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The Basic Law on Measures for the Aging Society (Law No.129,1995)

On publishing the English version of "The Basic Law on Measures for the Aging Society"
The Management and Coordination Agency tentatively translated this document
in cooperation with the International Longevity Center(ILC-Japan).

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Preamble

As a result of the tireless efforts of its people, Japan has realized unprecedented economic prosperity and has created a society in which people can enjoy the longevity that is the wish of all mankind. In light of the fact that people can now look forward to a long life, a society must be created in which the elderly can live with a sense of security. In such a society people of all ages can live with a sense of security.

However, the proportion of the elderly in the general population is increasing at an extremely rapid pace, and it is expected that this proportion will soon reach one of the highest levels in this world. Unfortunately, growth in people's awareness of this problem and responses by the social systems are not proceeding as rapidly. The problems confronted are diverse and the time remaining to solve them is limited.

In order to deal with these circumstances and create an aging society in which people can enjoy true happiness throughout their lives, it is necessary to constantly review and revise social systems relating to employment, pensions, medical care, welfare, education, social involvement and living environments so as to adapt them to an aging society. To achieve this goal, both the national government and local governments, as well as corporations, local communities, households and individuals, must cooperate with one another and work actively to fulfill their respective roles.

This law has been enacted to clarify the basic objectives on measures for the aging society, to indicate the direction these measures will take, and to facilitate the promotion of comprehensive measures by the

national government and society as a whole.

Chapter I General Provisions

Article 1. (Purpose)

The rapid aging of Japanese society, coupled with changes in the economy and society, is having a broad impact on people's lives. This law has been enacted to promote, in a comprehensive manner, measures to deal appropriately with the aging society (hereinafter referred to as "measures for the aging society") by establishing the basic objectives of these measures, clarifying the responsibilities of the national government and local governments, and specifying the basic items of the measures. In this way, the law seeks to promote the sound development of the nation's economy and society and to enhance the stability of people's lives.

Article 2. (Basic Objective)

The basic objective of measures for the aging society is to create a society as described in the following items.

- i) A fair and energetic society where people can be ensured that they have the opportunity of participating in diverse social activities or working throughout their lives.
- ii) A society where people are respected as important members throughout their lives where local communities are formed based on the spirit of independence and solidarity.
- iii) An affluent society where people can live peacefully and with fulfillment throughout their lives.

Article 3. (Duties of the National Government)

The national government shall have the duty to enact and implement comprehensive measures for the aging society which conform to the basic objective given in the preceding article (referred to as "basic objective" in succeeding articles).

Article 4. (Duties of Local Governments)

With respect to measures for the aging society which conform to the basic objective, local governments shall have the duty to enact and implement measures appropriate for the social and economic conditions of the region in cooperation with the national government,.

Article 5. (Efforts of People)

People shall endeavor to deepen their understanding of economic and social changes accompanying the aging of society and to increase social solidarity while taking steps to ensure that they can lead healthy and prosperous lives during their old age.

Article 6. (General Principles Concerning Measures)

The government shall establish basic and comprehensive general principles concerning measures for the aging society as guidelines for the implementation of measures which the government should promote.

Article 7. (Legislative Measures, etc.)

The government shall adopt the necessary legislative, fiscal and other measures to fulfill the purpose of this law.

Article 8. (Annual Reports)

1. The government shall submit a report annually to the National Diet concerning the state of the aging society and the implementation of measures for the aging society adopted by the government.
2. The government shall prepare and submit to the National Diet annually a document which clearly describes the measures that will be adopted to take account of the state of the aging society as described in the report of the preceding paragraph.

Chapter II Basic Policy

Article 9. (Working and Income)

1. To contribute to the creation of a vital society, the government shall adopt measures necessary to guarantee that diverse opportunities exist which allow the elderly to work according to their motivations and abilities, to enable workers to develop their occupational abilities throughout their working lives, and to allow workers to effectively use their abilities until old age.
2. To contribute to the maintenance of a stable livelihood during old age, the government shall adopt measures necessary to ensure that public pensions systems provide, in conjunction with employment systems, an appropriate level of benefits.
3. To contribute to the realization of a more prosperous life during old age, the government shall adopt measures necessary to support the formation of assets through the efforts of people.

Article 10. (Health and Welfare)

1. To ensure that people can enjoy healthy and serene lives during old age, the government shall adopt comprehensive measures to allow people to take steps to maintain and improve their health throughout their lives.
2. To accurately meet diverse requirements relating to health maintenance, medical treatment and welfare of the elderly, the government shall adopt measures necessary for creating a comprehensive system for provision of appropriate health, medical and welfare services with a view to integrating health maintenance, medical treatment and welfare within regions, and for promoting the sound development and utilization of health maintenance, medical treatment services and welfare services provided by private service providers.
3. To enable the elderly who require long-term care to maintain independence in their daily lives, the government shall adopt measures necessary to promote the establishment of a foundation to allow the elderly to obtain appropriate long-term care services.

Article 11. (Learning and Social Involvement)

1. To enable people to lead prosperous, purposeful lives, the government shall adopt measures necessary to guarantee opportunities for lifelong learning.
2. To create vital regional societies, the government shall adopt measures necessary to encourage participation by the elderly in social activities and to establish a foundation for volunteer activities.

Article 12. (Living Environment)

1. To enable the elderly to maintain independence in their daily lives, the government shall adopt measures necessary for promoting the construction of appropriate housing, etc. for the elderly, for securing housing for the elderly, and for promoting the construction of public facilities designed to

permit utilization by the elderly.

2. To enable the elderly to lead anxiety-free lives, the government shall adopt measures necessary for ensuring safe transportation of the elderly and for establishing a system to protect the elderly against crime and disasters, etc.

Article 13. (Promoting Research)

To ensure the health of the elderly and to support independence in their daily lives, the government shall take steps to promote research concerning the prevention and treatment of diseases characteristic of the elderly and research and development concerning technical aids.

Article 14. (Reflecting the Views of People in Policy)

To contribute to the appropriate enactment and implementation of measures for the aging society, the government shall adopt measures necessary to establish a system for reflecting the views of people in government policy.

Chapter III The Aging Society Policy Council

Article 15. (Establishment of Council and Work Administered)

1. The Aging Society Policy Council (hereinafter referred to as "the Council") shall be established as an auxiliary organ of the Cabinet Office.

2. The Council shall administer the following work.

i) Preparation of a draft of the general principles of Article 6.

ii) Coordination of the administrative agencies concerned with measures for the aging society.

iii) In addition to the preceding two items, the Council shall conduct deliberations concerning important matters regarding measures for the aging society and promote the implementation of measures for the aging society.

Article 16. (Organization, etc.)

1. The Council shall be comprised of a Chairperson and council members.

2. The Prime Minister shall be assigned to the position of Chairperson.

3. Council members shall be designated by the Prime Minister from the Chief Cabinet Secretary, the directors of concerned administrative agencies and the Ministers of State for Special Missions as provided for in Article 9, paragraph 1 of the Cabinet Office Establishment Law (Law No.89 of 1999).

4. A Secretary shall be appointed to the Council.

5. The Secretary shall be designated by the Prime Minister from the staff of concerned administrative agencies.

6. The Secretary shall assist the Chairperson and council members in administering the work of the Council.

7. Necessary matters concerning the organization and operation of the Council other than those stipulated in the preceding paragraphs shall be determined by cabinet order.

Supplementary Provisions

(Date of Enforcement)

1. This law shall be enforced on a day specified by cabinet order within a period not exceeding three months from the date of promulgation.

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