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Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Bill

Bill No. 12/2019.

Read the first time on 1 April 2019.

A BILL

intituled

An Act to amend the Pioneer Generation Fund Act 2014 (Act 43 of 2014).

Be it enacted by the President with the advice and consent of the Parliament of Singapore, as follows:

Short title and commencement

1. This Act is the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019 and comes into operation on a date that the Minister appoints by notification in the *Gazette*.

5 Amendment of long title

2. The long title to the Pioneer Generation Fund Act 2014 (called in this Act the principal Act) is amended —

(a) by inserting, immediately after the word “Fund”, the words “and the Merdeka Generation Fund”; and

10 (b) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneers”, the words “and Merdeka Generation Seniors, respectively”.

Amendment of section 1

3. Section 1 of the principal Act is amended by deleting the word “Fund” and substituting the words “and Merdeka Generation Funds”.

15 Amendment of section 2

4. Section 2 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by inserting, immediately after the definition of “accounting officer”, the following definition:

20 ““Appeals Panel” means the body of that name established under section 15;”;

(b) by deleting the definition of “Fund” and substituting the following definition:

25 ““Funds” means the Pioneer Generation Fund and the Merdeka Generation Fund established under section 4;”;

(c) by deleting the words “Pioneer Generation” in the definition of “member”;

- (d) by inserting, immediately after the definition of “member”, the following definition:

““Merdeka Generation Senior” includes an individual who is determined under section 13 to be a Merdeka Generation Senior;”;

- (e) by deleting the definition of “Pioneer Generation Appeals Panel”;

- (f) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneer” in the definition of “reimbursement arrangement”, the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”; and

- (g) by deleting the definition of “verification application” and substituting the following definition:

““verification application” means an application made under section 13(2) in relation to an individual seeking a determination from the Appeals Panel that the individual is a Pioneer or Merdeka Generation Senior for the purposes of this Act.”.

Amendment of section 3

5. Section 3 of the principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneers” wherever it appears, the words “and Merdeka Generation Seniors”.

Amendment of heading to Part 2

6. Part 2 of the principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after the word “FUND” in the Part heading, the words “AND MERDEKA GENERATION FUND”.

Amendment of section 4

7. Section 4 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting the words “is established a Government fund called the Pioneer Generation Fund” in subsection (1) and substituting the words “are established 2 Government

funds called the Pioneer Generation Fund and the Merdeka Generation Fund, respectively,”;

5 (b) by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsections (1)(a) and (d), (2) and (3) and substituting in each case the words “the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund (as the case may be)”;

10 (c) by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsection (1)(b) and (c) and substituting in each case the words “the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund, as the case may be”;

(d) by deleting the words “The Fund is” in subsection (3) and substituting the words “The Pioneer Generation Fund and the Merdeka Generation Fund are each”; and

15 (e) by inserting, immediately after the word “Fund” in the section heading, the words “and Merdeka Generation Fund”.

Amendment of section 5

8. Section 5 of the principal Act is amended —

20 (a) by deleting the words “in the Fund” in subsections (1) and (2) and substituting in each case the words “in the Pioneer Generation Fund and the Merdeka Generation Fund”;

(b) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneers” in subsection (1)(a) and (b), the words “or Merdeka Generation Seniors (as the case may be)”;

25 (c) by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsection (1)(d) and substituting the words “the Pioneer Generation Fund and the Merdeka Generation Fund, respectively”; and

(d) by deleting the word “Fund” in the section heading and substituting the word “Funds”.

Amendment of section 6

9. Section 6 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting the words “the Fund are to be charged upon and payable out of the Fund” in subsection (1) and substituting the words “the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund are to be charged upon and payable out of the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund, as the case may be”; 5
- (b) by deleting the words “the Fund are to be charged upon and payable out of the Fund” in subsection (2) and substituting the words “the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund are to be charged upon and payable out of the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund (as the case may be) (called in this subsection the relevant Fund)”; 10 15
- (c) by deleting the word “Fund” in subsection (2)(a) and (b) and substituting in each case the words “relevant Fund”; and
- (d) by deleting the word “Fund” in subsection (3) and substituting the word “Funds”. 20

Amendment of section 7

10. Section 7 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting the words “the Fund unless they are charged upon the Fund” in subsection (1) and substituting the words “the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund unless they are charged upon that Fund”; and 25
- (b) by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsection (2) and substituting the words “either of the Funds”.

