

**LAW 56**  
**Dated 11 July 2017**

**That establishes the participation of women in government boards of directors**

**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**DECREES:**

**Article 1.** This Law establishes the right of women to access and active participation in the decision-making process of public and private entities in the country.

**Article 2.** Women will be appointed to a minimum of 30% of the positions on each of the Boards of institutions of the Central Government, decentralized entities, public companies, financial intermediaries and entities regulated by those institutions that have a board of directors, board of administration or similar body in their organizational structure.

In those entities where the appointments are periodic, the State will ensure the minimum participation of women is maintained throughout the various periods according to the provisions herein.

The public-private companies in which the State has a stake will ensure they have the minimum established herein and the State will make the relevant appointments to satisfy this requirement.

**Proviso:** The boards of directors whose members consist of Government authorities, and those in which nominative appointments are legally restricted either completely or for more than 61% of the positions on the board, are exempt from this requirement.

For those board of directors' positions that permit nominative participation and are not restricted by law, the appointments necessary for compliance with the provisions herein will be made.

**Article 3.** This Law will be applied in stages, as follows:

1. The first stage, to be complied with within a year of its enactment, will require State boards of directors described in the previous Article to have at least a 10% participation of women;

2. The second stage, to be complied with within two years of its enactment, will require the boards of directors described in the previous Article to have at least a 20% participation of women;
3. The third stage, to be complied with within three years of its enactment, will require the boards of directors described in the previous Article to have at least a 30% participation of women.

**Proviso:** This Law will not affect the current composition of the boards of directors described in the previous Article that had been previously appointed, nor will it affect the rights of their members. Its application will commence with new appointments made after the entry into force of this Law, pursuant to the provisions of this Article.

**Article 4.** This Law shall become effective the day after its enactment.

#### **FOR COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICATION.**

Bill 420 of 2016 approved at the Third Reading in Palacio Justo Arosemena, Panama City, on the twenty-fourth days of April, two thousand seventeen.

The President,

[Signed]  
Ruben De Leon Sanchez

The Secretary General,

[Signed]  
Franz O. Wever Z.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BRANCH. PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC.  
PANAMA, REPUBLIC OF PANAMA, 11 JULY 2017.

[Signed]  
JUAN CARLOS VARELA R.  
President of the Republic

[Signed]  
ALCIBIADES VASQUEZ VELASQUEZ  
Minister of Social Welfare