

## The Senate's Three Majority Leaders Rank Last Among the Impeachment Judges, as 49% of Filipinos Say They Would Acquit Sara Duterte

*The first wave of a weekly Pulso Intelligence tracker finds a bench the public rates mildly favourably across the board — every senator-judge sits above the neutral midpoint — but with the chamber's majority leadership occupying the last three places, and acquittal sentiment leading conviction by fifteen points.*

The three senators who hold the Senate's majority-bloc leadership posts occupy the bottom three places on the first Pulso Intelligence Senator-Judge Scorecard. Senior Deputy Majority Leader Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito scores 2.51 overall and ranks 19th of 21; Majority Leader Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri scores 2.48 and ranks 20th; Deputy Majority Leader Joel Villanueva scores 2.44 and ranks last. The minority bloc's two leaders sit far higher — Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano is third at 2.85 and Deputy Minority Leader Imee Marcos ninth at 2.72 — giving the minority leadership an average of 2.79 against the majority leadership's 2.48.

On the impeachment itself, the public leans clearly toward acquittal. Asked how they would rule on the impeachment of Vice President Sara Duterte if the decision were theirs today, 49% say not guilty and 34% say guilty, a margin of 15 points, with 17% neutral. The neutral bloc is only just large enough to matter: even if every neutral respondent broke for conviction, guilty would clear not guilty by 2 points, and 16 of the 17 neutral points would have to move for the result to reverse at all.

The bench itself is tightly compressed. Francis "Chiz" Escudero leads at 2.92 and Villanueva trails at 2.44, a spread of only 0.48 points on a 1.00–3.00 scale, and every judge sits above the 2.00 neutral midpoint. The three measures behave almost as one: fairness is the highest or joint-highest of the three for 20 of the 21 judges, and the rank orders the three measures produce are effectively identical (Spearman  $\rho \geq 0.995$  for every pair). Respondents are not grading fairness, performance and trust separately so much as expressing a single overall disposition toward each senator.

### KEY FIGURES

- 49% of Filipinos would find VP Sara Duterte not guilty; 34% would convict — a 15-point margin, with 17% neutral.
- 16 of the 17 neutral points would have to break for conviction to reverse the result; if all 17 did, guilty would clear not guilty by just 2 points.
- Francis "Chiz" Escudero leads the bench at 2.92 overall; Joel Villanueva trails at 2.44.
- The Senate's three majority-bloc leaders rank 19th, 20th and 21st — last on every one of the three measures.
- Majority-bloc leadership averages 2.48 against 2.79 for the minority bloc's leaders and 2.69 for the 16 judges holding no leadership post.
- Fairness is the highest or joint-highest measure for 20 of 21 judges: a bench average of 2.71, against 2.66 for trust and 2.64 for performance.
- Fairness is also the least differentiated measure — a 0.39-point range against 0.53 for trust.
- Only 9 of 21 judges score above the field average of 2.67; the entire bench sits inside 0.48 points.

*“The public isn’t grading these senators on three things. It’s grading them on one — and right now the men running the majority are at the bottom of that list.”*

— Abraham Eleazar D. Quintos, Chief Executive Officer, Pulso Intelligence Labs, Inc.

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the first wave of the Senator-Judge Scorecard and Impeachment Sentiment Tracker, a weekly Pulso Intelligence tracker of public sentiment toward the senator-judges of the impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte, and toward the impeachment itself. It is published for the general public. The summary on this page sets out the headline results; the full findings, including each measure, the complete scorecard, and the sub-group readings, follow in the pages after it. The methodology and the firm’s independence statement appear at the end.

## How to read the figures

Unless otherwise noted, all scorecard figures are drawn from a respondent base of 1,500 Filipinos of legal age, weighted to represent regional population and demographic differences, surveyed on 15–16 August 2026. Scores are reported on a 1.00–3.00 sentiment scale, where 1.00 is wholly negative, 2.00 is neutral and 3.00 is wholly positive; the Overall score is the composite of the three measures. Because the entire bench falls inside a 0.48-point band, differences of one or two hundredths should be read as ties rather than as rankings. Impeachment-sentiment figures are shares of the same base. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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## About Pulso Intelligence

Pulso Intelligence Labs, Inc. (“Pulso Intelligence”) is an independent public opinion and market sentiment research firm, and the research arm of Geronimo Law. It maintains a verified respondent network of more than 1.6 million panel members across all 17 regions of the Philippines, and conducts socio-political and policy polling, brand and market research, and qualitative and deliberative studies.

