



**Ateneo FactCheck 2013
Fourth Brief**

Fact Check: Senatoriables and the Anti-Political Dynasty Bill

Claim: Candidates, who are members of political dynasties, will not champion or will not support an anti-political dynasty bill in Congress; while candidates, who are NOT members of any political dynasty, are expected to champion and support an anti-dynasty bill.

Fact checked:

The 1987 Constitution prohibits political dynasties but left it to Congress to enact an enabling anti-political dynasty law. Exactly 26 years after the constitution was enacted and despite several attempts, no such law has been passed by either chamber of Congress. All versions of the bill have not even gone way past the committee level for second reading. Now that the 2013 midterm election is coming, what is to be expected from at least the top 20 candidates vying for a seat in the Senate?

While an exact definition is still elusive, it is liberally accepted that political dynasties are those candidates who have more than one family member in any elective public position or are running for elective positions and holding such position for several terms before passing it on to either the immediate or extended family members.

Generally the top 20 candidates for the Senate, according to major survey outfits, are dominated by members of well-known political dynasties. Exactly 13 out of the 20 are members of dynasties, namely: Sonny Angara, Bam Aquino, Nancy Binay, Alan Cayetano, Ting-Ting Cojuangco, JV Ejercito, Jack Enrile, Chiz Escudero, Dick Gordon, Ernesto Maceda, Jun Magsaysay, Cynthia Villar and Mig Zubiri. Except for newcomers like Bam Aquino and Nancy Binay, most candidates are veteran or experienced politicians in Congress. On the other hand, there are seven candidates who are not members of known political dynasties. These are: Gringo Honasan, Risa Hontiveros, Loren Legarda, Jamby Madrigal, Koko Pimentel, Grace Poe and Antonio Trillanes.



(Table 1 shows the candidates who are dynasties and who are not in the top 20. These are arranged in alphabetical order)

	Name	History of being a member of a dynasty
1	Sonny Angara	<p>Locality: Aurora Province</p> <p>Aunt, Bellaflor Angara-Castillo, is current Governor of Aurora and is running for District Representative</p> <p>Uncle, Arturo Angara, is current Mayor of Baler</p> <p>Cousin, Karen Angara, is current councilor of Baler</p> <p>Father, Edgardo Angara Sr., is current senator of the Philippines</p>
2	Bam Aquino	<p>Locality: Tarlac</p> <p>Cousin, Jeci Aquino Lapus, current Rep of 3rd District of Tarlac</p> <p>Cousin, Benigno Aquino III is current President of the Philippines</p>
3	Nancy Binay	<p>Locality: Makati City</p> <p>Sister, Abby Binay-Campos, Representative of 2nd District of Makati</p> <p>Brother, Junjun Binay, Mayor of Makati</p> <p>Sister, Mar-Len Abigail Binay-Campos, is running for reelection as District Rep seat</p> <p>Father, Jejomar Binay is current Vice President of the Philippines</p> <p>Mother, Dr. Elenita Binay, Former Makati City Mayor</p>
4	Alan Cayetano	<p>Locality: Taguig City</p> <p>Wife, Laarni "Lani" Cayetano is current Mayor of Taguig</p> <p>Nephew, Lino Edgardo S. Cayetano is running for 2nd Legislative District Rep</p> <p>Sister, Pia Cayetano is current Senator</p>



5	Tingting Cojuangco	<p>Locality: Tarlac Province</p> <p>Brother in law, Enrique Henry Cojuangco, Rep of 1st District of Tarlac</p> <p>Nephew, Miguel Cojuangco Rivilla, Municipal Mayor Paniqui Tarlac</p> <p>Nephew, Dr. Isabel Cojuangco-Suntay, running for governor</p> <p>Nephew, Benigno Aquino III, is current President</p>
6	JV Ejercito	<p>Locality: San Juan City and Laguna Province</p> <p>Father, Joseph Estrada, his father is former President, now running as Mayor of Manila City</p> <p>Mother, Guia Gomez, is current Mayor of San Juan City and running for reelection</p> <p>Niece, Janella Ejercito is running for councilor in San Juan</p> <p>Half brother, Sen Jinggoy Estrada is current Senator</p> <p>Cousin, ER Ejercito is running for Laguna governor</p> <p>ER Ejercito's wife is current Laguna Mayor</p> <p>Jesse Ejercito's daughter is running for Congresswoman of San Juan</p>
7	Jack Enrile	<p>Locality: Cagayan Province</p> <p>Father, Juan Ponce Enrile, Sr., Senate President</p> <p>Wife, Sally Ponce Enrile, Former representative, 1st District of Cagayan</p>
8	Chiz Escudero	<p>Locality, Sorsogon Province</p> <p>Uncle, Antonio Escudero Jr., Vice Governor, Sorsogon</p> <p>Uncle, Ramon Escudero, Vice Mayor, Casiguran, Sorsogon</p> <p>Uncle, Rico Hatoc, Councilor, Casiguran, Sorsogon</p> <p>Uncle, Dennis Escudero, Councilor, Casiguran, Sorsogon</p> <p>Nanay Escudero is running for Legislative District Seat</p>



