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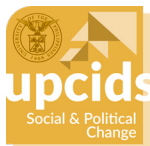
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The Party is Dead! **Long Live the Party!** Reforming the Party System in the Philippines

Jorge V. Tigno

The Party is Dead! Long Live the Party! Reforming the Party System in the Philippines¹

*Jorge V. Tigno*²

Abstract

Strong and stable political parties and credible elections are the hallmarks of any democratic system. The Philippines represents a case where parties are both relevant and irrelevant to the political system. While they flourish particularly during elections, they are not seen to be integral to the effective functioning of democracy in the country with its predominantly patronage- and personality-based electoral system. Parties in the Philippines perform a largely superficial (nonprogrammatic) and mechanical (electoral) function. This situation is not lost to congressional representatives—dozens of proposals have been, and continue to be, made in Congress to reform the party system. Regrettably, none have been adopted into law. This paper looks into why these congressional reform initiatives have not prospered. Addressing the root cause is both necessary and vital for the country to move in the direction of stable and sustained democratic consolidation.

¹ This Discussion Paper is part of the study “On the Necessity of a Stable Party System for the Philippines,” under the Policy Studies for Political and Administrative Reforms (PSPAR) project funded by the General Appropriations Act (GAA) 2021 For Comprehensive Release (FCR) Project: January to December 2021. Funding for this project was coursed through and administered by the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS).

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Introduction: Parties and Democracy in the Philippines

Political parties are essential to the effective and sustained functioning of any democratic system. Their existence is considered the hallmark of modern government (Schattschneider [1942] 2017). Moreover, elections and political parties play an indispensable role in the process of democratic consolidation (Randall and Svåsand 2002). This is especially the case for a country like the Philippines, which is experiencing a rather extended transition from autocratic to democratic rule. Challenges remain, and the threat of the return or resurgence of authoritarianism persists. Strong and stable political parties can lead to the creation of strong and stable political institutions, which are the foundations for political legitimacy. Autocratic political systems can also exhibit a degree of party structure, but these lack both efficacy and legitimacy.

The Philippines is a country with a party system characterized by certain “peculiarities.” The most notable among them—as observed by Landé as far back as the 1960s—are the lack of intraparty solidarity, combined with persistent interparty switching due to the “identicalness” of the parties in terms of leadership and platforms (Landé 1964, 1; 1967, 22). Since the late 1980s, numerous initiatives have been made to reform the party system in the Philippines. They had the noteworthy intent of creating strong and stable political parties. Except for the party-list system law,³ none of these reform initiatives have come into fruition. The party system in the country in the last four decades still retains much of the “peculiarities” described by Landé in the 1960s. Why have reform attempts from the legislature been unsuccessful in bringing about lasting remedies to these problems?

This paper looks into why these repeated congressional reform initiatives have not prospered beyond the proposal stage. The

³ The party-list law is provided for in the 1987 Constitution. The party-list system in the Philippines is rather “peculiar,” to borrow Landé’s term as well. While it specifies a “floor” of 2 percent of votes cast for party-list groups, it also imposes a “ceiling” of no more than three seats per party-list organization.

paper argues that recognizing and addressing the root causes are both necessary and vital to ensuring that reform initiatives in the legislature are taken and are able to take effect. Current arrangements (some of which have to do with requiring parties to be registered) are cosmetic in nature. They simply would not suffice to ensure programmatic and stable parties. This would be akin to rearranging the deck chairs on the sinking Titanic. A strong and effective party system needs to be institutionalized by making it relevant to the larger electorate beyond its mere electoral or mechanical function.

The Philippines is a political system in search of itself. It was the first country in Asia to declare itself a republic near the end of the 19th century. It was also among the countries in Asia that experienced a democratic transition in 1986, as part of the so-called third wave of democratization (Shin 2008).⁴ In that year, the country successfully transitioned away from a nondemocratic regime towards a more democratic system with the removal of authoritarian structures created by Ferdinand Marcos Sr. in 1972.⁵ In 1987, a new constitution was established, providing for greater accountability in governance as well as safeguards against a return to authoritarian rule.

