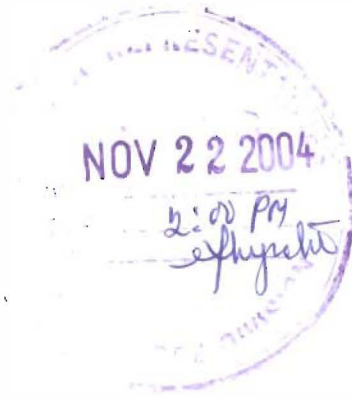


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Thirteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3317



Introduced by HONORABLE LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the continuing effort to purge the election process of every element which provides opportunities for distorting and frustrating the will of the electorate, one area remains neglected up to the present.

The law governing election does not contain any prohibition against the assignment of Election Officers or Registrars in the province, city or municipality where an incumbent elective public official or a candidate for office is related to him or her by consanguinity or by affinity. Neither does it provide for his transfer to another jurisdiction upon the filing by a relative of a certificate of candidacy for public office in the municipality, city, or province to which he is assigned.

While there is no lack of election officers or registrars who are capable of resisting family pressure, still the psychological overhang of clan disapproval and, perhaps, even ostracism, at times prove overwhelming. After all, blood is thicker than water. Moreover, even in instances where the election officer steadfastly refused to favor a relative, defeated candidates for office and many of the voters harbor the suspicion the he or she had rigged the election of a person related to him or her.

This inevitable and frequently all-pervading suspicion then taints the election process inspite of its lack of any basis in fact in some cases. It is thus better to avoid any suspicion in the higher interest of maintaining an unquestionable integrity of the election process and promoting a good image for the Commission on Elections.

To forestall the commission of anomalies, the generation of doubt as to the integrity of the election process, and, above all, to relieve local election officers of the clan pressure which at times proves to be overwhelming, it is proposed that the assignment to or continuance in any assignment of election

officers or registrars in jurisdiction where a incumbent public official is related to him by blood or by affinity be absolutely prohibited and that these presently assigned to such jurisdictions be transferred. It is further proposed that such transfers be made immediately and automatically upon the filing of a certificate of candidacy for a public office in the province, city, or municipality to which an election officer or registrar is assigned by any person related to him or her by blood or affinity.

This proposed rule shall apply in all cases where the person who is the incumbent or who is a candidate for a public office is related within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity to the local election officer.

With the adoption of this rule, not only will the election process be purged of a possible source of stigma, it will greatly relieve election officers and registrars of the tremendous burden of fending off attempts by those related to them by ties of blood or affinity to subvert their sense of duty and the process of suffrage which they are sworn to uphold.

Above all, it will greatly assist in fortifying the faith of the people in the electoral process, which, like Ceasar's wife, is required to be not only "beyond reproach but above suspicion."

Because of the merits of this bill, early passage is earnestly requested.



LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Thirteenth Congress
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HOUSE BILL NO. **3317**

Introduced by HONORABLE LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

AN ACT
TO PROHIBIT THE ASSIGNMENT OR CONTINUANCE IN AN
ASSIGNMENT OF CERTAIN OFFICIALS OF THE COMMISSION ON
ELECTIONS IN JURISDICTIONS WHERE THEY ARE RELATED BY
CONSANGUINITY OR AFFINITY, WITHIN THE FOURTH CIVIL
DEGREE, TO ANY INCUMBENT ELECTIVE PUBLIC OFFICIAL OR ANY
CANDIDATE FOR A PUBLIC OFFICE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. No provincial, city, or municipal election officer of the Commission on Elections shall be assigned to any province, city or municipality where a person related to him/her by consanguinity or affinity within the fourth civil degree is an incumbent elective public official or is a candidate for an elective public office. Where such Regional Director or Election Registrar had been assigned to a particular jurisdiction prior to the election or the filing of a certificate of candidacy by the person related to him/her within the prohibited degree of relationship, he/she shall be automatically given another assignment outside his jurisdiction within five (5) days after such election or the filing of such certificate of candidacy; *Provided, however,* That election officers assigned to jurisdictions where a person related to them is the incumbent in an elective public office at the time of the approval of this Act shall be automatically be given another assignment within sixty (60) days after the approval thereof.

SECTION 2. This Act shall take immediate effect upon its approval.

APPROVED,