



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2341



Introduced by Hon. Rozzano Rufino B. Biazon

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The usual qualifications for public office are the citizenship, age, residence and suffrage qualifications. Academic requirements are prescribed for some offices like the Constitutional Commissions and the judiciary in general, where professional practice is also necessary.

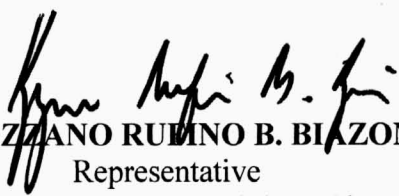
For the rest of the public offices, however, neither a college degree nor a high school diploma is required. Such is true of the Presidency of the Philippines, the Vice Presidency, and the Senate and the House of Representatives. This is true also of the offices of the provincial governors and city and municipal mayors and the rest of the elective local officials. For these offices, one's literacy, or the mere ability to read and write, seems to be sufficient proof of intelligence or capability.

This is not to suggest that the lack of academic requirements for most public offices would indicate that in fact idiots and imbeciles fill them. An academic degree is no proof of intelligence nor does their number establish learnedness or even mere common sense. There are a lot of intangible qualities that offset the lack of intellectual achievements, such as a calling or a mission to improve the lives of the poor, or the will and the desire to serve.

It is time for the Philippines to raise the bar of excellence of its leaders and would-be leaders. It is time that we include the state of mind of these people who wish to lead and serve the Filipino people, as a prerequisite for filing one's certificate of candidacy.

Thus, this bill aims to require all persons seeking to run for an elective public office to submit to a neuro-psychiatric examination and include the results of the examination in his certificate of candidacy that is filed with the Commission on Elections (COMELEC). The submission of the results of the examination to the COMELEC would let the public know whether the person is mentally prepared to take on the challenging task of leading their communities or the entire nation towards a better future.

The Filipino people deserve only to be led by the best. Hence, the passage of this bill is urged.


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**AN ACT
REQUIRING ANY PERSON RUNNING FOR AN ELECTIVE NATIONAL OR
LOCAL POSITION TO UNDERGO A NEURO-PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATION
PRIOR TO FILING A CERTIFICATE OF CANDIDACY**

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

SECTION 1. *Title of the Act.* – This Act shall be known as “*Improved Qualifications Act of 2004.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It shall be the policy of the State to allow only the best, brightest and the most qualified citizens of the Philippines to run for elective positions, both in the national and local level. It shall endeavor to ensure that the leaders of the country will effectively and efficiently serve the Filipino people.

SEC. 3. *Neuro-psychiatric examination; Mandatory.* – No person shall be eligible for any elective public office unless he or she passes a neuro-psychiatric examination duly conducted by an experienced and competent medical doctor prior to the filing of the sworn certificate of candidacy with the Commission on Elections (COMELEC).

The person filing a certificate of candidacy shall include the findings and/or results of the neuro-psychiatric examination therein. Failure of the person to include said findings and/or results in the certificate of candidacy shall make him ineligible for any elective public office.

SEC. 4. *Ground for Disqualification.* – The person who fails the neuro-psychiatric examination duly conducted by an experienced and competent medical doctor shall be disqualified from running for any elective public office.

Likewise, any person who falsifies the findings and/or results of the neuro-psychiatric examination shall, upon notice and hearing, be disqualified from running for any elective public office. This is without prejudice to the filing of appropriate criminal charges against the person or persons who falsified such findings and/or results.

SEC. 5. *Standardized Examination.* – The COMELEC, along with the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) and other medical societies on psychiatry, shall develop a special and standardized neuro-psychiatric examination exclusively to test the character fitness and current state of mind of persons who wish to run for public office. Such standardized examination shall be developed within sixty (60) days upon the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* – All other general and special laws, acts, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, administrative rules and regulations, or part thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.* – If for any reason any section or provision of this Act, or any portion thereof, or the application of such section, provision or portion to any person, group or circumstances is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or the application of such section, provision or portion thereof to other persons, groups or circumstances shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.