However, while the country has successfully managed to initiate the transition towards democracy, it is still plagued with numerous challenges. Some of these, not the least, are the dangers of the weakening of its democratic institutions and processes, as well as backsliding towards nondemocratic values and ways. The Philippines is seen as an “incomplete democracy” (Dore, Ku, and Jackson 2014) that has yet to fully consolidate its democratic gains, particularly

⁴ Huntington (1991) defines the third wave of democratization as transitions of authoritarian or autocratic systems towards democratic political systems taking place between 1974 and 1990.

⁵ Ironically, Marcos was himself a kind of beneficiary of the second, rather short, wave of democratization (from the early 1940s to the early 1960s), having been elected president first in 1965 and then in 1969. Under the 1935 Constitution, Marcos would have been ineligible for a third term, had he not declared Martial Law in 1972. However, Martial Law led to the extraconstitutional extension of his term, as well as the consolidation of his position as dictator of the country, until his ouster by popular revolt in 1986.

in the areas of party system institutionalization and democratic consolidation.⁶

The key indicators of democratic consolidation are: (1) the holding of regular, free, and fair elections, and (2) the existence of effective programmatic political parties competing for elective posts. On the one hand, while the holding of regular elections is a necessary part of the democratization process, it is by no means a sufficient condition for a mature democracy. On the other hand, the mere presence of political parties during elections also does not make for a consolidated democracy.

Regular, free, and fair elections “are a necessary but not sufficient condition for democratic consolidation” (Im 2020, 135–36). In many countries, elections have triggered democratic retreats through military takeovers and authoritarian alternatives. It is important to note that at this point, the process of democratic consolidation can involve different pathways. As such, the ways that political parties contribute to building or consolidating democracy in any political system can be varied and need not be strictly limited to purely Western models.

Moreover, an orderly and accountable government cannot exist without a strong and stable party system. An effective party system is the *sine qua non* of a robust and consolidated democracy. However, this point is not immediately evident, given that (1) democracy is not usually defined in terms of the existence of political parties, (2) parties represent dissension and factionalism that can undermine any democratic order, and (3) parties operate in the open only during elections. These may be the reasons why political party reform is not a top priority in any country’s legislative agenda.

The strength of a political organization such as a political party depends on the extent of support and trust it receives, as well as

⁶ In its simplest sense, democratic consolidation is both a condition as well as a process through which democracy becomes behaviorally, attitudinally, and constitutionally “the only game in town” (Linz and Stepan 1996, 14). What this means is that even when faced with the most severe economic and political crises, a substantial proportion of the population will still adhere strongly to democratic procedures and principles. A consolidated democracy favors deliberation against “short cuts” as dictated by exigencies.

the level of institutionalization of its organizational procedures. Huntington (1968, 12) defines institutionalization as “the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability.” Institutionalization also implies the predictability of behavior and results.

Party system institutionalization is that “process by which the patterns of interaction among political parties become routine, predictable, and stable over time . . . [and] when parties cooperate, collaborate, and colligate in a standardized and structured way, presenting voters with clearly stable political alliances and, therefore, predictable government alternatives” (Casal Bertoa 2016, 118). Such a definition can be broken down into several key components. The first component is when parties can engage one another in standardized and structured ways. For example, party platforms are pitted against one another in ways that are consistent with democratic deliberation. The second component is when parties are able to present clear electoral choices to the people, not just in terms of their leaders but, more importantly, their programs of government. The third component is when parties can provide a clear framework for governing society.

An institutionalized party system would have certain core features (Mainwaring 2018). An institutionalized party system would have a stable set of main parties, election after election. New minor parties can still emerge from time to time and can even become major contenders. However, the regular or constant emergence of new major parties can be a sign of weak or diminished institutionalization. If new parties keep emerging and winning a significant share of votes, it can be difficult to predict the major parties that will compete in the next elections. Moreover, new parties that emerge with old candidates representing them do not pose real choices to the voters.

