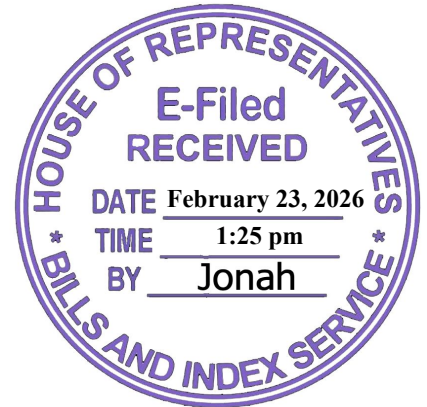


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7926



Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Members of Congress are trusted with public money and public responsibility. While the Constitution gives Congress control over its own rules and discipline, the public rightly expects that allowances paid from taxpayers' funds are used properly and fairly. Concerns arise when per diems and allowances appear to be given without a clear connection to actual work or attendance, which can weaken trust in public institutions.

This bill addresses that concern by linking certain allowances and per diems, not basic salaries, to verified attendance or official legislative work. It recognizes that lawmakers do important work not only during plenary sessions, but also in committee hearings, bicameral meetings, official missions, and district duties connected to lawmaking and oversight. These legitimate activities are counted as "deemed attendance," so Members are not unfairly penalized for working outside the session hall.

By requiring clear records, proper documentation, and public summaries of attendance-based payments, the measure promotes transparency and accountability while respecting Congress's independence. Simply put, the bill ensures that attendance-based allowances are released only when work is actually done and can be verified. This strengthens public confidence, protects public funds, and reinforces the principle that government service must always be accountable to the people.

In view of the foregoing, **ug sa ngalan sa SERBISYONG TINUORAY**, the undersigned respectfully requests the immediate passage of this measure.


CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP
Representative, Second District of Southern Leyte

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 7926

Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON “COCO” M. YAP

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR ATTENDANCE-BASED WITHHOLDING OF CERTAIN ALLOWANCES AND PER DIEMS OF MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, DEFINING DEEMED ATTENDANCE INCLUDING OFFICIAL DISTRICT DUTIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 “*Attendance-Based Allowances for Members of Congress Act.*”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is the policy of the State to promote accountability, responsibility, and integrity in public service. Members of Congress, as elected representatives of the people, shall be transparent in the discharge of legislative and official duties. Allowances and per diems that are intended to support official functions shall be released only upon verified official attendance or deemed attendance.

SECTION 3. Coverage. — This Act shall apply to all Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

SECTION 4. Definition of Terms. — For purposes of this Act:

- (a) Member of Congress – refers to any duly elected Senator or Member of the House of Representatives.

- (b) Plenary Session – refers to a regular or special session of Congress where legislative business is conducted with the presence of a quorum, as officially recorded in the Journal of the Senate or the House of Representatives.
- (c) Committee Meeting – refers to any duly constituted meeting of a standing, special, or ad hoc committee, including hearings and investigations in aid of legislation, as scheduled and recorded by the Secretariat.
- (d) Official Attendance – refers to physical presence or such mode of attendance as may be officially authorized by the chamber concerned, in a plenary session or committee meeting, and duly recorded by the Secretariat.
- (e) Deemed Attendance – refers to attendance credited to a Member who is not physically present in a plenary session because the Member is performing other official duties recognized under this Act and duly documented.
- (f) Attendance-Based Compensation – refers only to daily per diems, session or committee attendance allowances, and such other allowances or emoluments as are expressly designated by the Senate President or the Speaker, as applicable, as attendance-based and not forming part of the basic salary fixed by law.

SECTION 5. Attendance-Based Compensation Scheme. —

- (a) A Member of Congress shall be entitled to Attendance-Based Compensation only for days when the Member has Official Attendance of Deemed Attendance.
- (b) A Member who incurs an absence that is neither Official Attendance nor Deemed Attendance shall not be entitled to Attendance-Based Compensation for the day or days of such absence.
- (c) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to:
 - 1. Reduce, increase, or otherwise alter the basic salary of Members of Congress fixed by law; or
 - 2. Impair the constitutional powers of each chamber to discipline its Members

SECTION 6. Deemed Attendance; Authorized Absences. — While Congress is in session, a Member shall be deemed present in a plenary session on any day that the Member's absence is due to any of the following official duties, as duly certified under Section 7:

- (a) Attendance in committee meetings as authorized by the Committee on Rules, upon written notification to the Secretary General by the concerned committee secretary;
- (b) Attendance in meetings of:
 - (1) The Commission on Appointments;
 - (2) The Electoral Tribunal of the chamber concerned; and
 - (3) Bicameral Conference Committees;
- (c) Official mission or official travel as approved by the Senate President or the Speaker, as applicable; and
- (d) Official duties in the district (for Members of the House of Representatives) or in the region/province/city/municipality concerned (for Senators, as may be applicable), including but not limited to:
 - (1) constituent consultations, public hearings, or stakeholder conferences officially convened or participated in by the Member in relation to pending or proposed legislation or oversight;
 - (2) field inspections, site visits, or project monitoring undertaken in relation to legislative oversight functions, including verification of implementation issues relevant to legislation;
 - (3) attendance in official government meetings or inter-agency coordination sessions upon written invitation by a national government agency or local government unit, where the Member participates in an official capacity connected to legislative functions; and
 - (4) emergency response coordination in declared states of calamity or public emergencies, when the Member is requested in writing by competent authorities to participate in official coordination, provided that the participation is documented and reported to the chamber concerned.

SECTION 7. Documentation, Certification, and Recording. —

- (a) Each chamber shall maintain daily records of plenary and committee attendance.

(b) For Deemed Attendance under Section 6(c) and (d), the Member shall submit, within a reasonable period prescribed by the chamber's rules, supporting documents such as travel authority, mission order, invitation, program, minutes, attendance sheets, or certification by the relevant government office.

(c) The Senate President or the Speaker, as applicable, shall designate the office responsible for verifying documents and issuing certifications for Deemed Attendance.

SECTION 8. Transparency. — Each chamber shall publish, in a manner consistent with data privacy and security requirements, periodic summaries of Members' attendance and deemed attendance, and corresponding Attendance-Based Compensation released.

SECTION 9. Fraudulent Claims and Administrative Consequences. —

(a) Any Member or officer who knowingly causes the recording of false attendance or submits falsified documents to obtain Attendance-Based Compensation shall be subject to appropriate proceedings under the rules of the chamber concerned, without prejudice to liability under other applicable laws.

(b) Officers and employees of either chamber who participate in falsification of attendance records shall likewise be subject to administrative discipline.

SECTION 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). — Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Senate and the House of Representatives shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act within their respective chambers, including:

- (a) The list of attendance-based allowances/per diems covered;
- (b) Documentary requirements;
- (c) Verification procedures; and
- (d) Publication formats.

SECTION 11. 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 12. Repealing Clause. — All laws, decrees, orders, rules, regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby amended, repealed, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,