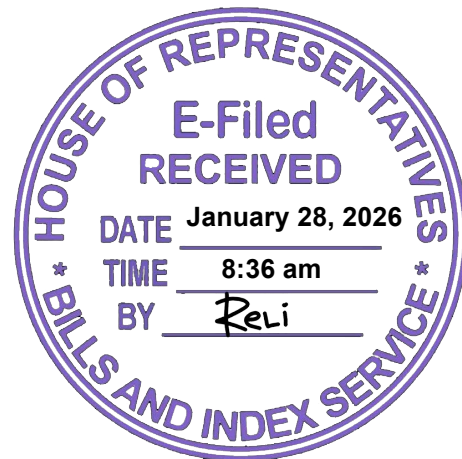


**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City**

**Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session**

House Bill No. 7451



**Introduced by Honorable Representatives
DADAH KIRAM ISMULA (Akbayan Partylist)
JOSE MANUEL TADEO "CHEL" I. DIOKNO (Akbayan Partylist)
PERCIVAL V. CENDAÑA (Akbayan Partylist)
KAKA BAG-AO (Dinagat Islands)**

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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In a society as diverse as that of the Philippines, development and progress lie in the hands of millions of Filipinos who make up the population. According to a World Bank tracking in 2024¹, more than half of the said population is women. Almost ninety years ago, women were overwhelmingly granted the right to vote by the electorate. The integral role of women in nation-building is further recognized and enshrined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Yet, since then, the disparity between men and women occupying influential and powerful positions in politics has never come close and has only stagnated in some cases.

Since 1937, only two (2) women out of seventeen (17) people have become Commanders-in-Chief, and only three (3) women out of fifteen (15) people have become the Vice President of the Republic. In today's 20th Congress of the Philippines, only four (4) women out of twenty-four (24) people serve as Senators, with no woman ever being elected as Senate President, and only eighty-nine (89) out of three-hundred and fourteen (314) are Congresswomen, with only one (1) woman ever elected as Speaker of the House of Representatives. In the judiciary, only two (2) out of the fifteen (15) Justices are women, and only one (1) woman has ever served as Chief Justice. No woman has ever served as Police Chief and AFP Chief of Staff in the uniformed service despite its possibility. In a nation whose 50.1% of its population

¹ World Bank. (n.d.). Population, female (% of total population) – Philippines. World Bank Data. Retrieved January 23, 2026, from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL.FE.ZS?locations=PH>

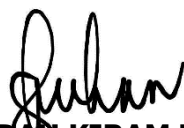
consists of women, the evident gap in representation in politics remains to be a problem that requires a solution and an intervention.

The abundance of laws and international treaties that compel the State to advocate for women's rights and representation in social, civic, and political spaces is a welcome measure. However, the complete and equitable execution of the said laws and international treaties remains to be a present challenge in the community. This bill seeks to address this concern by institutionalizing a mechanism within the political system to advance equity in political representation, recognizing its direct and pervasive impact on every Filipino's way of life.

Furthermore, this bill recognizes the role of political parties as a gateway for some to acquire power. Genuine political parties are empowered by this bill to further advocate their causes through inclusive political practices where women are represented. The enactment of this measure is a critical requirement for strengthening democratic representation and institutional equality. The State shall affirm its commitment to inclusive governance and shall bear the responsibility of correcting long-standing structural barriers that have systematically limited women's access to political power.

Given the persistent underrepresentation of women in elected and appointive positions, despite their substantial participation in civic and community leadership, the establishment of a clear and enforceable legal framework is an urgent democratic necessity. This measure ensures that political institutions more accurately reflect the diversity of the population they serve, enhances the quality of policymaking through broader perspectives, and advances the constitutional principles of equality, social justice, and genuine political participation.

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



DADAN KIRAM ISMULA
Akbayan Representative



JOSE MANUEL TADEO
"CHEL" I. DIOKNO
Akbayan Representative



PERCIVAL V. CENDAÑA
Akbayan Representative



KAKA J. BAG-AO
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*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

1 **SECTION 1. *Section Title.*** - This Act shall be known as the "Women Participation
2 and Representation in Political Parties Act of 2026".
3

4 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** - Pursuant to Article II, Section 14 of the 1987
5 Constitution, which recognizes the role of women in nation-building and ensures
6 fundamental equality before the law of men and women, and Article XIII, Section 14
7 of the Constitution, which makes it an obligation of the state to provide facilities and
8 opportunities for women that will enhance and enable them to realize their full
9 potential in the service of the nation, it is hereby declare the policy of the State to
10 promote women participation and equitable representation of women by providing
11 incentives to political parties which have women agenda and which have internal
12 policies which promote women participation and equitable representation.
13