This paper also attempts to contribute to the policy discourse on party system institutionalization in the Philippines by (1) underscoring and enumerating the specific challenges facing the Philippine party system, and (2) specifying possible ways to overcome those challenges.

Party Politics in the Philippines

In its simplest sense, a political party is “a group of persons organized to acquire and exercise political power” (Duverger [1951] 2023). In this paper, political parties are limited to those organizations that seek to acquire power by legal and electoral means. Article VIII of the 1985 Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines adopts a similar definition. The Code defines a political party as “an organized group of persons pursuing the same ideology, political ideas or platforms of government and includes its branches and divisions” (Section 60). Not much else is mentioned about political parties in Philippine legislation and electoral policies. Other than that, they perform crucial administrative and elective functions, such as being entitled to poll watchers during elections or being able to spend a certain amount for their candidates during campaigns.

Political parties act as a bridge between the people and the government. They can aggregate, channel, and amplify the varied interests of society. Parties provide the necessary political consciousness for the people and the leadership. They act as recruitment and training grounds for political leaders. Parties are also in a better position to provide and ensure both administrative guidance and accountability to any government. Randall and Svåsand (2002) clustered the main functions of parties into three groups—functions that are electorate-oriented, linkage-related, and government-related.

Figure 1. Essential Functions of Political Parties.

Essential Functions of Political Parties	
1.	Oriented towards the electorate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation: expression of people’s demands; simplifying and structuring electoral choice • Integration: integration of voters into the system, political education
2.	Linkage-related <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregating (and channeling) interests • Recruitment and training of political leaders
3.	Government-related <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making government accountable: implementing party policy, exercising control over government administration • Organizing opposition and dissent

As far as the Philippines is concerned, and despite the very important functions that they perform, political elites look upon parties as marginally important to securing electoral victory and government control. This has been the historical observation of political science scholars such as Carl Landé from the 1960s onwards. The general public, on the other hand, feels differently. A 2019 survey report in the World Values Survey revealed that almost two-thirds (62 percent) of Filipino respondents felt confident about political parties. In 1996, only 44 percent of Filipinos had expressed confidence in political parties.

As far as political elites are concerned, parties are relevant to allow politicians a nominal base for their candidacies. More importantly, they allow candidates to spend more on their campaigns than if they were to run as independents. Likewise, parties afford individual candidates the opportunity to expand the reach of their campaign machinery especially if the party is known nationally. However, it can also be the case that a more well-known politician can add prestige to a little-known political party—as in the 2022 presidential election when Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ran under Partido Federal. This means that parties perform a rather superficial function for politicians. Indeed, candidates typically create their own political parties, as these would suit their ambitions.

This problem is manifested in the “high birth and high death rates” of political parties (Hicken 2014, 308). New ones are formed, while old ones would die or hibernate with each election. At best, political parties are seen as superfluous and/or, purely from an instrumental perspective, as mechanisms for securing campaign funds and guarding voter share during the counting process.

[T]heir function is essentially to be instrumental in electing political leaders, and to inform the people what they believe to be the problems of the day. They do not issue and keep membership cards, nor do they collect membership dues and maintain permanent headquarters except during election campaigns. (Liang 1970, 446)

Candidates often form parties, not the other way around. Quimpo (2005, 5) quips that parties are but “convenient vehicles of

patronage that can be set up, merged with others, split, resurrected, regurgitated, reconstituted, renamed, repackaged, recycled, or flushed down the toilet at any time.”

By and large, few people look upon parties with any lasting sense of attachment, much less ideological attachment. Parties maintain little, if any, enduring links with interest groups. Parties, according to a classic work by Carl Landé (1966, 40), are indistinguishable from one another and composed of “loose combinations of pre-fabricated, identical, and interchangeable parts.”

