



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5019**



Introduced by Representative Pantaleon D. Alvarez

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to allow persons with disability and senior citizens to vote under the local absentee voting system.

The right to suffrage is guaranteed under Article V, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution. Thus, all citizens of the Philippines are allowed to vote provided that they have all the qualifications to do so.

Absentee voting laws were passed as a means to increase participation by citizens who are in situations which prevent them to vote. Executive Order No. 157, Series of 1987, was issued by the late President Corazon C. Aquino to provide for absentee voting by officers and employees of government who are away from the places of their registration by reason of official functions on election day. This law ensures that those government officials and employees are not deprived of their right to participate in electoral exercises. Republic Act No. 10380 was also passed into law to expand the coverage of the local absentee voting and included members of the media, media practitioners, including their staff who are registered voters and who, on election day, may not be able to vote due to the performance of their functions.

In 2013, Republic Act No. 10366 entitled, "*An Act Authorizing the Commission on Elections to Establish Precincts Assigned to Accessible Polling*

Places Exclusively for Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens” was also approved to ensure that persons with disabilities and senior citizens are able to exercise their right to political participation without discrimination or restrictions, providing for the purpose measures that will enable them to register and vote by themselves.

Despite the implementation of Republic Act No. 10366, some persons with disability (PWDs) and senior citizens still failed, if not discouraged, to participate in the electoral process and were disenfranchised because of their mobility limitation due to their physical and health condition. At present, there is no law granting PWDs and senior citizens the privilege to vote under local absentee voting. If a PWD or senior citizen chooses to vote in a place other than where that person is registered but in the place where such person is confined during the election by reason of a limiting physical or health condition, the State must allow that person to do so as long as the requirements for local absentee voting are fulfilled.

This bill ensures that senior citizens and PWDs, who are unable to vote in their registered precincts during election day on account of their physical and health conditions, can cast their votes as local absentee voters in places other than where they are registered, subject to the rules and regulations issued by the Commission on Elections. The State must ensure that they are able to exercise their right to vote in a comfortable manner and with greater accessibility.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



PANTALEON D. ALVAREZ



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5019**

INTRODUCED BY REP. PANTALEON D. ALVAREZ

AN ACT
EXPANDING THE COVERAGE OF ABSENTEE VOTING TO
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWD) AND SENIOR CITIZENS,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10380,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT PROVIDING FOR LOCAL
ABSENTEE VOTING FOR MEDIA

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

1 **SECTION 1.** Republic Act No. 10380, otherwise known as *An Act*
2 *Providing for Local Absentee Voting for Media*, shall now hereby be known
3 as the *Expanded Absentee Voting Act of 2017*.

4 **SEC. 2.** Section 2 of Republic Act No. 10380, otherwise
5 known as *An Act Providing for Local Absentee Voting for Media*, is
6 amended to read as follows:

7
8 “Section 2. Local Absentee Voting for **PEOPLE WITH**
9 **DISABILITIES, SENIOR CITIZENS, AND** Members of Media.
10 The Commission on Elections shall extend the right to vote under
11 the local absentee voting system provided under existing laws and
12 executive orders to **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, SENIOR**

1 CITIZENS, AND members of media, who are duly registered
2 voters and who, on election day: Provided, That they shall be
3 allowed to vote only for the positions of President, Vice President,
4 Senators and Party-List Representative. **FOR THIS PURPOSE,**
5 **MEMBERS OF MEDIA SHALL BE DEEMED TO INCLUDE**
6 **MEDIA PRACTITIONERS, INCLUDING THE TECHNICAL**
7 **AND SUPPORT STAFF, AND WHO MAY NOT BE ABLE TO**
8 **VOTE DUE TO THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR FUNCTIONS**
9 **IN COVERING AND REPORTING ON THE ELECTIONS."**
10

11 **SEC. 3. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - The Commission
12 on Elections and Employment shall promulgate the necessary
13 implementing rules and regulations within sixty (60) days from the
14 effectivity of this Act.
15

16 **SEC. 4. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision of this law or the
17 application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
18 remainder of this law or the application of such provision or part to
19 other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.
20

21 **SEC. 5. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, rules, and
22 regulations or parts thereof, which are contrary to or inconsistent with
23 this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.
24

25 **SEC. 6. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
26 after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of national
27 circulation.

Approved,