



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5870

Introduced by Representatives Ronaldo V. Puno, Jeffrey P. Ferrer, Antolin Oreta III, Augustina Dominique C. Pancho, Alfredo Marañon III, Danilo A. Domingo, Joaquin Carlos Rahman A. Nava, Sun J. Shimura, Dimszar M. Sali, Rosalie A. Salvame, Alfelito M. Bascug, Adolph Edward G. Plaza, Anna Victoria V. Tuazon, Jennifer A. Lagbas, Adrian Jay C. Advincula, Maria Victoria G. Co-Pilar, Niko Raul S. Daza, Antonio A. Ferrer, Romeo M. Acop, Jon Geesnell Yap II, Crispin Diego D. Remulla, and Rachel Marguerite B. Del Mar

AN ACT

CALLING FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO PROPOSE AMENDMENTS, REVISIONS, CORRECTIONS AND CHANGES TO THE 1987 CONSTITUTION, SETTING THE ELECTION DATE OF DELEGATES, PRESCRIBING THE COMPOSITION, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE CONVENTION, PROVIDING FOR ITS APPROPRIATIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

For nearly four decades, the 1987 Constitution has served as the cornerstone of our democratic order, adopted in the aftermath of a revolution, and designed to safeguard liberty, justice, and accountability. But the passage of time, along with the accumulated lessons of governance and jurisprudence, has revealed significant imperfections in the Charter's text. These include ambiguities in language, drafting lapses, and procedural inconsistencies that now hinder reform, obstruct accountability, and erode public confidence in our institutions.

Several provisions highlight these concerns. The directive in Article XI, Section 3(4) that impeachment proceedings "shall forthwith proceed" has become the subject of partisan dispute and inconsistent application, undermining the urgency of constitutional accountability. Provisions presuming a unicameral legislature still erroneously remain in the text. For instance, Article VI, Section 28, paragraph 4, which states that "no law granting any tax exemption shall be passed without the concurrence of a majority of all the Members of the Congress," has led to interpretive confusion over whether Congress is to act as a joint body or in separate chambers.

Article VII, Section 19, regarding the grant of amnesty by the President with the concurrence of a majority of all the Members of Congress, has likewise sparked procedural uncertainty. Although the Constitution requires presidential amnesty to be concurred in by “a majority of all the Members of the Congress,” it fails to specify whether this concurrence must occur through a joint vote or separate votes by the Senate and House.

The composition of the Judicial and Bar Council, limited to “a representative of Congress,” has led to recurring conflicts between the Senate and the House and required resolution by the Supreme Court in *Chavez v. Judicial and Bar Council* (2013). Similarly, Article VI, Section 28(4) on tax exemptions presumes a unicameral structure and has likewise generated procedural uncertainty.

A Constitution that lacks textual precision ceases to serve as a reliable guide for government action. It becomes vulnerable to manipulation and incapable of protecting the rule of law.

Prominent legal scholars and constitutionalists have called attention to this problem. In his July 2025 column in *The Manila Times*, Fr. Ranhilio Aquino argued that “for the sake of democracy and the rule of law, the Constitution must be a current document ... kept up to date so that its provisions may stably anchor the actions of administration, the statutes passed by the legislature and the application of the laws to actual cases and controversies by the judiciary.”¹ Former Acting Secretary of Justice Alberto Agra has similarly emphasized that a Constitutional Convention is necessary to clarify powers and eliminate legal uncertainty that complicates governance and undermines investor confidence.²

The proposed measure, therefore calls for the convening of a Constitutional Convention (ConCon), which measure offers the most prudent and participatory mechanism to address these enduring ambiguities. The ConCon shall be composed of elected delegates from all eighteen (18) administrative regions with each region being proportionally represented based on its population.

This diverse and inclusive composition ensures that constitutional reform is informed not only by democratic legitimacy but by technical competence and independent insight. It is a reform mechanism focused solely on the Constitution, free from the competing pressures of ordinary lawmaking and political partisanship.

This initiative does not seek to discard the 1987 Constitution. It seeks to fulfill it. To complete its project, correct its errors, and reinforce its aspirations with clarity, coherence, and enforceability. In doing so, it affirms our shared commitment to a truly living Constitution, one capable of guiding a modern democracy with confidence, consistency, and constitutional fidelity.

¹ Fr. Ranhilio Aquino, “Constitutional Amendment and the Rule of Law,” *The Manila Times*, 7 July 2025.

² Atty. Alberto Agra, “Time to Consider Amendments,” *The Manila Times*, 16 June 2025.

