

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **3719**



Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

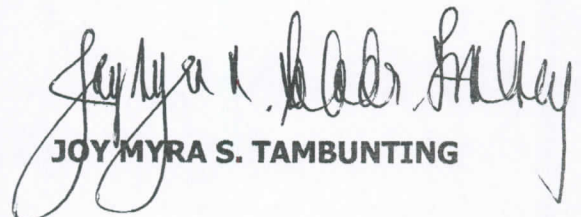
Section 14 of Article II of the 1987 Constitution recognizes the role of women in nation-building and thereby mandates the State to ensure fundamental equality between men and women. As a response, series of legislations empowering and recognizing the rights of women are in effect such as Republic Act No. 7192 otherwise known as the An Act Promoting Integration as Full and Equal Partners of Men in Development and Nation-Building, Republic Act No. 8353 or the Anti-Rape Law, Republic Act No. 8505 or the Rape Victim Assistance Protection Act, Republic Act No. 7877 or the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act, and Republic Act No. 6955 or the Anti-Mail Order Bride Scheme.

Notwithstanding the legislation promoting the protection of women's rights, there is still an equality that exist in term of opportunities in the areas of public governance. In fact, based on the Fact Sheet dated March 19, 2013 released by the National Statistical Coordination Board on Updates on Women and Men in the Philippines, elective positions are dominated by men with 81.3% in contrast with 18.4% for women during the 2010 elections. Although women dominates in the distribution of government personnel for major subdivision in the national level and in the state universities and colleges, men still lead in number of personnel in the local government as well as in government owned and controlled corporations. More importantly, in the field judiciary, men dominated in numbers with 634 in contrast to 288 female judges from data gathered in 2009.

In order to address the issue of prevailing inequality in opportunities in public governance, this bill is filed. In addition, this bill aims to increase the share of women's role in decision-making and to address the discrimination experiences by women in the field of public service.

The salient feature of this bill includes the reservation of certain percentage in appointive positions and penalty for non-compliance.

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


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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT 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 and cited as the "Women Empowerment Act of 2019."

SECTION 2. Appointive positions in the national and local government shall be reserved to qualified women based on the following fraction and classification:

- a) At least one-third (1/3) of the Cabinet;
- b) At least one-third (1/3) of all undersecretaries and positions of comparable salary grade or at least one in every line department, government-owned and controlled corporations, government financing institutions, state colleges and universities, and local government units: Provided, that in case where are more than fifty percent (50%) of the women population occupying technical positions in departments, offices, bureaus and agencies, the secretary or the head agency shall be a woman and the proportion of one-third (1/3) shall be increased to two-thirds (2/3);
- c) At least one-third (1/3) of all assistant secretaries in every department;
- d) At least one-third (1/3) of all directors in every department;
- e) At least one-third (1/3) of all chief of division in every department, bureau or agency;
- f) At least one-third (1/3) of all ambassador and consular offices;
- g) At least one-third (1/3) of all judges in all lower courts; and
- h) At least one-third (1/3) of all prosecutors in department of justice.

It shall be the Civil Service Commission who shall enforce this provision.

SECTION 3. All duly-accredited political parties shall reserve at least one third (1/3) of its party slate of official candidates to women in elections for the municipality/city councils and provincial boards.

The Commission on Elections shall enforce this provision.

SECTION 4. Women in the Armed Forces of the Philippines shall be allowed combat and security-related assignments.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines shall enforce this provision.

SECTION 5. All police stations shall establish an all-female unit to attend to victims of rape, battering, incest and other crimes against women and chastity. For this purpose, the Philippine National Police shall reserve at least thirty percent (30%) of all items in each rank to women.

SECTION 6. All departments, bureaus, agencies, and other government-owned and controlled corporations, in coordination with the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), shall include in their human resource development program, gender and development orientation, trainings, and seminars among others.

SECTION 7. At least one-third (1/3) of scholarships, grants, fellowships and trainings in the national or local government, either in the Philippines or abroad shall be reserved for qualified women.

The Commission on Civil Service and National Economic and Development Authority shall enforce this provision.

SECTION 8. Nothing in this Act shall diminish the rights and privileges of incumbent male employees.

SECTION 9. *Penalty.* - Persons who violate the provisions of this Act shall be punished by a fine not less than fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) or imprisonment of not less than one (1) year nor more than six (6) years or both fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the court.

If the offender is a government official, he shall in addition, be perpetually disqualified from holding any public office.

SECTION 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The National Commission on the Role Filipino Women, in consultation with the Civil Service Commission, the Commission on Elections, the Philippine National Police and the National Economic and Development Authority, shall formulate the necessary guidelines to implement this Act.

SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 12. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 13. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,