



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



TWENTIETH (20TH) CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10013

Introduced by KAMANGGAGAWA Partylist
Representative **ELIJAH R. SAN FERNANDO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article VI, Section 32 of the 1987 Constitution mandates Congress to provide a system of initiative and referendum whereby the people may directly propose and enact laws, or approve or reject any act or law or part thereof passed by Congress or by a local legislative body, upon the registration of a petition signed by the required number of registered voters. Republic Act No. 6735, otherwise known as the "Initiative and Referendum Act," was enacted to give effect to this constitutional command and to strengthen direct democratic participation.

When Republic Act No. 6735 was enacted in 1989, public transactions were still primarily paper-based. Today, government, commercial, and civic transactions increasingly rely on electronic documents, electronic signatures, digital identity systems, and secure online submission platforms. Republic Act No. 8792, or the Electronic Commerce Act of 2000, recognizes the legal validity and functional equivalence of electronic documents and electronic signatures, subject to requirements of authenticity, integrity, and reliability.

Despite these developments, the process of gathering signatures for initiative and referendum petitions remains largely dependent on physical signature sheets. This traditional process may be costly, time-consuming, and inaccessible to many registered voters, including workers with limited time and mobility, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, Filipinos in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, and qualified overseas voters.

At the same time, the modernization of signature-gathering must not dilute the safeguards required by law, the Constitution, and jurisprudence. Direct democracy requires not only accessibility, but also authenticity, informed consent, transparency, security, and protection against fraud, coercion, misrepresentation, and unauthorized use of personal data. The integrity of initiative and referendum petitions depends on a system that ensures that every signature is affixed by a registered voter, with full knowledge of the text and effect of the petition being supported.

This measure therefore seeks to amend Republic Act No. 6735 by requiring the Commission on Elections to develop, establish, implement, and maintain a secure, accessible, reliable, and verifiable electronic petition system for initiative and referendum processes. The measure provides for voter authentication, full-text disclosure, tamper-evident petition records, audit trails, data privacy safeguards, public transparency, accessibility measures for persons with disabilities and voters with special needs, and penalties for fraud, coercion, misrepresentation, and misuse of the electronic petition system.

The bill likewise preserves the availability of paper-based petitions and recognizes electronic, paper-based, and hybrid modes of petition filing and signature-gathering, subject to uniform verification and compliance with the requirements of law. In this manner, the measure expands access to direct democratic participation without compromising the authenticity, voluntariness, and integrity of the petition process.

By modernizing the Initiative and Referendum Act while maintaining the safeguards necessary for credible and verifiable petitions, this amendatory bill seeks to make direct democratic participation more accessible, secure, inclusive, and responsive to present-day realities.

In solidarity with the working class, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



ELIJAH R. SAN FERNANDO
Representative
KAMANGGAGAWA PARTYLIST



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AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6735, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE
INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM ACT," TO AUTHORIZE THE USE OF
ELECTRONIC PETITIONS AND ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES IN INITIATIVE
AND REFERENDUM PROCESSES, PROVIDING SAFEGUARDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT TO SECTION 3 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6735.

Section 3 of Republic Act No. 6735 is hereby amended BY INSERTING NEW PARAGRAPHS to read as follows:

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. — For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

x x x

ELECTRONIC PETITION - REFERS TO A PETITION FOR INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM PREPARED, EXECUTED, SIGNED, SUBMITTED, STORED, OR VERIFIED IN ELECTRONIC FORM THROUGH AN ELECTRONIC PETITION SYSTEM AUTHORIZED, OPERATED, ADMINISTERED, OR ACCREDITED BY THE COMMISSION.

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE - REFERS TO ANY DISTINCTIVE MARK, CHARACTERISTIC, SOUND, SYMBOL, PROCESS, OR DIGITAL AUTHENTICATION METHOD IN ELECTRONIC FORM, ATTACHED TO OR LOGICALLY ASSOCIATED WITH AN ELECTRONIC PETITION, EXECUTED OR ADOPTED BY A REGISTERED VOTER WITH THE INTENT TO SIGN AND SUPPORT SUCH PETITION, CONSISTENT WITH REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8792, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "ELECTRONIC COMMERCE ACT OF 2000," AND SUCH STANDARDS AS MAY BE PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION.

