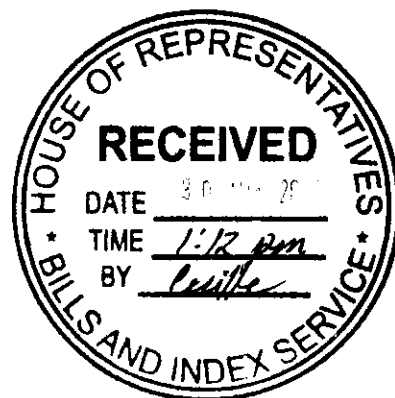


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 327



Introduced by: Hon. Iris Marie D. Montes

AN ACT
ACCELERATING THE PARTICIPATION AND EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION
OF WOMEN IN THE DECISION-MAKING AND POLICY-MAKING PROCESSES
IN GOVERNMENT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 14 of Article II of the Philippine Constitution provides that "The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men."

The sex distribution in the Philippine population based on the 2020 Census of Population and Housing shows that the Philippines had a total population of 109,035,343 persons. Of the 108.67 million household population in 2020, 55.02 million (50.6%) were males while 53.65 million (49.4%) were females. The sex ratio was computed at 103 in 2020, which means that there were 103 males for every 100 females.

Meanwhile, in 2022, only 24% of elected positions in the country were held by women, a notable decrease from 30% in 2017.¹

This is "Despite progressive laws like the 1987 Constitution and the Magna Carta of Women—both of which uphold women's equal role in nation-building—Filipina leaders remain vastly underrepresented in governance. The sharp decline in political participation is not just a statistic; it's a warning."²

According to the United Nations Women Asia and the Pacific Region, "...higher numbers of women in parliament generally contribute to stronger attention to women's issues. Women's political participation is a fundamental prerequisite for gender equality and genuine democracy. It facilitates women's direct engagement in public decision-making and is a means of ensuring better accountability to women."

Political accountability to women begins with increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, but it cannot stop there. What is required are gender-sensitive governance reforms that will make all elected officials more effective at promoting gender equality in public policy and ensuring their implementation."³

¹ Women make up only 24% of elected officials in PH, highlighting gender gap in politics, Philippine Institute for Development Studies (<https://pids.gov.ph/details/news/press-releases/women-make-up-only-24-of-elected-officials-in-ph-highlighting-gender-gap-in-politics>) Accessed on 23 May

2025

² Ibid.

³ Political Participation of Women, UN Women (<https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/participation-of-women>) Accessed on 23 May 2025

Albeit ultimately, a free market situation is ideal where both men and women have equal access to opportunities in all endeavors. The existing reality however, is that Filipino women continue to face steep discrimination, particularly in accessing education, employment, and career opportunities.

Hence, to help address the inherent social discrimination against women and to balance men and women participation government, this measure seeks to reserve at least one third of certain opportunities in government and certain institutions to women.

The right of women to participate in all spheres of life is vital in fully realizing their role as agents and beneficiaries of development.

For this purpose, early passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



IRIS MARIE D. MONTES

Kababaihan, Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan
at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the "Women in Government Act."

SEC. 2. Appointive positions in the national and local government shall be reserved to qualified women based on the following fraction and classification:

- (a) At least one-third of the Cabinet;
- (b) At least one-third of all undersecretaries and positions of comparable salary grade or at least one in every line department, government-owned and controlled corporations, government financing institutions, state colleges and universities, and local government units: *Provided, That* in cases where there are more than fifty percent (50%) women population occupying technical position in departments, offices, bureaus and agencies, the secretary or the head agency shall be a woman and the proportion of one-third shall be increased to two-thirds;
- (c) At least one-third of all assistant secretaries in every department;
- (d) At least one-third of all directors in every department;
- (e) At least one-third of all chiefs of division in every department, bureau or agency;
- (f) At least one-third of all ambassadors and consular offices;
- (g) At least one-third of all judges in all lower courts; and
- (h) At least one-third of all prosecutors in department of justice.

The Civil Service Commission shall enforce this provision.

SEC. 3. Women in the Armed Forces of the Philippines shall be allowed combat and security-related assignments.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines shall enforce this provision.

SEC. 4. All police stations shall establish a female unit to attend to victims of rape, battering, incest and other crimes against women and chastity. For this purpose, the Philippine National Police shall reserve at least thirty percent (30%) of all items in each rank to women.

SEC. 5. All departments, bureaus, agencies, and other government-owned and controlled corporations, in coordination with the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), shall include in their human resource development program, gender and development orientation, trainings, and seminars among others.

SEC. 6. At least one-third of scholarships, grants, fellowships and trainings in the national and local governments, either in the Philippines or abroad, shall be reserved for qualified women.

The Civil Service Commission and the National Economic and Development Authority shall enforce this provision.

SEC. 7. Nothing in this Act shall diminish the rights and privileges of incumbent male employees.

SEC. 8. Any person who shall violate the provisions of this act shall be punished by a fine not less than Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) or imprisonment of not less than one (1) year nor more than six (6) years or both fine and imprisonment at the discretion of the court.

If the offender is a government official, she or he shall, in addition, be perpetually disqualified from holding any public office.

SEC. 9. The PCW, in consultation with the Civil Service Commission, the Commission on Elections, the Philippine National Police, and the National Economic Development Authority, shall formulate the necessary guidelines to implement this Act.

SEC. 10. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. If any provision of this Act is declared invalid, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 12. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders and their implementing rules, inconsistent with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 13. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,