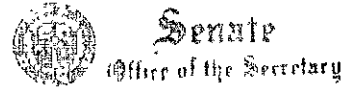



FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



'11 MAY 17 P3:22

SENATE  
S.B. No. 2820

RECEIVED BY: 

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Introduced by SENATOR MANNY VILLAR

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE


This legislation is mindful of the 1987 Philippine Constitution when it declared, "The Congress shall also design a procedure for the disabled and the illiterates to vote without the assistance of other persons, x x x "(Art. V, Sec, 2, second paragraph). Ditto, it is in full recognition that "[s]uffrage may be exercised by all citizens of the Philippines not otherwise, disqualified by law x x x No literacy, property or other substantive requirement shall be imposed on the exercise of suffrage. "(Art. V, Sec.1)

Suffrage or the right to vote for government officials is a constitutionally afforded right of all Filipino citizens, unless disqualified by law. Being the sole determinant of electoral succession, it is a highly valued right and widely regarded as an exercise of democracy.

While there are no literacy or economic requirements to qualify as a voter, physical limitations have hindered senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PWDs) from casting their votes. During the last elections, news programs showed footage of senior citizens leaving polling centers instead of climbing two flights of stairs to reach their assigned voting precinct.

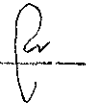
This bill seeks to remedy the said lapses and problems of existing regulations. With around a million PWDs and almost five million senior citizens, it will be impossible to ensure that all their precincts will be situated at ground-level. With the approval of this bill, PWDs and senior citizens will instead be assigned to special voting rooms on Election Day. Their ballots will be collected on basis of their actual assigned precincts and will later be forwarded to the corresponding precincts.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval thereof is highly recommended.

  
MANNY VILLAR

11 MAY 17 P3:22

SENATE  
S.B. No. 2820

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Introduced by SENATOR MANNY VILLAR

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**AN ACT**  
**MANDATING THE USE OF GROUND-FLOOR POLLING PLACES FOR PERSONS**  
**WITH DISABILITIES AND SENIOR CITIZENS**

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

1 **SECTION 1. Declaration of policy.** – The State shall ensure the right to suffrage of all  
2 Filipinos, unless disqualified by law. In response to physical limitations of senior citizens and  
3 persons with disabilities, the government shall design procedures to make polling centers  
4 accessible.

5  
6 **SECTION 2. Use of ground-floor polling places for persons with disabilities and**  
7 **senior citizens.** The government, through the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), shall  
8 designate special polling rooms for senior citizens and persons with disabilities. The rooms  
9 shall be located at the ground floor of each polling center. Instead of proceeding to their  
10 precincts, the elderly and persons with disabilities will be allowed to vote in the special  
11 rooms where extra ballot boxes of their assigned precincts will be provided. At the end of  
12 day, before the counting of ballots or transmission of votes, the assigned board of election  
13 inspectors shall submit the ballot boxes to the corresponding precincts for consolidation.

14  
15 **SECTION 3. Number of special polling rooms.** – COMELEC will determine the number of  
16 special polling rooms based on the number of elderly and disabled registered voters.

17  
18 **SECTION 4. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within sixty (60) days from the  
19 effectivity of this Act, the COMELEC shall promulgate and issue the rules and regulations  
20 for the implementation of this Act.

21  
22 **SECTION 5. Separability Clause.** – Should any provision of this Act be declared invalid or  
23 unconstitutional, the validity or constitutionality of the other provisions shall not be affected  
24 thereby.

25  
26 **SECTION 6. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, letters of instructions, resolutions,  
27 orders, ordinances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are  
28 hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

29  
30 **SECTION 7. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in  
31 two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

32  
33  
34  
35 *Approved,*