HYBRID FORM - REFERS TO A PETITION INITIATED, ACCOMPLISHED, SIGNED, AND/OR SUPPORTED THROUGH A COMBINATION OF PAPER-BASED AND ELECTRONIC MEANS, INCLUDING THE USE OF BOTH PHYSICAL SIGNATURE SHEETS AND AN ELECTRONIC PETITION PLATFORM, SUBJECT TO THE UNIFORM VERIFICATION, AUTHENTICATION, CONSOLIDATION, AND VALIDATION PROCEDURES PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION.

DIGITAL SIGNATURE - REFERS TO AN ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE CONSISTING OF A TRANSFORMATION OF AN ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT OR ELECTRONIC DATA MESSAGE USING AN ASYMMETRIC OR PUBLIC CRYPTOSYSTEM OR OTHER SECURE TECHNOLOGY, SUCH THAT A PERSON HAVING THE INITIAL UNTRANSFORMED ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT AND THE SIGNER'S PUBLIC KEY OR OTHER VERIFICATION CREDENTIAL CAN ACCURATELY DETERMINE WHETHER THE TRANSFORMATION WAS CREATED USING THE CORRESPONDING PRIVATE KEY OR AUTHENTICATION CREDENTIAL AND WHETHER THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN ALTERED.

ELECTRONIC PETITION SYSTEM - REFERS TO A SECURE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM AUTHORIZED, OPERATED, ADMINISTERED, OR ACCREDITED BY THE COMMISSION FOR THE ELECTRONIC PREPARATION, PUBLICATION, SIGNING, SUBMISSION, CUSTODY, VERIFICATION, AND AUDIT OF PETITIONS UNDER THIS ACT.

ELECTRONIC PETITION RECORD - REFERS TO THE ELECTRONIC DATA GENERATED, SUBMITTED, STORED, RETAINED, OR VERIFIED IN CONNECTION WITH AN ELECTRONIC PETITION, INCLUDING THE PETITION TEXT, SIGNATURE RECORD, AUTHENTICATION RECORD, TIMESTAMP, AUDIT LOG, CONSENT RECORD, AND OTHER RELATED DATA PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6735.

Section 5 of Republic Act No. 6735 is hereby amended TO CORRECT THE PARAGRAPH DESIGNATION AND to read as follows:

SEC. 5. Requirements. —

(a) To exercise the power of initiative or referendum, at least ten percent (10%) of the total number of registered voters, of which every legislative district is represented by at least three percent (3%) of the registered voters thereof, shall sign a petition for the purpose and register the same with the Commission.

(b) A petition for an initiative on the 1987 Constitution must have at least twelve percent (12%) of the total number of registered voters as signatories, of which every legislative district must be represented by at least three percent (3%) of the registered voters therein. Initiative on the Constitution may be exercised only after five (5) years from the ratification of the 1987 Constitution and only once every five (5) years thereafter.

(c) The petition, **WHETHER IN PAPER, ELECTRONIC, OR HYBRID FORM**, shall state the following:

- c.1. **THE FULL** contents or text of the proposed law, **ACT, ORDINANCE, RESOLUTION, OR MEASURE** sought to be enacted, approved, rejected, amended, or repealed, as the case may be;
- c.2. the proposition;
- c. 3. the reason or reasons therefor;
- c.4. that it is not one of the exceptions provided herein **OR UNDER THE CONSTITUTION**;
- c.5. **THE NAMES, signatures, AND SUCH OTHER VOTER-IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION OF THE PETITIONERS OR REGISTERED VOTERS AS MAY BE PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION FOR PURPOSES OF VERIFICATION, WHICH MAY INCLUDE HANDWRITTEN SIGNATURES, ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES, OR DIGITAL SIGNATURES**;
- c.6. an abstract or summary **OF THE PROPOSITION** in not more than one hundred (100) words, **WRITTEN IN CLEAR AND PLAIN LANGUAGE, WHICH SHALL APPEAR PROMINENTLY** at the top of every page of the **PAPER** petition **OR ON THE SIGNING PAGE OF THE ELECTRONIC PETITION**; **AND IN THE CASE OF AN ELECTRONIC PETITION, A UNIQUE PETITION IDENTIFIER, DIGITAL COPY, DOCUMENT HASH, OR OTHER TAMPER-EVIDENT REFERENCE PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION TO ENSURE THAT THE TEXT SIGNED BY THE VOTER IS IDENTICAL TO THE TEXT SUBMITTED FOR VERIFICATION AND REGISTRATION.**

NO SIGNATURE, WHETHER HANDWRITTEN OR ELECTRONIC, SHALL BE COUNTED UNLESS THE VOTER IS GIVEN ACCESS TO THE FULL TEXT OF THE PETITION AND THE SUMMARY THEREOF BEFORE AFFIXING THE SIGNATURE.