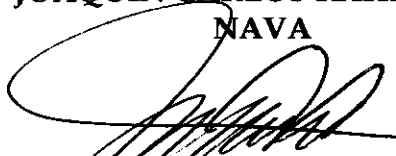
In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

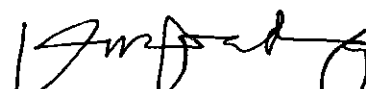

RONALDO V. PUNO


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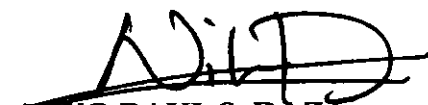

JOAQUIN CARLOS RAHMAN A.
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DIMSAR M. SALI


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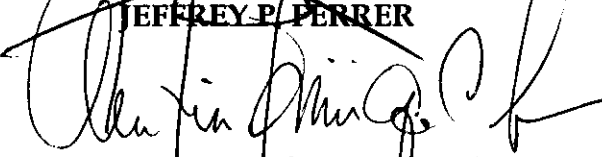

ANNA VICTORIA V. TUAZON


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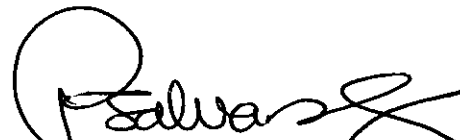

ROMEO M. AZOP


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AUGUSTINA DOMINIQUE C.
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MARIA VICTORIA G. CO-PILAR


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JON GEESNELL YAP II



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RACHEL "CUTIE" MARGUERITE B. DEL MAR



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

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy* - It is the policy of the State to ensure that any proposed amendments to, or revision of, the 1987 Constitution shall be effected through a process that is democratic, participatory, transparent, and representative of the Filipino people.

SECTION 2. *Constitutional Convention* -

- (a) There is hereby called a Constitutional Convention, hereinafter referred to as the "Convention," for the purpose of proposing amendments, revisions, corrections, and changes to the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, hereinafter referred to as the "Constitution".

- (b) The call for a Convention under this Act is made through the regular legislative process. This Act shall be deliberated and approved by each Chamber of Congress—Senate and House of Representatives—voting separately, in accordance with the standard procedure for the passage of bills. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to imply that the call for constitutional amendments or revision is made pursuant to the three-fourths vote requirement of all members of Congress voting jointly, as provided under Article XVII, Section 1(1) of the 1987 Constitution.

SECTION 3. *Election of Delegates* -

- (a) There shall be a total of One Hundred and Fifty (150) delegates. The election of delegates of the Convention shall be held on Monday, May 11, 2026, for each of the eighteen (18) administrative regions enumerated below:

1. Region I – Ilocos Region
2. Region II – Cagayan Valley
3. Region III – Central Luzon
4. Region IV-A – CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon)
5. Region IV-B – MIMAROPA (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan)
6. Region V – Bicol Region
7. Region VI – Western Visayas
8. Region VII – Central Visayas
9. Region VIII – Eastern Visayas
10. Negros Island Region
11. Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula
12. Region X – Northern Mindanao
13. Region XI – Davao Region
14. Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, General Santos City)
15. Region XIII – Caraga Region
16. NCR – National Capital Region
17. CAR – Cordillera Administrative Region

18. BARMM – Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

- (b) Delegates shall be apportioned among the eighteen (18) administrative regions as follows: three (3) base delegates shall be elected per region, and the remaining seats shall be distributed per region in proportion to the population using the latest official Philippine Statistics Authority census, subject to the COMELEC's implementing rules.
- (c) The manner and conduct of the election shall be under the supervision, direction, and control of the Commission on Elections in accordance with existing election laws, as may be applicable.

SECTION 4. *Qualifications of Delegates* - A person shall be eligible for election as a delegate if they are:

1. A natural-born citizen of the Philippines;
2. At least a college degree holder and a registered voter in the district in which the delegate shall be elected and a resident thereof for a period of not less than one (1) year immediately preceding the day of election;
3. Of recognized probity, independence, and nationalism;
4. Not a member of Congress or holding any other elective public office during their term as delegate; and
5. Not related to the President within the third degree of consanguinity.
6. At least twenty-five (25) years of age on the day of the election;
7. Must not have been convicted of a crime.

SECTION 5. *Prohibited Acts* - No person elected as a delegate shall, during their term, run for any public office in the first national and local elections to be held following the ratification or rejection of the proposed constitutional amendments or revision, or be appointed to any government office or position while the Convention is in session and during the period of one (1) year after its final adjournment.

SECTION 6. *Powers and Functions of the Convention* -

- (a) The Convention shall have the power to propose amendments, revisions, corrections, and changes to the 1987 Constitution.
- (b) It shall convene not later than July 15, 2026, and complete its work within one year, unless extended by law.
- (c) The Convention shall have the power to prescribe its internal rules, procedures and structures.

SECTION 7. *Submission to the People* - The proposed amendments or revision shall be submitted to the people for ratification in a plebiscite to be held not earlier than sixty (60) days nor later than ninety (90) days after the approval by the Convention, in accordance with Article XVII, Section 4 of the Constitution.

SECTION 8. *Appropriations* - The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against any available appropriations in the General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, the necessary sums shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause* - All laws, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,