



13 SEP 18 P4:12

SENATE
S. No. 1722

RECEIVED BY: *ji*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 11, Section 14 provides:

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.

Women have historically been underrepresented in scientific and engineering occupations, and although progress has been made over the last several decades, there is still room for improvement. Female students earn fewer bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees in science and engineering. Among recent bachelors of science and bachelor of engineering graduates, women are less likely to be in the labor force, to be employed full-time, and to be employed in their field than are men. Moreover, a substantial salary gap exists between men and women with doctorates in science and engineering. Limited access is the first hurdle faced by women seeking industrial jobs in science and engineering.

While progress has been made in recent years, common recruitment hiring practices that make extensive use of traditional networks often overlook the available pool of women. Once on the job, many women find paternalism, sexual harassment, allegations of reverse discrimination, different standards for judging the work of men and women, lower salary relative to their male peers, inequitable job assignments, and other aspects of a male-oriented culture that are hostile to women. They, to a greater extent than men, find limited opportunities for advancement, particularly for moving into management positions.

This bill seeks to establish a commission that would examine these issues and help (1) to focus attention on the importance of eliminating artificial barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women in the fields of science, engineering, and technology, and in all

employment sectors of the Philippines; (2) to promote workforce diversity; and (3) to encourage the replication of successful recruitment and retention programs by universities, corporations, and agencies in employing women in the fields of science, engineering, and technology.*

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
als.

* This bill was originally filed during the Thirteenth Congress, First Regular Session.

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1 AN ACT
2 ESTABLISHING THE COMMISSION ON THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN IN
3 SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

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

4 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Commission on the
5 Advancement of Women in Science, Engineering, and Technology Development Act."

6 SECTION 2. *Commission on the Advancement of Women in Engineering, Science and
7 Technology Development.* - There is established a commission to be known as the "Commission
8 on the Advancement of Women in Science, Engineering, and Technology Development" (in this
9 Act referred to as the "Commission").

10 SECTION 3. *Duty of the Commission.* - The Commission shall review available research,
11 and if determined necessary by the Commission, conduct additional research, to—

12 (A) Identify the number of women in the Philippines in specific types of occupations
13 in science, engineering, and technology development;

14 (B) Examine the preparedness of women to pursue careers in science, engineering and
15 technology development; and advance to positions of greater responsibility within the academia,
16 industry, and government;

17 (C) Describe the practice and policies of employees and labor unions relating to the
18 recruitment, retention, and advancement of women in the fields of science, engineering, and
19 technology development;

1 (D) Identify the opportunities for, and artificial barriers to, the recruitment, retention,
2 and advancement of women in the fields of science, engineering, and technology development in
3 academia, industry, and government;

4 (E) Compile a synthesis of available research on lawful practices, policies, and
5 programs that have successfully led to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women in
6 science, engineering, and technology development;

7 (F) Issue recommendations with respect to lawful policies that government (including
8 Congress), academia, and private industry can follow regarding the recruitment, retention, and
9 advancement of women in science, engineering, and technology development;

10 (G) Identify the disincentives for women to continue graduate education in the fields
11 of science, engineering, and technology development;

12 (H) Identify university undergraduate programs that are successful in retaining
13 women in the fields of science, engineering, and technology development; and

14 (I) Identify the disincentives that lead to a disproportionate number of women
15 leaving the fields of science, engineering, and technology development before completing their
16 undergraduate education,

17 SECTION 4. *Membership.* - The Commission shall be composed of six members to be
18 appointed by the President as follows:

19 (A) Two (2) members from among for-profit entities that hire individuals in the fields
20 of engineering, science, or technology development;

21 (B) Two (2) members from among institutions in education or academia in the fields
22 of life science, physical science, or engineering; and

23 (C) Two (2) members from among nongovernment organizations, people's
24 organizations, or any similar entities that promote and advance the welfare of women.

25 The Secretary of Science and Technology shall automatically sit as chair of the
26 Commission in an *ex-officio* capacity. Each member shall be appointed for the life of the
27 Commission. A vacancy in the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the original

1 appointment was made. Members shall not be paid by reason of their service on the Commission.
2 Each member shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in an amount to be determined by
3 existing law and rules. A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum
4 for the transaction of business.

5 The Commission shall meet not fewer than five (5) times in connection with and pending
6 the completion of the report described in this Act. The Commission shall hold additional
7 meetings for such purpose if the Chair or a majority of the members of the Commission requests
8 additional meetings in writing.

9 SECTION 5. *Directors and Staff of the Commission; Experts and Consultants.* -

10 (A) *Director.* - The Commission shall appoint and fix the pay of a Director and
11 additional personnel as the Commission considers appropriate.

12 (B) *Experts and Consultants.* - The Commission may procure temporary and
13 intermittent services to assist in the discharge of the Commission's functions.

14 SECTION 6. *Powers of the Commission.* -

15 (A) *Hearings and Sessions.* - The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out
16 this Act, hold hearings, take testimony, and receive evidence as the Commission considers
17 appropriate. The Commission may administer oaths or affirmations to witnesses appearing
18 before it.

19 (B) *Powers of Members and Agents.* - Any member or agent of the Commission may,
20 if authorized by the Commission, take any action which the Commission is authorized to take by
21 this section.

22 (C) *Obtaining Official Data.* - The Commission may secure directly from any
23 department or agency of the government information necessary to enable it to carry out this Act.
24 Upon request of the Chair of the Commission, the head of that department or agency shall
25 furnish that information to the Commission.

1 (D) *Mails.* - The Commission may use mails in the same manner and under the same
2 conditions as other departments and agencies of the government.

3 (E) *Contract Authority.* - To the extent provided in advance in appropriations Acts,
4 the Commission may contract with and compensate government and private agencies or persons
5 for the purpose of conducting research or surveys necessary to enable the Commission to carry
6 out its duties under this Act.

7 SECTION 7. *Report.* - Not later than two (2) years after the enactment of this Act, the
8 Commission shall submit to the President and the Congress a written report containing the
9 findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Commission resulting from the study
10 conducted under section 3.

11 SECTION 8. *Use of Information Obtained.* - No information obtained from any
12 nongovernment entity, such as businesses, colleges, universities, foundations, or research
13 organizations, by the Commission may be used in connection with any employment-related
14 litigation.

15 SECTION 9. *Termination; Access to Information.* - The Commission shall terminate
16 thirty (30) days after submitting the reports required in this Act. On or before the date of the
17 termination of the Commission, the Commission shall provide to the Department of Science and
18 Technology the information gathered by the Commission in the process of carrying out its duties
19 under this Act. The Department shall act as a central repository for such information and shall
20 make such information available to the public, including making such information available
21 through the Internet.

22 SECTION 10. *Authorization of Appropriations.* - These are authorized to be appropriated
23 to carry out this Act—

1 (A) Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00) for the fiscal year during which this Act is
2 approved; and

3 (B) Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00) for the next succeeding fiscal year.

4 SECTION 11. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part thereof is held invalid or
5 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
6 valid and subsisting.

7 SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
8 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent
9 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

10 SECTION 13. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
11 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,