9	Dick Gordon	<p>Locality: Zambales Province, Olongapo City</p> <p>Wife, Katherine H. Gordon, former Congressional District Representative of Zambales from 1987-1995. former Mayor of Olongapo from 1995 – 2004</p> <p>Brother, Jame Gordon Jr. former Congressional representative of the first district of Zambales from 1995-2004. Mayor of Olongapo from 2004 until 2013. He is now running as representative of Zambales again</p> <p>Sister-in-law, Anne Marie Gordon, wife of James Gordon Jr. was elected Vice—Governor of Zambales from 2007-2010. She is running as mayor this coming elections</p> <p>Son, Brian Patrick Gordon, served as city councilor from 2004-2007. He is running as vice mayor in the 2013 elections</p> <p>Nephew, John Carlos Delos Reyes, former city councilor from 1995 to 1998 and 2007 to 2010. He is now running as senator under the Kapatiran Party</p>
10	Ernesto Maceda	<p>Locality: Manila</p> <p>Son, Edward Maceda, is Manila City Councilor</p>
11	Jun Magsaysay	<p>Locality: Zambales</p> <p>Niece-in-law Mitos Magsaysay, Congresswoman and currently running for Senate</p>
12	Cynthia Villar	<p>Locality: Las Pinas</p> <p>Son, Mark Villar, running for re-election as Las Pinas Rep</p> <p>Brother, Vergel Aguillar, is current Mayor of Las Pinas</p> <p>Spouse, Manuel B. Villar, is current Senator</p>



13	Mig Zubiri	<p>MEMBER</p> <p>Locality: Bukidnon Province</p> <p>Father, Jose Maria R. Zubiri Jr., Vice Governor, Bukidnon Brother, Jose F. Zubiri III, Representative, 3rd district of Bukidnon Cousin, Ignacio W. Zubiri, Major, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon</p>
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Table 2 shows candidates who are not members of political dynasties

NOT A MEMBER OF A POLITICAL DYNASTY	
1	Gringo Honasan
2	Risa Hontiveros
3	Loren Legarda
4	Jamby Madrigal
5	Koko Pimentel
6	Grace Poe
7	Antonio Trillanes

There is a common assumption that candidates who are not members of political dynasties will have strong motivations and will to pass an anti-political dynasty. This is not entirely true, at least for this election. Four out of seven of the candidates who are not members of political dynasties cannot be relied on to support the passage of an anti-dynasty law. However, there are three candidates who are in favor of having an anti-dynasty policy. For instance, Koko Pimentel and Risa Hontiveros share the opinion that whether or not a dynasty is good or bad, banning political dynasties is a constitutional mandate and Congress is duty bound to prohibit it. On the other hand Jamby Madrigal opposes political dynasties because it monopolizes power in the senate. Among these three, only Risa Hontiveros and Koko



Pimentel have the legislative track record on pushing for an anti-dynasty policy in Congress. Hontiveros introduced a definition of political dynasty in Akbayan's version of the SK Reform Law which she authored during the 14th Congress. On the other hand, Pimentel, though without any versions of the policy, has conducted several committee hearings for the Anti-Political Dynasty Bill in the Senate as Chairman of the Committee on Electoral Reforms. Most likely, these two are the same persons who will strongly champion an anti-political dynasty bill.

On the other hand, it is also commonly perceived that candidates who are members of political dynasties will fight tooth and nail to hinder the passage of an anti-political dynasty law. Generally, for this election that is true, but there are exceptions. In fact, five out of the thirteen candidates who are members of political dynasties are in favor of passing an anti-dynasty law. We can rely on the following senator candidates, who are members of political dynasties, to support an anti-dynasty law: Bam Aquino, Jack Enrile, Jun Magsaysay, Migs Zubiri and Ernesto Maceda. Most of the reasons cited by pro anti-dynasty policy candidates include (1) it is imperative to define a political dynasty, (2) the lack of such a policy or law hinders inclusivity of democratic process, and (3) leaving dynasties unchecked promotes accumulation of power and wealth under one the same family. While they are supportive of an anti-political dynasty policy, their position is still on the level of lip service as none of them (with the exception of Aquino being a new comer to elections) have the legislative track record to show that they will champion a bill in the senate.

Any form of an anti-political dynasty measure in congress will be met with strong opposition from the current candidates who are also members of political dynasties. There are six candidates, who (a) are members of political dynasties, and (b) have categorically stated strong positions against a measure to ban political dynasties. Most of the reasons they have for going against an anti-dynasty policy is

- (1) it is the quality of public service not membership in political dynasty which is important,
- (2) a policy is not needed because voters are educated enough to determine who are fit for public office,
- (3) political dynasties are not an issue,
- (4) political dynasties are not illegal.



Most of these candidates opposed to an anti-dynasty law, except Gordon and Cojuangco who are not in the Magic 12 based on surveys, are strong contenders in the senate. Most likely they will present a direct and strong opposition to any anti-political dynasty measure in the senate.

In any case, both sides of the category, members and non-members, have fence sitters on the issue. There are two candidates out of the thirteen who are against an anti-political dynasty namely: JV Ejercito and Cynthia Villar. Their reasons include (1) allowing equal opportunity for all qualified candidates, and (2) that membership in a political dynasty is not a guarantee of automatic victory.

And even among non-dynasty based candidates namely: Loren Legarda, Antonio Trillanes, Gringo Honasan and Grace Poe, majority of them do not have clear position because either (1) it is impractical if not impossible to ban political dynasties in the country, (2) it is an irrelevant issue compared to a candidate's quality of service, and (3) it has no realistic prospect of passing in congress

In sum, there are candidates who are members of political dynasties and who will oppose an anti-dynasty bill and they are strong contenders. Yet there are candidates from the same group, who are in favor of pushing for an anti-dynasty law, but their track record in pushing for such measure is lacking. Despite the disadvantage in numbers, passing an anti-dynasty measure can be expected from three non-dynasty candidates who support pushing for an anti-political dynasty bill, with Risa Hontiveros and Koko Pimentel showing track record on anti-political dynasty advocacy.