

Francis “Tol” Tolentino, #61

Senator, 19th Congress

as of Feb. 5, 2025



Age and date of birth: 60 (Jan. 2, 1960)

Party: Partido Federal ng Pilipinas

Highest Educational Attainment: Master of Laws, University of Michigan Law School, University of London (England) and Columbia Law School; Master on National Security Administration, National Defense College of the Philippines.

Highest Government Position Held: Senator

Summary:

Seeking a second term as senator, incumbent Majority Leader Francis Tolentino advocates for access to clean water, universal Wi-Fi and affordable electricity. He is launching LITAW (Liwana, Internet, Tubig Assistance Welfare), a program to subsidize families displaced by calamities.

Stance on Key Issues

On Poverty, Controlling Inflation and Jobs

- Favors a “legislative wage hike”
- Believes access to resources such as clean water, internet and electricity play a vital role “in shaping a resilient and progressive society” and aims “to champion initiatives” that will allow Filipinos equitable access to utilities that provide these

On Fighting Graft and Corruption

- Supports the signing of the New Government Procurement Act for faster and more efficient government services and “less opportunities for graft and corruption”
- Supports the ban on offshore gaming operations and a transition plan to assist Filipinos affected by the policy

On West Philippine Sea

- Vocal about defending the country’s sovereign rights in the West Philippine Sea and protesting against China imposing a fishing ban in the contested waters

On The Drug War

- Proposes that mechanisms be put in place to protect human rights and prevent abuse and extra-judicial killings

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Stance on Key Issues

On Disaster-preparedness

- Supports modernizing the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) to improve the country’s disaster response
- Advocates for effective communication during disasters and urges Phivolcs and the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Administration to simplify weather and disaster advisories

Government Experience/Field of Expertise

- Senator (2019 - 2025)
 - Principal author and sponsor of two landmark laws (the Philippine Maritime Zones Act and Philippine Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act) which together define the country’s entitlements in the South China Sea.
 - Co-authored other notable laws such as the Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) Registration Act and the Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers.
 - As chair of the Committee on Local Government, co-authored Senate Bill No. 2214, extending the transition period for the Bangsamoro Region and deferring its parliamentary elections to 2025.
- Presidential adviser for political affairs of the Duterte administration after losing his first senatorial bid in 2016.
- Chairman, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (2010-2015)
 - Launched the first Metro Manila Integrated Bus Terminal known as the Southwest Integrated Provincial Transport Terminal.
 - Had the Metro Manila Outdoor Media Magna Carta signed under his watch providing new guidelines on handling of billboards and other advertising signs along major and secondary roads and open spaces.
- Mayor, Tagaytay City (1995 - 2004)
 - Established the Tagaytay Public Safety Office.

Issues and Controversies

- Filed a libel complaint in 2017 against broadcaster Ted Failon for hinting at possible misuse of MMDA funds in an episode of the television program “Failon Ngayon.” The complaint was dismissed by the Court of Appeals in 2020.
- Filed an election protest for alleged “massive fraud and irregularities” against the proclamation of Leila De Lima as the 12th winning senatorial candidate in the 2016 polls, which he later withdrew and the Senate Electoral Tribunal dismissed; results of the vote recount showed De Lima won over Tolentino, who placed 13th

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Issues and Controversies

- Sparked controversy in 2015 for supposedly hiring female dancers who did a “lewd” dance number at a gathering of the Liberal Party; he later apologized for “failing to stop” the performance

Family Members in Government

Michael Francis “Micko” Tolentino

- Relationship: Son
- Position/s held:
 - Councilor, Tagaytay City (2019-present)

Abraham “Bambol” Tolentino

- Relationship: Brother
- Position/s held:
 - Mayor, Tagaytay City (2004-2010; 2022-present)
 - Representative, Cavite 8th District (2019-2022)
 - Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives (2019-2022)
 - Representative, Cavite 7th District (2013-2019)

Isaac Tolentino

- Relationship: Father
- Position/s held:
 - Mayor, Tagaytay City (1954 - 1980)

Aniela Tolentino

- Relationship: Niece
- Position/s held:
 - Representative, Cavite 8th District (2022-present)

Athena Tolentino

- Relationship: Niece
- Position/s held:
 - Vice Governor, Cavite (2022-present)
 - Councilor, Tagaytay City (2019-2022)

Agnes Tolentino

- Relationship: Sister-in-law
- Position/s held:
 - Vice Mayor, Tagaytay City (2022-present)
 - Mayor, Tagaytay City (2013-2022)