Amendment of section 8

11. Section 8 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsection (1) and substituting the words “each of the Funds”;

5 (b) by deleting the words “Fund begins on the date of commencement of this Part” in subsection (2) and substituting the words “Pioneer Generation Fund begins on 9 March 2015”; and

10 (c) by inserting, immediately after subsection (2), the following subsection:

15 “(3) The first financial year of the Merdeka Generation Fund begins on the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019 and ends on 31 March of the succeeding year.”.

Amendment of section 9

12. Section 9 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by deleting subsection (1) and substituting the following subsection:

20 “(1) The Minister must designate —

(a) one or more public officers to be accounting officers of the Pioneer Generation Fund; and

25 (b) one or more public officers to be accounting officers of the Merdeka Generation Fund.”;

30 (b) by deleting the words “officer of the Fund” in subsection (2) and substituting the words “officer of the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund”;

- (c) by deleting the words “the Fund” wherever they appear in subsection (2)(a), (b) and (c) and substituting in each case the words “that Fund”; and
- (d) by deleting the words “officer of the Fund” in subsection (3) and substituting the words “officer of the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund (as the case may be)”. 5

Amendment of section 10

13. Section 10 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by inserting, immediately after the words “each financial year” in subsection (1), the words “of the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund (as the case may be)”; 10
- (b) by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsection (1) and substituting the words “the Pioneer Generation Fund and the Merdeka Generation Fund (as the case may be)”; 15
- (c) by deleting the word “Fund” in subsections (2) and (4) and substituting in each case the word “Funds”;
- (d) by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsection (3) and substituting the words “any of the Funds”; and 20
- (e) by inserting, immediately after the words “by the auditor” in subsection (3), the words “for that Fund”.

Amendment of section 11

14. Section 11 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting the words “dissolution of the Fund” and substituting the words “dissolution of any of the Funds”; 25
- (b) by deleting the words “in the Fund” and substituting the words “in that Fund”; and
- (c) by deleting the word “Fund” in the section heading and substituting the word “Funds”. 30

Amendment of heading to Part 3

15. Part 3 of the principal Act is amended by deleting the words “PIONEER GENERATION” in the Part heading.

New sections 12A and 12B

5 16. The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 12, the following sections:

“Who is a Merdeka Generation Senior?”

12A.—(1) In this Act, a Merdeka Generation Senior is —

(a) a citizen of Singapore —

- 10 (i) whose birthday is between 1 January 1950 and 31 December 1959 (both dates inclusive); and
- (ii) who was a citizen of Singapore on 31 December 1996, and has been a citizen of Singapore since that date; or

15 (b) a citizen of Singapore —

- (i) whose birthday is 31 December 1949 or earlier;
- (ii) who was a citizen of Singapore on 31 December 1996, and has been a citizen of Singapore since that date; and

20 (iii) who —

(A) is not a Pioneer; or

(B) ceased being a Pioneer because of section 18(1)(d), whether before, on or after the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019.

25 (2) In addition, any other citizen of Singapore may be determined under section 13 to be a Merdeka Generation Senior for the purposes of this Act provided that —

30 (a) the citizen’s birthday is 31 December 1959 or earlier; and

(b) the citizen —

- (i) is not a Pioneer; or
- (ii) ceased being a Pioneer because of section 18(1)(d), whether before, on or after the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019.

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Citizen cannot be both Pioneer and Merdeka Generation Senior

12B. For the purposes of this Act, a citizen of Singapore may only be either a Pioneer or a Merdeka Generation Senior at any time, but not both.”