(d) A referendum or initiative affecting a law, resolution or ordinance passed by the legislative assembly of an autonomous region, province or city is deemed validly initiated if the petition thereof is signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the registered voters in the province or city, of which every legislative district must be represented by at least three percent (3%) of the registered voters therein; Provided, however, That if the province or city is composed only of one (1) legislative district, then at least each municipality in a province or each barangay in a city should be represented by at least three percent (3%) of the registered voters therein.

(e) A referendum or initiative on an ordinance passed in a municipality shall be deemed validly initiated if the petition therefor is signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the registered voters in the municipality, of which every barangay is represented by at least three percent (3%) of the registered voters therein.

(f) A referendum or initiative on a barangay resolution or ordinance is deemed validly initiated if signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the registered voters in said barangay.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENT TO SECTION 7 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6735.

Section 7 of Republic Act No. 6735 is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 7. Verification of Signatures. — The Election Registrar shall verify the signatures on the basis of the registry list of voters, voters' affidavits, and voters' identification cards used in the immediately preceding election, VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS, AND SUCH OTHER OFFICIAL RECORDS OR SECURE VERIFICATION SYSTEMS AS MAY BE AUTHORIZED BY THE COMMISSION.

FOR PAPER PETITIONS, VERIFICATION SHALL BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH EXISTING PROCEDURES PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION.

FOR ELECTRONIC PETITIONS, VERIFICATION SHALL INCLUDE CONFIRMATION THAT:

(A) THE SIGNATORY IS A REGISTERED VOTER QUALIFIED TO SIGN THE PETITION;

(B) THE ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE OR DIGITAL SIGNATURE IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE REGISTERED VOTER;

(C) THE SIGNATURE WAS VOLUNTARILY AFFIXED WITH THE INTENT TO SUPPORT THE PETITION;

(D) THE VOTER WAS GIVEN ACCESS TO THE FULL TEXT AND SUMMARY OF THE PETITION BEFORE SIGNING;

(E) THE ELECTRONIC PETITION RECORD HAS NOT BEEN ALTERED AFTER SIGNING;

(F) THE SIGNATURE IS NOT A DUPLICATE, AUTOMATED, FRAUDULENT, OR UNAUTHORIZED SUBMISSION; AND

(G) THE ELECTRONIC PETITION RECORD COMPLIES WITH THE TECHNICAL, AUTHENTICATION, AUDIT, AND DATA PRIVACY STANDARDS PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION.

A VOTER SHALL NOT BE COUNTED MORE THAN ONCE FOR THE SAME PETITION. IN CASE A VOTER SIGNS BOTH A PAPER PETITION AND AN ELECTRONIC PETITION FOR THE SAME PROPOSITION, ONLY ONE VALID SIGNATURE SHALL BE COUNTED, SUBJECT TO THE RULES OF THE COMMISSION.

SEC. 4. INSERTION OF NEW SECTION 7-A IN REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6735.

A new Section 7-A is hereby inserted after Section 7 of Republic Act No. 6735, to read as follows:

SEC. 7-A. ELECTRONIC PETITION SYSTEM, ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES, AND GATHERING. — THE COMMISSION SHALL DEVELOP, ESTABLISH, IMPLEMENT, AND MAINTAIN A SECURE, ACCESSIBLE, RELIABLE, AND VERIFIABLE ELECTRONIC PETITION SYSTEM FOR THE FILING, SIGNING, GATHERING, AUTHENTICATION, VERIFICATION, CONSOLIDATION, AND VALIDATION OF PETITIONS FOR INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM.

REGISTERED VOTERS MAY SIGN PETITIONS FOR INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM THROUGH SUCH ELECTRONIC PETITION SYSTEM, SUBJECT TO THE RULES, PROCEDURES, SECURITY STANDARDS, AND SAFEGUARDS PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION.

