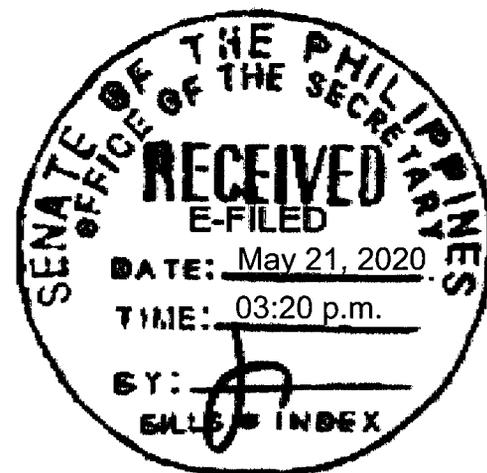


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



SENATE
P.S. RES. NO. 412

Introduced by SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL REFORMS AND PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO ASSESS THE PREPARATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMELEC) FOR THE 2022 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS AMIDST CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) PANDEMIC IN THE COUNTRY

1 WHEREAS, the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has already disrupted the
2 very foundation of our democracy, i.e. elections;

3 WHEREAS, COVID-19 has also placed unprecedented pressure on countries
4 and states around the globe to assess whether scheduled elections should be
5 cancelled, postponed, or held in a new manner;

6 WHEREAS, based on the analysis prepared by International Institute for
7 Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) on 18 March 2020, for
8 countries across the globe with scheduled elections until May 2020, at least 56
9 countries and territories have decided to postpone national and subnational elections
10 due to COVID-19;

11 WHEREAS, according to a paper published by Observer Research Foundation
12 on 07 May 2020, Poland is one of the countries that suspended its presidential
13 election on 10 May 2020 and now studying the possibility of introducing
14 compulsory universal postal voting;

15 WHEREAS, the International IDEA further reported that at least 23 countries
16 and territories have decided to hold national or subnational elections as originally
17 planned wherein voters casted their ballots in polling stations (in-person voting)
18 while observing social distancing and preventive health measures;

1 WHEREAS, in an article dated 01 May 2020, the Asian Network for Free
2 Elections (ANFE) highlighted the accomplishments of South Korea for successfully
3 conducting the first major elections on 15 April 2020 by imposing innovative
4 measures such as online campaigning, advance voting, postal voting, strict
5 implementation of social distancing and other health precautionary measures,
6 allowing medical staff and COVID-19 patients to vote, and live-streaming of polling
7 and counting activities to ensure transparency, among others;

8 WHEREAS, the Philippines is scheduled to conduct the National and Local
9 Elections (NLE) on 09 May 2022, and Barangay and Sangguninang Kabataan
10 Elections (BSKE) on 05 December 2022 as provided in Republic Act No. 11462;

11 WHEREAS, according to COMELEC, around 4.3 million voters are expected to
12 register for the 2022 NLE, which is more than double than the two million new
13 registrants for the rescheduled 2020 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Election;¹

14 WHEREAS, Section 28 of Republic Act No. 10590 authorizes the COMELEC to
15 explore more efficient, reliable, and secure modes or systems, ensuring the secrecy
16 and sanctity of the entire process, whether paper-based, electronic-based, or
17 internet-based technology or such other latest technology available.

18 WHEREAS, several legislative proposals are now pending in Congress which
19 seek to allow early voting to all qualified senior citizens, persons with disabilities,
20 election lawyers and employees required to work on election day;

21 WHEREAS, in a news article dated 01 April 2020, COMELEC Commissioner
22 Rowena Guanzon shared that the poll body is considering mail and electronic voting
23 as options for domestic voters and the mobile voting app for overseas voting for
24 2022 NLE;

25 WHEREAS, in addition to these initiatives, there is still a need for COMELEC to
26 work on a new operational approach to deliver an election in the context of a
27 pandemic and post-pandemic, putting utmost priority to health and safety of the
28 voters especially the vulnerable members of the electorate and the thousands of
29 election workers who make the election possible;

¹ <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/01/20/comelec-expects-4-3m-new-excited-voters-to-register/>

1 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the
2 Senate of the Philippines, to direct the Committee on Electoral Reforms and People's
3 Participation to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, to assess the preparations of
4 the COMELEC for the 2022 National and Local Elections amidst the COVID-19
5 pandemic in the country.

Approved,



SONNY ANGARA