

## Online shopping discount for seniors, PWDs pushed

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The 20-percent discount privilege of senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PWDs) should apply to online purchases, based on a measure filed before the House of Representatives.

House Resolution No. 1880 seeks to clarify the Expanded Senior Citizens Act and the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities and expand the coverage of the discount privileges granted under both laws.

The measure was filed by Quezon City fifth district Rep. Alfred Vargas, chair of the House committee on social services, citing the “lack of clear guidelines” from national agencies tasked with implementing the provision on discounts.

“With the lack of clear guidelines from implementing agencies regarding the special discounts on online transactions, millions of Filipino senior citizens and persons with disabilities are unable to avail of the privileges that they rightfully deserve under the law,” read the resolution.

Vargas lamented that senior citizens and PWDs have resorted to buying online due to restrictions on their movements during this pandemic, but are not given the discounts they deserve because online transactions do not make a distinction.

As early as October 2020, Vargas said consumer advocacy groups have been asking the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to release the guidelines to allow the elderly and PWDs to avail themselves of the discounts for their online purchases.

But as of May this year, the DSWD and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) “have confirmed that they have yet to release the guidelines after important consultations with other national government agencies,” Vargas said.

The lawmaker reminded these agencies that it is government’s duty “to ensure with urgency that our services for the people are made accessible especially for the marginalized and underprivileged.”

Aside from the DSWD and the DTI, the resolution also urges the National Commission for Senior Citizens, the National Commission on Disability Affairs and other relevant government agencies to immediately draft and implement the guidelines.