This survey was designed, conducted, and funded solely by Pulso Intelligence Labs, Inc. No partisan group, candidate, political party, or commissioning interest influenced the survey or the reporting of its results.

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Signed,

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## THE FULL FINDINGS

### Senator-Judge Scorecard & Impeachment Sentiment Tracker — Wave 1, August 2026

The results below report the full study behind the findings summarised above. Figures are drawn from a nationwide base of 1,500 Filipinos of legal age surveyed on 15–16 August 2026 and weighted to represent regional population and demographic differences. Scores run from 1.00 to 3.00. Where a figure is based on a sub-group of the bench rather than the whole, the group and its size are stated beneath the relevant table.

#### SECTION I

### The National Verdict

#### Acquittal leads conviction by 15 points; 17% remain neutral

Asked how they would rule on the impeachment of Vice President Sara Duterte if the decision were theirs today, 49% of Filipinos say not guilty against 34% who say guilty — a margin of 15 points. A further 17% take neither position. Acquittal sentiment is therefore short of a majority on its own, but it is the clear plurality, and it is nearly half again the size of the conviction bloc.

TABLE 1

Q. If the decision were yours today, how would you rule on the impeachment of Vice President Sara Duterte? — Total (in %)

| Response   | %    |
|------------|------|
| Not guilty | 49.0 |
| Guilty     | 34.0 |
| Neutral    | 17.0 |

Base: 1,500 Filipinos of legal age, weighted to represent regional population and demographic differences; fielded 15–16 August 2026. Single-select. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

#### The neutral bloc is only just large enough to reverse the result

The arithmetic of the neutral bloc is tighter than its size suggests. For conviction to overtake acquittal, 16 of the 17 neutral points would have to break guilty — that is, 94% of every undecided respondent in the sample. Were all 17 points to move, guilty would still clear not guilty by only 2 points. Conviction sentiment cannot reach a majority on neutral defections alone; it would need to draw from the acquittal bloc itself, which at 49% is the largest single position in the survey. Read together with the scorecard, this is the wave’s central tension: the public is disinclined to convict, yet rates the senators running the trial only modestly.

#### SECTION II

### The Senator-Judge Scorecard

#### Escudero leads the bench at 2.92; Villanueva trails at 2.44

Francis “Chiz” Escudero tops the scorecard at 2.92 overall, and does so on all three measures — 2.89 on trust, 2.95 on performance and 2.92 on fairness. Christopher “Bong” Go (2.86) and Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano (2.85) complete the top three, in that order on every measure. At the other end, Deputy Majority Leader Joel Villanueva scores 2.44 and is last on all three. The full field spans just 0.48 points.

TABLE 2

Q. Senator-judge scorecard — trust, performance, fairness and overall score (1.00–3.00 scale)

| # | Senator-judge           | Trust | Performance | Fairness | Overall |
|---|-------------------------|-------|-------------|----------|---------|
| 1 | Francis “Chiz” Escudero | 2.89  | 2.95        | 2.92     | 2.92    |
| 2 | Christopher “Bong” Go   | 2.87  | 2.84        | 2.89     | 2.86    |