Party System Reform Initiatives

Without a doubt, there is an obvious need to reform the country’s party system to strengthen Philippine democratic institutions and processes (Casiple 2020). Given the numerous and persistent problems and challenges associated with political parties in the country as discussed above, the need for reforms is both obvious and immediate. The country continues to suffer from nonprogrammatic and highly personalized parties, leading to frequent party-switching and the dilution of party platforms. This has the effect of undermining free democratic choices as parties become indistinguishable from one another.

There have been numerous legislative attempts to strengthen and institutionalize a stable party system in the Philippines (see Appendix). In not a few instances, the same bills are filed and refiled within each congress. To date, not even one of these proposed measures have been passed by any congress into law. For the most part, these proposed measures put forth the following with hardly any regard to party affiliation on the part of the proponents/authors: they mandate parties to “craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance”; they set limits on voluntary contributions to parties; they impose “penalties for turncoats; and they establish a state subsidy fund to provide subsidies to parties” (Encinas-Franco 2009, 52–54). This paper does not go into the details of these specific reform proposals. Rather, it seeks to identify some of the likely factors that have contributed to the unsuccessful attempts to reform the country’s party system.

Why have these reform initiatives been unable to succeed? Several reasons and lessons can be cited. The reform process is ultimately political. Despite the leadership support that these reform initiatives were able to generate, substantial and sustained popular clamor for them is seemingly lacking, notwithstanding the participation of electoral reform groups and coalitions. People continue to be greatly concerned with more basic and immediate issues, such as jobs, poverty, inflation, and crime. Reforming the country's party system seems to be too far from—as well as too esoteric in—the minds of both the people and the politicians.

Timing is important. In many ways, these reform initiatives are said to have been made too late in the congressional sessions or took way too long in deliberation. As such, they simply expired or were overtaken by the elections or some other issues. For instance, House Bill (HB) No. 5877 (“Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor”), a consolidated proposal sponsored by no less than the House Speaker at the time, Jose De Venecia, was submitted in October 2007. The House approved it on third reading in January 2007, and the bill was transmitted to the Senate in early February 2007. However, by then, the May 2007 midterm elections were already looming. That prompted many members of Congress to set the measure aside as they prepared to campaign for their respective reelections.

Despite strong support from the various sectors as well as the optimism of congressional leaders, political reform measures can still falter for any number of reasons. Legislators can be distracted by the elections, as in the case of the proposed measures during the 12th Congress (2001–4). Even though there was minimal opposition in the Senate, the body was still unable to pass a political party reform measure because it had “to give way for the 2004 elections” (Encinas-Franco 2009, 52). Legislators at the time also became distracted by the announcement of then-president Arroyo to run for reelection in 2004 (Casiple 2020). During the 15th Congress (2010–13), political reform bills were filed in both the Senate and the House. However, only the House was able to pass the measure while “the Senate failed to pass its version due to the 2013 midterm elections” (Teehanke 2019, 311; see also Casiple 2020).

Diminished congressional interest, combined with a multitude of priorities among legislators, can also be another factor, particularly among incumbents. Likewise, legislators can simply be overwhelmed by other issues that they need to address. Therefore, party reform proposals perennially take a back seat. Encinas-Franco (2009) cites issues that have previously derailed legislative efforts to pass a party reform measure: the cases of electoral fraud allegations against then-president Arroyo in 2004, calls for constitutional change, and economic crises (see Encinas-Franco 2009 and Casiple 2020). Clashes in personalities can also pose an obstacle to reform initiatives. This is particularly so in the case of the nationally elected members of the Senate (see Encinas-Franco 2009). Party-list representatives and other members of the House minority can also object to a proposed party development bill. This happened in 2008 (14th Congress), leading to its unceremonious recall (Casiple 2020, 119).

