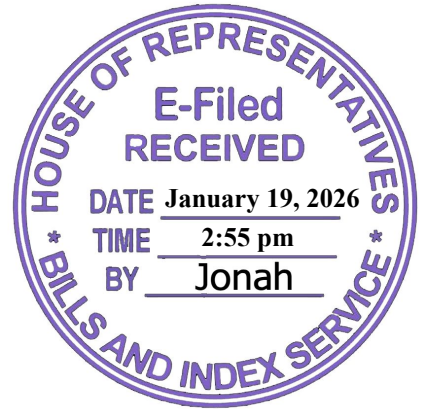




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH (20TH) CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7199



Introduced by Representative **FELIMON M. ESPARES**

**AN ACT
DEFINING AND PROHIBITING POLITICAL DYNASTIES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

There is no better time to introduce this bill than now — now that many political dynasties have been linked to recent corruption scandals, including those involving flood-control projects, and in light of the pronouncement of Honorable President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. to prioritize this measure.

Data shows that around 70-80% of incumbent officials come from political dynasties. A report by the United Nations Development Programme states that out of the 77 Philippine provinces included in their study, 72 provinces, or 94% of them, had political families. Unfortunately, political dynasties have evolved from largely “thin” to “fat” and even “obese,”¹ growing by at least 1% or about 170 positions every election period.² In fact, based on the 2025 election results alone, if elected officials with the exact surname are banned up to the 2nd degree of affinity or consanguinity, an estimate of 5,763 elected seats of out 17,887 or 32% of seats would be freed.

These data show that political dynasties hamper genuine democratic process, and elections have become mere formalities for transferring power from parents to children

¹ “Thin” dynasties are families who are successively elected in the same jurisdiction, serving one at a time. “Fat” political dynasties are families that occupy different elected positions at the same time. Meanwhile, “Obese” dynasties are used to describe a political family with at least five or more members actively holding elected government positions simultaneously.

² <https://www.bworldonline.com/opinion/2025/10/27/707900/dynasties-and-the-flood-of-corruption/>

or from one sibling to another. While dynasties are not, in themselves, inherently evil, their decades in power have coincided with persistent poverty, corruption, and a lack of meaningful reforms.³ The reality is that, in many cases, candidates with little to no legislative or governance experience secure key positions simply by leveraging family connections or media exposure.⁴ Voters are then left with limited selection from the same ruling families and instead of having fresh perspectives and new ideas, the same flawed system continues to persist.⁵

Thus, to advance true and genuine electoral reforms and good governance, it is high time for us to control the proliferation of political dynasties and give equal opportunities to those who are genuinely poised to lead our nation.

Based on the foregoing reasons, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



FELIMON M. ESPARES
Congressman

³ <https://democratic-erosion.org/2025/05/01/the-ruling-family-how-political-dynasties-are-destroying-democracy-in-the-philippines/>

⁴ <https://www.pids.gov.ph/details/news/in-the-news/tell-it-to-sunstar-the-reign-of-political-mediocrity>

⁵ *Supra* note 2.



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**AN ACT
PROHIBITING POLITICAL DYNASTIES**

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Title.*** – This Act shall be known as "*The Anti-Political Dynasty Act.*"

2
3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the policy of the State to guarantee equal access
4 to opportunities for public service and prohibit political dynasties, as declared under
5 Section 26, Article II of the 1987 Constitution. Toward this end, the State shall adopt
6 measures to prevent the establishment and perpetuation of political dynasties or familial
7 concentrations of political power and shall promote equal opportunities for all citizens to
8 participate in governance and serve the public based on merit, competence, and integrity.
9

10 **SEC. 3. *Political Dynasty Defined.*** – For purposes of this Act, a political dynasty refers
11 to persons related to one another within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or
12 affinity, including spouses and common-law spouses, who concentrate, consolidate, or
13 perpetuate political power by holding any elective public office simultaneously or
14 successively.
15

16 A political dynasty likewise exists when spouses or relatives within the fourth civil degree
17 of consanguinity or affinity simultaneously run for elective public office, including through
18 nomination or substitution under the party-list system. It further exists when the spouse
19 or any relative within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity of an incumbent

elective official, including a party-list representative, succeeds to the office of the same official or of any other incumbent elective official.

SEC. 4. *Prohibited Political Dynasties.* – Political dynasties are hereby prohibited. To this end:

(a) ***National and Legislative Positions.*** — No person shall be eligible to be a candidate for, be proclaimed, or assume office in any elective national position, such as the President, Vice-President, and all members of Congress, if at the time of filing of the certificate of candidacy, or at any time before assumption of office, such person is the spouse or common-law spouse, or is related within the prohibited degree to an incumbent who is simultaneously holding any of the foregoing positions.

(b) ***Local Positions.*** — No person shall be eligible to be a candidate for, be proclaimed, or assume office in any elective provincial, city, or municipal position if such person is the spouse or common-law spouse, or is related within the prohibited degree to an incumbent who is simultaneously holding any elective position within the same province, city, or municipality, as the case may be.

