
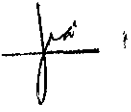


SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

 Senate
Office of the Secretary
'13 JUL 18 P3:11

SENATE
S.B. No. 924

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced By Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Our democracy requires broad participation in electoral exercises and the exercise of the right of suffrage by persons who have all the qualifications and none of the disqualifications to vote.

Voters are required to be physically present in the polling place where they are registered in order that they may exercise their right to vote. This rule is subject to several exceptions, such as members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and members of the Philippine National Police who are duly registered voters and temporarily assigned to perform public functions on election day in places where they are not registered. There is also pending legislation to grant an exemption to members of the media who are assigned to perform their functions on election day in places where they are not registered.

This bill seeks to extend the exception to members of the staff of national electoral candidates and registered national political parties who are called to be outside their place of registration on election day given the wide-spread area covered by the national election. This bill seeks to grant such persons the opportunity to exercise their right of suffrage, under certain conditions.

The passage of this bill is also in the national interest considering that it will ensure a higher voter turnout and promote greater involvement of the citizenry in the electoral process.


MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID
Senator 



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Introduced By Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR EARLY VOTING FOR QUALIFIED MEMBERS OF THE
STAFF OF ELECTORAL CANDIDATES AND REGISTERED NATIONAL
POLITICAL PARTIES**

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

1 **SECTION 1. Title.**—This Act shall be known as the "Early Voting for Electoral
2 Staff Act of 2013".

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.**—It is a policy of the State to ensure the free
5 exercise of the right of suffrage by all citizens of the Philippines who are not otherwise
6 disqualified by law.

7
8 **SEC. 3. Coverage.**—Electoral staff of national electoral candidates and registered
9 national political parties who are registered voters but, by reason of their functions and
10 duties as electoral staff, are assigned on election day to a place other than their place of
11 registration may avail of the voting procedure provided under this Act.

12
13 "Electoral staff" are employees or volunteers assisting a candidate or a registered
14 national political party in the conduct, monitoring and safeguarding of election-related
15 activities. For purposes of this Act, in no case shall the number of a national candidate's
16 or registered national political party's electoral staff exceed the total number of cities
17 and municipalities in the Philippines, as reflected by the Commission on Elections'
18 ("COMELEC") progress reports.

19

1 **SEC. 4. Request for Application Form.**— Not later than thirty (30) days before the
2 election, a national electoral candidate or a registered national political party whose
3 electoral staff are covered by this Act shall submit to the COMELEC a list of the names,
4 designation, place of registration, and place of assignment of such electoral staff. Such
5 list shall be accompanied with a request that such registered voters be provided with an
6 application form to cast absentee ballots in accordance with this Act and the rules and
7 regulations to be promulgated by the COMELEC in accordance hereto. The list and the
8 request shall both be accomplished under oath.

9
10 **SEC. 5. COMELEC Verification of Request.**— Upon verification by the
11 COMELEC that the persons included in the list are qualified voters, it shall transmit the
12 exact number of application forms to the candidate making the request.

13
14 **SEC. 6. Application for Absentee Voting.**— The registered voters concerned shall
15 personally accomplish the application for absentee voting and shall promptly submit
16 the same to the COMELEC within the period provided for submission. Upon
17 verification of the applications, the COMELEC shall transmit the exact number of
18 absentee ballots to the appropriate Office of the City or Municipal Election Registrar.

19
20 **SEC. 7. Voting.**— The absentee voters shall vote not later than one week before
21 election day. They shall do so by casting their votes in the office of the City or
22 Municipal Election Registrar of the place of their registration.

23
24 **SEC. 8. Sanctity and Secrecy of Absentee Ballots.**— The COMELEC shall
25 promulgate rules and provide a mechanism ensuring the sanctity and secrecy of the
26 special absentee ballots to be accomplished in accordance with this Act.

27 **SEC. 9. Transmission of the Absentee Ballots.**— The COMELEC official to whom
28 the special absentee ballot is delivered shall immediately transmit the same to the
29 COMELEC, by the fastest means available, so that all special absentee ballots are in the
30 custody of the COMELEC Central Office before the closing of the polls on election day.

31
32 The transmittal letter shall indicate the names of the persons who cast the
33 absentee votes, their voter's registration record number and their certificates of
34 eligibility to vote as absentee voters.

1
2 **SEC. 10. *Canvass of Absentee Votes.***—The COMELEC shall canvass the votes
3 cast in accordance with this Act and shall add the results of said canvass to the votes
4 reported throughout the country.

5
6 **SEC. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.***—The COMELEC shall
7 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act.

8
9 **SEC. 12. *Appropriations.***—The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of
10 this Act shall be provided in a supplemental budget or included in the General
11 Appropriations Act of the year of its enactment into law. Thereafter, the expenses for
12 its continued implementation shall be included in the subsequent General
13 Appropriations Act.

14
15 **SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.***—If any provision or part of this Act shall be
16 declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected
17 thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

18
19 **SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.***—All laws, decrees, executive orders, issuances, rules
20 and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
21 repealed or modified accordingly.

22 **SEC. 15. *Effectivity Clause.***—This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
23 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
24 circulation.

Approved,