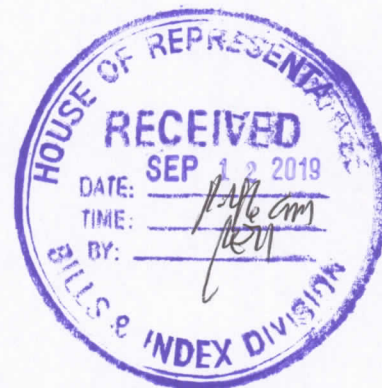




Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Constitution Hills, Quezon City



**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
*First Regular Session*

**HOUSE BILL NO. 4565**

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Introduced by  
**REPRESENTATIVE PANTALEON D. ALVAREZ**

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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR EARLY VOTING FOR QUALIFIED SENIOR**  
**CITIZENS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN NATIONAL**  
**AND LOCAL ELECTIONS**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE:**

This bill seeks to broaden the access to the right of suffrage of qualified senior citizens and persons with disabilities in order to eliminate possible impediments to electoral participation and ultimately improve the quality of their voting experience.

This measure will allow qualified senior citizens and persons with disabilities, together with qualified media practitioners, teachers, military personnel, and government employees involved in the conduct of elections, to vote one (1) week before the date of the elections in COMELEC designated and accessible voting centers nationwide.

This bill was approved on third reading by the House of Representatives during the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress and transmitted to the Senate of the Philippines on May 31, 2017. The approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**PANTALEON D. ALVAREZ**



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

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to make voting convenient for senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PWDs) by giving them the option to vote earlier than the date set for the elections.

SEC. 2. *Early Voting.* - For national and local elections, there shall be early voting where senior citizens and PWDs qualified to vote early may choose to cast their ballot at accessible establishments designated by the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) within seven (7) working days before the date set for the election.

SEC. 3. *Registration.* - There shall be a nationwide registration for senior citizens and PWDs who may wish to avail of their early voting privileges to qualify them for early voting. Those who are not registered under this Act shall vote on Election Day.



SEC. 4. *Obligation of the COMELEC.* - To ensure the smooth implementation of this Act, the COMELEC shall:

- (a) Keep a record of senior citizens and PWDs who are registered voters;
- (b) In coordination with local government units, the National Council on Disability Affairs, the Commission on Human Rights, the Department of Health, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government, design a registration system that shall allow senior citizens and PWDs to register and opt for early voting in order to improve their voting experience in national and local elections;
- (c) Ensure the full implementation of Republic Act No. 10366, entitled "An Act Authorizing the Commission on Elections to Establish Precincts Assigned to Accessible Polling Places Exclusively for Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens", such that polling places are safe, highly accessible, and fitted with the necessary communication, visual, and physical aids; and
- (d) Mount an intensive information campaign on early voting by qualified senior citizens and PWDs.

SEC. 5. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to fund early voting by qualified senior citizens and PWDs in national and local elections shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 6. *Applicability of Other Laws.* - The provisions of Batas Pambansa Blg. 881 or the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 7166, entitled "An Act Providing for Synchronized National and Local Elections and for Electoral Reforms, Authorizing Appropriations Therefor, and for Other Purposes", and other elections laws not inconsistent herewith shall be applied to facilitate the early voting by qualified senior citizens and PWDs.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the COMELEC shall, in consultation with other

relevant government and non-government agencies, promulgate the rules and regulations necessary to implement this Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,