| #  | Senator-judge                                               | Trust | Performance | Fairness | Overall     |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| 3  | Alan Peter Cayetano (Minority Leader)                       | 2.82  | 2.81        | 2.89     | <b>2.85</b> |
| 4  | Bam Aquino                                                  | 2.82  | 2.80        | 2.85     | <b>2.82</b> |
| 5  | Robinhood “Robin” Padilla                                   | 2.82  | 2.77        | 2.84     | <b>2.81</b> |
| 6  | Raffy Tulfo                                                 | 2.81  | 2.76        | 2.81     | <b>2.80</b> |
| 7  | Loren Legarda                                               | 2.78  | 2.72        | 2.79     | <b>2.76</b> |
| 8  | Pia Cayetano                                                | 2.74  | 2.72        | 2.75     | <b>2.73</b> |
| 9  | Imee Marcos (Deputy Minority Leader)                        | 2.71  | 2.71        | 2.74     | <b>2.72</b> |
| 10 | Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan                                   | 2.68  | 2.65        | 2.74     | <b>2.67</b> |
| 11 | Sherwin “Win” Gatchalian                                    | 2.65  | 2.62        | 2.69     | <b>2.64</b> |
| 12 | Risa Hontiveros                                             | 2.63  | 2.61        | 2.67     | <b>2.62</b> |
| 13 | Panfilo “Ping” Lacson                                       | 2.59  | 2.59        | 2.66     | <b>2.59</b> |
| 14 | Camille Villar                                              | 2.58  | 2.56        | 2.65     | <b>2.59</b> |
| 15 | Manuel “Lito” Lapid                                         | 2.56  | 2.54        | 2.63     | <b>2.58</b> |
| 16 | Mark Villar                                                 | 2.56  | 2.54        | 2.61     | <b>2.57</b> |
| 17 | Erwin Tulfo                                                 | 2.53  | 2.52        | 2.61     | <b>2.56</b> |
| 18 | Vicente “Tito” Sotto III                                    | 2.53  | 2.47        | 2.59     | <b>2.56</b> |
| 19 | Joseph Victor “JV” Ejercito (Senior Deputy Majority Leader) | 2.42  | 2.45        | 2.58     | <b>2.51</b> |
| 20 | Juan Miguel “Migz” Zubiri (Majority Leader)                 | 2.42  | 2.44        | 2.55     | <b>2.48</b> |
| 21 | Joel Villanueva (Deputy Majority Leader)                    | 2.36  | 2.43        | 2.53     | <b>2.44</b> |

Base: 1,500 Filipinos of legal age, weighted to represent regional population and demographic differences; fielded 15–16 August 2026. Ranked by overall score. Overall is the composite of the three measures. Three sitting senators are not covered in this wave — see Methodology.

## Only 9 of 21 judges score above the field average

The bench average is 2.67, but the distribution is top-weighted: 9 of the 21 judges sit above it and 12 below, because a small group of high scorers pulls the mean upward. The top five average 2.85, the middle 11 average 2.66, and the bottom five average 2.51 — a top-to-bottom gap of 0.34 points. In practical terms the bench divides into a small, clearly favoured group at the top, a large and largely undifferentiated middle, and a distinct trailing group.

**TABLE 3**

Q. Overall score by tier of the bench (in points)

| Tier                             | Judges | Average overall | Score range |
|----------------------------------|--------|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>Top five (ranks 1–5)</b>      | 5      | 2.85            | 2.81 – 2.92 |
| <b>Middle 11 (ranks 6–16)</b>    | 11     | 2.66            | 2.57 – 2.80 |
| <b>Bottom five (ranks 17–21)</b> | 5      | 2.51            | 2.44 – 2.56 |

Base: 1,500 Filipinos of legal age, weighted to represent regional population and demographic differences; fielded 15–16 August 2026. Field average 2.67. Tiers are analytic groupings of the ranking, not survey categories.

## SECTION III

# The Three Measures

## Fairness scores highest across the bench — and divides opinion least

Of the three measures, fairness draws the most favourable reading: a bench average of 2.71, against 2.66 for trust and 2.64 for performance. It is the highest, or joint-highest, of a judge's three scores for 20 of the 21 senators — the two exceptions are Escudero, whose performance score edges his fairness score, and Raffy Tulfo, whose fairness and trust scores tie. It is also the most compressed: fairness spans 0.39 points from best to worst, against 0.53 for trust and 0.52 for performance. Filipinos are readier to grant the bench impartiality than to credit it with competence, and they differentiate least between individual senators when doing so.

**TABLE 4**  
Q. Each measure across the full bench — average, spread, and the judges at each end (1.00–3.00 scale)

| Measure     | Bench average | Range | Highest       | Lowest          |
|-------------|---------------|-------|---------------|-----------------|
| Trust       | 2.66          | 0.53  | Escudero 2.89 | Villanueva 2.36 |
| Performance | 2.64          | 0.52  | Escudero 2.95 | Villanueva 2.43 |
| Fairness    | 2.71          | 0.39  | Escudero 2.92 | Villanueva 2.53 |

Base: 1,500 Filipinos of legal age, weighted to represent regional population and demographic differences; fielded 15–16 August 2026. Range is the distance from the highest to the lowest individual score on that measure.

