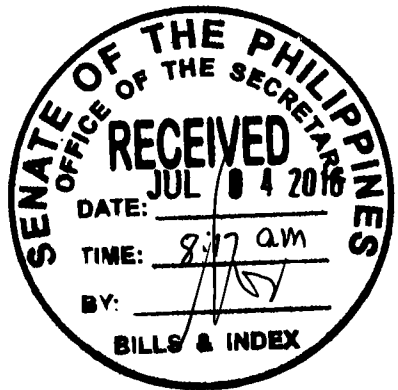


SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



SENATE  
S.B. No. 226

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Introduced by Senator FRANKLIN M. DRILON

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**AN ACT  
STRENGTHENING THE POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM**

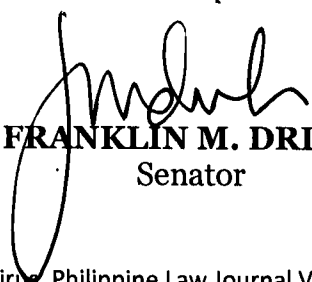
**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Political parties have been classically defined as an organized group of persons who preserve the same political ideals in a government. Ideally, since the community of political principles and interests bind the members of a party in the pursuit of their political goals, the same principles and interests command loyalty from each member to stick and maintain allegiance toward the group. Furthermore, in a situation where freedom allows the easy coalition of citizens of like interests and political pursuits, parties of distinctive political ideals and programs of action naturally arise rendering it difficult for a party member to move from one party to another without the concomitant abandonment of personally treasured ideals and the relearning of another.<sup>1</sup>

Political parties in our country are normally used as political vehicles to win an election. Our political party system is centered on personalities rather than ideology and political platform. There have been many attempts to reform the orientation of our political parties in the past so as to veer away from the concept of traditional politics. Unfortunately, these attempts remain unsuccessful because of lack of legal institutional framework to govern system of political parties.

Hence, most political aspirants change political parties for convenience, rather than because of conviction. This only shows the lack of ideological commitment of the members of party because they choose parties based on the rise and fall of the tide of opportunity. "Turncoatism" should never be encouraged nor tolerated since it only distorts the concept of word of honor and dignity of a leader. It is therefore imperative that the country's political party system should be strengthened in order to achieve genuine political development and democratization.

Hence, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**FRANKLIN M. DRILON**  
Senator

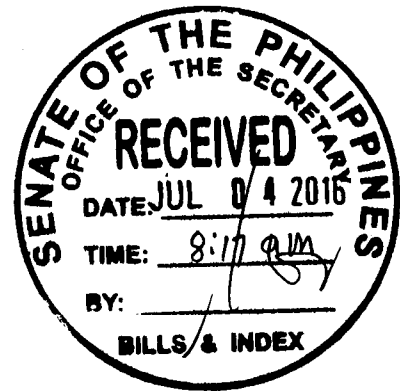
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<sup>1</sup> Matunog, Samuel. Turncoatism – The Taming of a Political Virtue. Philippine Law Journal Vol. 58.

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
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SENATE

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Introduced by Senator FRANKLIN M. DRILON

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**AN ACT  
STRENGTHENING THE POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM**

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

1           SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as "*The Political Party*  
2 *System Act*".

3           SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared a policy of the State to  
4 institutionalize and strengthen political parties as pillars of the country's democratic  
5 system. Toward this end, the State shall:

- 6           (a) institute reforms in campaign financing to promote accountability and  
7 transparency and reduce opportunities for graft and corruption;  
8           (b) provide equal opportunity to all political parties through financial  
9 subsidies for party development and campaign expenditures;  
10           (c) promote party loyalty, discipline and adherence to ideological principles,  
11 platforms and programs;  
12           (d) institute measures to make political parties viable instruments of  
13 development and good governance; and  
14           (e) encourage and support continuing voters' education through the political  
15 parties.

16           SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall  
17 mean:

- 18           (a) "Accredited National Political Party" refers to a national political party  
19 qualified to receive subsidy for party development and campaign  
20 purposes, accredited for this purpose by the COMELEC based on the  
21 criteria provided under this Act.  
22           (b) "Candidate" refers to any person aspiring for or seeking an elective  
23 public office, by himself or duly nominated by an accredited political

1 party, aggroupment or coalition of parties, and who has filed a certificate  
2 of candidacy with the COMELEC.