14 **SEC. 3. *Definition of terms.*** – For the purposes of this Act, the following terms are
15 defined as follows:
16

17 (a) **Campaign expenditures** shall refer to any type of expense incurred, regardless
18 of source and purpose, that relates directly or indirectly, to the conduct of the
19 electoral campaign of a woman candidate. It includes all payments of money or
20 anything of value, or a contract, promise or agreement to spend, for the purpose

1 of influencing the results of the elections. It includes the use of office space and
2 facilities personally owned by the woman candidate, the monetary value of which
3 shall be assessed based on the market rates prevailing in a particular area:
4 Provided, that for purposes of this Act, the term shall refer exclusively and
5 specifically to campaign expenditures of women candidates.

6
7 (b) **Certified political party** shall refer to a political party qualified to receive
8 incentives for the development and implementation of its women and gender and
9 development agenda and to augment funds reserved for the campaign
10 expenditures of its women candidates, and certified as such by the Commission
11 Elections (COMELEC).

12
13 (c) **Disclosure requirement** shall refer to the duty of women candidates and political
14 parties, as defined in this Act, to reveal the details of the incentives and
15 expenditures given and received by them as incentives and their share in the
16 Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund.

17
18 (d) **Political party** shall refer to a political party, party-list or an organized group of
19 persons duly registered with the COMELEC, pursuing or advocating a platform,
20 principles and policies for the general conduct of government and which nominates
21 and supports its members as candidates for public office.

22
23 (e) **Woman member of a political party** shall refer to a natural person, regardless
24 of her sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and sex characteristics
25 (SOGIESC), of good standing in a political party who complied with the
26 requirements of party membership, including the payment of membership dues,
27 and coming from the women sector.

28
29 (f) **Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund or Fund** shall refer to the
30 fund for the development and implementation of a political party's women and
31 gender and development agenda, and which may be used to augment funds for
32 the campaign activities of women candidates, as provided for by this Act.

33
34 **SEC. 4. *Development and implementation of a women and gender and***
35 ***development agenda.*** - Political parties shall formulate and implement a women
36 and gender and development agenda consistent with Republic Act No. 9710 otherwise
37 known as the Magna Carta of Women. Party members shall endeavor to act in
38 accordance with such agenda and pursue programs in furtherance of the party's
39 commitments.

40
41 **SEC. 5. *Participation and equitable representation in political parties.*** –
42 Women's representation in a political party refers to the integration of women into the

1 leadership and internal policy-making structures of the political party. Such leaders
2 must be bona fide women members of the political party. Women's representation
3 shall be deemed equitable when women occupy at least fifty per cent (50%) of the
4 leadership and internal policy-making structures of the political party. The COMELEC,
5 shall certify the equitable nature of such representation.

6
7 **SEC. 6. *Participation and equitable representation by political parties.* –**

8 Women representation by a political party shall refer to the nomination of women as
9 official candidates of the political party for elective positions in the government,
10 whether in national, regional, local or party-list elections: Provided, That such
11 nominees are bona fide women members of the political party: Provided, further, That
12 women representation by a political party shall be equitable whenever at least forty
13 per cent (40%) of its official candidates across these elections are women: Provided,
14 further, That the COMELEC, shall certify the equitable nature of representation by a
15 political party.

16
17 **SEC. 7. *Anti-Political Dynasty Safeguards in Women's Political***
18 ***Representation.* –** For purposes of compliance with Sections 5 and 6 of this Act, a

19 political party shall not be deemed to have achieved equitable women's representation
20 when a woman included in its leadership or internal policy-making structures is related
21 within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity to an incumbent elective
22 official within the same political party in the same electoral district or local government
23 unit.

24
25 A political party shall likewise not be deemed to have achieved equitable women's
26 representation solely by reason of such nomination when a woman nominated as an
27 official candidate is related within the second civil degree of consanguinity or affinity
28 to an incumbent elective official or to a candidate of the same political party for the
29 same elective position or within the same electoral district or local government unit.

30
31 Political parties shall require women leaders, members of internal policy-making
32 structures, and nominees covered by this Section to submit a sworn declaration of
33 relevant familial relations to the COMELEC, for the limited purpose of verifying
34 compliance with this Act.

35
36 **SEC. 8. *Incentives for equitable representation in and by a political party.* –**

37 A political party registered and certified with the COMELEC to have equitable
38 representation as stated in Sections 5, 6 and 7 of this Act, shall be allowed to access
39 the Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund, pursuant to this Act, to fund their
40 women and gender and development agenda, and to augment funds for the campaign
41 expenditures of their women candidates.

