

Implications of The Constitutional Court Decision No. 60/PUU-XXII/2024 on the Single Candidate Phenomenon in Regional Head Elections in Indonesia

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Abstract

Simultaneous regional head elections in 2024 are a challenge for Indonesia's democratic system, especially with the phenomenon of single candidates even though the Constitutional Court has lowered the nomination threshold through Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024. This study aims to analyze the impact of the Constitutional Court's decision on party political participation and identify factors that influence the sustainability of the single candidate phenomenon. This research uses a normative juridical method with a conceptual approach. The results show that although the lowering of the threshold has succeeded in increasing the opportunities for small parties to nominate candidates, the dominance of incumbents, high political costs, and weak political education remain significant obstacles so that there will still be single candidates in 37 Regions in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Head Elections. Key findings suggest the need for additional arrangements, such as limiting the maximum party support for a single candidate, to encourage more participatory competition. This research confirms the importance of regulatory reform and political education to realize a more inclusive democracy in the context of regional head.

Keywords: single candidate; nomination threshold; political participation.

Abstrak

Pemilihan kepala daerah serentak tahun 2024 menjadi tantangan bagi sistem demokrasi Indonesia, terutama dengan fenomena calon tunggal, meskipun Mahkamah Konstitusi telah menurunkan ambang batas pencalonan melalui Putusan Nomor 60/PUU-XXII/2024. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dampak putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi terhadap partisipasi politik partai serta mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi keberlanjutan fenomena calon tunggal. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode yuridis normatif dengan pendekatan konseptual. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun penurunan ambang batas berhasil meningkatkan peluang bagi partai kecil untuk mencalonkan kandidat, dominasi petahana, tingginya biaya politik, dan lemahnya pendidikan politik tetap menjadi hambatan signifikan, sehingga masih terdapat calon tunggal di 37 daerah dalam Pemilihan Kepala Daerah Serentak 2024. Temuan utama mengindikasikan perlunya pengaturan tambahan, seperti pembatasan maksimal dukungan partai terhadap calon tunggal, guna mendorong kompetisi yang lebih partisipatif. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya reformasi regulasi dan pendidikan

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politik untuk mewujudkan demokrasi yang lebih inklusif dalam konteks pemilihan kepala daerah.

Kata kunci: calon tunggal; ambang batas pencalonan; partisipasi politik.

1. INTRODUCTION

The year 2024 is a historic year for the Indonesian people, because in that year simultaneous General Elections and Regional Head Elections were held. On February 14, 2024, Indonesia has held general elections to elect members of the DPR, DPD, Provincial DPRD, Regency / City DPRD, and President and Vice President simultaneously. Then, on November 27, 2024, Simultaneous Regional Head Elections will be held with a total of 545 regions throughout Indonesia. The organization of the 2024 elections, both to elect legislative members and regional heads, is certainly inseparable from the legal and political dynamics that accompany it.

Democratic elections are one of the important pillars in Indonesia's political system, as guaranteed by the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UUD NRI Tahun 1945). In the 1945 Constitution, there are several democratization principles that form the basis for the implementation of general elections, namely popular sovereignty, equal rights, and justice. These principles guarantee that every citizen has the same right to participate in the electoral process without discrimination. Article 1(2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia affirms that "Sovereignty is vested in the people and shall be exercised according to the Constitution". This means that every electoral process carried out, including the 2024 General Election, must reflect the sovereignty of the people as the highest holder of power (Subiyanto 2020).

Before the 2024 elections were held, there were legal and political dynamics that affected the political constellation at that time with the birth of the Constitutional Court Decision Number 90/PUU-XXI/2023. This decision changed the nomination requirements for the President and Vice President ahead of the election on February 14, 2024 (Aji 2024). The role of the Constitutional Court does not only affect the February elections, but also the Regional Head Elections that will be held in November 2024. Precisely on August 20, 2024, the Constitutional Court issued two decisions, namely Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 and Decision Number 70/PUU-XXII/2024, which

had a significant impact on the political dynamics ahead of the regional head elections on November 27, 2024.

