

Senate panel OKs anti-dynasty bill

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Thirteen senators have given their support to the anti-political dynasty bill to be reported out by the Senate committee on electoral reforms when Congress resumes session in May.

The committee report was released by committee vice chairman Francis Pangilinan and had the signatures of Sens. Loren Legarda, Sonny Angara, Risa Hontiveros, Pangilinan, Grace Poe, Panfilo Lacson, Sherwin Gatchalian, Joseph Victor Ejercito, Nancy Binay, Paolo Benigno Aquino IV, Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto and Minority Leader Franklin Drilon.

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III indicated in the report that he is against the measure.

Senate Bill No. 1765 or the proposed anti-political dynasty act of 2018 defines political dynasty as the “concentration, consolidation and/or perpetuation of public office and political powers by persons related to one another within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity.”

Pangilinan explained that this would cover spouses (legal and common-law), siblings (full or half-blood), parents and children (legitimate, illegitimate and adopted) and the spouses of these second-degree relatives.

The bill is a consolidation of the similar measures filed by Lacson, Drilon, Ejercito, Poe, Legarda and Aquino.

Under the consolidated bill, any person with political dynasty relationship with any incumbent elective official shall not be allowed to run for or hold public office under the following circumstances: to immediately succeed or replace the said incumbent; if the incumbent is an elective barangay official, the spouse and the above relatives are prohibited to run simultaneously for any position in the same barangay as well as in the barangays in municipalities or cities within the same legislative district; if the incumbent is an elective official of the municipality or city, legislative district or province, the spouse and above relatives are prohibited to run for or hold any elective office simultaneously with the incumbent within the same barangay, municipality, city, legislative district or province.

If the incumbent is a national elective official, the spouse and the above relatives are likewise prohibited to run simultaneously for any position in the national or local level as barangay captain, mayor, governor or district representative in any part of the country; and if the incumbent is a barangay captain/mayor/governor or district representative, the spouse and the above relatives are also prohibited to run simultaneously for any position in the national level.

Pangilinan explained that individuals who are not holding any public office shall also be prohibited from running in the same election if their election will result in a political dynasty relationship.

The Commission on Elections will be given the power to deny the application for certificate of candidacy of any candidate that falls under a political dynasty relationship.