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Amendment of section 13

17. Section 13 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by deleting subsection (1) and substituting the following subsection:

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“(1) For the purpose of determining —

(a) whether a citizen referred to in section 12(2) is a Pioneer for the purposes of this Act; or

(b) whether a citizen referred to in section 12A(2) is a Merdeka Generation Senior for the purposes of this Act,

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the Appeals Panel must have regard to, and give such weight as the Panel considers appropriate to, all of such matters as are prescribed by regulations.”;

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(b) by inserting, immediately after the words “section 12(2)” in subsection (2), the words “or 12A(2)”;

(c) by inserting, immediately after the words “a Pioneer” in subsection (2), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior (as the case may be)”;

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(d) by deleting the words “Pioneer Generation” in subsections (2), (6) and (8);

(e) by inserting, immediately after the words “a Pioneer” in subsections (3)(a) and (6) and in the section heading, the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”;

(f) by deleting subsection (4) and substituting the following subsection:

“(4) However, a verification application must be made no later than —

(a) in the case of a verification application for a determination to be a Pioneer, the closing date specified by the Minister under subsection (5) for this type of verification applications; or

(b) in the case of a verification application for a determination to be a Merdeka Generation Senior, the closing date specified by the Minister under subsection (5) for this type of verification applications,

and the Appeals Panel must reject any verification application made after the applicable closing date.”;

(g) by deleting the words “the closing date” in subsection (5) and substituting the words “a closing date”; and

(h) by deleting subsection (7) and substituting the following subsection:

“(7) If the Appeals Panel determines that —

(a) a citizen of Singapore referred to in section 12(2) is a Pioneer for the purposes of this Act; or

(b) a citizen of Singapore referred to in section 12A(2) is a Merdeka Generation Senior for the purposes of this Act,

the Panel may, where suitable, state that the citizen of Singapore is a Pioneer or a Merdeka Generation Senior (as the case may be) with effect from a date

before the date of its decision, but not a date earlier than when the verification application (if made) for that citizen of Singapore was received by the Panel.”.

Amendment of section 14

18. Section 14 of the principal Act is amended —

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(a) by deleting subsection (1) and substituting the following subsections:

“(1) A person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Appeals Panel under this section or section 13 refusing to determine that a citizen of Singapore referred to in section 12(2) is a Pioneer may, at any time but no later than the closing date specified under section 13(5) for verification applications mentioned in section 13(4)(a), apply in writing to that Panel to reconsider that decision.

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(1A) A person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Appeals Panel under this section or section 13 refusing to determine that a citizen of Singapore referred to in section 12A(2) is a Merdeka Generation Senior may, at any time but no later than the closing date specified under section 13(5) for verification applications mentioned in section 13(4)(b), apply in writing to that Panel to reconsider that decision.”;

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(b) by deleting the words “Pioneer Generation” in subsections (2), (3) and (4) and in the section heading;

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(c) by inserting, immediately after the words “subsection (1)” in subsection (3), the words “or (1A)”;

(d) by inserting, immediately after the words “section 12(2)” in subsection (3), the words “or 12A(2) (as the case may be)”;

30

(e) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneer” in subsection (3)(a), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior (as the case may be)”;

(f) by inserting, immediately after the word “application” in subsection (3)(a), the words “(if made)”.

New section 14A

19. The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 14, the following section:

“Determination to be Merdeka Generation Senior on Appeals Panel’s own accord

14A.—(1) Despite section 13(2), where —

(a) the Appeals Panel makes a decision (whether before, on or after the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019) —

(i) under section 13 refusing to determine that a citizen of Singapore is a Pioneer; or

(ii) under section 14 affirming its earlier refusal to determine that a citizen of Singapore is a Pioneer; and

(b) no application or further application under section 14(1) for reconsideration of that decision is received by the Appeals Panel,

the Appeals Panel may, on its own accord, decide whether that citizen may be determined a Merdeka Generation Senior if he or she is a citizen of Singapore referred to in section 12A(2).

(2) To avoid doubt, the Appeals Panel may make a decision under subsection (1) without any verification application being made to the Panel under section 13 to determine whether or not the citizen referred to in subsection (1) is a Merdeka Generation Senior.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (1), the Appeals Panel must have regard to, and give such weight as the Panel considers appropriate to, all of the matters mentioned in section 13(1).

