

# **[ ARTICLE VI, October 15, 1986 ]**

## **LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT**

SECTION 1. The legislative power shall be vested in the Congress of the Philippines which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives, except to the extent reserved to the people by the provision on initiative and referendum.

SECTION 2. The Senate shall be composed of twenty-four Senators who shall be elected at large by the qualified voters of the Philippines, as may be provided by law.

SECTION 3. No person shall be a Senator unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines, and, on the day of the election, is at least thirty-five years of age, able to read and write, a registered voter, and a resident of the Philippines for not less than two years immediately preceding the day of the election.

SECTION 4. The term of office of the Senators shall be six years and shall commence, unless otherwise provided by law, at noon on the thirtieth day of June next following their election.

No Senator shall serve for more than two consecutive terms. Voluntary renunciation of the office for any length of time shall not be considered as an interruption in the continuity of his service for the full term for which he was elected.

SECTION 5. (1) The House of Representatives shall be composed of not more than two hundred and fifty members, unless otherwise fixed by law, who shall be elected from legislative districts apportioned among the provinces, cities, and the Metropolitan Manila area in accordance with the number of their respective inhabitants, and on the basis of a uniform and progressive ratio, and those who, as provided by law, shall be elected through a party-list system of registered national, regional, and sectoral parties or organizations.

(2) The party-list representatives shall constitute twenty per centum of the total number of representatives including those under the party list. For three consecutive terms after the ratification of this Constitution, one-half of the seats allocated to party-list representatives shall be filled, as provided by law, by selection or election from the labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, women, youth, and such other sectors as may be provided by law, except the religious sector.

(3) Each legislative district shall comprise, as far as practicable, contiguous, compact, and adjacent territory. Each city with a population of at least two hundred fifty thousand, or each province, shall have at least one representative.

(4) Within three years following the return of every census, the Congress shall make a reapportionment of legislative districts based on the standards provided in this section.

SECTION 6. No person shall be a Member of the House of Representatives unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines and, on the day of the election, is at

least twenty-five years of age, able to read and write, and, except the party-list representatives, a registered voter in the district in which he shall be elected, and a resident thereof for a period of not less than one year immediately preceding the day of the election.

SECTION 7. The Members of the House of Representatives shall be elected for a term of three years which shall begin, unless otherwise provided by law, at noon on the thirtieth day of June next following their election.

No member of the House of Representatives shall serve for more than three consecutive terms. Voluntary renunciation of the office for any length of time shall not be considered as an interruption in the continuity of his service for the full term for which he was elected.

SECTION 8. Unless otherwise provided by law, the regular election of the Senators and the Members of the House of Representatives shall be held on the second Monday of May.

SECTION 9. In case of vacancy in the Senate or in the House of Representatives, a special election may be called to fill such vacancy in the manner prescribed by law, but the Senator or Member of the House of Representatives thus elected shall serve only for the unexpired term.

SECTION 10. The salaries of Senators and Members of the House of Representatives shall be determined by law. No increase in said compensation shall take effect until after the expiration of the full term of all the Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives approving such increase.

SECTION 11. A Senator or Member of the House of Representatives shall, in all offenses punishable by not more than six years imprisonment, be privileged from arrest while the Congress is in session. No Member shall be questioned nor be held liable in any other place for any speech or debate in the Congress or in any committee thereof.

SECTION 12. All Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives shall, upon assumption of office, make a full disclosure of their financial and business interests. They shall notify the House concerned of a potential conflict of interest that may arise from the filing of a proposed legislation of which they are authors.

SECTION 13. No Senator or Member of the House of Representatives may hold any other office or employment in the Government, or any subdivision, agency, or instrumentality thereof, including government-owned or controlled corporations or their subsidiaries, during his term without forfeiting his seat. Neither shall he be appointed to any office which may have been created or the emoluments thereof increased during the term for which he was elected.

SECTION 14. No Senator or Member of the House of Representatives may personally appear as counsel before any court of justice or before the Electoral Tribunals, or quasi-judicial and other administrative bodies. Neither shall he, directly or indirectly, be interested financially in any contract with, or in any franchise or special privilege granted by the Government, or any subdivision, agency, or instrumentality thereof, including any government-owned or controlled corporation,

or its subsidiary, during his term of office. He shall not intervene in any matter before any office of the Government for his pecuniary benefit or where he may be called upon to act on account of his office.

SECTION 15. The Congress shall convene once every year on the fourth Monday of July for its regular session, unless a different date is fixed by law, and shall continue to be in session for such number of days as it may determine until thirty days before the opening of its next regular session, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. The President may call a special session at any time.

SECTION 16. (1) The Senate shall elect its President and the House of Representatives its Speaker, by a majority vote of all its respective Members.

Each House shall choose such other officers as it may deem necessary.

(2) A majority of each House shall constitute a quorum to do business, but a smaller number may adjourn from day to day and may compel the attendance of absent Members in such manner, and under such penalties, as such House may provide.

(3) Each House may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly behavior, and, with the concurrence of two-thirds of all its Members, suspend or expel a Member. A penalty of suspension, when imposed, shall not exceed sixty days.

(4) Each House shall keep a Journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may, in its judgment, affect national security; and the yeas and nays on any question shall, at the request of one-fifth of the Members present, be entered in the Journal.

Each House shall also keep a Record of its proceedings.

(5) Neither House during the sessions of the Congress shall, without the consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

SECTION 17. The Senate and the House of Representatives shall each have an Electoral Tribunal which shall be the sole judge of all contests relating to the election, returns, and qualifications of their respective Members. Each Electoral Tribunal shall be composed of nine Members, three of whom shall be Justices of the Supreme Court to be designated by the Chief Justice, and the remaining six shall be Members of the Senate or the House of Representatives, as the case may be, who shall be chosen on the basis of proportional representation from the political parties and the parties or organizations registered under the party-list system represented therein. The senior Justice in the Electoral Tribunal shall be its Chairman.

SECTION 18. There shall be a Commission on Appointments consisting of the President of the Senate, as ex officio Chairman, twelve Senators, and twelve Members of the House of Representatives, elected by each House on the basis of proportional representation from the political parties or organizations registered under the party-list system represented therein. The Chairman of the Commission shall not vote, except in case of a tie. The Commission shall act on all appointments