3 (c) "Campaign Contribution" refers to any form of donation to any  
4 candidate, political party, aggroupment or coalition thereof, given before,  
5 during or after the holding of elections. It includes any gift, donation,  
6 subscription, loan, advance or deposit of money or anything of value, or  
7 those arising from a contract, pledge or agreement to contribute, made  
8 for the purpose of influencing the results of the elections, but shall not  
9 include services rendered without compensation by individuals  
10 volunteering a portion or all of their time in behalf of a candidate or  
11 political party. It also includes the use of office space, facilities,  
12 equipment, office supplies and other materials and fixtures voluntarily  
13 donated by other persons, or allowed their use for free, the monetary  
14 value of which shall be assessed based on market rates prevailing in a  
15 particular area.

16 (d) "Campaign Expenditure" refers to any type of expense incurred,  
17 regardless of source, amount and purpose, that relates, directly or  
18 indirectly, to the conduct of an electoral campaign. It includes all  
19 payments of money or anything of value, or a contract, promise or  
20 agreement to spend, for the purpose of influencing the results of the  
21 election. It includes the use of office space and facilities personally  
22 owned by the candidate, the monetary value of the use of which shall be  
23 assessed based on the market rates prevailing in a particular area.

24 (e) "Disclosure Requirement" refers to the duty of all candidates and  
25 political parties, aggroupment or coalitions thereof to reveal the details  
26 of campaign contributions received by them, and the expenditures made  
27 on account thereof. For accredited national political parties, it includes  
28 expenditures and destinations of party development and campaign  
29 monies given to them as their share in the State Subsidy Fund  
30 established under this Act.

31 (f) "Donor" refers to any person who contributes money, property or any  
32 other form of material contribution to a candidate, political party,  
33 aggroupment or coalition thereof.

34 (g) "Donee" refers to any candidate, political party, aggroupment or coalition

1           thereof, or any representative acting in their behalf or interest, to whom  
2           money, property, or any other form of contribution is made.

3           (h) "National Political Party" refers to a political party or an organized group  
4           of persons duly registered with the COMELEC, whose constituency is  
5           effectively spread across the geographical territory of all or a majority of  
6           the administrative regions of the Philippines, pursuing or advocating  
7           platform, principles and policies for the general conduct of government  
8           and which, as the most immediate means of securing their adoption and  
9           implementation, regularly nominates and supports its members as  
10          candidates for public office.

11          (i) "Political Opportunism" refers to any act of a party member constituting  
12          disloyalty to the party, or regular non-adherence to the party's  
13          ideological principles, platforms and programs, as determined by the  
14          party in accordance with its constitution and by-laws.

15          (j) "Political Turncoatism" refers to the change of political party affiliation  
16          by any candidate, whether or not elected, six (6) months prior to the next  
17          election. Political turncoatism shall not apply in any of the following  
18          instances:

- 19               (1) change in party affiliation before the effectivity of this Act;
- 20               (2) abolition, merger or coalition of political parties where a  
21               candidate is a registered member thereof;
- 22               (3) expulsion in writing of a registered member from his/her political  
23               party: *Provided*, That the cause for such does not constitute  
24               political opportunism.

25          (k) "State Subsidy Fund" refers to the fund established under this Act for  
26          party development and campaign activities of accredited national  
27          political parties.

28          (l) "Voluntary Contributions" refers to the contributions to candidates  
29          and/or political parties, aggroupment or coalitions thereof, as allowed  
30          under existing laws.

31          SEC. 4. *Registration as a National Political Party.* – Any organized group of  
32          persons seeking registration as a national political party may file with the COMELEC  
33          a verified petition attaching thereto its constitution and by-laws, platform, principles,  
34          policies and general program of government, a verified list of its national officials,

1 members of the executive board, or its equivalent, and the heads of its regional,  
2 provincial, and city chapters, annual statement of accounts, and such other relevant  
3 information as may be required by the COMELEC.

4 The COMELEC shall, after due notice and hearing, resolve the petition within  
5 ten (10) days from the date it is submitted for decision. National Political Parties  
6 already registered as such with the COMLEC prior to the effectivity of this Act are not  
7 required to register anew.

8 *SEC. 5. Policy Agenda and Program of Governance.* – National Political  
9 Parties are mandated to craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance  
10 consistent with their party philosophy and ideals. The members of the National  
11 Political Party shall endeavor to act in accordance with the defined party platform  
12 and pursue programs to fulfill party commitments.

