

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

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2131



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Introduced by Representative LEILA M. DE LIMA

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**AN ACT**  
**DEFINING AND PROHIBITING POLITICAL DYNASTIES, PROVIDING**  
**PENALTIES THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Article II, Section 26 of the 1987 Constitution provides that “[t]he State shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for public service, and prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law.” However, almost four decades after the ratification of the Constitution, and despite numerous attempts from both the Senate and the House of Representatives to fulfil this Constitutional mandate, there is yet to exist an enabling law to prohibit political dynasties.

The persistence of political dynasties in today’s political landscape is not only a clear violation of the Constitution but also a hindrance to the country’s development and democratization.

Findings from several studies conducted in the Philippines show that provinces dominated by political dynasties are “less likely to experience good governance in terms of (a) infrastructure and development, (b) spending on health, (c) prevention of crime, (d) full employment, and (e) the quality of government”<sup>1</sup> and are among the poorest, “afflicted by low levels of human development, bad governance, violence, and poor business climates.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tusalem, R. & Pe-Aguirre, J. (26 June 2013). The Effect of Political Dynasties on Effective Democratic Governance: Evidence From the Philippines. *Asian Politics and Policy*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12037>.

<sup>2</sup> Albert, J.R.G., Mendoza, R., Yap, D.B., and Cruz, J.F. (August 2015). Regulating political dynasties toward a more inclusive society. *Philippine Institute for Development Studies*. Retrieved <https://www.pids.gov.ph/publication/policy-notes/regulating-political-dynasties-toward-a-more-inclusive-society>.

Political dynasties limit spaces for political competition and contestation as power is concentrated within the dynasty or family,<sup>3</sup> discouraging and at times directly blocking alternative leaders from entering the political arena.

While defenders of political dynasties often argue that elected officials belonging to political dynasties are still chosen by the people nonetheless, these arguments negate the fact that in jurisdictions where political dynasties are deeply entrenched, elections no longer serve as effective mechanisms of accountability that reflect the elected official's track record and performance in delivering public goods and services. Instead, the political capital accrued by dynasties over time is used to dominate elections in favor of the dynasty's candidates,<sup>4</sup> thus disincentivizing positive reforms and good governance and undermining effective democracy.

The Constitutionally-mandated enactment of legislation prohibiting political dynasties is long overdue. The current state of development and democracy in the country, dominated by political dynasties both in the local and national levels, further substantiates the necessity of such legislation.

In 2018, during the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress, this representation as then Senator, signed along with 12 others, a committee report approving Senate Bill No. 1765, the consolidated version of the proposed Anti-Political Dynasty Act of 2018. This representation was then the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Electoral Reforms and People's Participation which, jointly with the Senate Committee on Constitutional Amendments and Revision of Codes then chaired by Senator Francis Pangilinan, tackled the various anti-political dynasty bills then pending.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress, bills prohibiting political dynasties were filed by Senators Francis Pangilinan, Franklin Drilon, Grace Poe, and Panfilo Lacson in the Senate, and by Representatives Lawrence Fortun and Rodante Marcoleta in the House of Representatives. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Congress, similar bills were filed by Senators Grace Poe and Robinhood Padilla in the Senate, and by Representative Raoul Manuel in the House of Representatives. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress, Senator Francis Pangilinan and Representatives Antonio Tinio and Renee Co again filed bills on the same subject. This bill fully adopts the bill filed by Senator Francis Pangilinan in the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Early approval of this measure is earnestly sought.



LEILA M. DE LIMA

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Albert, J.R.G., et al. (August 2015).

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**PENALTIES THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1           SECTION. 1. *Short title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Anti-Political Dynasty  
2 Act of 2025.”

3  
4           SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to  
5 guarantee and provide equal access to opportunities for public office and public  
6 service to any qualified Filipino, pursuant to Section 26, Article II of the 1987  
7 Constitution. Towards this end, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to prohibit  
8 political dynasties as hereinafter defined.

9  
10          SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following definitions  
11 shall be used:

12  
13           (a) *National office* shall refer to the Presidency, the Vice-Presidency, the  
14 Senate of the Philippines, or the House of Representatives;

15  
16           (b) *Political dynasty* shall refer to the concentration, consolidation, and/or  
17 perpetuation of public office and political powers by persons related to one another  
18 within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity;

19  
20           (c) *Political dynasty relationship* shall exist when the spouse or any relative  
21 within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity of an incumbent elective official,  
22 runs for public office to succeed or replace the incumbent, or runs for or holds any  
23 elective local office simultaneously with the incumbent within the same province,

1 legislative district, city, or municipality, and within the same barangay or barangays  
2 within the same legislative district.

3  
4 The relationship also exists if the incumbent is a national elective official,  
5 including incumbents in the party-list system, and the spouse or relatives within the  
6 second degree of consanguinity or affinity run for any position in the national level or  
7 in the local level as barangay captain, mayor, governor, or district representative in  
8 any part of the country.

9  
10 It shall also be deemed to exist where two (2) or more persons who are  
11 spouses, or are related to one another within the second degree of consanguinity or  
12 affinity run simultaneously for elective public office at the national level, or at the local  
13 level within the same province, legislative district, city, or municipality, and within the  
14 same barangay or barangays within the same legislative district, even if neither is so  
15 related to an incumbent elective official.