However, the bigger question is: what contributes to delays in the passage of any political reform measure, such that legislators become distracted by an election? The answer to this question may lie in the substance of the measures being proposed. Many of the bills propose providing funds for the operations of political parties. This led some legislators and civil society groups to question where the funds are going to be sourced and also to question the basis for the granting of said state subsidies. While the aim of providing state subsidies to political parties may be laudable and intended for building stronger and stable parties, the issue still concerns sourcing funds, which the government perennially lacks.

The persistent incumbency mentality among legislators can also impact their desire to push for reforms. The thinking among many is that the system that got them elected is the “best” since this is what allowed them to win. As Encinas-Franco (2009, 54) observes: “[N]o matter the intent of the bill to level the playing field, they would not want to change the rules of the game they are so used to playing.” The election of Benigno Aquino III to the presidency in 2010 may have also contributed to the sidelining of political party reforms. The more liberal-minded Aquino III presidency, along with the then-dominant Liberal Party, may have inadvertently buoyed the sentiments of the members of Congress and instilled a sense of overconfidence against

the need to institute political reforms without the need for actual legislation. Casiple notes in his interviews with key legislators:

[I]t turned out that the ruling Liberal Party and President Aquino himself prevented its passage as this would interfere with the LP plans and strategies for the 2013 and 2016 elections . . . given that [any reform measure] would have curtailed a certain electoral practice enjoyed by the Liberal Party. (2020, 120)

As the saying goes, “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Legislators’ diminished interest may also be due to the uncertainty that might ensue if such reform initiatives were to suddenly come into effect. Ultimately, any legislated reform initiative would need to account for this matter, i.e., providing a degree of certainty, credibility, and predictability in the outcome of the alternative electoral and party process.

Possible Ways Forward for Congress?

Creating a strong and stable consensus-based and reform-oriented congressional leadership is vital. Within the congressional organization itself, there appears to be a weak consensus for the need to reform the party and electoral systems. Working with other stakeholders, especially those in civil society, can lead to better results. The general public must realize that party reforms are a good thing for the country in the long term. Thus, building a popular constituency for reforming the party system becomes paramount. Initiatives would need to be made to prepare for a groundswell of support for such political reforms from the bottom going up. This political education agenda may be something that electoral reform groups may want to take up.

Momentary distractions, such as reelection campaigns, can be minimized when reform initiatives are made right at the beginning of the congressional term and not near the end as if merely an afterthought. Likewise, electoral reforms should be done in tandem with party reforms. Addressing the root cause is vital. For instance, party switching is rampant because candidates and political elites

attach little to no importance to their party organizations. Party organizations are weak not because they are unable to generate campaign funds but because their natural trajectory is toward fragmentation due to the nature of our election rules and practices. Previous reform initiatives pertaining to the granting of subsidies to party organization do not seem to include party-list organizations. This has prompted some party-list organizations to register their opposition to such initiatives in the past. A strong congressional leadership pushing for such reforms at the same time can build a stable and robust consensus within the chamber. At the bicameral level, it can be a decisive factor.

Congress may also wish to consider a piecemeal approach to reforming the country's party and election rules. There are advantages to adopting a piecemeal approach to electoral and party reforms. Such an approach offers the advantage of minimizing any unintended consequences. Incremental reforms do not require constitutional amendments that can be long-drawn and costly both in material as well as political resources. Any problems that arise can be easily remedied.

Party reforms can happen without necessitating constitutional change. For instance, the Constitution does not specify that the president and vice-president have to be elected separately. Electing these two national officials separately has led to discontinuities and intrigue. Promoting tandem voting for president and vice-president, while not specified in the 1987 Constitution, can lead to higher levels of continuity and cooperation between the two highest executive positions in the country.

Lifting the three-seat limit for party-list organizations would not warrant a lengthy and debilitating constitutional reform process. An amendment to the Party-List System Act (RA No. 7941) in this direction can encourage parties to merge, strengthen, and become more relevant to the voting public. Introducing a block-voting system in the senatorial elections can also strengthen the parties that offer a full slate of senatorial candidates, as well as provide a shorthand approach for voters who have to sort through the names of dozens of different candidates by name.

