

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)

SENATE
S.B. No. 2506

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Introduced by Senator Ramon Bong Revilla, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 7, Article XVI of the 1987 Constitution provides that "the State shall provide immediate and adequate care, benefits and other forms of assistance to war veterans and veterans of military campaigns, their surviving spouses and orphans."

Despite said provision, the government has continually failed to provide the necessary funding for the adequate compensation and assistance of our veterans and military retirees. Every year, their number constantly increases and the problem on the delayed processing of their claims is a perennial problem due to lack of sufficient funding.

It is incumbent upon the government to resolve this sad plight of our war heroes. These veterans and military retirees rightfully deserve the recognition for their sacrifices in defending our country and our treasured freedom.

This bill seeks to address the increasing arrears of the government for the pensions and benefits of our veterans and military retirees which have amounted to billions of pesos over the years. As annual appropriations could not cope with the rising number of pensioners and their beneficiaries, it is but necessary to explore ways to address these needs. As such, this bill proposes that proceeds from the development, lease or use of government properties shall be utilized solely for the payment of pension and benefits of war veterans and military retirees and for no other purpose.

Therefore, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.
Senator

SENATE

S.B. No. 2506

Introduced by Senator RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

**AN ACT MANDATING THE USE OF THE PROCEEDS FROM THE
DEVELOPMENT, LEASE OR USE OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTIES FOR
VETERANS' PENSIONS AND BENEFITS**

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

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* – Consistent with the constitutional mandate to provide immediate and adequate care and benefits to war veterans, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to provide the necessary funds to pay arrears in the veterans and military retirees' pensions and benefits.

SECTION 2. *Coverage.* – This Act shall apply to the lease, development or use, as the case may be, of the following properties of the government:

- a.) the former site of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) at Aroceros Street, Ermita, Manila;
- b.) the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City;
- c.) the Veterans Center in Taguig, Metro Manila;
- d.) the properties given by the Japanese government to the Philippine government under the Reparations Agreement, including the Roppongi and Nampeidai properties in Tokyo and the Naniwa-cho and Obanoyam properties in Kobe;
and
- e.) other properties that may be identified by the President of the republic of the Philippines, as recommended by the Secretary of National Defense.

SECTION 3. *Utilization of Proceeds for Veterans and Military Retirees' Pensions and Benefits.* – All proceeds from the lease, development or use of the aforesaid properties shall be utilized to fund pensions and benefits of veterans and military retirees, whether in arrears or due for payment by the national government: *Provided*, that any shortfall in payment of pensions and benefits to veterans and military retirees shall continue to be assumed by the national government from other sources, and that this Act is not intended to be in full satisfaction of said pensions and benefits; *Provided*, further, that all proceeds and receipts from the lease, development or use of said properties except operational expenses, shall be remitted directly to a separate account to any government bank as the depository bank, and disbursed by the PVAO for purpose of distribution of pensions and benefits directly to war veterans and military retirees, and for no other purpose.

SECTION 4. *Privatization Council and Privatization Management Office as Implementing Agencies.* – For purposes of implementing the provisions of this Act, the Privatization Council (PC) is hereby empowered to direct, supervise and coordinate private sector participation in the lease, development or other use of the above properties, in order to generate maximum cash recovery for the benefit of war veterans and military retirees.

The Privatization Management Office (PMO) is hereby authorized to implement the actual marketing for the lease, development or use of the above properties after securing the prior approval of the Council: to execute and deliver, on behalf of the national government, the deeds, contracts and other instruments as may be necessary in the fulfillment of its tasks; to submit periodic reports to the Council and to the PVAO on the status of private sector participation in the lease, development or use of said properties; and to adopt such rules and regulations as may be necessary to effect the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 5. *Sale of Covered Properties.* – Any sale of the aforesaid properties shall be remitted directly to the same account as the lease, development and use of the

covered properties, and shall likewise be disbursed by the PVAO for purpose of distribution of pensions and benefits directly to war veterans and military retirees, and for no other purpose; Provided, that such sale shall first secure the approval of the President of the Philippines, upon recommendation of the Secretary of the National Defense.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules.* – The Department of National Defense, through PVAO, the Department of Finance through the PMO, in coordination with the Committees on National Defense of the Senate the House of Representatives, respectively, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations for this Act within six months after enactment thereof.

SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any portion or provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or portions thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication in two national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,