

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
19TH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3275



Introduced by **REP. BERNADETTE “DETTE” G. ESCUDERO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill proposes a universal pension for senior citizens, regardless of whether they are indigent. It proposes a monthly minimum grant of One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000) to all senior citizens, subject to review every two years, taking into account factors such as inflation and funding availability.

Many low-income seniors cannot afford the annual checkups and maintenance medicines they require, let alone raise the necessary funds for treatment, even in government hospitals where fees are expected to be subsidized.

A significant percentage of Filipinos cannot currently count on receiving a pension in their golden years. 29% of senior citizens receive pensions based on their previous working history, with an additional 17% expected to receive the social pension in 2016. Meanwhile in 2017, the new administration allocated funds to cover 34% of the elderly. But when the coverage of these schemes is combined and followed, approximately 40% of Filipino senior citizens are still left with no pension at all. ¹

While there is already a social pension program for indigent senior citizens worth Php 1,000.00, which has helped to bridge the gap, an increasing number of elderly people remain unprotected by this social safety net.

A universal social pension, on the other hand, would close the pension coverage gap and provide a solid foundation for the development of the pension system. Finally, this would recognize the financial and other contributions made by senior citizens throughout their lives. Our elders today have contributed to the nation in a variety of ways throughout their lives,

¹ helpage.org/silo/files/the-feasibility-of-a-universal-social-pension-in-the-philippines.pdf

including paying taxes, contributing to economic growth, and raising future generations of Filipinos. ²

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bernadette G. Escudero', written in a cursive style.

BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO

² <https://www.helpage.org/silo/files/the-feasibility-of-a-universal-social-pension-in-the-philippines.pdf>

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
19TH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3275

Introduced by **REP. BERNADETTE “DETTE” G. ESCUDERO**

**AN ACT GRANTING UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PENSION TO SENIOR CITIZENS AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

Section 1. Short Title. This Act shall be known as “The Universal Social Pension for Senior Citizens Act”.

Section 2. Declaration of Policies. The Constitution recognizes vital initiatives that foster social justice and order, promote social services, and preserve social welfare. Be it noted that Article II, Section IX provides: “The State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all.” Furthermore, as expressed in Article II, Section X: “The State shall promote social justice in all phases of national development.” In addition, Article II, Section XI emphasizes the value given by the State to the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights. Furthermore, Article XIII, Section XI provides: “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.” More importantly, Article XV, Section IV provides: “The family has the duty to care for its elderly members but the State may also do so through just programs of social security.”

Consistent with the aforementioned Constitutional provisions and principles, the policies stated hereunder shall form part of the declared policies of this Act:

- a) To extend support to our senior citizens by providing monetary resources of the government to aid them towards a sustainable and decent living;

- b) To strengthen our shared duty in the promotion of basic Filipino values especially the rearing of the elderly people; and
- c) To further cultivate filial piety as a basic component of kinship and camaraderie between and amongst our people.

In consonance with the foregoing policies, this Act aims to:

- a) Formulate programs and systems that will ensure propriety and uniformity in its implementation, through a comprehensive and inclusive approach to senior citizens;
- b) Configure existing processes and procedures that will help provide orderly conduct of activities between and among senior citizens and their availment thereof;
- c) Establish norms and customs that will contribute to the development of a just and humane society that recognizes and gives value to the contributions and sacrifices of our senior citizens in and for our communities; and
- d) Reduce the number of financially-challenged senior citizens suffering from lack of or unwanted retirement plans.

Section 3. Definition of Terms. For the purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- a) “Senior citizen” refers to an individual aged 60 years old and above;
- b) “Qualified senior citizen” refers to an individual, aged 60 years old and above, who is eligible to receive the Universal Social Pension (USP), as provided for in this Act; and
- c) “Universal Social Pension (USP)” refers to monthly stipends amounting to PHP1,000.00 which are granted to qualified senior citizens, as determined and regulated by the provisions of this Act.

Section 4. Qualifications. A senior citizen, who is a permanent resident of the Philippines, having resided for a period of at least six (6) consecutive months; and with good moral character, as certified by a duly executed barangay clearance attesting the same, shall be eligible to receive the Universal Social Pension (USP); provided, however, that eligibility is not contrary to law or any provision explicitly stated in this Act.

Section 5. Universal Social Pension (USP). Any qualified senior citizen, as further determined by the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC), shall be entitled to receive the Universal

Social Pension (USP). The USP, in the form of a monetary grant, shall be given to qualified beneficiaries on a monthly basis, in the amount of PHP1,000.00, and regulated by the provisions of this Act.

Section 6. Implementation and Management Plan. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), together with the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC), in partnership with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), shall jointly formulate and devise application, evaluation, distribution, monitoring procedures, and other implementing rules and regulations of the program for the systematized administration thereof. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) shall be designated as the implementing institution that will promulgate rules to ensure compliance and congruence with the purposes of and provisions provided for in this Act.

Section 7. Waiver of Pension. Senior citizens may voluntarily file a waiver through the NCSC. Unclaimed pension fund shall be preserved by the DSWD for the purpose of the succeeding section of this Act.

Section 8. Undisbursed Fund. Undisbursed fund shall be divided proportionally among the active beneficiaries in the last quarter of the year and shall not be reverted to the National Treasury.

Section 9. Funding. The initial required fund of the program shall be determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), in consultation with the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC), sourced out from the available funds of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Funds, thereafter, necessary for further implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA), subject to the accounting and auditing procedures of the government.

Section 10. Repealing Clause. All laws, presidential decrees or issuances, executive orders, proclamations, administrative orders, rules and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

Section 11. Separability Clause. If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act shall remain valid and subsisting.

Section 12. Effectivity Clause. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its official publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,