

THE SCOPE OF AUTHORITY OF THE ACTING REGIONAL HEAD DUE TO THE VICTORY OF THE EMPTY COLUMN IN THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The victory of the Blank Column in the Regional Elections has an impact on the appointment of the Acting Regional Head to run the regional government until the election of the Regional Head in the next Regional Election. The Acting Regional Head is given the task of replacing the definitive Regional Head but there are differences in its application. In this paper, the scope of authority of the Acting Regional Head is discussed using normative juridical research with a statutory approach or statute approach and a conceptual or conceptual approach or conceptual or conceptual approach or conceptual acceptal approach. The results of this study show that juridically assigning tasks to the Acting Regional Head is inconsistent and hinders the course of regional autonomy. This paper also discusses alternative arrangements for the Acting Regional Head to be in line with the principle of regional autonomy.

Keywords: Authority, PLT, regional elections

INTRODUCTION

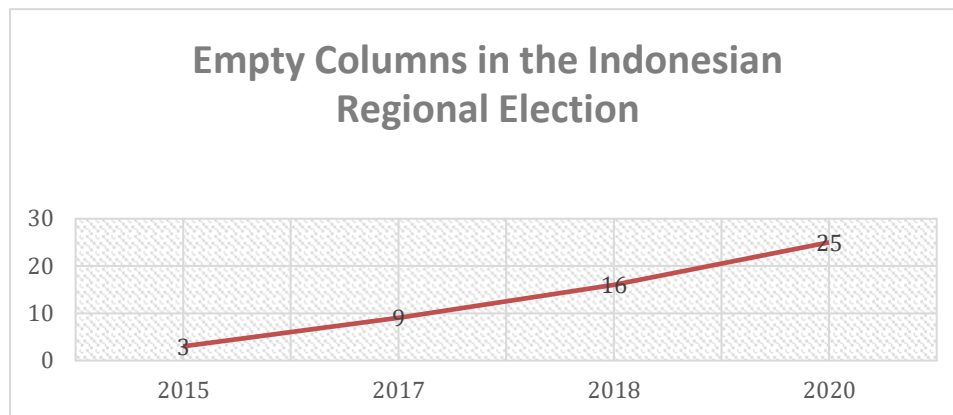
Regional Heads have a very strategic role in the field of regional government (Ramadhan, 2023). As the head of the regional government, the Regional Head carries out his duties by referring to the provisions of laws and regulations (Yuhandra et al., 2021). The Regional Head as a whole is tasked with ensuring that public services to the community run well (Fleming et al., 2024).

Article 18 paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution (1945 Constitution) says that Regional Heads are elected in a democratic way through General Elections. General elections are conducted on the principle of independence; honest; fair; legal certainty; orderly; open; Proportional; Professional; Accountable; effective; and efficient as in Article 3 of Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections.

In 2015, the requirement for the implementation of regional elections was that a minimum of 2 candidate pairs could not be met in some regions, so the minimum requirement for 2 candidate pairs in Law No. 8 of 2015 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors was subject to judicial review to the Constitutional Court (MK).

The judicial review resulted in Constitutional Court Decision Number 100/PUU-XIII/2015 (Maslul, 2022). The ruling ordered that regional elections with one pair of candidates be held by

presenting a Blank Column as a competitor for the single candidate pair (Harahap & Kosandi, 2024). Since 2015, Blank Columns have been present in regional elections in Indonesia with a significant increase, as shown in the following chart:



Source: KPU RI processed by researchers

For the first time, Kolom Blank won the regional elections in Makassar City in 2018 (Purwaningsih & Widodo, 2021). As a result, the appointment of the Acting Regional Head was carried out by the Ministry of Home Affairs (Makawi et al., 2020). This is in accordance with the provisions of Article 25 paragraph (3) of PKPU No. 13 of 2018. The appointment of the Acting Regional Head by the Ministry of Home Affairs indicates an undemocratic filling of the position because it does not involve the people in it (Aurora, 2021).

