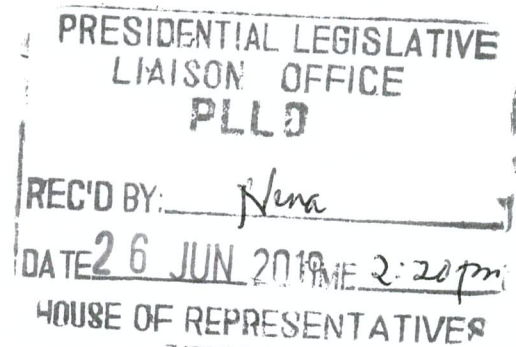


24 June 2019

**UNDERSECRETARY RYAN L. ESTEVEZ**  
Presidential Legislative Assistant for PLLO-HOR  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City



Dear **Undersecretary Estevez**,

This has reference to the letter dated 22 May 2019 of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office (PLLO) requesting for the Department to share its comments and suggestions on House Bill No. 9106 entitled "An Act Granting Additional Privileges to Persons with Disabilities, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 7277, as Amended, Otherwise Known as the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities and Appropriating Funds Therefor."

The Department wishes to express its full support on this measure that seeks to provide additional benefits and privileges to persons with disabilities.

To contribute to the bill's enhancement, we submit the following recommendations:

1. On **SEC. 1, , Sec. 4 of Chapter 1, Title One of RA 7277, as amended, letter (Q)**: Revise to read as:

*"(Q) ASSISTIVE DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGIES REFER TO WHEELCHAIRS, AND WALKERS, PROSTHESES, HEARING AIDS, AIDS FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED AND SPECIALIZED COMPUTER SOFTWARE, HARDWARE AND PERIPHERALS THAT ~~INCREASE~~ SPEED UP MOBILITY, HEARING, VISION OR COMMUNICATION CAPACITIES..."*

2. On **SEC. 2, Sec. 5 (Equal Opportunity for Employment) of Chapter 1, Title Two of RA 7277, as amended**:
  - a. To give grants of Recognition for Government agencies that employs persons with disabilities equivalent to 2% of their total personnel. The Office of the President (OP), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Civil Service Commission (CSC), and the National Council for Disability Affairs (NCDA) may take the lead in awarding government agencies.
  - b. Include in this Section monitoring and reporting of compliance by government agencies and private corporations' on their mandated percentage allocation for persons with disabilities. The CSC, DOLE and Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) should be required to submit reports on this.

3. On **SEC. 4, Sec. 32 of Chapter 8, Title Two of RA 7277, as amended:**

- a. **Item (L):** To increase the P500.00 monthly allowance for persons with disabilities, as it may not be sufficient to cover disability related costs such as medical needs, accessibility, and transportation among others. Moreover, government should focus on investing on human capital instead that will lower the disability related costs.
- b. **Item (M) and (N):** This Section should be available to all persons with disabilities regardless of socioeconomic status not just for marginalized persons with disabilities, to ensure economic empowerment, equal opportunities, and equal access for persons with disabilities.
- c. **Item (O):** Include exemption from government fees on birth certificates, marriage certificates, driver's license, CENOMAR, etc., as these are commonly availed by persons with disabilities.

4. On **Sec. 6 – Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR):** Include Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) catering to persons with disabilities in the crafting of the IRR.

5. General Comments:

- a. "Permanent disability" should be clearly and sufficiently defined. The Department of Health (DOH) and NCDRA should provide a list of considered permanent disabilities.
- b. Consider granting ten (10) days paid leave credits for persons with disabilities for their health and well-being (e.g., medical check-ups, mental health breaks, and therapy sessions).
- c. We recommend providing free access to speech, occupational and physical therapies for persons with disabilities with autism spectrum disorder, developmental disability and intellectual disability. These interventions will lead to the improvement and rehabilitation of these disabilities that are inaccessible due to high costs.

The proposed measure affirms the Department's mandate to lead in the development and implementation of social welfare and development policies and programs for persons with disabilities. By ensuring inclusive economic empowerment, equal opportunities, and equal

access to persons with disabilities, the bill will lighten the burden carried by Filipino persons with disabilities as one of the most vulnerable and marginalized members of the society.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rolando Bautista', written over a horizontal line.

**ROLANDO JOSELITO D. BAUTISTA**

Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_