16  
17 (d) *Spouse* shall refer to the legal or common-law wife or husband of an  
18 incumbent official;

19  
20 (e) *Second civil degree of consanguinity or affinity* shall refer to the relatives of  
21 a person who may be the latter's brother or sister, whether of full or half-blood, direct  
22 ascendant or direct descendant, whether legitimate, illegitimate, or adopted, including  
23 their spouses; and

24  
25 (f) *Running for an elective office* shall be deemed to commence upon the filing  
26 of the Certificate of Candidacy by a candidate with the Commission on Elections  
27 (COMELEC).

28  
29 **SEC. 4. *Applicability.*** – This Act shall govern and be applicable to the next  
30 elections and all subsequent elections thereafter.

31  
32 **SEC. 5. *Prohibited Candidates; Scenarios Covered.*** –

33  
34 (a) Any person with a political dynasty relationship, as defined in Section 3 of  
35 this Act, with any incumbent elective official, shall not be allowed to run for or hold  
36 public office in any of the following manner:

- 37  
38 i. To immediately succeed or replace the said incumbent;  
39  
40 ii. If the incumbent is an elective barangay official, the spouse and the  
41 above relatives are prohibited to run simultaneously for any position in  
42 the same barangay as well as in all the barangays in municipalities or  
43 cities within the same legislative district;

- 1           iii. If the incumbent is an elective official of the municipality, city, legislative  
2           district, or province, the spouse and above relatives are prohibited to run  
3           for or hold any elective local office simultaneously with the incumbent  
4           within the same barangay, municipality, city, legislative district, or  
5           province;  
6  
7           iv. If the incumbent is a national elective official, the spouse and the above  
8           relatives are likewise prohibited to run simultaneously for any position in  
9           the national or local level as barangay captain, mayor, governor, or  
10          district representative in any part of the country; and  
11  
12          v. If the incumbent is a barangay captain, mayor, governor, or district  
13          representative, the spouse and the above relatives are also prohibited to  
14          run simultaneously for any position in the national level.  
15

16          (b) Persons who are not holding any public office shall likewise be prohibited  
17          from running in the same election if their election will result in a political  
18          dynasty relationship, as defined in Section 3 above: *Provided*, That if  
19          persons within the same prohibitive degree shall file for candidacy, the said  
20          persons shall be notified by the COMELEC that only one of them shall be  
21          allowed to file, and within five (5) days from receipt of the notice, said  
22          persons shall file a joint manifestation to the COMELEC indicating the name  
23          of the candidate who shall pursue his or her candidacy and the position  
24          desired, otherwise all applications shall be deemed not filed.  
25

26                 A person is deemed to be holding an elective office from the moment the public  
27                 official takes his oath of office.  
28

29                 **SEC. 6. *Statement with the Commission on Elections.*** – Any person running for  
30                 an elective public office shall file a sworn statement with the COMELEC that he or she  
31                 does not have a political dynasty relationship prohibited under this Act.  
32

33                 **SEC. 7. *Denial Motu Proprio by the COMELEC/Petition to Deny Due Course***  
34                 ***and/or Cancel Certificate of Candidacy.*** – The COMELEC, *motu proprio*, may suspend  
35                 giving due course to the application for a certificate of candidacy of any candidate if it  
36                 becomes apparent from the documents filed that a violation of Section 5 of this Act  
37                 may have been committed. If, upon investigation by the COMELEC, there is  
38                 substantial evidence to establish a violation of Section 5 of this Act, the COMELEC  
39                 shall deny due course to said application for a certificate of candidacy.  
40

41                 A verified petition seeking to deny due course or to cancel a certificate of  
42                 candidacy may be filed by any person for violation of this Act.

1           **SEC. 8. *Summary Proceedings.*** – The petition may be filed at any time not later  
2 than twenty-five (25) days from the time of the filing of the certificate of candidacy and  
3 shall be decided, after due notice and hearing, not less than fifteen (15) days before  
4 the election. The petition shall be heard and decided summarily by the COMELEC,  
5 after due notice and hearing, and the decision shall be executed after the lapse of five  
6 (5) days from receipt thereof by the losing party.

7  
8           If the petition, for reasons beyond the control of the COMELEC, cannot be  
9 decided before the completion of the canvass, the votes cast for the respondent shall  
10 be included in the counting and canvassing: *Provided*, That in cases where a  
11 disqualified candidate has been proclaimed, he or she shall forfeit his or her right to  
12 the office upon the decision of the COMELEC, as the case may be.

13  
14           **SEC. 9. *Petition for Quo Warranto.*** – A voter contesting the election of any  
15 candidate on the grounds of violation of this Act shall file a sworn petition for quo  
16 warranto with the COMELEC or House Electoral Tribunal, Senate Electoral Tribunal,  
17 or Presidential Electoral Tribunal, as the case may be, within ten (10) days after the  
18 proclamation of the results of the election.

19  
20           **SEC. 10. *Rules and Regulations.*** – The COMELEC shall promulgate all the rules  
21 and regulations necessary for the full implementation of this Act.

22  
23           **SEC. 11. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or  
24 unconstitutional, the provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force  
25 and effect.

26  
27           **SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,  
28 presidential proclamations, letters of instruction, rules and regulations or parts thereof  
29 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended  
30 accordingly.

31  
32           **SEC. 13. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its  
33 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the  
34 Philippines.

Approved,