

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

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 4062**



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**Introduced by Rep. Precious Hipolito Castelo**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Every year, the President delivers his State of the Nation Address (SONA). Numerous high-ranking officials, including the Vice President, the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives gather to personally witness this annual momentous event.

While the strongest and strictest security measures have always been implemented and enforced during SONA, there is always a chance, however slim, that a tragedy can happen. It is true that the Philippine Constitution provides for a line of succession in case of incapacity, death, resignation, or removal of the President from office.<sup>1</sup> The line of presidential succession follows the order of the Vice President, the Senate President, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

However, in the unlikely chance that all of these officials become unavailable to fill in the role of the President, our supreme law does not provide a rule. During SONA, or during any other assembly where these officials are gathered, the probability of this happening becomes greater.

In the United States, dating back to the Cold War era, the practice is to keep a "designated successor" away from events at which numerous high-ranking federal officers gather.<sup>2</sup> This is done in order to guarantee that there will always be someone to assume the reins of the government in case an unimaginable disaster happens and all the officers in the presidential line of succession are killed.

Since our Constitution does not provide for the same rule, we can only imagine how tragic the outcome will be in case the unthinkable happens. The absence of a leader can lead to lawlessness and disorder, and worst, to anarchy.

As such, the passage of this measure is collectively sought.

  
PRECIOUS HIPOLITO CASTELO

<sup>1</sup> Section 8, Article VII.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/01/30/sonny-perdue-trumps-designated-survivor-state-union-2018/1079325001/>



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**AN ACT**

**GIVING THE PRESIDENT THE POWER TO DELEGATE OR DESIGNATE A SUCCESSOR  
IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT THE PRESIDENT, THE VICE PRESIDENT, THE  
SENATE PRESIDENT AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
DIE OR BECOME INCAPACITATED TO FILL IN THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT**

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the "Presidential Succession Act".

SEC. 2. During occasions when the President, the Vice-President, Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives are all gathered in one place, the President shall delegate a successor from among his Cabinet officials, who shall take over the Presidency in the unlikely event that the President and all his Constitutional successors die or become incapacitated to fill in the role of the President.

SEC. 3. Such delegated successor shall be kept in a secure and undisclosed place during the occasion or gathering for which his appointment was made.

SEC. 4. The appointment of the delegated successor shall be *pro hac vice* and shall be limited to the circumstances under which it is made. The appointment shall be of no effect in case the President and/or any of his Constitutional successors survive the occasion or gathering.

SEC. 5. All issuances, laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof not consistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 6. This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*