Referring to regional autonomy, the principle of decentralization is very important in running Regional Government (Smith, 2023). In carrying out regional autonomy, the Regional Head is the captain, so that the achievement of the purpose of regional autonomy lies with the Regional Head with his authority (Peterlini, 2023). This emphasizes that the existence of the Regional Head is very important (Bakry & Growe, 2024).

Regional Heads elected in regional elections are called definitive Regional Heads or Regional Heads born by the will of the people (Saparuli & Yoga, 2023). In addition, the Acting Regional Head is a temporary acting whose election is carried out by the Home Minister (Muslikhah et al., 2023). From this, it can be concluded that the definitive Regional Head is different from the Acting Regional Head (Blanchard, 2015).

From these two rules, research will be conducted to determine whether the differences or similarities in duties and authorities of the Acting Regional Head are in line with the principle of regional autonomy (Lenaerts, 2017). The potential for the birth of the Acting Regional Head will continue as long as the Blank Column is part of Law No. 10 of 2016. This is an important reason to conduct this research (Jaya & Ilyas, 2024).

RESEARCH METHODS

This paper uses a type of normative research and literature that looks at cases from rules and literature, this method is also called doctrinal research because it focuses on what is written in laws and regulations. There are two approaches used, first, the statutory approach (statute approach) to examine rules related to the issue of study, the aim is to see the synchronization of positive laws with each other. Second, a conceptual approach to see the views and doctrines that develop related to the matter under study.

In this case, research on legal synchronization will be carried out vertically, namely by conducting a study of Permendagri No. 1 of 2018 and Permendagri No. 4 of 2023" against Law No. 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government and Article 18 of the NRI Constitution of 1945.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Traces of the Existence of Empty Columns in Indonesian Regional Elections

The Blank Column was present in the Indonesian regional elections from 2015 to 2020 with very varied votes. The following are the results of the Blank Column votes in the regional elections from 2015 to 2020:

Table 1. 2015 Regional Election Results Single Candidate vs Blank Column

No	Area	Single Candidate	Empty Columns
1	Tasikmalaya	67,35% (500.908)	32,65% (242.865)
2	Blitar	84,9% (428.075)	15,1% (76.121)
3	North Central Timor	79.89% (75.025)	21,11% (18.890)

Table 2. 2017 Regional Election Results Single Candidate vs Blank Column

No.	Area	Single Candidate	Empty Columns	No.	Area	Single Candidate	Empty Columns
1	Starch	74,52% (519.610)	25,48% (177.694)	6	Central Maluku	70,85% (142.644)	29,15% (58.681)
2	Buton	55,08% (27.512)	44,92% (22.438)	7	Jayapura City	84,53% (104.993)	15,47% (19.213)
3	Western onion bones	96,75% (167.512)	3,25% (5.625)	8	Tambrau	87,07% (4.814)	12,93% (715)
4	High Cliff City	71,39% (41.937)	28,61% (16.807)	9	Sorong City	79.37% (47.187)	20,63% (12.262)
5	Hedgehog	96,72 % (226.378)	3,28 % (7.673)				

Table 3. 2018 Regional Election Results Single Candidate vs Blank Column

No.	Area	Single Candidate	Empty Columns	No.	Area	Single Candidate	Empty Columns
1	Prabumulih	79,26% (74.7230)	20,74% (19.552)	9	Tapin	80,97% (85.723)	19,03% (20.145)
2	Lebak	76,96% (453.938)	23,04% (135.879)	10	Top	90,10% (143.539)	9,90% (14.813)
3	Tangerang	83,72% (941.804)	16,28% (183.095)	11	Mamasa	61,22% (48.552)	38,78% (30.758)
4	Tangerang City	85,80% (609.428)	14,80% (102.386)	12	Jayawijaya	99,13% (99.13%)	0,87% (2.271)
5	Pasuruan	77,55% (536.721)	22,45% (155.393)	13	North Padang Lawas	80,13% (86.915)	19,87% (21.559)
6	Makassar	46,77% (264.245)	53,23% (300.795)	14	Deli Serdang	82,25% (538.238)	17,75% (116.139)
7	Enrekang	67,15% (77.586)	31,03% (35.826)	15	Central Mamberamo	86,70% (28.845)	13,30% (4.426)
8	Southeast Minasaha	67,28% (47.499)	32,72% (23.098)	16	Bone	63,04% (232.955)	36,96% (136.535)

