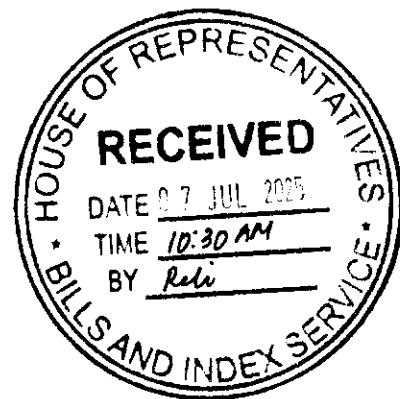


Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1385**



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Introduced by: Hon. Iris Marie D. Montes

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**AN ACT**  
**PROMOTING WOMEN PARTICIPATION AND EQUITABLE**  
**REPRESENTATION IN AND BY POLITICAL PARTIES, GIVING**  
**INCENTIVES THEREFOR, AND CREATING THE WOMEN IN POLITICAL**  
**PARTIES EMPOWERMENT FUND**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines provides in Section 14, Article II that "The State recognizes the role of women in nation building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men."

Towards this end, this bill seeks to promote women participation and equitable representation by providing incentives to political parties which champion women agenda and have internal policies in place to promote women participation and equitable representation.

As already articulated by the Philippine Commission on Women, equal representation of women and men in bureaucracy, politics and governance results to promulgation of and improved gender responsive implementation of policies, programs and services.

According to a policy brief that is part of the study, "Women, Substantive Representation, and Policy Outcomes" under the Policy Studies for Political and Administrative Reforms (PSPAR) project: "women in elective positions are important for democracy, development, and its symbolic value to future generations. Women's participation in electoral politics is integral to strengthening democracy since they comprise half of the population and should be properly represented in political processes. If sustainable progress is to be made, it must include women's meaningful participation in political life. Women's meaningful participation in politics results in better social welfare outcomes in terms of an increased budget for social services, among others. Moreover, women in the political sphere create visibility for women leaders, serving as role models for future generations."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Barriers to Filipino Women's Political Participation, Jean Encinas-Franco and Elma Laguna, University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies

The Philippine Institute for Development Studies, however, reveals that "In 2022, only 24% of elected position in the country were held by women, a notable decrease from 30% in 2017."<sup>2</sup>

This measure therefore aims to counter the existing unequal gender representation in politics by helping put more women in power through party representation and nomination.

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

  
**IRIS MARIE D. MONTES**  
Kababaihan Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan  
at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list

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<sup>2</sup> Women make up only 24% of elected officials in PH, highlighting gender gap in politics, Press Release, Philippine Institute for Development Studies, April 14, 2025 (<https://www.pids.gov.ph/details/news/press-releases/women-make-up-only-24-of-elected-officials-in-ph-highlighting-gender-gap-in-politics#:~:text=Women%20make%20up%20only%2024,decrease%20from%2030%25%20in%202017.>) Accessed on 15 May 2025

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Women Participation and Representation in Political Parties Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - Pursuant to Section 14, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which recognizes the role of women in nation-building and ensures fundamental equality before the law of men and women, and to Section 14, Article XIII, which makes it an obligation of the State to provide facilities and opportunities for women that will enhance and enable them to realize their full potential in the service of the nation, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote women participation and equitable representation of women by providing incentives to political parties which have women agenda, and which have internal policies which promote women participation and equitable representation.

SEC. 3. *Definition.* - As used in this Act:

(a) "Campaign expenditures" shall refer to any type of expense incurred, regardless of source and purpose, that relates directly or indirectly, to the conduct of the electoral campaign of a woman candidate. It includes all payments of money or anything of value, or a contract, promise or agreement to spend, for the purpose of influencing the results of the elections. It includes the use of office space and facilities personally owned by the woman candidate, the monetary value of which shall be assessed based on the market rates prevailing in a particular area. *Provided, That* for purposes of this Act, the term shall refer exclusively and specifically to campaign expenditures of women candidates;

(b) "Certified political party" shall refer to a political party qualified to receive incentives for the development and implementation of its women and gender and development agenda and to augment funds reserved for the campaign expenditures of its women candidates, and certified as such by the Philippine Commission on Women, with the assistance of the Commission on Elections;

(c) "Disclosure requirement" shall refer to the duty of women candidates and political parties, as defined in this Act, to reveal the details of the incentives and expenditures given and received by them as incentives and their share in the Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund;

(d) "Woman member of a political party" shall refer to a natural person of good standing in a political party who complied with the requirements of party membership, including the payment of membership dues, and coming from the women sector;

(e) "Political party" shall refer to a political party, party-list or an organized group of persons duly registered with the Commission on Elections, pursuing or advocating a platform, principles and policies for the general conduct of government and which nominates and supports its members as candidates for public office; and

(f) "Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund" or "Fund" shall refer to the fund for the development and implementation of a political party's women and gender and development agenda, and which may be used to augment funds for the campaign activities of women candidates, as provided for by this Act.