13 *SEC. 6. Selection of Candidates.* – The selection process for candidates of  
14 National Political Parties shall be democratized through the adoption of a process  
15 that is fair, open and transparent, and which promotes participation of choice from  
16 the members of the party. Toward this end, every National Political Party is  
17 mandated to formulate a merit system on nomination and selection of candidates  
18 who must be members of the party. Every National Political Party shall submit to the  
19 COMELEC its rules governing the merit system on nomination and selection of  
20 candidates not later than one hundred and eighty (180) days before the Election Day  
21 following the effectivity of this Act.

22 Any aggrieved member of an Accredited National Political Party may file a  
23 verified complaint to its Grievance and Arbitration Committee not later than ten (10)  
24 days after the party convention, for violation of the rules governing the merit system  
25 on the nomination and selection of candidates. Every National Political Party may  
26 hold conventions or meetings to nominate their official candidates not earlier than  
27 fifteen (15) days before the start of election period and shall submit to the COMELEC  
28 not later than the start of the election period the names of the officials of the party  
29 authorized to nominate their official candidates.

30 No political party shall nominate more candidates than the number of persons  
31 required to be voted for in an elective position nor shall any candidate be allowed to  
32 accept nominations from more than one registered political party, except in cases of  
33 aggroupment or coalitions thereof. Nominations made in violation hereof shall be  
34 denied due course by the COMELEC and the candidates concerned shall be

1 considered independent candidates. The nominations of candidates of political  
2 parties shall be filed not later than the last day for filing of the certificates of  
3 candidacy as determined by the COMELEC.

4 SEC. 7. *Certificate of Nomination and Acceptance.* – The certificate of  
5 nomination and acceptance shall state that the person issuing the nomination is the  
6 duly authorized representative of the political party as provided for in its constitution  
7 and by-laws, that the person named therein is the official candidate of the party for  
8 the elective position stated, and that he has accepted said nomination. The certificate  
9 of nomination and acceptance shall be subscribed under oath by the duly authorized  
10 representative of the political party.

11 SEC. 8. *Limit on Voluntary Contributions.* – Voluntary contributions to any  
12 National Political Party shall be limited to a maximum amount of One Million Pesos  
13 (P1,000,000.00) from a person allowed to make a voluntary contribution under  
14 existing laws.

15 Any contribution, in cash or in kind, to any candidate or political party for  
16 campaign purposes, duly reported to the COMELEC, shall be exempt from donor's  
17 tax.

18 SEC. 9. *Voluntary Contributions to Party; How Made.* – Voluntary  
19 contribution to a political party shall be deposited by the contributor to the account  
20 of the party with any reputable bank accredited by the COMELEC, within six (6)  
21 months prior to the campaign period but not later than fifteen (15) days before the  
22 day of election. The accredited banks shall issue a corresponding receipt to the  
23 contributor on the amount deposited, and shall submit to the COMELEC a statement  
24 of account of every political party with deposits. The COMELEC shall cause the  
25 publication of the account of all political parties in any newspaper of general  
26 circulation within a reasonable time as determined by the COMELEC.

27 SEC. 10. *Changing Political Party Affiliation.* – Any member of a National  
28 Political Party who changes party affiliation after being nominated by the party shall  
29 be deemed to have committed Political Turncoatism.

30 SEC. 11. *Penalties for Political Turncoatism.* - Political Turncoats shall be:

31 (a) Disqualified from running under any political party, aggroupment or  
32 coalition thereof, for any elective position in the next succeeding election  
33 immediately following the act of changing political party affiliation;

34 (b) Prohibited from assuming any executive or administrative position in

1 his/her new political party; and

- 2 (c) Directed to refund any and all amounts he/she received from his/her  
3 political party, plus a twenty-five percent (25%) surcharge thereon.

4 SEC. 12. *Petition for Disqualification.* – Any citizen of voting age, or any  
5 candidate, political party, aggroupment or coalition thereof, may file with the  
6 COMELEC, upon the filing of the certificate of candidacy and before proclamation, a  
7 petition to disqualify a candidate on the ground of political turncoatism as defined in  
8 this Act.

9 SEC. 13. *Authorized Expenses of National Political Parties.* – The amount  
10 that a National Political Party may spend for every election campaign shall be Twenty  
11 Pesos (P20.00) for every voter currently registered in the constituency or  
12 constituencies where it has official candidate. The COMELEC shall adjust the  
13 authorized amount based on the Consumer Price Index every three (3) years  
14 following the effectivity of this Act.

