

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 5330**



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**INTRODUCED BY: HONORABLE MARISOL C. PANOTES**

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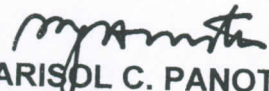
**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Section 55 of Batas Pambansa Bilang 881, as amended, otherwise known as the Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines explicitly mandates the local government unit to provide a suitable space for the Office of the Provincial Election Supervisor and his staff and the Election Registrar and his staff. This provision of the law has compromised the integrity and independence of the Commission on Elections considering that the local government unit concerned has been spending for these Offices and Staff of the Comelec, an independent Constitutional body primarily tasked "to enforce and administer all laws and regulations relative to the conduct of an election, plebiscite, initiative, referendum, and recall."

It must be recalled that this Omnibus Election Code was enacted into law on December 3, 1985 or barely two (2) months before the Snap Presidential Elections in February, 1986. There was a possibility that the provision was designed to allow the local officials to influence the decision of the Comelec officials and possibly subvert the free will of the electorates.

This bill therefore seeks to protect the independence and integrity of the Comelec by removing from the local government unit concerned the burden of providing for the office space of the Comelec officials and staff. This independent Constitutional body must be insulated from partisan politics so as not to erode the people's trust in this institution.

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

  
**MARISOL C. PANOTES**  
Representative  
Second District, Camarines Norte

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**AN ACT**  
**PROTECTING THE INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMELEC) BY REMOVING FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT THE BURDEN OF PROVIDING AN OFFICE SPACE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL ELECTION SUPERVISOR AND HIS STAFF AND THE ELECTION REGISTRAR AND HIS STAFF, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 55 OF BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 881, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE OMNIBUS ELECTION CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES**

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

**SECTION 1.** Section 55 of Batas Pambansa Bilang 881, as amended, otherwise known as the Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines is hereby repealed.

**SEC. 2.** Any amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the appropriation of the Commission on Elections of the year following its enactment into law. Thereafter, such sums as maybe necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**SEC. 3.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*