(4) The Appeals Panel must give to the citizen referred to in subsection (1) notice of its decision under this section.

(5) A person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Appeals Panel under this section of refusing to determine that a citizen referred to in subsection (1) is a Merdeka Generation Senior may, at any time but no later than the closing date specified under section 13(5) for verification applications mentioned in section 13(4)(b), apply in writing to that Panel to reconsider that decision; and section 14(2), (3) and (4) applies with the necessary modifications in relation to that application for reconsideration.”.

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Amendment of section 15

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20. Section 15 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by deleting the words “a Pioneer Generation Appeals Panel” in subsection (1) and substituting the words “an Appeals Panel”;

(b) by deleting paragraph (b) of subsection (1) and substituting the following paragraph:

15

“(b) one or more deputy chairpersons; and”;

(c) by deleting the words “and not more than 8 other individuals” in subsection (1)(c); and

(d) by deleting the words “Pioneer Generation” in subsections (2) and (3) and in the section heading.

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Amendment of section 16

21. Section 16 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by inserting, immediately after the words “a Pioneer” wherever they appear in subsections (1), (2) and (3), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”;

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(b) by inserting, immediately after the words “the Pioneer” wherever they appear in subsection (1)(a), (c) and (d), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”;

(c) by inserting, immediately after the word “credited” in subsection (1)(a), the words “, during a prescribed period (if prescribed),”;

30

(d) by inserting, immediately before the words “a cash” in subsection (1)(b), the words “for Pioneers only,”;

(e) by inserting, immediately after paragraph (b) of subsection (1), the following paragraph:

5 “(ba) for Merdeka Generation Seniors only, a cash grant to be credited to the Merdeka Generation Senior’s PAssion Silver stored value card, being of an amount prescribed;”;

10 (f) by inserting, immediately after paragraph (c) of subsection (1), the following paragraph:

15 “(ca) a subsidy of the cost of any premium of a prescribed insurance scheme covering the Pioneer or Merdeka Generation Senior in relation to any disability, being of an amount prescribed for the Pioneer or Merdeka Generation Senior (as the case may be) and payable for premiums due during a prescribed period;” and

20 (g) by deleting the section heading and substituting the following section heading:

“Pioneer Generation and Merdeka Generation benefits”.

Amendment of section 17

25 **22.** Section 17 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by inserting, immediately after the words “no Pioneer” in subsection (1), the words “and no Merdeka Generation Senior”;

30 (b) by inserting, immediately after “14” in subsection (1), the words “or a Merdeka Generation Senior under section 13, 14 or 14A”;

(c) by inserting, immediately after the words “a Pioneer” in subsection (2), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”;

- (d) by inserting, immediately after the words “the Pioneer” in subsection (2)(a) and (b), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior (as the case may be)”; and
- (e) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneers” in the section heading, the words “and Merdeka Generation Seniors”.

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Amendment of section 18

23. Section 18 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by inserting, immediately after subsection (1), the following subsection:

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“(1A) Despite any provision in this Part, an individual continues to be a Merdeka Generation Senior until —

(a) the individual ceases to be a citizen of Singapore at any time after the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019;

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(b) the individual is or becomes a citizen of another country at any time after the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019, even if the individual does not cease to be a citizen of Singapore;

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(c) the individual dies;

(d) the individual is declared under subsection (2) to cease being a Merdeka Generation Senior; or

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(e) the individual is determined under section 13(2) or 14 to be a Pioneer.”; and

- (b) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneer” in subsections (2) and (3) and in the section heading, the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”.

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Amendment of section 19

24. Section 19 of the principal Act is amended by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsections (1), (2) and (5) and substituting in each case the words “any of the Funds”.

Amendment of section 20

25. Section 20 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsection (1) and substituting the words “any of the Funds”; and

(b) by deleting the word “Fund” in the section heading and substituting the word “Funds”.