15 SEC. 14. *Establishment of a State Subsidy Fund.* – There is hereby established  
16 a State Subsidy Fund, which shall be used to augment the operating funds of the  
17 Accredited National Political Parties. The fund shall be used directly and exclusively  
18 for party development and campaign expenditures.

19 SEC. 15. *Allowable Party Development Activities.* – Due to the vital role  
20 played by the National Political Parties in the country's political development, and in  
21 order to promote professionalism and accountability among members of the parties,  
22 the following party development activities shall be allowed to be funded out of the  
23 State Subsidy Fund:

- 24 (a) Party administration, recruitment and civic education;  
25 (b) Research and policy development;  
26 (c) Education and training of members;  
27 (d) Institution building and constituent outreach program; and  
28 (e) Other reasonable logistical and operational expenses that is essential in  
29 strengthening the party.

30 SEC. 16. *Allowable Campaign Expenditures.* – The Accredited National  
31 Political Parties are authorized to use the subsidy given to them only for the  
32 following campaign activities:

- 33 (a) Operating expenses of the party, which may include hiring of personnel,  
34 professional secretariat, setting up of headquarters, and other relevant

1 electoral expenditures;

2 (b) Traveling expenses of the candidates and support personnel in the course  
3 of the campaign, and for personal expenses incident thereto;

4 (c) Information dissemination and advocacy campaigns of the political  
5 party;

6 (d) Production and distribution of electoral paraphernalia and other  
7 propaganda materials; and

8 (e) Other expenditures under Section 102 of the Omnibus Election Code.

9 SEC. 17. *Accreditation.* – A National Political Party eligible in accordance with  
10 Section 20 hereof, and which desires to be entitled to the rights and privileges as  
11 recipient of the subsidy provided for under this Act, may apply for accreditation by  
12 the COMELEC, under such rules and regulations as the COMELEC shall prescribe  
13 consistent with the provisions of this Act.

14 SEC. 18. *Criteria for Eligibility.* – The COMELEC shall accredit National  
15 Political Parties eligible to receive subsidy from the State Subsidy Fund, based on the  
16 following general criteria:

17 (a) Political representation, consisting of the incumbent president, vice  
18 president, members of congress, governors, vice-governors,  
19 city/municipal mayors and vice-mayors;

20 (b) Organizational strength and mobilization capability, which may include  
21 the identifiable political organizations and strengths as evidenced by  
22 their organized chapters; the number of political chapters, organizations  
23 nationwide, the number of active and permanent members of the party;  
24 and the number of incumbent elective officials belonging to them ninety  
25 (90) days before the date of elections;

26 (c) Performance and track record of the party, which may include the  
27 established record of the parties, that now composed them, taking into  
28 account, among other things, the number of years of existence of the  
29 party, their showing in the past elections as well as the ability of the party  
30 to field a slate of candidates from the municipal level to the position of  
31 senator in the immediately preceding national elections.

32 SEC. 19. *Effects of Accreditation.* – A duly accredited National Political Party  
33 shall be entitled to the rights and privileges accorded under this Act. Likewise, the  
34 accredited national political party shall be subject to the regulations set forth in this



1 Act and its implementing rules as prescribed by the COMELEC.

2 SEC. 20. *Distribution of the Fund.* – The total amount of State Subsidy Fund  
3 released annually shall be distributed as follows:

4 (a) Ten percent (10%) of the fund shall accrue to the COMELEC, to be used  
5 exclusively for monitoring purposes and the conduct of information  
6 dissemination campaigns and voters' education;

7 (b) Thirty percent (30%) of the fund shall be proportionately and ratably  
8 distributed to accredited national political parties represented in the  
9 Senate based on the number of seats obtained in the most recent general  
10 elections;

11 (c) Thirty percent (30%) of the fund shall be proportionately and ratably  
12 distributed to accredited national political parties represented in the  
13 House of Representatives based on the number of seats obtained in the  
14 most recent general elections;

15 (d) Thirty percent (30%) of the fund shall be proportionately and ratably  
16 distributed to accredited national political parties based on the number  
17 of seats obtained in local elective positions for governor, sangguniang  
18 panlalawigan, city mayor, city vice-mayor, sangguniang panglungsod,  
19 municipal mayor, municipal vice-mayor and sangguniang bayan in the  
20 most recent general elections.