Table 4. 2020 Regional Election Results Single Candidate vs Blank Column

No	Area	Single Candidate	Empty Columns	No	Area	Single Candidate	Empty Columns
1	Humbang Hasundutan	52,5% (51.861)	47,5% (46.940)	14	Kediri	23,5% (181.423)	23,5% (181.423)
2	Gunungsitoli City	79,3% (47.501)	20,% (12.402)	15	Ngawi	5,7% (28.430)	5,7% (28.430)
3	Pematangsiant City	77,4% (87.733)	22,6% (25.560)	16	Badung	5,4% (16.172)	5,4% (16.172)
4	Pasaman	83,6% (104.519)	16,4% (20.558)	17	West Sumbawa	25,6% (19.115)	25,6% (19.115)
5	Ogan Komering Ulu	64,8% (116.606)	35,2% (63.2444)	18	Balikpapan City	37,6% (96.669)	37,6% (96.669)
6	Ogan Komering Ulu Selatan	96,2% (210.623)	3,8% (8.407)	19	Kutai Kartanegara	26,2% (70.851)	26,2% (70.851)
7	North Bengkulu	71,7% (105.133)	28,3% (41.440)	20	Gowa	8,9% (36.889)	8,9% (36.889)

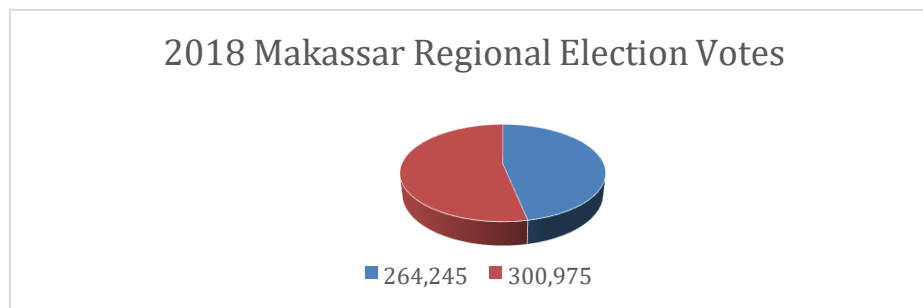
The Scope of Authority of The Acting Regional Head Due to The Victory of The Empty Column in The Regional Elections

8	Boyolali	95,5% (664.872)	4,5% (31.148)	21	Soppeng	13,7% (18.056)	13,7% (18.056)
9	Grobogan	86,2% (595.197)	13,8% (94.752)	22	Central Mamuju	5,4% (8.341)	5,4% (8.341)
10	Kebumen	60,8% (389.724)	39,2% (251.059)	23	South Manokwari	6,9% (2.003)	6,9% (2.003)
11	Semarang City	91,4% (714.531)	8,6% (67.407)	24	Arfak Mountains	-	-
12	Sragen	80,2% (431.271)	19,8% (106.55)	25	Raja Ampat	33,4% (11.382)	33,4% (11.382)
13	Wonosobo	63,7% (269.363)	36,3% (153.77)				

(Source: KPU RI kpu.go.id page processed by researchers)

From the Blank Column votes, in 2015 the highest votes were 32.65% and the lowest was 15.1%, in 2017 the highest votes were 44.92% with the lowest achievement of 12.93%. In 2018, Kolom Blank won the regional election with 53.23% of the votes in Makassar City, in addition to the lowest vote gain was also obtained in 2018 at 0.87% in Jayawijaya Regency. In 2020, Kolom Blank almost won the regional election for the second time with 47.5% of the vote in Humbang Hasundutan, while the lowest vote was at 4.5% in Boyolali.

