



Senate
Office of the Secretary

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)**

23 JAN 30 P1:17

**SENATE
S. No. 1799**

RECEIVED BY.

Introduced by SENATOR FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE AND STRENGTHENED NUTRITION
PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9994, AS
AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "EXPANDED SENIOR CITIZENS
ACT OF 2010"**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 15, Article II of the 1987 Constitution states that "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them." Section 11 of Article XIII further provides that "the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development. Acknowledging the physical disadvantages of the underprivileged elderly, including the underprivileged sick, disabled, women, and children, their needs for health development is said to be a priority."

According to the 2020 Census of Population and Housing, senior citizens or people aged sixty (60) years old and over make up 8.5% (9.22 million) of the Filipino household population for that year. According to the Commission on Population and Development, citing recent data from the Philippine Statistics Authority, the percentage of Filipino elderly is rising throughout the years.¹

¹ Dona Z. Pazzibugan, 'Opportunity': PH senior population on the rise, *available at*: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1646487/opportunity-ph-senior-population-on-the-rise> (last accessed on 23 January 2023) (2022).

While the government has already increased the financial benefits and privileges of our senior citizens through the expanded senior citizens act of 2010 and the act increasing the social pension of indigent senior citizens, it cannot be denied that the majority of these financial benefits are just consumed by our senior citizens for the purchase of maintenance medicines.

Ageing is a biological phenomenon that is marked by 'temporal continuity, heterogeneity on cellular, somatic, and molecular level, and the ability of being modulated.'² The process of aging follows numerous changes in the body, which results in an overall decline in the health of an individual. At this point in time, nutrition plays a very crucial role and requires special attention as Filipinos reach old age.³ Good nutrition is very essential in all age groups, most especially in the elderly. It provides the energy and nutrients that would help prevent or manage certain lifestyle diseases. Unfortunately, our government has somehow been remiss in providing this comprehensive nutritional support to our elderly.

As such, this measure, providing a comprehensive nutrition program for senior citizens and strengthening our current Philippine nutritional framework, is hereby introduced in the fervent hope of ensuring the State's constitutional mandate to prioritize the health of an otherwise increasing elderly population in the country.

It is for this purpose that the urgent passage of this measure is sought.



FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

² Grassi M., Petraccia L., Mennuni G., Stephen D.W., Prashanthi V., Val J.L., et. al., Changes, functional disorders, and diseases in the gastrointestinal tract of elderly, pp. 559-567 (2011).

³ Damanpreet Kaur, et. al., Nutritional Interventions for Elderly and Considerations for the Development of Geriatric Foods, *available at*: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6971894/> (last accessed on 23 January 2023) (2019).

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

1 **Section 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the "Comprehensive
2 Senior Citizen Welfare Act".

3 **Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the declared policy of the State to
4 protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness
5 among them.¹ To further this policy, our highest law of the land also provides that the
6 state shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development,
7 giving priority to the needs of the underprivileged sick, elderly, disabled, women, and
8 children.²

9 **Sec. 3.** Section 5 (c) of Republic Act No. 9994, as amended, is hereby further
10 amended to read as follows:

¹ 1987 Constitution, Article II, Section 15.

² 1987 Constitution, Article XIII, Section 11.

1 "Section 5. Government Assistance. - The government shall provide the
2 following:

3 (a) xxx

4 (b) xxx

5 (c) Health

6 "The DOH, in coordination with local government units (LGUs), NGOs
7 and POs for senior citizens, shall institute a national health program and
8 shall provide an integrated health service for senior citizens. It shall
9 train community-based health workers among senior citizens and health
10 personnel to specialize in the geriatric care and health problems of senior
11 citizens.

12 **REALIZING THE CONTRIBUTION OF PROPER NUTRITION IN**
13 **THE OVERALL HEALTH OF A PERSON ESPECIALLY OF THE**
14 **ELDERLY, THE NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL (NCC), IN**
15 **COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH)**
16 **AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUs), IS HEREBY**
17 **MANDATED TO PREPARE A COMPREHENSIVE NUTRITION AND**
18 **WELLNESS PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS WHICH SHALL BE**
19 **DISSEMINATED AND MADE AVAILABLE TO EVERY**
20 **MUNICIPALITY FOR THE AWARENESS OF EVERY SENIOR**
21 **CITIZEN.**

22 **LGUS, THROUGH THEIR LOCAL HEALTH PERSONNEL, SHALL**
23 **CONDUCT REGULAR VISITATION TO EVERY SENIOR CITIZEN**
24 **WITHIN THEIR JURISDICTION TO ENSURE THAT THEIR**
25 **SENIOR CITIZEN CONSTITUENTS ARE ABLE TO CONSUME A**
26 **HEALTHY DIET IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE**
27 **NUTRITION AND WELLNESS PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATE TO**
28 **THEIR HEALTH CONDITION.**

1 LGUS, THROUGH THEIR OFFICE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS
2 AFFAIRS' OFFICE (OSCA), SHALL ACTIVELY INTEGRATE THE
3 COMPREHENSIVE NUTRITION AND WELLNESS PROGRAM IN
4 THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS. A MONTHLY REPORT ON THE
5 STATUS OF THE PROGRAM SHALL BE PREPARED BY THE OSCA
6 TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH."

7 **Sec. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within six (6) months from
8 the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Interior and Local Government, in
9 coordination and consultation with the National Nutrition Council, the Department of
10 Health, and other agencies concerned, shall promulgate such rules or guidelines as
11 may be necessary for the proper implementation of this Act.

12 **Sec. 5. *Appropriations.*** – The necessary appropriations for the conduct of
13 regular visitation by LGUs shall be appropriated and approved by the LGUs concerned.
14 For national government agencies, the requirements to implement the provisions of
15 this Act shall be included in their respective budgets.

16 **Sec. 6. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act shall be held
17 unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in
18 full force and effect.

19 **Sec. 7. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders,
20 proclamations, and other executive issuances which are inconsistent with or contrary
21 to the provisions of this Act are hereby amended or repealed accordingly.

22 **Sec. 8. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
23 following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

24 *Approved,*

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