

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

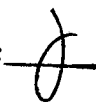


Senate  
Office of the Secretary

'16 AUG 30 P12:00

SENATE

SENATE BILL No. 1111

RECEIVED BY: 

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Introduced by **SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA**

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**AN ACT  
PROVIDING FOR A SYSTEM FOR LOCAL ABSENTEE VOTING FOR  
MEDIA PRACTITIONERS, LAWYERS, AND ELECTORAL STAFF OF  
CANDIDATES FOR NATIONAL ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THIS  
PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7166, AND FOR OTHER RELATED  
PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The right to suffrage is the essence of democracy. It is both a manner through which we can hold our officials accountable and a way in which we can express our aspirations for our future. That being said, it is imperative upon our government to ensure that our electorate will have all the possible opportunities to have their voices heard during the elections. Parenthetically, there should be no room for disenfranchisement of voters.

However, some sectors in our society are unable to cast their vote because their profession requires them to work in locations away from the precincts where they are registered. They are the government officials, who enforce and execute the law; the media practitioners, who cover the elections; and the election lawyers who advocate for the candidates. It would be injustice if they were to be deprived of their right to vote simply because their work requires them to participate in the conduct of elections.

This bill amends R.A. No. 7166, otherwise known as "An Act Providing for Synchronized National and Local Elections and for Electoral Reforms, Authorizing Appropriations Therefor, and for Other Purposes," by expanding the qualified voters for local absentee voting.

  
LEILA M. DE LIMA

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PURPOSES**

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

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**SECTION 1.** *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as "Local Absentee Voting Act."

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**SEC. 2.** Section 12 of Republic Act No. 7166, otherwise known as "An Act Providing for Synchronized National and Local Elections and for Electoral Reforms, Authorizing Appropriations Therefor, and for Other Purposes," shall be amended to read as follows:

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"Section 12. **LOCAL Absentee Voting.** - Absentee voting [as provided for in Executive Order No. 157 dated March 30, 1987] shall apply to the elections for President, Vice-President, Senators, **AND PARTY LIST REPRESENTATIVES** only and shall be limited to [~~members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police and other government officers and employees~~] **PERSONS, AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 12-A OF THIS ACT**, who are duly

22 registered voters and who, on election day, may temporarily be  
23 assigned in connection with the performance of election duties to  
24 places where they are not registered voters.”

25 **SEC. 3.** Section 12-A shall be inserted after Section 12 of Republic Act No.  
26 7166, which shall read as follows:

27 “SECTION 12-A. *WHO MAY AVAIL OF LOCAL*  
28 *ABSENTEE VOTING.* - ABSENTEE VOTING SHALL BE  
29 LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

30 1. MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE  
31 PHILIPPINES AND THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL  
32 POLICE AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICERS  
33 AND EMPLOYEES, AS PROVIDED FOR IN  
34 EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 157 DATED MARCH 30,  
35 1987;

36 2. MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA, MEDIA  
37 PRACTITIONERS INCLUDING THEIR TECHNICAL  
38 AND SUPPORT STAFF WHO ARE ACTIVELY  
39 ENGAGED IN THE PURSUIT OF INFORMATION  
40 GATHERING AND REPORTING OR DISTRIBUTION,  
41 IN ANY MANNER OR FORM, INCLUDING, BUT NOT  
42 LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

- 43 a. PRINT JOURNALISTS;  
44 b. TELEVISION JOURNALISTS;  
45 c. PHOTO JOURNALISTS;

- 46 d. ONLINE JOURNALISTS;
- 47 e. RADIO JOURNALISTS;
- 48 f. DOCUMENTARY MAKERS;
- 49 g. TELEVISION/RADIO PRODUCTION;

50 3. ELECTION LAWYERS, INCLUDING THEIR SUPPORT  
51 STAFF, WHO ARE RETAINED BY CANDIDATES FOR  
52 NATIONAL POSTS; AND

53 4. ELECTORAL STAFF OF CANDIDATES FOR  
54 NATIONAL POSTS.

55 FOR PURPOSES OF THIS ACT, THE SEPARATE TOTAL  
56 NUMBERS OF ELECTION LAWYERS AND ELECTORAL STAFF  
57 PER CANDIDATE SHALL NOT BE MORE THAN THE TOTAL  
58 NUMBER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, INCLUDING  
59 PROVINCES, INDEPENDENT CITIES, COMPONENT CITIES,  
60 AND MUNICIPALITIES, AT THE TIME OF THE ELECTION. IF  
61 AN ELECTION LAWYER SHALL HAVE BEEN RETAINED BY  
62 MORE THAN ONE CANDIDATE, HE MAY ONLY AVAIL OF  
63 ABSENTEE VOTING FOR ONE CANDIDATE.”

64 **SEC. 4.** *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The COMELEC shall,  
65 within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the implementing  
66 rules and regulations which shall include a system of accreditation and verification of  
67 the persons who avail of local absentee voting.

68           **SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part hereof, is held  
69   invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise  
70   affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

71           **SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.*** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,  
72   executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation  
73   contrary to or is inconsistent with the provision of this Act is hereby repealed,  
74   modified, or amended accordingly.

75           **SEC. 7. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after  
76   its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,