1 **SEC. 9. *Establishment of the Women in Political Parties Empowerment***
2 ***Fund.*** – There is hereby established a Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund,
3 hereinafter referred to as “the Fund”, which shall be the source of incentives for
4 political parties complying with Section 8 of this Act. The incentives given to political
5 parties from the Fund shall be used directly and exclusively for the following purposes:
6

7 (a) Development and implementation of the political party’s women and gender
8 and development agenda; and

9 (b) Finance of the campaign activities of the political party’s women candidates.
10

11 The share of each political party from the Fund shall be released only upon proof that
12 the political party has raised and segregated an amount specifically for the
13 development and implementation of its women and gender and development agenda:
14 Provided, That notwithstanding Sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 of this Act, no political party
15 shall receive its share in the Fund unless it has demonstrated that party funds have
16 been segregated and reserved exclusively for its women and gender and development
17 agenda; Provided, further, That the amount to be released shall be equal to the
18 amount so segregated and reserved; Provided, finally, That any unreleased amounts
19 resulting from the political party’s failure to segregate and reserve such funds shall be
20 forfeited and reverted to the General Fund of the Government.
21

22 For purposes of this Act, all releases from the Fund during a non-election year shall
23 be used exclusively for the political party’s women and gender and development
24 agenda. Amounts released from the Fund during an election year shall be divided as
25 follows: (1) sixty per cent (60%) shall be used for campaign expenditures, and (2)
26 forty per cent (40%) shall be used for women and gender and development agenda.
27

28 The political parties availing of the incentives from the Fund shall maintain a separate
29 financial account for the amounts given them by virtue of this Act.
30

31 Any violation of the provisions of this Section, including the misuse, misallocation, or
32 failure to properly segregate, account for, or utilize the funds in accordance with this
33 Act, shall constitute an election offense and shall be penalized in accordance with
34 existing election laws and other applicable laws. Such violation shall be without
35 prejudice to the filing of administrative, civil, or criminal actions under existing laws.
36

37 **SEC. 10. *Allowable women and gender and development activities.*** – The
38 Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) shall formulate and issue a comprehensive
39 list of specific activities that shall be considered as allowable women and gender and
40 development activities for purposes of compliance with Section 9 of this Act. Such list
41 shall be consistent with and aligned with the policies and principles under Republic Act
42 No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women. The PCW shall submit the said list to the
43 COMELEC for its guidance in the certification of political parties’ compliance with this
44 Act.
45

1 **SEC. 11. *Certification.*** – A political party which conforms with Section 5, 6 and 7
2 of this Act, and which desires to be entitled to the incentives, rights and privileges and
3 to perform the responsibilities, provided in this Act, is required to ask for a Certification
4 from the COMELEC under such rules and regulations as the COMELEC shall prescribe
5 consistent with the provisions of this Act. The criteria in Sections 5, 6 and 7 of this Act
6 shall set the eligibility requirement for the Certification. A duly-certified political party
7 shall be entitled to the incentives, rights and privileges and to perform the
8 responsibilities, as provided in Sections 9 and 12 of this Act.
9

10 **SEC. 12. *Full Disclosure.*** – The political party certified by the COMELEC to be eligible
11 and which has in fact availed of the incentives under Section 8 of this Act, shall be
12 required to submit with the COMELEC and the Commission on Audit (COA) a public
13 disclosure of the amounts it received and the expenditures made thereon at the end
14 of every fiscal year.
15

16 **SEC. 13. *Failure to comply with disclosure requirements.*** – Failure of a certified
17 political party to comply with the provisions of this Act, particularly with Section 12,
18 shall result in its disqualification from receiving a share in the Fund and the forfeiture
19 of all rights and privileges to which the said political party would have been entitled
20 under this Act. Such failure shall also serve as a ground for disqualification from
21 availing of any portion of the Fund in subsequent releases, without prejudice to other
22 administrative, civil, or criminal actions under existing laws.
23

24 **SEC. 14. *Appropriations.*** - This Act will be implemented initially within the
25 framework of the budget of the COMELEC for the year it is enacted into law.
26 Thereafter, the amounts as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act will
27 be included in the budget of the COMELEC in the annual General Appropriations Act.
28

29 **SEC. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The COMELEC as the lead
30 agency, in coordination with the PCW, other relevant government offices and
31 agencies, non-governmental organizations, women's organizations, political parties
32 and the academe shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act
33 within sixty (60) days from its effectivity.
34

35 **SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.*** - If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act
36 is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining parts or provisions not affected will
37 continue in full force and effect.
38

39 **SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations,
40 rules and regulations, and other issuances, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the
41 provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.
42

43 **SEC. 18. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
44 in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,