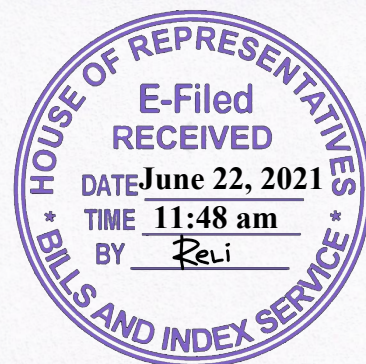


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. 9636

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The COVID-19 pandemic changed a lot of the normal processes that we have been used to. It showed us that we need to change some of our procedures and adapt to the current situation.

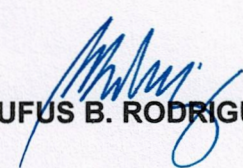
One change that should happen is to allow for online voter registration.

It is a fact that many Filipinos, even before the pandemic, hesitate to register as voters because of the time it takes to complete the registration process and the lines that they have to endure.

We need to provide a more convenient and efficient voter registration system and ensure a continuing system of voter registration by adopting online registration of voters as an option

This bill seeks to amend Section 8 of RA 8189 by adding as an option to the existing personal mode of voter registration, the electronic or online mode of registration through the official website as designated by the Commission on Elections. Online registration shall not be limited to the filing of an application to register but to all processes under the existing law such as reactivation of voter registration records, transfer of registration records and correction in the entries of voter's registration records.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this measure is earnestly requested.


RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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House Bill No. 9636

AN ACT

ADOPTING A SYSTEM OF ONLINE REGISTRATION OF VOTERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 2, 3, 8, AND 10 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8189, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "VOTER'S REGISTRATION ACT OF 1996"

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

SECTION 1. Section 2 of Republic Act No. 8189 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to [systematize the present method of registration in order to establish a clean, complete, permanent and updated list of voters] **ESTABLISH A SYSTEM OF REGISTRATION THAT ENSURES AND GUARANTEES A CLEAN, COMPLETE, PERMANENT, AND UPDATED LIST OF VOTERS. TO ENCOURAGE AND ENSURE A CONTINUING SYSTEM OF VOTER REGISTRATION, THE STATE SHALL ADOPT AND MAKE USE OF TECHNOLOGIES THAT SHALL FACILITATE AND ALLOW THE AUTOMATED AND ONLINE REGISTRATION OF VOTERS AS AN OPTION, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE INTEGRITY, COMPLETENESS, AND ACCURACY OF THE LIST OF VOTERS.**"

SEC. 2. Section 3 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in is Act:

a) *Registration* refers to the act of accomplishing and filing of a sworn application for registration by a qualified voter **ONLINE OR** before the election officer of the city or municipality wherein [he] **THE APPLICANT** resides and including the same in the book of registered voters upon approval by the Election Registration Board. **REGISTRATION LIKEWISE REFERS TO OTHER PROCESSES ATTENDANT TO BEING A QUALIFIED VOTER SUCH AS THE REACTIVATION OF VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS, TRANSFER OF VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS, AND CORRECTION OF ENTRIES THEREIN;**

SEC. 3. Section 8 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 8. *System of Continuing Registration of Voters.* - The personal **OR ELECTRONIC** filing of application [of] **FOR** registration of voters shall be conducted daily in the office of the Election Officer during regular office hours **OR THROUGH THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE COMMISSION.** No registration shall, however, be conducted [during the period starting] **WITHIN** one hundred twenty (120) days before a regular election and ninety (90) days before a special election."

SEC. 4. Section 10 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 10. *Registration of Voters.* – A qualified voter shall be registered in the permanent list of voters in a precinct of the city or municipality [wherein he] **WHERE THE VOTER** resides to be able to vote in any election. To register as a voter, [he] **THE APPLICANT** shall personally **OR ELECTRONICALLY** accomplish an application form for registration as prescribed by the Commission [in three (3) copies before the Election Officer] **AND PERSONALLY SUBMIT THE ACCOMPLISHED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF THE ELECTION OFFICER OF THE CITY OR MUNICIPALITY WHERE THE VOTER RESIDES** on any date during office hours, **OR THROUGH THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE COMMISSION** [after having acquired the qualifications of a voter].

X X X

The application for registration [shall contain three (3) specimen signatures of the applicant, clear and legible rolled prints of his left and right thumbprints, with four (4) identification size copies of his latest photograph, attached thereto, to be taken at the expense of the Commission] **MAY BE SUBMITTED PERSONALLY OR ELECTRONICALLY AND SHALL BE PROCESSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10367 ENTITLED "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR MANDATORY BIOMETRICS VOTER REGISTRATION" AT THE EXPENSE OF THE COMMISSION .**

Before the applicant accomplishes [his] **THE** application for registration, the Election Officer shall inform [him] **THE APPLICANT** of the qualifications and disqualifications prescribed by law for a voter, and thereafter, see to it that the accomplished application contains all the data therein required and that the applicant's specimen signatures, fingerprints, and photographs are properly affixed in [all copies of] the voter's application.

IN CASE OF ONLINE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION BY AN APPLICANT, THE COMMISSION SHALL SEND A NOTICE CONFIRMING ITS RECEIPT OF THE APPLICATION AND PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW THE APPLICANT MAY CHECK THE STATUS OF THE APPLICATION.

FURTHERMORE, THE COMMISSION SHALL EMPLOY DATA SECURITY MEASURES WHICH ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE THE ACCURACY AND INTEGRITY OF ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS."

SEC. 5. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act may be charged against the current appropriations of the Commission. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act must be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within fifteen (15) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Commission on Elections, in consultation with the Department of Information and Communications Technology, Department of Science and Technology, and Department of Interior and Local Government shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.* - If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* - All other laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders, issuances, presidential proclamations, rules and regulations or parts thereof, which are contrary to and inconsistent with any provision of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect immediately upon its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,