Amendment of section 21

26. Section 21 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneers” in subsection (2)(a) and (e), the words “or Merdeka Generation Seniors”;

(b) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneer” in subsections (2)(b) and (3)(d), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”; and

(c) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneers” in subsection (2)(b), the words “or Merdeka Generation Seniors, as the case may be”.

Amendment of section 22

27. Section 22 of the principal Act is amended —

(a) by deleting the words “the Fund” in subsections (1) and (2) and substituting in each case the words “the Pioneer Generation Fund or the Merdeka Generation Fund”;

(b) by deleting the words “or (b)” in subsection (1)(a) and substituting the words “, (b) or (ba)”;

(c) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneer” in subsections (1)(a)(i) and (ii), (2)(b) and (3)(b), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior (as the case may be)”;

- (d) by deleting the words “section 16(1)(c) or (d)” in subsection (1)(b) and substituting the words “section 16(1)(c), (ca) or (d)”;
- (e) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneer” in subsection (1)(d), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”; 5
- (f) by deleting the words “Pioneer or former Pioneer” in subsection (3) and substituting the words “Pioneer or Merdeka Generation Senior, or former Pioneer or former Merdeka Generation Senior”; and 10
- (g) by deleting subsection (4) and substituting the following subsection:
- “(4) Where the money in any of the Funds is withdrawn and —
- (a) paid in error to a Pioneer or Merdeka Generation Senior; or 15
- (b) paid to anyone else without authorisation or in excess of authorisation required by or under this Act,
- the amount of the financial assistance, grant or benefit 20
so obtained is recoverable from the recipient as a debt due to the Government.”.

Amendment of section 23

28. Section 23 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting the words “Pioneer Generation” in subsection (1)(a); 25
- (b) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneer” in subsection (1)(d), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”; and
- (c) by deleting “(b), (c)” in subsection (3)(b) and substituting “(b), (ba), (c), (ca)”. 30

Amendment of section 27

29. Section 27 of the principal Act is amended —

- 5 (a) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneers” in subsection (2)(a), the words “and Merdeka Generation Seniors”;
- (b) by inserting, immediately after the word “Pioneer” in subsections (2)(c)(ii) and (2A), the words “or Merdeka Generation Senior”;
- 10 (c) by deleting the words “Pioneer Generation” in subsection (2)(e);
- (d) by deleting the words “Pioneers referred to in section 16(1)(a) or (b)” in subsection (2A)(a) and substituting the words “Pioneers or Merdeka Generation Seniors (as the case may be) referred to in section 16(1)(a),
- 15 (b) or (ba)”;
- (e) by deleting the word “or” at the end of paragraph (b) of subsection (2A), and by inserting immediately thereafter the following paragraph:

20 “(ba) the amount for any subsidy referred to in section 16(1)(ca); or”.

New section 29

30. The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 28, the following section:

“Validation of pre-commencement decisions for Merdeka Generation Seniors

25 29.—(1) Any decision, relating to whether a citizen of Singapore is a Merdeka Generation Senior, by any person purporting to be made in the name or on behalf of the Appeals Panel before the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019 has effect, and is

30 taken always to have had effect, as if it had been made on that date by the Appeals Panel under section 13 or 14 as amended by

that Act or section 14A as inserted by that Act, as the case may be.

(2) Anything done under or for the purposes of such a decision as mentioned in subsection (1) is as valid, and is taken always to have been as valid, as it would have been if the decision had been made by the Appeals Panel under section 13 or 14 as amended by the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019 or section 14A as inserted by that Act, as the case may be.

(3) Any application lodged before the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019 to any person purporting to act in the name or on behalf of the Appeals Panel and in respect of which no decision as mentioned in subsection (1) is made before that date is deemed to be a verification application made under section 13(2) as amended by that Act.”.

Saving and transitional provisions

31.—(1) Every decision that is made before the date of commencement of this Act by the Pioneer Generation Appeals Panel under the principal Act and is in force on that date is to continue as if, and is deemed to be, a decision made by the Appeals Panel under the principal Act as amended by this Act.

