

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

'04 JUN 30 P5:51

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S E N A T E

S. No. 475

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Introduced by Senator S. R. Osmeña III

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 14 of Article II of the Philippine Constitution provides that

"Section 14. The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men."


The 1995 survey of population reports the male: female ratio at 1.051. The fact that this ratio is far greater than the ratio of males to female in government, business and politics shows that these spheres continue to be male-dominated, and females are not proportionately represented in these sectors.

In the long run, the ideal situation is a free market where both sexes have equal access to opportunities in all endeavors. The reality however, is that females continue to face more difficult odds in gaining access to educational institutions, work place, and career opportunities.

*In order to compensate for the inherent social discrimination against women, and to achieve a balance in male-female participation, this bill proposes to reserve at least one third of certain opportunities in government and certain institutions to women.*

Improving women's access to advancement opportunities promotes equity in Philippine society. Tapping women's energies to complement the male approach could introduce productivity improvements for greater efficiency.

In view of the foregoing, early passage of this bill is earnestly requested.

  
SERGIO OSMEÑA III  
Senator

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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1       SECTION 1. This Act shall be known and cited as the "**Women**  
2       **Empowerment Act of 2004.**"

3       SEC. 2. Appointive positions in the national and local government shall  
4       be reserved to qualified women based on the following fraction and classification:

5       a) At least one-third of the Cabinet;  
6       b) At least one-third of all undersecretaries and positions of comparable  
7       salary grade or at least one in every line department, government-owned and  
8       controlled corporations, government financing institutions, state colleges and  
9       universities, and local government units: *Provided*, That in cases where there  
10      are more than fifty percent (50%) women population occupying technical  
11      positions in departments, offices, bureaus and agencies, the secretary or the  
12      head of agency shall be a woman and the proportion of one-third shall be  
13      increased to two-thirds;

14      c) At least one-third of all assistant secretaries in every department;  
15      d) At least one-third of all directors in every department;  
16      e) At least one-third of all chiefs of division in every department, bureau of  
17      agency;

- 1 f) At least one-third of all ambassadors and consular officers;  
2 g) At least one-third of all judges in all lower courts; and  
3 h) At least one-third of all prosecutors in the Department of Justice.

4 The Civil Service Commission shall enforce this provision.

5 SEC. 3. All duly accredited political parties shall reserve at least one-third  
6 of its party slate of official candidates to women in elections for the municipal/city  
7 councils and provincial boards.

8 The Commission on Elections shall enforce this provision.

9 SEC. 4. Women in the Armed Forces of the Philippines shall be allowed  
10 combat and security-related assignments. The Armed Forces of the Philippines  
11 shall enforce this provision.

12 SEC. 5. All police stations shall establish an all-female unit to attend to  
13 victims of rape, battering, incest and other crimes against women and chastity.  
14 For this purpose, the Philippine National Police shall reserve at least thirty per  
15 cent (30%) of all items in each rank to women.

16 SEC. 6. All departments, bureaus, agencies, and other government-  
17 owned and controlled corporations, in coordination with the National Commission  
18 on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), shall include in their human resource  
19 development program, gender and development orientation, trainings, and  
20 seminars among others

21 SEC. 7. At least one-third of scholarships, grants, fellowships and  
22 trainings in the National Local and governments, either in the Philippines or  
23 abroad, shall be reserved for qualified women.

24 The Commission on Civil Service and the National Economic and  
25 Development Authority shall enforce this provision.

26 SEC. 8. Nothing in this Act shall diminish the rights and privileges of  
27 incumbent male employees.

28 SEC. 9. Persons who violate the provisions of this Act shall be punished  
29 by a fine of not less than Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) or imprisonment of

1 not less than one (1) year nor more than six (6) years or both fine and  
2 imprisonment at the discretion of the court.

3 If the offender is a government official, he shall, in addition, be perpetually  
4 disqualified from holding any public office.

5 SEC. 10. The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, in  
6 consultation with the Civil Service Commission, the Commission on Election, the  
7 Philippine National Police, and the National Economic Development Authority,  
8 shall formulate the necessary guidelines to implement this Act.

9 SEC. 11. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and  
10 regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or  
11 modified accordingly.

12 SEC. 12. If any part of the provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or  
13 invalid, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall  
14 continue to be in full force and effect.

15 SEC. 13. This shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in  
16 Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,