The three measures move as one

The three measures are close to statistically indistinguishable from one another. Rank-order correlation between every pair is at or above  $p = 0.995$ , and the same three names — Escudero, Go and Cayetano — hold the top three places on all three measures, while Ejercito, Zubiri and Villanueva hold the bottom three on all three. No judge is read as fair but ineffective, or effective but untrustworthy. This is the signature of a halo judgement: respondents appear to be forming one overall impression of each senator and applying it across the three questions, rather than assessing three distinct qualities. The practical consequence is that the composite Overall score carries almost all the information in the scorecard, and that movement between waves is more likely to reflect a change in a senator's general standing than a change in any single attribute.

SECTION IV  
Leadership and the Bench

The Senate's majority leadership occupies the bottom three places

The clearest structural finding of the wave concerns the chamber's own leadership. The three senators holding majority-bloc posts — Senior Deputy Majority Leader JV Ejercito (2.51), Majority Leader Migz Zubiri (2.48) and Deputy Majority Leader Joel Villanueva (2.44) — occupy ranks 19, 20 and 21, the last three places on the bench, and are last on each of the three measures individually. The two minority-bloc leaders sit far higher: Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano is third and Deputy Minority Leader Imee Marcos ninth. The 16 judges holding no leadership post average 2.69, 0.22 points clear of the majority leadership.

**TABLE 5**  
Q. Overall score by position in the Senate's leadership structure (in points)

| Group                    | Judges | Average overall | Ranks held |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------------|------------|
| Minority-bloc leadership | 2      | 2.79            | 3, 9       |
| No leadership post       | 16     | 2.69            | 1–18       |
| Majority-bloc leadership | 3      | 2.48            | 19, 20, 21 |

Base: 1,500 Filipinos of legal age, weighted to represent regional population and demographic differences; fielded 15–16 August 2026. Groups are defined by the leadership designations recorded in the scorecard. Sub-groups of fewer than five judges are directional and should not be reported standalone.

Visibility, not ideology, is the likeliest explanation

The pattern does not map onto any obvious ideological or partisan divide: the top five include senators from opposing political camps, and so does the middle of the table. What separates the bottom three from the rest is institutional role. Majority-bloc leaders are the members most closely identified with how the chamber is running the trial — its scheduling, its rulings, its procedural direction — and are therefore the most exposed to dissatisfaction with the process itself. That reading is consistent with the halo effect described in Section III: a general impression of the trial’s management appears to be attaching to the senators seen to be managing it. It is a hypothesis this wave cannot test directly, and one that subsequent waves should be able to confirm or reject as procedural developments move.

## SECTION V

### Strategic Takeaways

#### A favourable public, an unimpressed one, and a very narrow bench

Three readings define this wave. First, the country is not hostile to the senator-judges: every one of the 21 sits above the neutral midpoint of the scale, and the bench average of 2.67 is closer to the positive pole than to the neutral one. Second, it is not enthusiastic either — the whole field is packed into 0.48 points, which means the public is drawing very fine distinctions between individual senators and, on the evidence of Section III, is not really distinguishing between the qualities it is being asked about. Third, the one distinction it does draw cleanly is institutional: the senators running the majority are rated last, and by a clear margin.

On the impeachment question, the position is stable but not settled. A 15-point lead for acquittal is substantial, and the arithmetic of the neutral bloc makes a reversal difficult without movement out of the acquittal camp itself. But 51% of the country is either against the Vice President or has not taken a side, and that combined figure is the number to watch across subsequent waves rather than the headline margin.

#### Recommendations

1. Track the majority leadership as a bloc, not as individuals. Ejercito, Zubiri and Villanueva move together and sit together at the bottom. Their combined average of 2.48 is the single most sensitive indicator in the scorecard, and the most likely to respond to procedural controversy in the trial.
2. Treat the composite Overall score as the primary reading. With rank-order correlation at or above 0.995 between every pair of measures, the three sub-scores carry little independent information in this wave. Reporting them separately risks implying a precision the data does not support.
3. Read the middle of the table as a single tier. The 11 judges between ranks 6 and 16 span only 0.23 points. Week-to-week movement inside that band should be treated as noise until a subsequent wave confirms direction.
4. Watch the neutral bloc, not the margin. At 17%, neutrals are the only genuinely movable group; 16 of those 17 points would have to break for conviction to overtake acquittal. A fall in the neutral share is a more meaningful signal than a shift of one or two points in either committed camp.

## APPENDIX

### Rank by Individual Measure

The complete bench, showing each judge’s rank position on each of the three measures. Judges are listed in composite overall order; fractional ranks indicate ties, which are shared at the average of the tied positions.