Specifically, Decision No. 60/PUU-XXII/2024 stated that the provision of Article 40 paragraph (1) of Law No. 10/2016, which states that “A political party or a coalition of political parties may register a candidate pair if it has met the requirements of obtaining at least 20% of the total number of DPRD seats or 25% of the accumulated valid votes in the general election of DPRD members,” is unconstitutional. The Constitutional Court considers that the provision of Article 40 paragraph (1) is not in line with the principle of democratic elections and creates intolerable injustice for political parties to propose candidates for regional heads and deputy regional heads, as guaranteed in Article 18 paragraph (4) and Article 28D paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution.

Article 28D paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia affirms that “Everyone has the right to recognition, guarantees, protection and certainty of a just law and equal treatment before the law.” This principle of justice and equal rights is the basis for the implementation of inclusive elections, where every political party, both large and small, has the same opportunity to nominate candidates. The Constitutional Court's decision to lower the threshold of political party support requirements for regional head candidates is an effort to realize these principles, with the hope of increasing political participation and preventing the dominance of large parties in the nomination of regional heads.

Based on Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024, the Constitutional Court lowered the threshold of political party support requirements for regional head candidates. Previously, a candidate pair for regional head must have the support of at least 20% of seats in the DPRD or 25% of the valid votes of political parties in the general election. With this decision, the threshold is lowered to 6.5% to 10%, both of the number of DPRD seats and valid votes, depending on the population in the area. Through this decision, the Constitutional Court is of the view that lowering the threshold can increase political participation in regional head elections, not only from large parties or coalitions of political parties, but also provide opportunities for small parties to participate in regional head elections.

However, ahead of the Regional Head Election in November 2024, there is a single candidate phenomenon in several regions, where there is only one candidate pair registered at the regional KPU. This phenomenon is not new, because it has previously appeared since the Constitutional Court Decision Number 100/PUU-XIII/2015, which is then regulated in Pilkada Law Number 10/2016 and clarified through KPU regulations. In the Simultaneous Regional Head Election on November 27, 2024, there are 37 regions that only have a single candidate who will fight an empty box, consisting of 1 province, 5 cities, and 31 regencies. Although single candidates have a legal basis and are accommodated in legislation, this phenomenon is considered less relevant to the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024, which has lowered the threshold of political party support. The decision should open up wider space for political participation, regardless of the size of political parties.

The phenomenon of single candidates raises questions about the effectiveness of democratic principles in local elections. In the principles of democracy, diversity of choice is one of the main characteristics that indicate the existence of popular sovereignty. When there is only one candidate pair running in an election, the public has no alternative choice, which can limit the people's right to channel their aspirations. This condition is contrary to the spirit of democracy promoted by the 1945 Constitution, which gives every citizen the right to be actively involved in determining their leaders through free and fair elections.

There are several studies that have been published with the object of a single candidate in the regional head election, such as research from Abdullah with the title Single Candidate in Empty Box Politics and Party Power in the Regional Head Election (Abdullah 2024) . The research focuses more on the phenomenon of single candidates appearing in regional head elections, and what causes it. Meanwhile, the current research emphasizes the implications of the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 which lowered the threshold of support but still gave rise to a single candidate in the 2024 Regional Head Elections. In addition, there is also research from M Tanjung et al, with the title Single Candidate for Pilkada Reducing Democratic Qualities (Tanjung and Saraswati 2020). In this study, there are similarities regarding the single candidate

phenomenon, besides that the research conducted focuses on the impact on democracy. Meanwhile, this research focuses on the implications of the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 on the phenomenon of single candidates in the 2024 regional head elections. Next, there is research from Rofi Aulia Rahmawan with the research title Single Candidate Pilkada: Leadership Crisis and Threat to Democracy. The research has similarities in discussing the phenomenon of single candidates, but the research focuses more on the threat to democracy and the crisis of public confidence. Meanwhile, the current research is more about examining the impact of the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 on the phenomenon of the emergence of a single candidate in the 2024 regional head elections.

