

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2480



Introduced by: Hon. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D.

AN ACT
REDEFINING THE TERM "INDIGENT SENIOR CITIZEN" UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432,
AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9994, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "EXPANDED
SENIOR CITIZENS ACT OF 2010"

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIII, Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution provides that, "The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers."

The Constitution also states in Article XV, Section 4 that, "The family has the duty to care for its elderly members but the State may also do so through just programs of social security."

Republic Act 9994 or the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010 provides an array of benefits, privileges and assistance to senior citizens such as a twenty-percent (20%) discount and exemption from the value-added tax (VAT), if applicable, on the sale of some goods and services; death benefit assistance; educational assistance; free medical and dental services; and exemption from training fees for socioeconomic programs, among others.

It also grants indigent senior citizens additional privileges such as free vaccines, social pension and mandatory Philhealth coverage. An "indigent senior citizen" is defined under the law as any elderly who is frail, sickly or with disability, and without pension or permanent source of income, compensation or financial assistance from his/her relatives to support his/her basic needs, as determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in consultation with the National Coordinating and Monitoring Board.

Said definition excludes senior citizens who are not sick or disabled and who have pension or other sources of income but who are nonetheless in dire need of additional government assistance in the face of steep price of basic commodities and medical services.

This measure, which was approved on Third Reading by the House of Representatives on May 25, 2015; seeks to make a more inclusive definition of "indigent senior citizen" by removing the physical requirements and requirement of financial assistance by a senior citizen's relatives. Hence, more senior citizens will feel more secure during the remaining years of their lives because of the guarantee that they will have the ready access to financial assistance and health services.

In view thereof, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angelina'.

ANGELINA "HELEN" D.L. TAN, M.D.
4th District, Quezon

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

SECTION 1. Section 2, sub-paragraph h of Republic Act No. 7432, as amended by Republic Act No. 9994, otherwise known as the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010", is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 2. *Definition of Terms.* - For purposes of this Act, these terms are defined as follows:

"xxx

"(h) Indigent senior citizen refers to any elderly who is [frail, sickly or with disability, and] without pension, [or] permanent source of income, OR compensation [or financial assistance from his/her relatives] to support [his/her] THE SENIOR CITIZEN'S basic needs, as determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in consultation with the National Coordinating and Monitoring Board."

SEC. 2. All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,