(2) For a period of 2 years after the date of commencement of this Act, the Minister may, by regulations, prescribe such additional provisions of a saving or transitional nature consequent on the enactment of this Act as the Minister may consider necessary or expedient.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

This Bill seeks to amend the Pioneer Generation Fund Act 2014 (Act 43 of 2014) (the Act) for the purpose of establishing a new Government fund, called the Merdeka Generation Fund, in recognition of and to honour the Merdeka Generation Seniors who, in addition to the Pioneers of Singapore, had played an important part in Singapore’s development.

Clause 1 relates to the short title and commencement.

Clause 2 amends the long title of the Act to provide for the establishment of the Merdeka Generation Fund (MG Fund) to provide financial and other support to Merdeka Generation Seniors (MG Seniors).

Clause 3 amends section 1 to restate the short title of the Act as the Pioneer Generation and Merdeka Generation Funds Act 2014.

Clause 4 amends the definitions in section 2 of certain terms used in the Act and inserts a new definition for “Merdeka Generation Senior”.

Clause 5 amends section 3 to insert a reference to MG Seniors for the purpose of the Act.

Clause 6 amends the heading to Part 2.

Clause 7 amends section 4 to provide for the establishment of a new Government fund called the Merdeka Generation Fund. Its primary source of revenue will be moneys appropriated from the Consolidated Fund.

Clause 8 amends section 5 to provide for the purposes to which moneys in the MG Fund may be applied. Briefly, the purposes of the MG Fund include the provision of benefits described in section 16 as amended by clause 21 to MG Seniors, and the funding of all or any part of the cost of any public scheme, to be prescribed by the Minister in regulations, to the extent that MG Seniors are eligible to participate in or receive benefits under that public scheme.

Clause 9 amends section 6 to provide that the expenses in administering the MG Fund are charged upon and payable out of the MG Fund.

Clause 10 amends section 7 to provide for withdrawals and payments from the MG Fund and the necessary authorisation to do so.

Clause 11 amends section 8 to prescribe the financial year of the MG Fund.

Clause 12 amends section 9 to provide for the keeping of accounts of the MG Fund and the appointment of accounting officers of the MG Fund.

Clause 13 amends section 10 to provide for the requirement to prepare annual financial statements and accounts of the MG Fund, and for their audit. These are separate financial statements and accounts from those of the Pioneer Generation Fund. The clause also requires the Minister to cause a copy of the audited financial statements of the MG Fund and the auditor’s report to be presented to Parliament.

Clause 14 amends section 11 to require the balance of moneys remaining in the MG Fund upon the dissolution of the MG Fund to be transferred to the Consolidated Fund and be added to the past reserves of the Government.

Clause 15 amends the heading to Part 3.

Clause 16 introduces new sections 12A and 12B. The new section 12A defines who an MG Senior is for the purposes of the Act. As defined, there are 3 categories of MG Seniors, as follows:

- (a) a citizen of Singapore —
 - (i) whose birthday is between 1 January 1950 and 31 December 1959 (both dates inclusive); and
 - (ii) who was a citizen of Singapore on 31 December 1996 and has been a citizen of Singapore since that date;
- (b) a citizen of Singapore —
 - (i) whose birthday is 31 December 1949 or earlier;
 - (ii) who was a citizen of Singapore on 31 December 1996 and has been a citizen of Singapore since that date; and
 - (iii) who is not a Pioneer, or ceased being a Pioneer because of a conviction of an offence under the Act (whether before, on or after the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019);
- (c) any other citizen of Singapore determined under section 13 to be an MG Senior for the purposes of the Act provided that —
 - (i) the citizen's birthday is 31 December 1959 or earlier; and
 - (ii) the citizen is not a Pioneer, or ceased being a Pioneer because of a conviction of an offence under the Act (whether before, on or after the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019).

The new section 12B provides that a citizen of Singapore can only be either a Pioneer or a Merdeka Generation Senior at any time, but not both.

