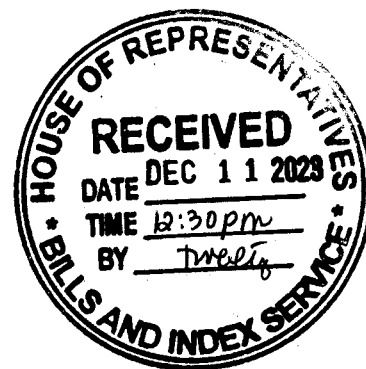


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 9704



Introduced by HON. RODOLFO "OMPONG" M. ORDANES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the age of digitalization and technological advancement, bridging the digital divide is crucial, especially for vulnerable and underserved demographics, such as senior citizens. The elderly frequently have trouble utilizing digital interfaces, which can lead to their exclusion from essential government benefits and services.

The Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) launched the eGov PH Super App, which offers a single portal for multi-sectoral government transactions and services. It makes it easier for Filipinos worldwide to access government documents, permits, identifications, and clearances.

In line with this, this bill recognizes the importance of inclusivity in digital governance by ensuring that senior citizens, as valued members of society, are provided with the necessary tools and access to government services. It aims to integrate the senior citizen identification card application and to accommodate senior citizens' concerns within the eGov PH Super App to ensure equitable access to government services, irrespective of age or technological proficiency.

Establishing a senior citizen ID application within the eGov PH Super App is a convenient and accessible means for the elderly to obtain senior citizen ID cards that grant them access to various government services and discounts. This feature streamlines the application process, reducing bureaucratic hurdles and enabling seniors to quickly verify their identity and eligibility for services through a user-friendly digital platform.

Moreover, including senior citizens' concerns within the eGov PH Super App signifies a commitment to digital inclusivity and accessibility. The application's dedicated section caters to senior citizens' specific needs by offering tailored services, information, and resources, empowering them to navigate through available government offerings independently and confidently.

Given the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


RODOLFO "OMPONG" M. ORDANES

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AN ACT
PROMOTING SENIOR CITIZEN INCLUSION THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF SENIOR
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION CARD APPLICATION AND OTHER SERVICES IN THE EGOV
PH SUPER APP

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to recognize and uphold the fundamental rights of senior citizens, ensuring their equal access to government services and acknowledging their invaluable contributions to society. The State shall promote inclusivity, equity, and accessibility in using technology so that senior citizens can readily access and benefit from government services through user-friendly and tailored digital platforms.

SECTION 2. Amendment to the eGov PH Super App. The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall incorporate a dedicated section within the eGov PH Super App platform specifically designed for senior citizens, which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. application process for the issuance of Senior Citizen Identification Cards (IDs) that can be completed through the eGov PH Super App;
- b. access to various government services tailored to the needs of senior citizens, including healthcare and social services, among others;
- c. informational resources on senior citizens' rights, benefits, and relevant legislation, and;
- d. a user-friendly interface with adjustable text sizes, voice assistance, and other accessibility features to accommodate the diverse needs of the elderly population.

Provide that, the eGov PH Super App will only serve as an alternative means for senior citizens to apply for their IDs and access any government services.

Senior citizens who do not have access to any digital devices and systems shall still have the right to visit their respective local government units for necessary assistance in availing government services physically or via their eLGU systems.

SECTION 3. Identity Verification System for Senior Citizens. In cases where senior citizens do not possess their senior citizen IDs or mobile phones while availing discounts and accessing government services through establishments utilizing the eGov PH Super App, an alternative identity verification system shall be established to facilitate their access without undue hindrance.

The alternative identity verification process shall include, but not be limited to, the following methods:

- a. personal identification through relevant information, such as full name, date of birth, address, or any other identifiable details available within the eGov PH Super App database, validated through personal questioning by authorized personnel or;
- b. biometric verification methods, including fingerprint scanning or facial recognition, if available and applicable, to confirm the identity of the senior citizen.

SECTION 4. Collaboration and Consultation. The DICT shall collaborate with relevant government agencies to ensure the comprehensive and effective implementation of the senior citizen features within the eGov PH Super App.

Regular consultations and feedback mechanisms shall be established to continuously improve and update the features and services provided to senior citizens within the eGov PH Super App.

SECTION 5. Information Officer. The DICT shall assign an Information Officer who shall ensure that the ICT systems for the senior citizen features are developed, implemented, properly secured, and compliant with standards as prescribed by the DICT and in accordance with relevant laws, rules, and regulations, including Republic Act No. 10173, or the "Data Privacy Act of 2012."

The Information Officer shall perform the following functions:

- a. Develop and supervise policies, strategies, and programs to enhance the accessibility, usability, and inclusivity of digital services provided to senior citizens through the eGov PH Super App.
- b. Coordinate with government agencies, non-governmental organizations, advocacy groups, and experts on senior citizen welfare to understand and address the unique needs and challenges faced by the elderly population in utilizing digital platforms and to conduct training programs, workshops, and awareness campaigns to educate senior citizens about the functionalities and benefits of using digital services available through the eGov PH Super App.
- c. Implement measures to ensure that the senior citizen features within the eGov PH Super App comply with accessibility standards, including but not limited to varying levels of technological literacy and visual impairments.
- d. Regular assessment and improvement of the senior citizen features in response to feedback, technological advancements, and changing needs of the elderly population.

The recruitment, selection, and appointment of the Information Officer assigned to the senior citizen features shall be in accordance with the civil service law, rules and regulations, and the competency standards prescribed by the DICT.

SECTION 6. Appropriations. The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DICT. Thereafter, the amount needed for its continuous implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 7. Separability Clause. If, for any reason, any section, clause, or term of this Act is held to be illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional, such parts not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. Repealing Clause. All laws, presidential decrees, issuance, executive orders, letters of instruction, rules, or regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. Effectivity Clause. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes first.

Approved,