*SEC. 4. Development and Implementation of a Women and Gender and Development Agenda.* — Political parties are mandated to craft and implement a clear women and gender and development agenda and program consistent with their party philosophy and ideals. The members of the political party shall endeavor to act in accordance with this agenda and pursue programs to fulfill party commitments.

*SEC. 5. Participation and Equitable Representation in Political Parties.* — Women representation in a political party shall refer to the integration of women in the leadership of a political party and its internal policy-making structures. *Provided, That* such leaders are bona fide women members of the political party. *Provided, further, That* women representation in a political party shall be equitable whenever women leaders occupy at least thirty percent (30%) of the leadership and internal policy making structures of the political party. *Provided, finally, That* the Philippine Commission on Women, with the assistance of the Commission on Elections, shall certify the equitable nature of representation in a political party.

*SEC. 6. Participation and Equitable Representation by Political Parties.* — Women representation by a political party shall refer to the nomination of women as official candidates of the political party to elective positions in the government. *Provided, That* such nominees are bona fide women members of the political party. *Provided, further, That* women representation by a political party shall be equitable whenever at least thirty percent (30%) of women are nominated as official candidates of the political party. *Provided, further, That* the Philippine Commission on Women, with the assistance of the Commission on Elections, shall certify the equitable nature of representation by a political party.

*SEC. 7. Incentives for Equitable Representation In and By a Political Party.* — A political party registered with the Commission on Elections, and certified by the Philippine Commission on Women to have equitable representation as stated in Sections 5 and 6 of this Act, shall be allowed to

access the Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund, established by virtue of this Act, to fund their women and gender and development agenda, and to augment funds for the campaign expenditures of their women candidates.

SEC. 8. *Establishment of the Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund.* — There is hereby established a Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund, hereinafter referred to as the "Fund," which shall be the source of incentives for political parties complying with Section 7 of this Act. The incentives given to political parties from the Fund shall be used directly and exclusively for the following purposes:

- (a) Development and implementation of the political party's women and gender and development agenda, and
- (b) Finance of the campaign activities of the political party's women candidates.

The share of each of the political parties from the Fund shall be released only upon proof that the concerned political party has raised an amount specifically for the development and implementation of the political party's women and gender and development agenda: *Provided, That* the notwithstanding Sections 5, 6 and 7 of this Act, no political party shall be given its share in the Fund until it has given proof that there are political party funds segregated and reserved for the political party's women and gender and development agenda: *Provided, further. That* the amount to be released shall be equal to the amount so segregated and reserved. *Provided, finally, That* unreleased amounts because of the political party's failure to segregate and reserve such amounts, if any, shall be forfeited and reverted to the General Fund of the government.

For purposes of this Act, all releases from the Fund during a non-election year shall be used exclusively for the political party's women and gender and development agenda. Amounts released from the Fund during an election year shall be divided as follows: (1) sixty percent (60%) shall be used for campaign expenditures, and forty percent (40%) shall be used for women and gender and development agenda. The political parties availing of the incentives from the Fund shall maintain a separate financial account for the amounts given them by virtue of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Allowable Women and Gender and Development Activities.* — The Commission on Elections and the Philippine Commission on Women shall provide a comprehensive list of specific activities which shall be considered as a development and implementation activity under Section 8 of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Certification.* — A political party which conforms with Section 5 and 6 of this Act, and which desires to be entitled to the incentives, rights and privileges and to perform the responsibilities, provided in this Act, may ask for a Certification from the Philippine Commission on Women, under such rules and regulations as the Philippine Commission on Women shall prescribe consistent with the provisions of this Act. The criteria in Sections 5 and 6 of this Act shall set the eligibility requirement for the said Certification. A duly-certified political party shall be entitled to the incentives, rights and

privileges and to perform the responsibilities, as provided in Section 7 and Section 11 of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Full Disclosure.* — The Officials of a political party certified by the Philippine Commission on Women to be eligible and which, in fact, has availed of the incentives under Section 7 of this Act, shall be required to submit with the Philippine Commission on Women, the Commission on Elections and the Commission on Audit a public disclosure of the amounts it received and the expenditures made thereon at the end of every fiscal year.

SEC. 12. *Failure to Comply with Disclosure Requirements.* — Failure of a certified political party to comply with the provisions of this Act, particularly with Section 11, will result in its disqualification from receiving a share in the Fund and the forfeiture of all rights and privileges to which the said political party would have been entitled under this Act.

SEC. 13. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 14. *Lead Agency, Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Philippine Commission on Women is hereby mandated as the regulatory and certifying agency charged with enforcing the provisions of this Act, and shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.* — If any part, section or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 16. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or other issuances, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, particularly those in Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Women, if any, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly

SEC. 17. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*