Such a gradual reform framework is not without its faults and limitations. Initiatives in Congress, whether these be in the form of incremental or extensive reforms, require a groundswell of popular support. Creating a strong, determined, and stable reform-oriented congressional leadership is vital. Reform distractions, such as reelection campaigns, can be minimized when such reform initiatives are made right at the beginning of congressional sessions and not near the end as if they are merely an afterthought. Finally, there must be legislative reform champions who adopt a strategic view toward reforming the party and electoral systems. An all-or-nothing tactic is less likely to succeed than piecemeal reforms.

Lastly, legislators must adopt a strategic view toward reforming the party and electoral systems of the country. An all-or-nothing tactic is less likely to succeed than piecemeal electoral reforms. Such piecemeal electoral reforms can go a long way towards addressing the pitfalls and challenges of the party and electoral system in the country with “the highest degree of efficacy with the lowest risk of unintended consequences” (Hutchcroft 2020, 22).

There can be reforms introducing a more majoritarian and proportional system. Such examples are electing the president and vice-president as a single ticket and lifting the three-seat cap for party-list representatives. Transitioning the country’s voting system from a plurality to a majoritarian system can lead to stronger and more programmatic parties emerging. At the end of the day, none of these changes would require the more problematic and tedious constitutional amendment process. Rather, these can simply be congressionally legislated and they would still be as effective—if not even more.

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Appendix

Legislative Initiatives on Reforming the Party System (2004–22)

13th Congress (2004–2007)

- HB 190: "Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor." De Venecia. July 2004. Proposes public funding for political parties reducing their dependence on interest groups for campaign contributions.*
- HB 244: "Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes." Dadivas and Rodriguez. July 2004.
- Establishes state subsidy fund for the campaign expenditures, operations, and programs of accredited national parties.*
- HB 304: "Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor." Lapus and Jesli. July 2004. Establishes a presidential election campaign fund.
- HB 1073: "Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor." Aquino and Agapito. July 2004.

Provides institutional framework and guidelines governing parties.*

- HB 1409: “Strengthening the Political Party System.” Barinaga and Roseller. July 2004. Changing party affiliation after being elected mandates forced resignation and seeking new mandate.*
- HB 2306: “Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Agara, Benjamin. August 2004. Requires national parties to craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance; limits voluntary contributions to PHP 100k for individuals and PHP 1M for juridical entities; imposes penalties for turncoats.*
- *HB 5877: “Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor.” De Venecia. October 2006. Mother (consolidated) bill of HBs 190, 304, 1073, 1349, 1355, 1409, 2306, 2754, 3015; approved on second reading without debate and interpellation (29 January 2007); approved on third reading (31 January 2007) with no objections and abstentions (128 yeas); sponsored by: Locsin; Aquino; Barinaga. Final list of authors: Codilla, Lacson, Amin, Arroyo, Chatto, Badelles, Nicolas, Villanueva, Espinosa, Rosales, Baterina, Enrile, Alfelor, Imperial, Espino, Umali, Reyes, Uy, Figueroa, Tulagan, Cua, Del Mar; transmitted to Senate (6 February 2007).
- HB 4454: “Declaring As Unlawful Solicitation From Candidates and Political Parties for the Purpose of Allowing Them to Campaign Freely Before and During Any Election.” Rosale, Etta. June 2005. Reached second reading in December 2006.
- SB 2610: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Angara, Recto, Pangilinan, Ejercito-Estrada, Gordon, and Drilon. February 2007. Mandates parties to craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance; sets limits on voluntary contributions to parties; imposes penalties for

turncoats; establishes state subsidy fund to provide subsidies to parties; pending second reading.