21 The share of each of the Accredited National Political Parties in the State  
22 Subsidy Fund shall be released only upon proof that the concerned party has raised  
23 an amount equal to its share in the Fund from voluntary contributions; Provided  
24 that, the party concerned that fails to raise an amount equal to its share in the fund  
25 shall only receive an amount from its share in the fund equal to the amount raised  
26 from voluntary contributions; Provided further, that the balance, if any, from the  
27 share in the Fund of the party concerned shall be forfeited and reverted to the  
28 general funds of the Government.

29 SEC. 21. *Schedule of Releases from the Fund.* – For purposes of this Act, all  
30 releases from the State Subsidy Fund during a non-election year shall be used  
31 exclusively for party development activities. Funds released during an election year  
32 shall be divided as follows: seventy-five percent (75%) shall be used for campaign  
33 expenditures, and twenty-five percent (25%) for party development activities. The  
34 COMELEC shall inform the Accredited National Political Parties of the schedule of

1 releases as well as the amount of the subsidy allocated at the start of every fiscal year.

2       SEC. 22. *Management of the Subsidy.* – The Accredited National Political  
3 Parties availing of the subsidy shall maintain a separate financial account for the  
4 funds used to finance campaign activities and party development, respectively.

5       Every Accredited National Political Party shall submit to the COMELEC a  
6 detailed program of activities as well as the breakdown of expenditures drawn from  
7 the Fund by the end of December of every fiscal year. No Accredited National  
8 Political Party shall be allowed to use the subsidy for purposes other than those  
9 indicated in this Act.

10       SEC. 23. *Audit of the Fund.* – The Commission on Audit (COA) shall examine  
11 the financial reports of the Accredited National Political Parties on their use of the  
12 State Subsidy Fund. Voluntary contributions to any Accredited National Political  
13 Party shall be accounted for separately under a different set of books of accounts,  
14 which shall be open to inspection by the COA.

15       SEC. 24. *Party Ethics.* – Accredited National Political Parties shall institute  
16 internal control mechanisms to promote accountability and transparency. Accredited  
17 National Political Parties shall likewise develop and enforce an internal code of  
18 conduct and ethical standards for its party members to uphold the values and  
19 standards of public life, and to formulate and implement disciplinary procedures for  
20 party members: Provided that, said program for internal controls, ethical standards  
21 and disciplinary procedures shall be duly submitted to the COMELEC and made  
22 available to the public.

23       SEC. 25. *Full Disclosure.* – The officials of every Accredited National Political  
24 Party shall submit a sworn statement of their assets and liabilities to the COMELEC  
25 which shall be made available to the public. All Accredited National Political Parties  
26 and their candidates shall also be required to make a public-disclosure of all  
27 contributions as well as expenditures incurred for the use of the State Subsidy Fund.

28       The disclosures shall be made through the official website of the COMELEC  
29 and in a newspaper of general circulation.

30       SEC. 26. *Other Reports.* – The following shall be reported by the Accredited  
31 National Political Parties and their candidates:

- 32       (a) The amount of contribution, the date of receipt by the bank, and the full  
33       name and exact address of the person from whom the contribution was  
34       received;

- 1 (b) A full report of expenditures and receipts incurred during the campaign,  
2 including those which were drawn from the State Subsidy Fund, if any;
- 3 (c) Post-election disclosure statements as required under existing laws,  
4 which must be submitted to the COMELEC within thirty (30) days after  
5 Election Day. Submissions made thirty (30) days after the deadline  
6 provided by law will be considered late and subject to a fine in such  
7 amounts as may be determined by the COMELEC; and
- 8 (d) Detailed breakdown of expenditures for the party development activities  
9 charged against the State Subsidy Fund. The financial report covering the  
10 party development activities shall be submitted annually, at the end of  
11 every fiscal year. The subsidy for the succeeding year will not be released  
12 without the submission of the said report covering the preceding year.

13 These reports are required of every accredited national political party and its  
14 candidates, regardless of the results of the elections.

15 *SEC. 27. Failure to Comply with Disclosure and Reporting Requirements.* –  
16 Failure of the Accredited National Political Party to comply with the provisions of  
17 this Act will result in its disqualification from receiving its share in the State Subsidy  
18 Fund, which shall revert to the general funds of the Government, and forfeiture of all  
19 the rights and privileges to which it would have been entitled under this Act.

