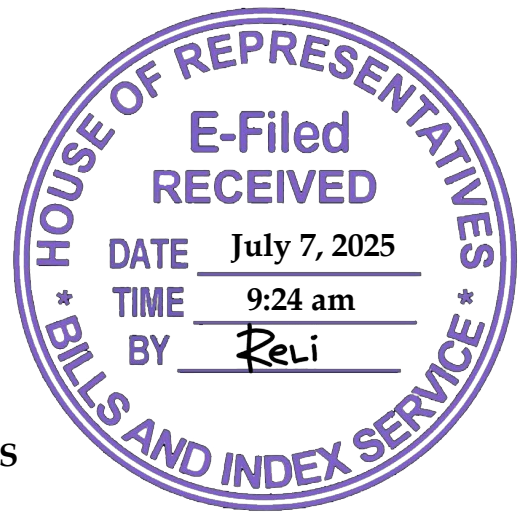




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1357

Introduced by 4Ps Partylist Representative
JC M. ABALOS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the 19th Congress, this Representation filed House Bill (HB) No. 4349, titled “An Act Providing for Early Voting for Qualified Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities in National and Local Elections”. This measure intends to address the concerns of Senior Citizens and PWDs on the challenges they face during elections such as varying levels of inaccessibility of precincts in voting centers that could lead to the disenfranchisement of the said sectors.

It was fortunate that fourteen (14) other similar bills were introduced in the previous Congress. All these bills, including HB 4349 were consolidated and substituted by House Bill No. 7576, “An Act Providing for Early Voting by Qualified Senior Citizens, Persons with Disabilities, Lawyers, and Human Resources for Health in National and Local Elections”. As the title indicates, it included other sectors that could benefit from early voting hours during elections.

Later on, HB 7576 was approved on its third and final reading, and was consequently transmitted to the Senate.

In the 2025 National and Local Elections, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC)’s implementation of early voting hours for Senior Citizens, Persons with Disabilities, and other relevant sectors is commendable.

Since this Representation wishes to institutionalize such features in the national and local elections, and no further actions were done to HB 7576, this Representation adopted the latest version of the said substitute bill and intends to file this measure.

Therefore, its immediate passage is earnestly sought.



J. M. ABALOS
Representative
4Ps Partylist



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

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

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to make voting convenient for senior citizens, persons with disabilities (PWDs), lawyers, and human resources for health by giving them the option to vote earlier than the date set for the elections.

SEC. 2. *Early Voting.* — In consideration of their respective physical and health conditions, senior citizens and PWDs shall be allowed to vote early in national and local elections. Similarly, in consideration of the necessity of providing professional services and ensuring the health and safety of the populace during election day, lawyers and human resources for health, respectively, shall be allowed to vote early in national and local elections.

For the purposes of this Act, the term "human resources for health" shall refer to those who are engaged in health and health-related work, and all persons employed in all hospitals, sanatoria, health infirmaries, health centers, rural health units, barangay health stations, clinics and other health-related establishments

owned and operated by the Government or its political subdivisions with original charters and shall include medical, allied health professional, administrative and support personnel employed regardless of their employment status who physically report to the frontlines during the day of the election.

SEC. 3. *Registration.* — There shall be a nationwide registration for senior citizens, PWDs, lawyers, and human resources for health to qualify them to avail of this early voting privilege. Those who are not registered under this Act shall vote on Election Day.

SEC. 4. *Obligations of the Commission on Elections.* — To ensure the effective implementation of this Act, the Commission on Elections shall:

- (a) Keep a record of senior citizens, PWDs, lawyers, and human resources for health who are registered voters;
- (b) Design a registration system, in coordination with local government units, the National Council on Disability Affairs, the Commission on Human Rights, the Office of the Bar Confidant of the Supreme Court, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the Department of Health, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government for senior citizens, PWDs, lawyers, and human resources for health in order to facilitate their early voting;
- (c) Ensure that polling places are safe and accessible to senior citizens and PWDs, and properly fitted with the necessary communication, visual and physical aids, as mandated under 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"; and
- (d) Mount an intensive information campaign on early voting for qualified senior citizens, PWDs, lawyers, and human resources for health.

SEC. 5. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the available appropriations of the COMELEC. Thereafter, such amount shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 6. *Applicability of Other Laws.* — The provisions of Batas Pambansa Blg. 881 or the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 7166, entitled, "An Act Providing for Synchronized National and Local Elections and for Electoral Reforms, Authorizing Appropriations Therefor, and for Other Purposes", and other election

laws not inconsistent herewith shall be applied to facilitate early voting for qualified senior citizens, PWDs, lawyers, and human resources for health.

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

SEC. 8. *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. 9. *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. 10. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,