Regarding the victory of the Blank Column in Makassar City, the Blank Column vote is far ahead of the single candidate pair as in the following diagram:



Candidate Spouse
MUNAFRI ARIFUDDIN, SH
Drg. A. RACHMATIKA DEWI YUSTITIA IQBAL

EMPTY COLUMNS

From the diagram, it can be seen that the majority of people choose an unnamed Blank Column rather than a single candidate pair who are clearly the person. The Blank Column vote was even far ahead of the single candidate, which was a margin of 36,721 votes.

Appointment of Acting Regional Head as a Result of Empty Column Victory

In Article 54D paragraph (4) of Law No. 10 of 2016 jo. Article 25 paragraph (3) of PKPU No. 13 of 2018, it is said that the Regional Head is not elected in the regional elections, so the

Government assigns the Acting Regional Head to run the regional government. In its appointment, the KPU coordinates with the ministry in charge of internal affairs for the assignment of the Acting Regional Head.

The Acting Regional Head must meet the requirements in Article 132 paragraph (1) of PP No. 6 of 2005 The Acting Regional Head as referred to in Article 130 paragraph (3) and Article 131 paragraph (4), namely ASN who:

- a. Have experience in the field of government, as evidenced by a history of position.
- b. Occupying echelon I structural positions with a group rank of at least IV/c for the Acting Governor and echelon II structural positions, a group rank of at least IV/b for the Acting Regent/Mayor.
- c. List of Work Implementation Assessments for the last 3 (three) years at least has a good value.

In the search conducted by researchers, in Makassar City in 2018, there were 12 officials who nominated as Acting Regional Heads, but only 3 names were qualified, namely Denny Irawan who at that time served as Acting Head of Bapenda South Sulawesi Sardi, Iqbal Suhaeb who was then Head of Balitbangda South Sulawesi and Sulkaf S Latief who was then Head of the South Sulawesi Marine and Fisheries Service.

The three candidates prepared a work program proposal that would be carried out while serving as Acting Mayor of Makassar. The assessment of the proposal is submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs as consideration in decision making. From this description, it is known that the legitimacy of the Acting Regional Head is regulated in Permendagri No. 1 of 2018. The regulation gives authority to the Acting Regional Head as well as the authority of the definitive Regional Head.

On the other hand, Law No. 30 of 2014 concerning Government Administration provides a distinction between definitive officials, acting and acting officials on the authority that can be exercised. In Article 7 paragraph (1) of Law No. 12 of 2011, in the hierarchy of Indonesian laws and regulations, the Law is third after the Constitution and TAP MPR, while Permendagri is recognized for its existence as long as it does not conflict with the above Law.

In law there is known as the principle "lex superiori derogat lex inferiori" that is, rules whose position is lower must not conflict with higher rules, this principle indicates that the formation of lower norms is determined by other higher norms. The process of law formation must look at the highest basic norm (regressus), so the Permendagri should be in line with Law No. 30 of 2014.

The appointment of the Acting Regional Head was highlighted by various researchers, such as Syarifuddin Usman and Abustan who said that the appointment of the Acting Regional Head was not in accordance with the wishes of Article 18 of the 1945 Constitution. The appointment of civil servants is feared to give birth to political interests from the center to the regions. The existence of central political interests to the regions can interfere with the running of regional government. To avoid this, the Constitutional Court through decision No. 67/PUU-XIX/2021 gives consideration that the appointment of Acting Regional Heads should be carried out in a transparent, open, and accountable manner.