THE COMMISSION SHALL PROMULGATE RULES AND STANDARDS GOVERNING ELECTRONIC PETITIONS, WHICH SHALL INCLUDE:

(A) SECURE VOTER AUTHENTICATION AND IDENTITY VERIFICATION;

(B) ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE OR DIGITAL SIGNATURE STANDARDS;

(C) SAFEGUARDS TO ENSURE THAT EACH SIGNATURE IS VOLUNTARILY AND PERSONALLY AFFIXED BY THE REGISTERED VOTER;

(D) TAMPER-EVIDENT STORAGE OF THE PETITION TEXT AND SIGNATURE RECORDS;

(E) AN AUDIT TRAIL SHOWING THE DATE, TIME, METHOD, AND AUTHENTICATION RESULT OF EACH ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE;

(F) PROCEDURES FOR DETECTING AND PREVENTING DUPLICATE SIGNATURES, AUTOMATED SUBMISSIONS, IMPERSONATION, UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS, AND OTHER FRAUDULENT ACTS;

(G) CLEAR PRESENTATION OF THE FULL TEXT, PROPOSITION, REASONS, AND SUMMARY OF THE PETITION BEFORE THE VOTER SIGNS;

(H) ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, SENIOR CITIZENS, OVERSEAS VOTERS, WORKERS WITH LIMITED MOBILITY, AND VOTERS IN GEOGRAPHICALLY ISOLATED AND DISADVANTAGED AREAS;

(I) PROCEDURES FOR VOTER CORRECTION, WITHDRAWAL, OBJECTION, OR CHALLENGE WITHIN A PERIOD TO BE PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION BEFORE FINAL CERTIFICATION OF PETITION SUFFICIENCY;

(J) DATA PRIVACY, CYBERSECURITY, RETENTION, AND DISPOSAL STANDARDS; AND

(K) INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL AUDIT, SOURCE CODE REVIEW WHERE APPLICABLE, VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT, AND PUBLIC REPORTING MECHANISMS CONSISTENT WITH LAW.

THE USE OF ELECTRONIC PETITIONS SHALL NOT EXCLUDE, IMPAIR, OR DIMINISH THE RIGHT OF VOTERS AND PROPONENTS TO USE PAPER PETITIONS. THE COMMISSION SHALL ENSURE THAT ELECTRONIC AND PAPER-BASED MODES OF SIGNING ARE TREATED AS LEGALLY EQUIVALENT, SUBJECT TO VERIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE WITH THIS ACT.

SEC. 5. INSERTION OF NEW SECTION 7-B IN REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6735.

A new Section 7-B is hereby inserted after Section 7-A of Republic Act No. 6735, to read as follows:

SEC. 7-B. CUSTODY, TRANSPARENCY, AND DATA PROTECTION. — THE COMMISSION SHALL BE THE OFFICIAL CUSTODIAN OF ELECTRONIC PETITION RECORDS SUBMITTED UNDER THIS ACT.

ALL ELECTRONIC PETITION SYSTEMS SHALL COMPLY WITH REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10173, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “DATA PRIVACY ACT OF 2012,” ITS IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS, AND APPLICABLE ISSUANCES OF THE NATIONAL PRIVACY COMMISSION.

THE COLLECTION AND PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE LIMITED TO WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR VOTER AUTHENTICATION, SIGNATURE VERIFICATION, PETITION CERTIFICATION, AUDIT, INVESTIGATION OF FRAUD, AND OTHER LAWFUL PURPOSES DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM PROCESS.

THE COMMISSION SHALL ADOPT SAFEGUARDS TO PROTECT ELECTRONIC PETITION RECORDS AGAINST UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS, ALTERATION, DISCLOSURE, LOSS, MISUSE, DESTRUCTION, OR UNLAWFUL PROCESSING.

THE COMMISSION SHALL PUBLISH, IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH DATA PRIVACY AND ELECTION LAWS, SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO ALLOW PUBLIC SCRUTINY OF THE STATUS OF EACH PETITION, THE NUMBER OF VERIFIED SIGNATURES PER LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT, THE NUMBER OF INVALIDATED OR DUPLICATE SIGNATURES, AND THE GENERAL GROUNDS FOR INVALIDATION.

SEC. 6. INSERTION OF NEW SECTION 7-C IN REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6735.

A new Section 7-C is hereby inserted after Section 7-B of Republic Act No. 6735, to read as follows:

SEC. 7-C. PROHIBITED ACTS INVOLVING ELECTRONIC PETITIONS. — THE FOLLOWING ACTS ARE PROHIBITED:

(A) SIGNING, ATTEMPTING TO SIGN, OR SUBMITTING AN ELECTRONIC PETITION IN THE NAME OF ANOTHER VOTER;