20 *SEC. 28. Performance Monitoring and Reporting System.* – The COMELEC  
21 and the COA shall jointly design and implement, in consultation with political  
22 parties, aggroupment or coalitions thereof, accredited citizens' arms, the private  
23 sector and non-governmental organizations, and government agencies, an integrated  
24 political party development and campaign subsidy performance monitoring and  
25 reporting system. The performance and monitoring system shall identify, define and  
26 operationalize a system of performance indicators and measures for party  
27 development and campaign subsidy deployment.

28 The COMELEC and the COA shall, based on the results of the system, publish  
29 and disseminate annual reports on the development of political parties that have  
30 received subsidies and on the distribution, use and results of the campaign subsidies  
31 provided to political parties.

32 *SEC. 29. Publication and Dissemination of the Political Party Development  
33 and Campaign Subsidy Performance Reports.* – The political party development  
34 and campaign subsidy performance reports shall be submitted to both houses of the

1 Congress of the Philippines not later than June 30 of every year, and shall be made  
2 available to the public via the internet and mass media as a guide for the citizenry in  
3 evaluating political parties for the purpose of participating in their program of  
4 activities, and in supporting, affiliating with, or joining them.

5 SEC. 30. *Punishable Acts.* – The following acts shall be punishable:

6 (a) Misuse of funds received by National Political Parties both from the State  
7 Subsidy Fund and from voluntary contributions;

8 (b) The giving of voluntary contributions which go beyond the allowable  
9 limits set under this Act and other existing laws;

10 (c) Inability to account for all incoming contributions from whatever source;

11 (d) Failure to submit pre-election as well as post-election disclosure  
12 statements to the COMELEC. Any submission past the late submission  
13 period set in Section 28(c) will be deemed as a failure to submit, hence,  
14 punishable under this Act; and

15 (e) False reporting or any misrepresentation in the financial statement  
16 reports.

17 SEC. 31. *Penalties.* – (a) Any candidate or official of any National Political  
18 Party who violates any provision of this Act shall be punished with imprisonment of  
19 not less than six (6) years but not more than twelve (12) years, or a fine ranging from  
20 Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) to Five Hundred Thousand Pesos  
21 (P500,000.00), or both. He shall, likewise, be disqualified to hold public office. Any  
22 National Political Party that violates any provision of this Act shall pay a fine of not  
23 less than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than One  
24 Million Pesos (P1,000,000.00); (b) Any National Political Party that fails to comply  
25 with any of the documentary requirements set forth in this Act shall be subject to  
26 administrative sanctions by the COMELEC, which shall include temporary or  
27 permanent cancellation of the party's registration, as well as payment of fines  
28 consistent with existing laws and regulations; and (c) Any national political party  
29 who shall be found to be directly responsible for the accommodation of the political  
30 turncoats shall be stripped of its state subsidy after due notice and hearing before the  
31 COMELEC.

32 SEC. 32. *Appropriations.* – The amount of Three Hundred Fifty Million Pesos  
33 (P350,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated out of the funds of the National Treasury  
34 not otherwise appropriated, effective immediately upon the approval of this Act.

1 Every year thereafter, and not later than January 15 of every year; there shall be  
2 appropriated the amount Three Hundred Fifty Million Pesos (P350,000,000.00). All  
3 such amounts appropriated pursuant to this Act shall go to the State Subsidy Fund,  
4 which shall be administered by the COMELEC.

5 The COMELEC and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall  
6 promulgate guidelines to facilitate the release of the funds to every accredited  
7 national political party.

8 SEC. 33. *Lead Agency.* – The COMELEC shall administer and enforce the  
9 provisions of the Act.

10 SEC. 34. *Applicability.* – The provisions of Batas Pambansa Blg. 881,  
11 otherwise known as the "Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines", as amended,  
12 and other election laws not inconsistent with this Act shall apply suppletorily.

13 SEC. 35. *Rules and Regulations.* – The COMELEC shall promulgate the  
14 necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

15 SEC. 36. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations  
16 or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed,  
17 modified or amended accordingly.

18 SEC. 37. *Separability Clause.* – If any part of this Act is held invalid or  
19 unconstitutional, the other parts or provisions thereof not affected thereby shall  
20 remain valid and effective.

21 SEC. 38. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days  
22 following its publication in the Official Gazette and in two (2) newspapers of general  
23 circulation.

*Approved,*