

DAVAO ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, INC
(Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines – Region XI)

Statement on Voters' Registration Extension

The Davao Association of Catholic Schools, the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines in Region XI, composed of seventy (70) Catholic schools, colleges and universities, lauds the passage of Republic Act 11591, An Act Fixing the Last Day of Registration of Voters for the 2022 National and Local Elections, granting thirty (30) more days for the Filipino electorates to register. We equally appreciate the Commission on Election for its en banc resolution extending the registration period. We believe that these responses to the public clamor will avoid disenfranchising around 11M Filipinos who are yet to register for the 2022 elections. Our appreciation is underscored by the firm resolve that our right to vote is as important as our right to health.

However, we echo the growing frustration of the Filipinos relative to the processes implemented by the COMELEC registration centers including the imposition of registration limits per day. Instead of encouraging the potential electorates, the daily cap dispirits especially the first-time voters. The interest to participate in the electoral process by the people appears to be met with indifference by our election authorities in the country. Reports show that some COMELEC centers do not only close earlier than the extended registration hour of 7:00PM but also disrespect the fast-tracking mechanisms by not making use of the online pre-registration forms. Clearly, it is COMELEC's obliviousness to peoples' birthright to vote that will disenfranchise the Filipino electorates.

Now that the registration period is extended, we pray that COMELEC respond to the above concerns with better service. We further call COMELEC to allow our schools to be satellite registration sites for greater coverage, safety and security. And lastly, we also call for the immediate release of the 2022 Election Guidelines so that we can prepare our communities when the day comes that we have to chart our nation's future.

In turn, we commit to launch a vigorous campaign encouraging our constituencies to optimize the extension granted and together with COMELEC, we will ensure a clean, honest, accurate, meaningful and peaceful 2022 elections.



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