Clause 17 amends section 13 to provide that MG Senior status may be conferred by the Appeals Panel on an individual whose birthday is 31 December 1959 or earlier, and who is not a Pioneer or who ceased being a Pioneer because of a conviction of an offence under the Act (whether before, on or after the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019), but who does not strictly meet the citizenship requirement in the new section 12A.

The Appeals Panel has to take into account various matters and give such weight it considers appropriate when the Appeals Panel determines whether a citizen of Singapore who does not strictly meet the citizenship requirement in the new section 12A is a Merdeka Generation Senior. These matters are to be prescribed from time to time in regulations made by the Minister.

To seek conferment of MG Senior status, a verification application must be made to the Appeals Panel. Verification applications for a determination to be an MG Senior must be made before the closing date that the Minister specifies through a notification in the *Gazette* for this type of verification applications. The Appeals Panel will refuse verification applications made after that closing date. There is no appeal against the determination of the Appeals Panel.

Clause 18 amends section 14 to allow the Appeals Panel to reconsider its decisions relating to MG Senior status on application to it. An unsuccessful individual seeking to be an MG Senior can apply to the Appeals Panel, one or more times, to reconsider its decisions, up to the applicable closing date specified under section 13(5).

Clause 19 introduces a new section 14A to enable the Appeals Panel to decide, on its own accord, whether an individual is to be determined an MG Senior, without that individual making a verification application to be so determined. This applies if the individual is a citizen of Singapore who meets the criteria in the new section 12A(2) and —

- (a) the Appeals Panel has made a decision under section 13 refusing to determine that individual as a Pioneer, but has not received an application under section 14(1) for reconsideration of that decision; or
- (b) the Appeals Panel has made a decision under section 14 affirming its earlier refusal to determine that individual as a Pioneer, but has not received a further application under section 14(1) for reconsideration of that decision.

Clause 20 amends section 15 to rename the Pioneer Generation Appeals Panel as the Appeals Panel and to expand its composition.

Clause 21 amends section 16 to set out the benefits for MG Seniors from the MG Fund.

First, there is a cash grant to be credited to the Medisave account (or other account) of the MG Senior in the Central Provident Fund. The cash grant is an amount that the Minister will prescribe in regulations. Different amounts may be prescribed for different MG Seniors or classes of MG Seniors. Further, the cash grant may be credited during a period that the Minister will prescribe in regulations (if prescribed).

Second, there is a cash grant to be credited to the PAssion Silver stored value card of the MG Senior which can be used for transactions allowed by the terms of use of the card. The cash grant is an amount that the Minister will prescribe in regulations.

Third, there is a subsidy of the cost of any premium of a prescribed insurance scheme covering the MG Senior (whether alone or as a member of a class) in relation to health services. This refers to the subsidy for the premium for the

MediShield Life Scheme which is to be prescribed in regulations. Different amounts may be prescribed for different MG Seniors or classes of MG Seniors.

Fourth, there is a subsidy of the cost of any premium of a prescribed insurance scheme covering the MG Senior in relation to disability. This refers to the subsidy for the premium for the proposed CareShield Life Scheme which is to be prescribed in regulations. The subsidy is an amount that the Minister will prescribe in regulations. The subsidy is also payable for premiums due during a period that the Minister will prescribe in regulations.

Fifth, there is a subsidy of the cost of certain health services (called a relevant health service) rendered or provided to an MG Senior by healthcare providers that the Minister will prescribe in regulations. A cap on the subsidy is also to be prescribed.

There is also a grant to the prescribed healthcare providers, to reimburse them (in whole or part) of the cost and expenses of providing any relevant health service to an MG Senior. The reimbursement grant is supported by reimbursement arrangements approved by the Minister for Health that entitle a prescribed healthcare provider to reimbursement of the whole or part of the cost and expenses it incurred in respect of the relevant health service so rendered or provided, up to the maximum proportion or maximum amount of those costs and expenses to be reimbursed.

Clause 21 also amends section 16 to give Pioneers a subsidy of the cost of any premium of the proposed CareShield Life Scheme which is to be prescribed in regulations. The subsidy is an amount that the Minister will prescribe in regulations. The subsidy is also payable for premiums due during a period that the Minister will prescribe in regulations.