Based on the description above, it is interesting to conduct research on the impact of the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 on the single candidate phenomenon in the Regional Head Election on November 27, 2024. This research also aims to examine whether the principles of democracy, such as popular sovereignty, equal rights, and justice, can be fully realized in the context of regional head elections marked by the phenomenon of a single candidate. This research has two formulations, first, How is the impact of the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 on party political participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Head Elections, and second, Why are there still single candidates in the 2024 Regional Head Elections after the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024?.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a type of juridical-normative research, in which the research examines applicable legal rules, legislation, court decisions, and relevant legal doctrines. The focus is on analyzing legal principles, rules, and how the law is applied in a particular context (Benuf, Mahmudah, and Priyono 2020). This research focuses on analyzing the decision of the Constitutional Court, especially Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024, which has an impact on the phenomenon of single candidates in the 2024 Pilkada. In addition, the approach used in this research is the first statutory approach (Statute Approach), this approach is used to examine in depth the various laws and

regulations relevant to the topic, including the 1945 Constitution, Pilkada Law, and related Constitutional Court decisions. This approach is used to examine the impact of the Constitutional Court's decision on the phenomenon of single candidates appearing in the 2024 Regional Head Elections. In addition, there is a second approach, namely a conceptual approach. The conceptual approach is used to explore theories and concepts relevant to the research issue. This approach aims to strengthen the research results which are then expected to contribute ideas or a regulatory idea that can be applied in the future.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Impact of Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 on party political participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Head Elections

Regulations on regional autonomy in Indonesia are constantly undergoing various kinds of changes, especially regarding the filling of the position of regional head as the highest leader of government in the region. Since 2005, regional heads have been directly elected by the people, both at the district and city levels and at the provincial level. The direct election of regional heads by the people is a consequence of the amendment to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. Both explicitly and implicitly, after the amendment of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia mandates that the process of electing regional heads be carried out democratically, which then refers to the provisions of article 1 paragraph (2) sovereignty is in the hands of the people and is carried out according to the Basic Law (Sarbaini 2020). This is the basis for organizing regional head elections to be carried out directly by the local community. In addition to the direct election of regional heads, what needs to be considered is related to political participation, both the participation of the local community and political parties as a place for regeneration of regional head candidates.

Speaking of direct regional elections, there are two theories that can be the basis for thinking, namely the theory of substantive democracy and also the theory of political participation. In the theory of substantive democracy, a process of organizing elections is not only carried out procedurally but also must pay attention to several important things such as real popular sovereignty, diversity and inclusiveness. In the context of regional

head elections, if it is related to substantive democracy, there must be a diversity of choices, it is important to accommodate so that people can be given a variety of alternative choices. In addition, there is a theory of political participation, this theory provides guidelines regarding the importance of community political participation so that every decision is in accordance with what the people want. In the context of regional head elections, political participation is very important because with the participation of the wider community and given an open space to participate, it can give birth to leaders who are in accordance with the will of the people in general.

Ahead of the simultaneous regional head elections in 2024, there is a petition for judicial review of Article 40 paragraph (3) of Law No. 10/2016 on Regional Head Elections filed by the Labor Party and the Gelora Party. The applicant feels that their constitutional rights have been impaired because the provisions of Article 40 paragraph (3) of Law No. 10/2016 limit political parties that do not have seats in the DPRD but have votes that even tend to be significant cannot nominate Regional Heads in simultaneous regional head elections. Based on this, the applicant feels that the provisions of Article 40 paragraph (3) are contrary to Article 1 paragraph (2), Article 1 paragraph (3), Article 18 paragraph (4), Article 27 paragraph (1), and Article 28C paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. In the applicant's view, the provision in question creates legal uncertainty that leads to discriminatory treatment between political parties that have seats in the DPRD and those that do not have seats in the DPRD.

Based on the description of the applicant, the Constitutional Court through Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 has granted the applicant's request by stating that the provisions of Article 40 paragraph (3) of Law No. 10/2016 concerning Regional Head Elections are contrary to the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and have no binding legal force. The decision of the constitutional court is based on several considerations of the judges including:

- 1) Inconsistency with Democratic Principles: The Constitutional Court considers that Article 40 paragraph (3) No. 10/2016 only takes into account the acquisition of seats in the DPRD without considering the acquisition of valid votes of

political parties, so it is considered inconsistent with the principle of democracy which respects every voter's vote.

