

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 432



Introduced by **REP. RODOLFO "OMPONG" M. ORDANES**

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR EARLY VOTING BY QUALIFIED SENIOR CITIZENS,
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, LAWYERS, AND HUMAN RESOURCES FOR
HEALTH IN NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The right of suffrage is a fundamental pillar of democracy. However, for many Filipinos, particularly senior citizens, persons with disabilities (PWDs), lawyers with critical obligations during election day, and frontliners in the health sector, exercising this right can be significantly hindered by age-related frailty, physical or mental disabilities, or professional obligations in the performance of their duties to the public.

As such, this bill seeks to address these challenges by institutionalizing early voting for these sectors during national and local elections. This proposed measure is grounded in the State's policy to ensure that no qualified voter is disenfranchised due to limitations in mobility, health, or necessary public service duties.

Under the bill, senior citizens and PWDs will be allowed to vote earlier than the scheduled election day, recognizing their physical health limitations. Likewise, lawyers, especially those rendering legal services during elections, and human resources for health who are expected to serve on election day will be afforded the

same early voting privilege to ensure their right to vote is protected without compromising their essential public functions.

The bill also mandates the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) to facilitate registration systems, ensure accessible and inclusive polling places, and conduct a nationwide information campaign.

This measure aligns with Republic Act No. 10366, which provides accessible polling places for PWDs and senior citizens and enhances existing election laws to be more inclusive and facilitate universal suffrage.

This measure was also approved on Third and Final Reading in the House of Representatives and has been transmitted to the Senate during the 19th Congress. This underscores the commitment to expanding democratic participation and empowering vulnerable and essential sectors of society.

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



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

1 **SECTION 1. *Title.*** This Act shall be known as the "*Early Voting Act.*"

2 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
3 make voting convenient for senior citizens, persons with disabilities, lawyers, and
4 human resources for health by giving them the option to vote earlier than the date set
5 for the elections.

6 **SEC 3. *Early Voting.*** In consideration of their respective physical and health
7 conditions, senior citizens and persons with disabilities shall be allowed to vote early
8 in national and local elections. Similarly, in consideration of the necessity of providing
9 professional services and ensuring the health and safety of the populace during
10 election day, lawyers and human resources for health shall likewise be allowed to vote
11 early in national and local elections.

12 For the purposes of this Act, the term "human resources for health" shall refer
13 to those who are engaged in health and health-related work, and all persons employed
14 in all hospitals, sanatoria, health infirmaries, health centers, rural health units,
15 barangay health stations, clinics, and other health-related establishments owned and
16 operated by the Government or its political subdivisions with original charters. This

1 shall include medical, allied health professional, administrative, and support
2 personnel employed regardless of their employment status who physically report to
3 the frontlines during the day of the election.

4 SEC. 4. **Registration.** There shall be a nationwide registration for senior
5 citizens, persons with disabilities, lawyers, and human resources for health to qualify
6 them to avail of this early voting privilege. Those who are not registered under this
7 Act shall vote on Election Day.

8 SEC. 5. **Obligations of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC).** To ensure
9 the effective implementation of this Act, the Commission on Elections shall:

10 (a) Keep a record of senior citizens, persons with disabilities, lawyers, and
11 human resources for health who are registered voters;

12 (b) Design a registration system, in coordination with local government units,
13 the National Council on Disability Affairs, the Commission on Human Rights, the
14 Office of the Bar Confidant of the Supreme Court, the Integrated Bar of the
15 Philippines, the Department of Health, and the Department of the Interior and Local
16 Government for senior citizens, persons with disabilities, lawyers, and human
17 resources for health in order to facilitate their early voting;

18 (c) Ensure that polling places are safe and accessible to senior citizens and
19 persons with disabilities, and properly fitted with the necessary communication,
20 visual, and physical aids, as mandated under Republic Act No. 10366, entitled "An
21 Act Authorizing the Commission on Elections to Establish Precincts Assigned to
22 Accessible Polling Places Exclusively for Persons with Disabilities and Senior
23 Citizens"; and

24 (d) Mount an intensive information campaign on early voting for qualified
25 senior citizens, persons with disabilities, lawyers, and human resources for health.

26 SEC. 6. **Appropriations.** The amount necessary for the initial implementation
27 of this Act shall be charged against the available appropriations of the Commission
28 on Elections. Thereafter, such amount shall be included in the annual General
29 Appropriations Act.

30 Section 7. **Applicability of Other Laws.** The provisions of Batas Pambansa Blg.
31 881 or the "Omnibus Election Code," Republic Act No. 7166, entitled "An Act
32 Providing for Synchronized National and Local Elections and for Electoral Reforms,

1 Authorizing Appropriations Therefor, and for Other Purposes,” and other election
2 laws not inconsistent herewith shall be applied to facilitate early voting for qualified
3 senior citizens, persons with disabilities, lawyers, and human resources for health.

4 SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (90) days from its
5 effectivity, the Commission shall promulgate rules and regulations for the effective
6 implementation of this Act.

7 SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* If any portion or provision of this Act is declared
8 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall
9 remain in force and effect.

10 SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* All other laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive
11 orders, issuances, presidential proclamations, rules and regulations or parts thereof,
12 which are contrary to and inconsistent with any provision of this Act, are hereby
13 repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

14 SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen days after its publication
15 in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

16 *Approved,*