**TABLE A1**

*Q. Senator-judge scorecard — rank position on each measure*

| # | Senator-judge           | Trust rank | Perf. rank | Fair. rank |
|---|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Francis “Chiz” Escudero | 1          | 1          | 1          |

| #  | Senator-judge                                               | Trust rank | Perf. rank | Fair. rank |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 2  | Christopher “Bong” Go                                       | 2          | 2          | 2.5        |
| 3  | Alan Peter Cayetano (Minority Leader)                       | 4          | 3          | 2.5        |
| 4  | Bam Aquino                                                  | 4          | 4          | 4          |
| 5  | Robinhood “Robin” Padilla                                   | 4          | 5          | 5          |
| 6  | Raffy Tulfo                                                 | 6          | 6          | 6          |
| 7  | Loren Legarda                                               | 7          | 7.5        | 7          |
| 8  | Pia Cayetano                                                | 8          | 7.5        | 8          |
| 9  | Imee Marcos (Deputy Minority Leader)                        | 9          | 9          | 9.5        |
| 10 | Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan                                   | 10         | 10         | 9.5        |
| 11 | Sherwin “Win” Gatchalian                                    | 11         | 11         | 11         |
| 12 | Risa Hontiveros                                             | 12         | 12         | 12         |
| 13 | Panfilo “Ping” Lacson                                       | 13         | 13         | 13         |
| 14 | Camille Villar                                              | 14         | 14         | 14         |
| 15 | Manuel “Lito” Lapid                                         | 15.5       | 15.5       | 15         |
| 16 | Mark Villar                                                 | 15.5       | 15.5       | 16.5       |
| 17 | Erwin Tulfo                                                 | 17.5       | 17         | 16.5       |
| 18 | Vicente “Tito” Sotto III                                    | 17.5       | 18         | 18         |
| 19 | Joseph Victor “JV” Ejercito (Senior Deputy Majority Leader) | 19.5       | 19         | 19         |
| 20 | Juan Miguel “Migz” Zubiri (Majority Leader)                 | 19.5       | 20         | 20         |
| 21 | Joel Villanueva (Deputy Majority Leader)                    | 21         | 21         | 21         |

Base: 1,500 Filipinos of legal age, weighted to represent regional population and demographic differences; fielded 15–16 August 2026. Ranks are computed independently for each measure; ties share the average rank.

## Methodology & Independence

### Methodology

The findings reported here are based on the first wave of the Senator-Judge Scorecard and Impeachment Sentiment Tracker, a weekly nationwide tracker conducted by Pulso Intelligence Labs, Inc. Fieldwork for this wave ran on 15–16 August 2026 through the firm’s verified online mobile application-based respondent panel. Results are read from a respondent base of 1,500 Filipinos of legal age, weighted to represent regional population and demographic differences.

Respondents rated each senator-judge on three measures — trust, performance and fairness — on a 1.00–3.00 sentiment scale, where 1.00 is wholly negative, 2.00 is neutral and 3.00 is wholly positive. The Overall score reported for each senator is the composite of the three measures. Scores are reported to two decimal places; because the full bench falls inside a 0.48-point band, differences of one or two hundredths should be read as ties. Rank-order correlations between the three measures are at or above  $p = 0.995$  in this wave, and the sub-scores should not be treated as independent readings.

Three sitting senators are not covered by this wave’s scorecard: Jinggoy Estrada, Rodante Marcoleta and Ronald “Bato” Dela Rosa. The reason for their exclusion was not supplied with the dataset, and their absence should be noted when the bench average or the tier groupings are cited. Group readings for the minority-bloc leadership (two judges) and the majority-bloc leadership (three judges) fall below the firm’s five-unit reporting floor for sub-group analysis and are directional only. The scorecard measures public perception of the senator-judges; it is neither a forecast of how any senator will vote nor a legal assessment of the case.

## **Independence and disclosure**

Pulso Intelligence Labs, Inc.'s research team takes full responsibility for the design and conduct of the survey, including the formulation of the questionnaire, the drawing and weighting of the sample, the fieldwork, the processing of the data, and the analysis and interpretation of the findings. No partisan group, candidate, political party, or commissioning interest influenced any of these processes or the reporting of the results. The survey was undertaken and funded by Pulso Intelligence Labs, Inc. as part of its continuing program of independent public-opinion research.

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