- 2) Discrimination against Political Parties: according to the Constitutional Court, the provision in Article 40 paragraph (3) of Law No. 10/2016, creates discriminatory treatment against political parties that obtain significant valid votes but do not get seats in the DPRD. Thus, these political parties are prevented from proposing candidates for regional heads, which is contrary to the principle of equality before the law.
- 3) Threat to a healthy democratic process: the Constitutional Court's opinion regarding the provisions in Article 40 paragraph (3) of Law No. 10/2016, if maintained, could threaten a healthy democratic process, because it limits political participation and narrows the choices for voters in regional head elections.

Based on these considerations, the Constitutional Court decided to lower the threshold of political party support in the nomination of regional heads, with the aim of increasing political participation and preventing the dominance of large parties. The provisions for lowering the threshold of political party support for regional head candidates are as follows:

Table.1 Minimum Threshold of Political Party Support for Regional Head Candidates

Regional Head Level	Total Permanent Voter List	Threshold for Political Party Support
Candidates for Governor & Vice Governor	2.000.000	At least 10%
	2.000.000-6.000.000	At least 8,5%
	6.000.000-12.000.000	At least 7,5%
	>12.000.000	At least 6,5%
Candidates for Regent and Deputy Regent and Candidates for	250.000	At least 10%

Mayor and Deputy Mayor		
	250.000-500.000	At least 8,5%
	500.000-1.000.000	At least 7,5%
	>1.000.000	At least 6,5%

Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 is expected to realize democratic principles that prioritize inclusive and fair values in regional head elections. In addition, the constitutional judges with this decision want to ensure that the laws and regulations are in line with the spirit of democracy and the constitution, and are committed to protecting the constitutional rights of citizens in participating in the democratic political process.

The Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 aims to expand the political participation of political parties in the nomination of regional heads in regional elections. Article 40 paragraph (3) of Law Number 10/2016 is declared contrary to Article 18 paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia because it limits the constitutional rights of political parties to utilize the valid votes they have obtained in the elections. If this provision remains in effect, the legitimate votes of political parties have the potential to lose their meaning because they cannot be used to support regional head candidates who represent their political aspirations. By lowering the nomination threshold through the decision, the Constitutional Court opens up greater opportunities for political parties, including small parties, to contribute independently without having to depend on large coalitions. This move reflects efforts to create an electoral system that is more inclusive, fair and in line with substantive democratic principles.

3.2. Single Candidate in the 2024 Regional Head Election after the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024

After the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024, which lowered the threshold of political party support in the nomination of regional heads, it did not have a significant effect on the 37 regions holding simultaneous regional head elections in 2024. Of the total 37 provinces and 508 regencies/municipalities holding simultaneous regional head elections, there are 1 province and 36

regencies/municipalities that only have a single candidate running in the election, so that the public is only given the choice between choosing a single candidate pair or an empty box. The regions include:

Table.2 Single Candidates in Simultaneous Regional Head Elections in 2024

No	Provincial Head Election	Single Candidate Pair
1	Papua Barat	Dominggus Mandacan-Mohamad Lakotani
District Head Election		
2	Aceh, Aceh Utara	Ismail A Jalil-Tarmizi
3	Aceh, Aceh Tamiang	Armia Pahmi-Ismail
4	Sumatera Utara, Asahan	Taufik Zainal Abidin-Rianto
5	Sumatera Utara, Labuhanbatu Utara	Hendri Yanto Sitorus-Samsul Tanjung
6	Sumatera Utara, Pakpak Bharat	Franc Bernhard Tumanggor-Mutsyuhito Solin
7	Sumatera Utara, Serdang Bedagai	Darma Wijaya-Adlin Umar Yusri Tambunan
8	Sumatera Utara, Nias Utara	Amizaro Waruwu-Yusman Zega
9	Sumatera Utara, Dharmasraya	Annisa Suci-Ramadhani Leliarni
10	Sumatera Selatan, Empat Lawang	Joncik Muhammad-Arifai
11	Jambi, Batanghari	Muhammad Fadhil Arief-Bakhtiar
12	Sumatera Selatan, Ogan Ilir	Panca Wijaya Akbar-H. Ardani
13	Bengkulu, Bengkulu Utara	Arie Septia Adinata-Sumarno
14	Lampung, Lampung Barat	Parosil Mabsus-Mad Hasnurin
15	Lampung, Tulang Bawang Barat	Novriwan Jaya-Nadirsya
16	Kepulauan Bangka Belitung, Bangka	H. Mulkan-Ramadian
17	Kepulauan Bangka Belitung, Bangka Selatan	Riza Herdavid-Debby Vita Dewi
18	Kepulauan Riau, Bintan	Roby Kurniawan-Deby Maryanti