- SB 1329: “Instituting Campaign Finance Reform and Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor Filed.” Recto. July 2004.
- SB 1051: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Angara. June 2004.
- SB 2079: “Prohibiting Candidates, Political Parties and Party-List Group for Any Elective Public Office From Accepting Money From Illegal Gambling, Such as ‘Jueteng’, and Other Illegal Sources.” Lim. August 2005.
- SB 1322: “Clarifying the Aggregate Duration of Time That a Candidate, or Registered Political Party, Party-List Group, Organization And/Or Coalition May Use for Their Broadcast.” Recto. July 2004.

14th Congress (2007–10)

- HB 1677: “Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor.” De Venecia. August 2007. Proposes public funding for political parties; prohibits turncoats.*
- HB 2128: “Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor.” Rodriguez, Rufus. August 2007. Provides subsidies to parties; sanctions against turncoats.*
- HB 2268: “Strengthening the Political Party System and Providing Funds Therefor.” Locsin, Teodoro. August 2007. Creates a state fund for parties; imposes limits on voluntary contributions to parties; penalizes turncoats.*
- HB 124: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Angara, Juan Edgardo. July 2007. Creates a party development fund to provide subsidies to national parties; discourages turncoats.*

- *HB 3655: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Angara, Juan Edgardo. February 2008. Mother (consolidated) bill for HBs 124, 1677, 2054, 2128, 2268; approved on second reading (23 April 2008) with no amendments. Final list of authors: Angara, De Venecia, De Guzman, Rodriguez, Locsin, Nograles, Almario, Codilla, Nicolas, Teodoro, Chatto; approved on third reading (27 August 2008) 173 Yaes, 6 Nays (party-list representatives Ocampo, Casino, Ilagan, Mariano, Bichara from Albay, Duavit from Rizal), and 1 abstention (Rep Solis from Sorsogon).
- SB 587: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Ejercito-Estrada. July 2007.
- SB 227: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Legarda. June 2007.
- SB 67: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Angara. June 2007.

15th Congress (2010–13)

- HB 49: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Rodriguez, Rufus. July 2010. Introduces reforms in campaign finance; provides subsidies to parties; imposes sanctions on turncoats.*
- HB 403: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Juan Edgardo Angara. July 2010. Provides subsidies to parties; introduces campaign finance reforms; provides penalties for turncoats.
- *HB 6551: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.”

Rodriguez, Rufus. September 2012. Mother bill; approved on third reading and transmitted to the Senate October 2012.

- SB 51: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Edgardo J. Angara. July 2010.
- SB 607: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Jinggoy Ejercito-Estrada. July 2010.
- SB 3214: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Edgardo Angara, Jinggoy Ejercito-Estrada, Miriam Defensor Santiago, and Franklin Drilon.
- SB 2881: “Relaxing and Liberalizing the Limits on Access to Print Space as Well as TV and Radio Time of Political Parties and Candidates During the Election Campaign Thereby Amending Section 6.” Trillanes. July 2011.

16th Congress (2013–16)

- HB 308: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria and Macapagal Arroyo, Diosdado. July 2013. Provides subsidies to parties; provides for registration of national parties; imposes limits on party contributions; imposes sanctions on turncoats.*
- HB 389: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Rodriguez, Rufus. July 2013. Provides for registration of parties; provides subsidies to parties (state subsidy fund).*
- HB 3242. “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Aggabao, Giorgidi. October 2013. Provides for the registration of national parties; imposes penalties on turncoats; provides subsidies to parties.*

- *HB 3978. “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor.” Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria. February 2014. Mother bill; recommended approval by Committee on Suffrage and Electoral Reforms in February 2014.
- SB 2763. “Providing for a System of Absentee Voting for Qualified Members of the Electoral Staff of National Candidates and Accredited National Political Parties and Party-Lists, and Election Lawyers.” Defensor Santiago, Lapid, Pimentel, and Escudero. May 2015.
- SB 2635: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes.” Ejercito-Estrada. February 2015.
- SB 1099: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes.” Ejercito. July 2013.
- SB 924: “Providing for Early Voting for Qualified Members of the Staff of Electoral Candidates and Registered National Political Parties.” Lapid. July 2013.
- SB 38: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes.” Trillanes. July 2013.