(B) USING ANOTHER VOTER'S CREDENTIALS, IDENTITY INFORMATION, DEVICE, AUTHENTICATION FACTOR, OR ACCOUNT WITHOUT AUTHORITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF SIGNING AN ELECTRONIC PETITION; PROVIDED, THAT ASSISTANCE MAY BE EXTENDED TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND OTHER VOTERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS WHO ARE UNABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THE ELECTRONIC SIGNING PROCESS ON THEIR OWN, SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATE SAFEGUARDS AND VERIFICATION PROCEDURES AS MAY BE PRESCRIBED BY THE COMMISSION;

(C) GENERATING, SUBMITTING, OR CAUSING THE SUBMISSION OF AUTOMATED, BOT-GENERATED, FICTITIOUS, DUPLICATE, OR FRAUDULENT SIGNATURES;

(D) ALTERING, SUBSTITUTING, SUPPRESSING, DELETING, OR TAMPERING WITH THE TEXT OF THE PETITION, ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES, AUTHENTICATION RECORDS, TIMESTAMPS, AUDIT LOGS, OR OTHER ELECTRONIC PETITION RECORDS;

(E) PRESENTING A MATERIALLY DIFFERENT TEXT, SUMMARY, PROPOSITION, OR EXPLANATION TO A VOTER FROM THE TEXT OFFICIALLY REGISTERED OR SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION;

(F) COERCING, INTIMIDATING, DECEIVING, UNDULY INFLUENCING, OR PAYING A VOTER TO SIGN OR WITHDRAW SUPPORT FOR A PETITION, WHETHER THROUGH PHYSICAL, ELECTRONIC, OR ONLINE MEANS;

(G) BUYING, SELLING, TRANSFERRING, OR UNLAWFULLY DISCLOSING PERSONAL DATA, VOTER DATA, AUTHENTICATION DATA, SIGNATURE RECORDS, OR ELECTRONIC PETITION RECORDS;

(H) OPERATING AN ELECTRONIC PETITION SYSTEM WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION OR ACCREDITATION FROM THE COMMISSION, WHEN SUCH AUTHORIZATION OR ACCREDITATION IS REQUIRED;

(I) FALSELY REPRESENTING THAT AN ELECTRONIC PETITION SYSTEM, WEBSITE, APPLICATION, FORM, OR ONLINE PLATFORM IS AUTHORIZED, OPERATED, OR ACCREDITED BY THE COMMISSION; AND

(J) ANY OTHER ACT THAT COMPROMISES THE AUTHENTICITY, VOLUNTARINESS, INTEGRITY, SECRECY WHERE APPLICABLE, OR VERIFIABILITY OF ELECTRONIC PETITION RECORDS.

VIOLATIONS OF THIS SECTION SHALL BE PUNISHABLE UNDER THE APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE OMNIBUS ELECTION CODE, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10173, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8792, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10175, AND OTHER RELEVANT LAWS, WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO ADMINISTRATIVE, CIVIL, OR CRIMINAL LIABILITY UNDER RULES TO BE PROMULGATED BY THE COMMISSION.

SEC. 7. AMENDMENT TO SECTION 20 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6735.

Section 20 of Republic Act No. 6735 is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 20. Rules and Regulations. — The Commission is hereby empowered to promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

WITHIN ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY (180) DAYS FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS AMENDATORY ACT, THE COMMISSION SHALL PROMULGATE THE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTRONIC PETITIONS AND ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES UNDER THIS ACT, INCLUDING STANDARDS FOR VOTER AUTHENTICATION, ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE VALIDATION, PLATFORM ACCREDITATION, CYBERSECURITY, ACCESSIBILITY, DATA PRIVACY, AUDIT, TRANSPARENCY, OBJECTIONS, WITHDRAWAL, AND VERIFICATION.

THE COMMISSION MAY CONSULT THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, THE NATIONAL PRIVACY COMMISSION, CYBERSECURITY EXPERTS, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, OVERSEAS VOTING STAKEHOLDERS, AND OTHER RELEVANT SECTORS IN THE FORMULATION OF SUCH RULES.

SEC. 8. AMENDMENT TO SECTION 21 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6735.

Section 21 of Republic Act No. 6735 is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 21. Appropriations. — The amount necessary to defray the cost of the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the Contingent Fund in the General Appropriations Act of the current year. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the full implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

THE AMOUNT NECESSARY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTRONIC PETITIONS AND ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE

CHARGED AGAINST THE CURRENT APPROPRIATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS. THEREAFTER, SUCH SUMS AS MAY BE NECESSARY FOR ITS CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE ANNUAL GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT.

SEC. 9. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE.

If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. REPEALING CLAUSE.

All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. EFFECTIVITY.

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

Approved.