Clause 22 amends section 17 to make it clear that no MG Senior is entitled to the benefits in section 16(1); an MG Senior cannot sue for them. These benefits are also declared as non-transferable to others and cannot be attached, sequestered or levied upon for or in respect of any debt or claim. The only exception is for debts due from the MG Senior to the Government, since the benefits are met from a Government fund.

Clause 23 inserts a new subsection (1A) into section 18 to set out the circumstances in which MG Senior status may be lost. This includes a situation where the individual ceases to be a citizen of Singapore at any time after the Bill is operative, or the individual is or becomes a citizen of another country at any time after that date even if the individual does not cease to be a citizen of Singapore. However, merely being a Commonwealth citizen (which is allowed by Article 139 of the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore) is not an event that can lead to loss of MG Senior status.

The new subsection (1A) also includes a situation where the individual is determined under section 13(2) or 14 to be a Pioneer. This is because a citizen of

Singapore may only be either a Pioneer or an MG Senior at any time but not both, as provided in the new section 12B (inserted by clause 16).

Clause 24 amends section 19 to empower the Minister to appoint any public officer, public authority or other organisation to disburse the grants, subsidies and benefits using moneys in the MG Fund in accordance with the Act.

Clause 25 amends section 20 to allow, in the specified circumstances, disclosure of confidential information in the possession of a public authority in order to disburse, or facilitate disbursement of, any financial assistance or grant under section 16 or any benefit under a prescribed public scheme mentioned in section 5(1)(b) using moneys in the MG Fund. A person or an officer of a public authority directed by the Minister charged with the responsibility for that public authority to provide confidential information for the purpose of disbursing the financial assistance, grant or benefit will not be guilty of an offence or incur any civil liability by virtue of his or her merely carrying out this purpose.

Clause 26 amends section 21 to insert references to MG Senior so that the restrictions on disclosure of confidential information under that section apply in relation to MG Seniors.

Clause 27 amends section 22 to insert references to the MG Fund, MG Senior, former MG Senior and the new section 16(1)(ba) and (ca), so that any moneys that are withdrawn from the MG Fund and are paid to a person not eligible to them, or paid in excess or paid without authorisation, are recoverable as a debt due to the Government.

Clause 28 amends section 23 to update the reference to the Pioneer Generation Appeals Panel with the reference to the Appeals Panel due to the renaming of the Panel. The clause also inserts a reference to MG Senior in section 23(1)(d) so that the offence under section 23(1) is extended in relation to a document furnished or statement made or information given in, or in connection with, a verification application to be determined as an MG Senior.

Clause 29 amends section 27 to update the reference to the Pioneer Generation Appeals Panel with the reference to the Appeals Panel due to the renaming of the Panel. The clause also amends section 27 to insert references to MG Senior so that regulations made under the section can be in relation to MG Seniors. The clause further amends section 27 to provide that the means of MG Seniors are irrelevant when prescribing in regulations the matters mentioned in section 27(2A) as amended by the clause.

Clause 30 introduces a new section 29 which is a validation provision for decisions taken by those purporting to be made in the name or on behalf of the Appeals Panel before the Bill is operative. These decisions are deemed to have effect, and always to have had effect, as if they had been made on the operative date of the Bill by the Appeals Panel under section 13 or 14 (as amended by the Bill) or the new section 14A (as inserted by the Bill).

Clause 31 is a saving and transitional provision to deal with decisions made by the Pioneer Generation Appeals Panel before it is renamed as the Appeals Panel.

The clause also empowers the Minister to make regulations prescribing additional provisions of a saving or transitional nature consequent on the enactment of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019, as the Minister may consider necessary or expedient. The Minister has power to do so only within 2 years after the date of commencement of the Pioneer Generation Fund (Amendment) Act 2019.

EXPENDITURE OF PUBLIC MONEY

This Bill will involve the Government in extra financial expenditure, the exact amount of which cannot at present be ascertained.