17th Congress (2016–19)

- HB 522: “Strengthening the Political Party System Appropriating Funds Therefor. Castro, Fredenil. June 2016. Mandates parties to craft a clear policy agenda; places limits on voluntary contributions to parties; establishes subsidies to parties through a state subsidy fund; imposes sanctions on turncoats; referred to committee in July 2016.
- HB 697: “Strengthening the Political Party System Appropriating Funds Therefor.” Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria. June 2016. Imposes limits on voluntary contributions;

imposes penalties for turncoats; provides subsidies to parties through a state subsidy fund; referred to committee in July 2016.

- HB 1695: “Strengthening the Political Party System Appropriating Funds Therefor.” Rodriguez, Maximo. July 2016. Mandates parties to craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance; sets limits on voluntary contributions to parties; imposes penalties for turncoats; establishes state subsidy fund to provide subsidies to parties; referred to committee in August 2016.
- HB 7088: “Strengthening the Political Party System Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes.” Alejano, Gary. February 2018. Mandates parties to craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance; sets limits on contributions to parties; imposes penalties on turncoats; establishes state subsidy fund for parties; referred to committee in February 2018.
- SB 2009: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Providing Guidelines Therefor and for Other Purposes.” Gatchalian. September 2018.
- SB 1984: “Strengthening the Political Party System of the Philippines, Creating a State Subsidy Fund for Political Parties, and for Other Purposes.” Drilon, Trillanes, Ejercito, Pimentel, and De Lima. September 2018.
- SB1696: “Promoting Women Participation and Equitable Representation in and by Political Parties, Giving Incentives Therefor, Creating the Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund, and for Other Purposes.” Hontiveros. February 2018.
- SB 885: “Strengthening the Political Party System Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes.” Ejercito. July 2016.

- SB 455: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes.” Trillanes. July 2016.
- SB 226: “Strengthening the Political Party System.” Drilon. July 2016.

18th Congress (2019–22)

- HB 802: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes.” Cabochan, Manuel. July 2019. Mandates parties to craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance; sets limits on voluntary contributions to parties; imposes penalties for turncoats; establishes state subsidy fund to provide subsidies to parties; pending with committee as of July 2019.
- HB 1383: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor.” Castro, Fredenil. July 2019. Mandates parties to craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance; sets limits on voluntary contributions to parties; imposes penalties for turncoats; establishes state subsidy fund to provide subsidies to parties; referred to committee in July 2019.
- HB 2783: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor.” Rodriguez, Rufus. July 2019. Mandates parties to craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance; sets limits on voluntary contributions to parties; imposes penalties for turncoats; establishes state subsidy fund to provide subsidies to parties; referred to committee in July 2019.
- HB 3428: “Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor.” Macapagal Arroyo and Juan Miguel. August 2019. Mandates parties to craft a clear policy agenda and program of governance; sets limits on voluntary contributions to parties; imposes penalties for turncoats; establishes state subsidy fund to provide subsidies to parties; referred to committee in August 2019.

- SB 620: “Strengthening the Political Party System of the Philippines, Creating a State Subsidy Fund for Political Parties, and for Other Purposes.” Leila De Lima. July 2019.
- SB 421: “Strengthening the Political Party System of the Philippines, Creating a State Subsidy Fund, and for Other Purposes.” Francis Pangilinan. July 2019.
- SB 12: “Strengthening the Political Party System of the Philippines. Franklin Drilon. July 2019.
- SB 1144: “Redefining the Dominant Majority and Minority Parties During National and Local Elections, Amending for the Purpose, Republic Act No. 7166, Otherwise Known As, ‘An Act for...’ De Lima. November 2019.
- SB 817: “Promoting Women Participation and Equitable Representation in and by Political Parties, Giving Incentives Therefor, Creating the Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund, and for Other Purposes.” Hontiveros. July 2019.

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