19	Jawa Barat, Ciamis	Herdiat Sunarya-Yana Diana Putra
20	Jawa Tengah, Banyumas	Sadewo Tri Lastiono-Dwi Asih Lintarti
21	Jawa Tengah, Sukoharjo	Etik Suryani-Eko Sapto Purnomo
22	Jawa Tengah, Brebes	Paramitha Widya Kusuma-Wurja
23	Jawa Timur, Trenggalek	Mochamad Nur Arifin-Syah Muhamad Nata Negara
24	Jawa Timur, Ngawi	Ony Anwar Harsono-Dwi Rianto Jatmiko
25	Jawa Timur, Gresik	Fandi Akhmad Yani-Asluchul Alif
26	Kalimantan Barat, Bengkayang	Sebastianus Darwis-Syamsul Rizal
27	Kalimantan Selatan, Tanah Bumbu	Andi Rudi Latif-Bahsanuddin
28	Kalimantan Selatan, Balangan	Abdul Hadi-Akhmad Fauzi
29	Kalimantan Utara, Malinau	Wempi W. Mawa-Jakaria
30	Sulawesi Selatan, Maros	A. S. Chaidir Syam-Muetazim
31	Sulawesi Tenggara, Muna Barat	La Ode Darwin-Ali Basa
32	Sulawesi Barat, Pasangkayu	Yaumil Ambo Djiwa-Herny
City Head Election		
33	Kepulauan Bangka Belitung, Kota Pangkal Pinang	Maulan Aklil-Masagus M Hakim
34	Jawa Timur, Kota Pasuruan	Adi Wibowo-Mokhammad Nawawi
35	Jawa Timur, Kota Surabaya	Eri Cahyadi-Armuji
36	Kalimantan Timur, Kota Samarinda	Andi Harun-Saefuddin Zuhri
37	Kalimantan Utara, Kota Tarakan	Khairul-Ibnu Saud.

The emergence of a single candidate in the 2024 simultaneous regional head elections does not seem to be in line with the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024, which has lowered the threshold of political party support for regional head candidates. The lowering of the support threshold does not simply change the pattern of political participation of political parties in the process of nominating

regional heads in the simultaneous regional head elections on November 27, 2024. Based on several previous studies, the high threshold of support is one of the main causes of the emergence of single candidates (Aprilianti and Mashuri 2024), because small parties often have no choice but to join a coalition to support a single candidate. However, even though the threshold has been lowered through a Constitutional Court ruling, there are still regions that only have a single candidate in the regional head elections.

When referring to the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 where the purpose of lowering the threshold is to provide greater participation space for parties in the contestation of regional head elections, it seems inversely proportional to the political configuration that occurs in several regions, especially those that only have a single candidate. In addition to the high threshold that has been lowered by the Constitutional Court, other factors must be considered, such as:

1) Incumbent Domination

In the general election law, regional heads who have only served 1 period are still given the opportunity to re-nominate for the next period. This is one of the factors that bind political parties to candidates from incumbents. Incumbents often have significant competitive advantages in elections, such as access to political resources, policies and state facilities. This creates unfairness for other candidates due to the potential for abuse of power and conflicts of interest.

2) High political costs

High political costs result in many potential individuals running for local elections. High political costs will result in domination by candidates with large capital and the formation of a large coalition that will only support one candidate (Sholikin 2019).