(d) ***Cap on Family Office-Holding.*** — Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b), no more than two (2) persons within the prohibited degree of relationship shall simultaneously hold elective office; *Provided*, That only one (1) may hold a position under subsection (a), and only one (1) may hold a position under subsection (b) at the same time; *Provided, further*, That no more than two (2) persons within the prohibited degree of relationship shall simultaneously hold local elective office.

(e) ***Rule on Succession.*** — No person shall be eligible to be a candidate for, be proclaimed, or assume office in any elective position covered under subsection (a) in the immediately succeeding regular election, if such person is the spouse or common-law spouse of, or is related within the prohibited degree of relationship to, the incumbent or outgoing official holding any position covered under subsection (a), whether to the same or a different elective position covered under subsection (a).

Likewise, no person shall be eligible to be a candidate for, be proclaimed, or assume office in any elective position covered under subsection (b) in the immediately succeeding regular election within the same province, city, or municipality, as the case may be, if such person is the spouse or common-law spouse of, or is related within the prohibited degree of relationship to, the incumbent or outgoing official holding any position covered under subsection (b), whether to the same or a different elective position covered under subsection (b).

(f) ***Prohibited Substitution by Reason of Relationship.*** — Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation on substitution of candidates, no substitution shall be allowed if the said substitution would result in a prohibited political dynasty or would otherwise

1 violate any of the prohibitions under this Act. Any certificate of candidacy filed in violation
2 of this subsection shall be void *ab initio*, and the substitute shall not be voted for,
3 proclaimed, or allowed to assume office.

4
5 (g) ***Barangay Positions Not Covered.*** – The foregoing prohibitions shall not
6 apply to elective positions in the Barangay level.

7
8 (h) ***First to File Rule.*** – In cases where two or more persons described above run
9 for public office, and the election of more than one of them would result in a political
10 dynasty, the certificate of candidacy that was first duly filed shall be given due course,
11 unless he or she is declared a nuisance candidate in relation to Section 69 of the Omnibus
12 Election Code.

13
14 **SEC. 5. *Statement with the Commission on Elections (COMELEC).*** - Any person
15 running for any elective public office shall file a sworn statement with the COMELEC that
16 they do not fall under the prohibition under Section 4 of this Act.

17
18 **SEC. 6. *Effect of Violation of Prohibition.*** - The COMELEC shall, *motu proprio* or
19 upon verified petition of any interested party, deny due course to any certificate of
20 candidacy filed in violation of this Act.

21
22 **SEC. 7. *Period for Filing a Petition to Deny Due Course or Cancel a Certificate***
23 ***of Candidacy.*** — Any citizen of voting age, candidate, or duly registered political party,
24 organization, or coalition of political parties may, within twenty-five (25) days from the
25 filing of the certificate of candidacy, file with the COMELEC a petition to deny due course
26 or to cancel certificate of candidacy on any of the grounds provided under Section 4 of
27 this Act.

28
29 **SEC. 8. *Summary Proceedings.*** — The petition shall be heard and decided summarily
30 by the COMELEC, after due notice and hearing, not less than fifteen (15) days before the
31 election. Its decision shall become final and executory five (5) days after receipt thereof
32 by the losing party.

33
34 **SEC. 9. *Effect of Petition if Unresolved Before Completion of Canvass.*** — If the
35 petition, for reasons beyond the control of the COMELEC, cannot be decided before the
36 completion of the canvass, the votes cast for the respondent shall be included in the
37 counting and canvassing: *Provided, however,* that if the basis for such disqualification is
38 strong, their proclamation shall be suspended notwithstanding the fact that they received
39 the winning number of votes in the election: *Provided further,* that in cases where
40 disqualified candidate has been proclaimed they shall *ipso facto* forfeit their right to the
41 office and shall not be entitled to any compensation, emolument, or benefit arising by
42 virtue of such position.

1 **SEC. 10. *Petition for Quo Warranto after Proclamation.*** — If a candidate who is
2 disqualified under this Act is nevertheless proclaimed or allowed to assume office, the
3 existence of such candidate's political dynasty relationship shall constitute a ground for a
4 petition for *quo warranto*: (a) before the COMELEC, if the candidate has not yet assumed
5 the position; or (b) before the proper Regional Trial Court, the House of Representatives
6 Electoral Tribunal, the Senate Electoral Tribunal, or the Presidential Electoral Tribunal, as
7 the case may be. Such petition shall be filed within ten (10) days from the proclamation
8 or from actual assumption of office, and the case may be or whichever is later, and shall
9 be decided within six (6) months from its filing.

10
11 **SEC. 11. *Applicability.*** — This Act shall apply to the next succeeding elections and to
12 13 all subsequent elections thereafter. An incumbent elective official who has a political
13 dynasty 14 relationship shall not be allowed to run in any subsequent election while such
14 political dynasty exists.

15
16 **SEC. 12. *Rules and Regulations.*** — The COMELEC shall promulgate the rules and
17 regulations for the implementation of the provisions of this Act.

18
19 **SEC. 13. *Repealing Clause.*** — All laws inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
20 hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

21
22 **SEC. 14. *Separability Clause.*** — If any of the sections or provisions of this Act is held
23 invalid, all the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid.

24
25 **SEC. 15. *Effectivity.*** — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its
26 publication in the Official Gazette or any newspaper of general circulation.

27
28 *Approved,*
29
30