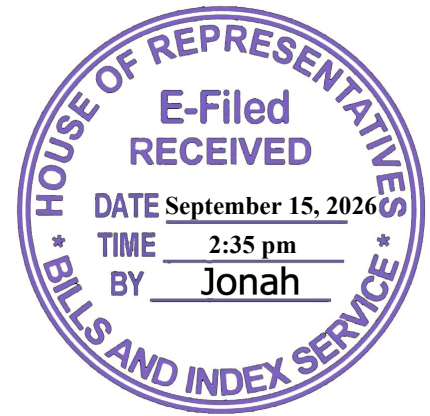


Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 11341



INTRODUCED BY REP. PATRICK MICHAEL “PM” D. VARGAS

AN ACT
REQUIRING LAND, AIR, AND SEA TRANSPORT PROVIDERS TO
PROVIDE PRIORITY SEATING FOR THE ELDERLY, FURTHER
AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432, AS
AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9257 AND 9994, OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS THE “EXPANDED SENIOR CITIZEN’S ACT OF 2010”

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is the duty of the State to ensure that public utilities and transportation services are accessible to all people, especially those in vulnerable groups such as senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

In furtherance of this mandate, Batas Pambansa Bilang 344, or the Accessibility Law, and Republic Act No. 9994, or the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010, were enacted to improve access to public transportation for persons with disabilities and senior citizens. Under these laws, public transport providers are required to designate seats for persons with disabilities, and the Department of Transportation is directed “to develop a program to assist senior citizens to fully gain access to public transport facilities.”

Administrative issuances, including Department of Transportation Department Order No. 2014-013, likewise provide for reserved or priority seating for persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and pregnant women in certain public transportation facilities. However, existing law and regulations do not establish a comprehensive statutory requirement expressly prescribing priority seating for senior citizens across all modes of public transportation—land, rail, air, and sea—along with uniform standards on seat designation, labeling, reservation, enforcement, and penalties.

As a result, senior citizens continue to experience difficulties in accessing priority seats. They often find themselves standing in cramped, moving vehicles while non-eligible passengers occupy seats that should be

available to them. The lack of clear statutory rules and consistent enforcement undermines the intent of existing accessibility and senior-citizen laws.

In recognition of the invaluable contributions of senior citizens to nation-building, it is only right and just to provide them with additional privileges, particularly in public transportation. By ensuring priority seating for the elderly, this measure promotes their mobility and access, enabling them to continue participating actively in the life of their communities.

This bill seeks to strengthen the Expanded Senior Citizens Act by expressly requiring priority seating for senior citizens in land, air, and sea transport, including rail services. It further provides for appropriate penalties for public transport operators who fail to comply with this requirement. It is the hope of this measure to mainstream mobility and access for senior citizens in public transportation, so that we may continue to support them in their daily lives and in their ongoing efforts to contribute to nation-building.

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



REP. PATRICK MICHAEL "PM" D. VARGAS

Fifth District, Quezon City

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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 “*Priority Seating for the Elderly Act.*”

SECTION 2. Amendatory Provisions. – For the purposes of this Act, the following provisions of Republic Act No. 7432, as amended by Republic Act No. 9257 and 9994, otherwise known as the “*Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010,*” is hereby further amended to read as follows:

- a) Section 5, Paragraph (f) of Republic Act No. 7432, as amended, is hereby further amended as follows:

“SEC. 5. Government Assistance. – x x x

“(a) Employment

x x x

“(f) Access to Public Transport

The Department of Transportation [~~and Communication~~] (DOTr) shall develop a program to assist senior citizens to fully gain access to public transport facilities.

PRIORITY SEATING FOR THE ELDERLY ALL PUBLIC UTILITY VEHICLES (PUV), PUBLIC UTILITY BUSES (PUB), RAIL TRANSPORT PROVIDERS, AND AIR AND SEA TRANSPORT

PROVIDERS, SHALL RESERVE AND DESIGNATE THE BEST POSSIBLE SEATS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOTR), IN COORDINATION WITH THE LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING AND REGULATORY BOARD (LTFRB), THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL RAILWAYS (PNR), THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (LRTA), THE MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY (MARINA), THE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF THE PHILIPPINES (CAAP), AND THREE (3) REPRESENTATIVES FROM REPUTABLE AND CONCERNED CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS, AS DETERMINED BY THE DOTR.

THE PRIORITY SEATS SHALL BE CLEARLY LABELLED TO INDICATE THAT PASSENGERS MAY USE THEM BUT MUST VACATE THEM IF THEY ARE NEEDED BY AN ELDERLY PASSENGER: *PROVIDED*, THAT PASSENGERS WHO ARE PREGNANT OR DISABLED SHALL BE EXEMPTED FROM THIS PROVISION.

COMMERCIAL AIR AND SEA TRANSPORT PROVIDERS SHALL ENSURE THAT PRIORITY SEATS ARE MADE AVAILABLE TO ELDERLY PASSENGERS DURING THE RESERVATION OF SEATS. ELDERLY PASSENGERS MAY NOT BE TRANSFERRED TO OTHER SEATS OR BUMPED OFF WITH AT LEAST ONE (1) WEEK OF PRIOR NOTICE AND WITHOUT REASON.

x x x”

- b) Section 10 of the same Act, as amended, is hereby further amended as follows:

“**SEC. 10. Penalties.** – x x x

“(a) x x x

“(b) x x x

“(c) x x x

(d) PENALTIES FOR NOT PROVIDING PRIORITY SEATING FOR THE ELDERLY. –

ANY PUV OR PUB OPERATOR WHO FAILS TO COMPLY WITH SECTION 5(F) OF THIS ACT SHALL, UPON CONVICTION, BE IMPRISONED FOR TWO (2) MONTHS TO ONE (1) YEAR OR PAY A FINE OF ONE THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 1,000.00) TO FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 5,000.00), WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THE IMPOSITION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS SUCH AS SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF THEIR FRANCHISE;

ANY RAIL TRANSPORT OPERATOR WHO FAILS TO COMPLY WITH SECTION 5(F) OF THIS ACT SHALL, UPON CONVICTION, BE IMPRISONED FOR FIVE (5) MONTHS TO TWO (2) YEARS OR PAY A FINE OF THIRTY THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 30,000.00) TO FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 50,000.00)

ANY COMMERCIAL AIR OR SEA TRANSPORT PROVIDER WHO FAILS TO COMPLY WITH SECTION 5(F) OF THIS ACT SHALL, UPON CONVICTION, BE IMPRISONED FOR FIVE (5) TO TEN (10) YEARS OR PAY A FINE OF ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 100,000.00) TO FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 500,000.00).

x x x

SECTION 3. *Appropriations.* – Such funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DOTR, in coordination with the LTFRB, PNR, LRTA, MARINA, CAAP, and three (3) representatives from reputable and concerned civil society organizations, as determined by the DOTR, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within fifteen (15) days from its effectivity.

SECTION 5. *Non-Impairment Clause.* – Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to diminish, impair, or repeal rights recognized, granted, or made available to disadvantaged, marginalized, or specific sectors under existing laws.

SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, presidential proclamations, letters of instruction, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect within fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,