3) Excessive Political Party Coalition

The impact of large party coalitions which tend to be excessive is that they will only support one candidate who is considered to have the highest chance of winning. This will close the opportunity for greater political participation and more candidates for the public to choose. Large coalitions also have an impact on political pragmatism which only pays attention to the distribution of power, allocation of

seats, or strategic positions in government for its supporters. (Vivi Yulianingrum and Nurcholis Alhadi 2025)

4) The Failure of Political Education

Political education is a crucial element in realizing broader political participation. However, if political education fails, it will lead to a tendency for political participation to become pragmatic. Pragmatic politics will strengthen the influence of money politics, resulting in larger coalitions and higher political costs, which in turn limit the number of candidates in regional head elections. (Mii, Reza, and Latuda, n.d.)

5) Lack of Public Trust in Political Parties

The lack of public trust in political parties also impacts political participation. Public distrust toward political parties leads to increased political apathy or indifference toward the electoral process. Additionally, political parties are often perceived as failing to fulfill their function as a bridge between the public and the government, as the candidates nominated by political parties sometimes do not align with the aspirations of the community (Mahfud, n.d.). Furthermore, stagnation in political recruitment has become one of the triggers for public distrust in political parties. Currently, political parties tend to be elitist, with only certain individuals having the opportunity to be nominated, resulting in political recruitment not functioning as it should.

Although the Constitutional Court has lowered the nomination threshold, the emergence of single candidates or only one candidate in regional head elections remains difficult to avoid. This is due to at least five other factors previously explained. These factors emphasize the importance of political education, both conducted by political parties and directed at the public. Political education by political parties is crucial to ensure that parties effectively perform their recruitment functions, producing candidates who not only possess significant financial resources but also demonstrate qualities such as leadership skills, the capacity to govern with principles of good governance, and a commitment to advancing the broader public interest. Additionally, political education for the public is essential to foster greater awareness of the political process, particularly

in elections. The public should be encouraged to resist the temptations of money politics and instead critically evaluate the visions and missions of regional head candidates, ensuring their choices are based on the candidates' quality and potential contributions to the public interest.

Beyond political education, efforts to prevent the emergence of single candidates in regional head elections require more than just lowering the political party support threshold for candidates. Additional regulations are needed to limit the maximum level of political party support for a single candidate. This aims to prevent excessive concentration of support and to encourage the emergence of more candidates in the contest.

For instance, a regional head candidate only needs a majority of votes to be declared elected, while in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta, securing over 50 percent of the votes is sufficient to win the election. Therefore, during the nomination process, political party support should also be capped. If one candidate has already garnered the maximum 50 percent support, other political parties should be encouraged to form new coalitions and propose alternative candidates. This approach would make regional head elections more participatory, offering the public a broader selection of candidates that better align with their aspirations.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 has had a significant impact on the simultaneous Regional Head Elections scheduled for November 2024. By lowering the support threshold from the previous minimum of 25%, candidates for regional head positions now only require support from political parties ranging between 6.5% and 10%. This change in the regulation regarding the support threshold for political parties aims to create a more inclusive and equitable electoral system. Furthermore, it provides greater opportunities for political parties with smaller vote shares to participate actively.

However, in reality, the reduction of the support threshold for political parties has not entirely resulted in a more inclusive and equitable electoral system with broader

participation. For instance, in the 2024 simultaneous regional head elections, 37 regions are reported to have only a single candidate. This phenomenon highlights other challenges that need to be addressed, such as incumbent dominance, high political costs, excessive party coalitions, limited political education, and low public trust in political parties. These factors indicate that improving the system requires not only amendments to regulations but also comprehensive reforms in political practices.

An evaluation of the regulations regarding political party support for regional head candidates is necessary. It is not sufficient to simply lower the support threshold; there must also be a maximum limit on the level of political party support for a single candidate. This would prevent excessive concentration of political power. Additionally, efforts must be made by the government, election organizers, and political parties to conduct comprehensive political education. Such initiatives would help the public better understand the essence of elections, particularly regional head elections, thereby fostering the emergence of capable regional leaders who align with the aspirations of the community.

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