

# Manuel “Lito” Lapid, #35

Incumbent Senator, Actor

as of Feb. 5, 2025



**Age and date of birth:** 69 (Oct. 25, 1955)

**Party:** Nationalist People’s Coalition

**Highest Educational Attainment:** Honoris Causa Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, Pampanga Agricultural College.

**Highest Government Position Held:** Senator

## Summary:

Vying for a fourth term in the Senate, Lapid vows to improve agri-tourism and continue his advocacies on education, public health and the environment. He also promises to expand the Free Legal Assistance Act that grants tax deductions to lawyers providing free legal aid to poor litigants.

## Stance on Key Issues

### On Poverty, Controlling Inflation and Jobs

- While Lapid supports the pending measure for a P100 wage hike for minimum wage earners, he admits that it would be challenging to enact such a legislation, citing the need to balance employers and employees’ interests.
- Filed bills related to the welfare and protection of workers in business process outsourcing, media and freelancing
- Co-authored RA 10653, which institutes tax exemption for workers’ bonuses and other benefits not exceeding P82,000

### On Fighting Graft and Corruption

- Supported the Senate hearings on POGO-related crimes and pushed fellow lawmakers to investigate the hub in his hometown in Pampanga. However, in July, he said he was not in favor of a total ban on POGOs

### On West Philippine Sea

- Was among the senators who signed a resolution in 2021 condemning China’s illegal activities in the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone
- One of the authors of RA 12065, which establishes the country’s archipelagic sea lanes and regulates foreign ships and aircrafts passing through the Philippines’ archipelagic waters

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## Stance on Key Issues

### On The Drug War

- None on record

### On Disaster-preparedness

- Filed a bill requiring government agencies and local government units to present in easily understandable form and translate to Filipino and regional languages announcements, advisories and other issuance related to local or national disasters
- Filed a bill seeking to establish a Department of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management to “harmonize policies” in disaster risk reduction among others

## Government Experience/Field of Expertise

- Senator (2004 - 2016; 2019 - 2025)
  - Authored and co-authored the following laws: Free Legal Assistance Act, Biometrics Act, Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010, Foundling Recognition and Protection Act and Basic Education Mental Health and Well-being Promotion Act
- Governor - Pampanga (1995 - 2004)
- Vice governor - Pampanga (1992 -1995)

## Issues and Controversies

- In 2024, an unnamed vlogger alleged that Lapid owns the 10-hectare land where a controversial Philippine Offshore Gaming Operator (POGO) compound was located in Porac, Pampanga. Lapid denied the allegation and vowed to resign if proven to have ties to POGOs.
- The Ombudsman charged him with graft in 2014 for alleged purchase of overpriced fertilizers when he was Pampanga governor in 2004. The case was dismissed in 2016 by the Sandiganbayan due to delays in the preliminary investigation. The Supreme Court reversed the decision in 2019, urging Sandiganbayan to resume hearing the case “with reasonable dispatch.”
- In 2013, the Philippine Daily Inquirer reported that Lapid used P5 million of his Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) in 2011 to purchase anti-dengue chemicals for four towns in Quezon province where there were no dengue outbreaks. Lapid argued there were no irregularities, saying he had “no other means” to allocate his PDAF shares but through the local government units.

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## Issues and Controversies

- In 2013, Lapid’s wife, Marissa Tadeo Lapid, was sentenced by a United States district court to five months of home confinement and three years of probation after pleading guilty to bulk cash smuggling charges.
- In 2009, then Pampanga governor Ed Panlilio filed a plunder complaint against Lapid and his son Mark Lapid for allegedly failing to remit P568-million worth of quarry funds during their respective terms as governor. Then ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez cleared the Lapids in 2011 after the accuser “miserably fail[ed] to show that respondents acquired ill-gotten wealth.”
- In 1999, the Ombudsman suspended Lapid for one year over his alleged involvement in illegal quarrying and collection of exorbitant fees in Pampanga. In 2000, the Supreme Court ordered Lapid’s immediate reinstatement as Pampanga governor after ruling that the Ombudsman’s suspension was not immediately executory.
- His son Mark Lapid, former Pampanga governor and now chief operating officer of the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority, was charged with graft over an allegedly anomalous water and sewerage system project in Boracay in 2018.
- In 2011, his youngest son Maynard Lapid was charged with frustrated murder for allegedly ordering to beat up complainants at a bar in July 2010. Maynard said he was the victim and the complaint was filed to extort from them.

## Family Members in Government

### Mark Lapid

- Relationship: Son
- Position/s held:
  - Chief operating officer - Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority, formerly the Philippine Tourism Authority (2008 - 2016; 2021-present)
  - Mayor- Bacoor City (2016-2022)
  - Seeking reelection
  - Governor - Pampanga (2004 - 2007)

### Maynard Lapid

- Relationship: Son
- Position/s held:
  - Member - Sangguniang Bayan - Porac, Pampanga (2013 - 2022)
  - Candidate for councilor - Porac, Pampanga

### Ma-An Krista Lapid-Legaspi

- Relationship: Daughter
- Position/s held:
  - Terminal Head - Bureau of Immigration-Clark