

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



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. 9637

EXPLANATORY NOTE

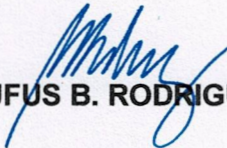
The COVID-19 pandemic changed a lot of the normal processes that we have been used to. It showed us that we need to change some of our procedures and adapt to the current situation.

One change that should happen is to allow for online filing of certificates of candidacy (COC).

In most if not all provinces, cities and towns, Comelec offices are too small to accommodate many candidates and their supporters. It cannot be denied that many supporters want to accompany their candidate in the filing of COC. It would be impossible for them to observe physical distancing in these workplaces.

The COMELEC can put in place systems to ensure that the online filing of COC will go smoothly and not be tampered with.

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


RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ

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AN ACT

**ADOPTING A SYSTEM OF ONLINE FILING OF CERTIFICATES OF CANDIDACY,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 7 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7166**

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

SECTION 1. Section 7 of Republic Act 7166 is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 7. Filing of Certificates of Candidacy. - The certificate of candidacy of any person running for the office of President, Vice-President, Senator, Member of the House of Representatives or any elective provincial, city or municipal official shall be filed in five (5) legible copies with the offices of the Commission specified hereunder not later than the day before the date legally fixed for the beginning of his campaign period.

- a. The certificate of candidacy for President, Vice-President and Senators shall be filed with the main office of the Commission in Manila;
- b. The certificate of candidacy for the Members of the House of Representatives shall be filed with the provincial election supervisor of the province concerned. Those for legislative districts in the National Capital Region shall be filed with the regional election director of said region and those for legislative districts in cities outside the National Capital Region which comprise one or more legislative districts shall be filed with the city election registrar concerned;
- c. The certificate of candidacy for provincial offices shall be filed with the provincial supervisor concerned; and
- d. The certificate of candidacy for city or municipal offices shall be filed with the city or municipal election registrar concerned. Whenever practicable, the names of registered candidates for local positions shall be printed in the election returns: Provided, That, if a candidate has been disqualified or declared a nuisance candidate, it shall be the duty of the Commission to instruct without delay the appropriate election officials to delete the name of said candidate as printed in the election return.

The certificate of candidacy shall be filed by the candidate personally or by his duly authorized representative **OR ELECTRONICALLY**. [No certificate of candidacy shall be filed or accepted by mail, telegram or facsimile].

SEC. 2. 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. 3. 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. 4. 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. 5. 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. 6. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect immediately upon its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,