Regulation of Duties and Authorities of Regional Heads and Acting Regional Heads

Regulation of Duties and Authorities of Regional Heads

The duties and authorities of the Regional Head are regulated in Article 65 of Law No. 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government. The Regional Head is authorized to compile and submit draft regional regulations to be discussed with the DPRD. In addition, the Regional Head is tasked with representing his region inside and outside the court, appointing deputy regional heads, and other duties ordered by other laws and regulations as long as it does not conflict with the law.

In carrying out their duties, the Regional Head has the authority to submit a draft Regional Regulation and determine the Regional Regulation after obtaining approval from the DPRD, in the event of an urgent situation in the region, the Regional Head is authorized to take beneficial actions on the problems faced.

In addition to these duties, the Regional Head also has the power to carry out other authorities in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations. This authority is none other than what is meant by Article 1 point 5 of Law No. 30 of 2014 concerning Government Administration, namely the right possessed by Government Agencies and/or Officials or other state administrators to make decisions and/or actions in the administration of government, in this case the Regional Head is the head of regional government.

Regulation of Duties and Authorities of Regional Heads

The duties and authorities of the Acting Regional Head are contained in two Permendagri. First, Permendagri No. 1 of 2018. Second, Permendagri No. 4 of 2023. In Article 9 of Permendagri No. 1 of 2018, the Acting Regional Head has the same duties and authorities as the definitive Regional Head. However, the Acting Regional Head is given the condition of obtaining written permission from the Ministry of Home Affairs for two things. First, discuss the draft bylaw and sign it. Second, fill in regional officials.

Getting permission from the Home Minister is not a difficult thing for the Acting Regional Head, in the sense that the requirement to "obtain permission from the Home Minister" seems as a mere formality to distinguish between a definitive Regional Head and an Acting Regional Head. In Permendagri No. 4 of 2023, the requirement to exercise the authority to discuss and ratify local regulations and fill in regional officials is abolished. However, the ban is still in place, namely to issue policies that contradict previous officials.

This is clarified in paragraph 4, namely in carrying out duties, authorities, and obligations, the Acting Regional Head has financial rights and protocol rights equivalent to the definitive regional head in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations. However, there are prohibitions for Acting Regional Heads such as mutating civil servants, canceling and/or making new rules that conflict with the rules made by previous officials.

Prohibition Arrangements for Regional Heads/Acting Regional Heads

Juridically, the prohibition for Regional Heads and Deputy Regional Heads is regulated in Article 76 of Law No. 23 of 2014. First, make decisions that specifically benefit personal, family, cronies, certain groups, or political groups that are contrary to the provisions of laws and regulations. Second, making policies that harm the public interest and disturb a group of people or discriminate against citizens and/or other groups of society.

Third, become the administrator of a company, both privately owned and state/regional owned or the board of any field foundation. Fourth, abusing authority that benefits oneself and/or harms the region led. Fifth, committing corruption, collusion, and nepotism and receiving

money, goods, and/or services from other parties that influence decisions or actions to be taken.

Sixth, become an advocate or legal representative in a case in court in addition to representing the interests of the regional government. Purpose, abuse of authority and violate his oath / promise of office. Ketuju, concurrently serving as another state official. Eighth, travel abroad without permission from the Minister. Eighth, leaving the task and work area for more than 7 (seven) consecutive or non-consecutive days within 1 (one) month without permission.

In addition, the prohibition for Acting Regional Heads is juridically regulated in Article 132A Paragraphs (1) and (2) of PP No. 49 of 2008 concerning the Election, Ratification of Appointment, and Dismissal of Regional Heads and Deputy Regional Heads, this rule is in line with the prohibition contained in Permendagri No. 4 of 2023 which positions the Acting Regional Head with the same definitive Regional Head. Prohibitions for Acting Regional Heads in the regulation such as transferring employees, canceling permits and/or issuing permits, making policies on regional expansion and making development policies and programs that are contrary to the policies of previous officials. However, as in the previous regulation, the above prohibitions can be carried out as long as they get written approval from the Home Minister.

Implementation of the Authority of the Ideal Acting Regional Head Based on Regional Autonomy Principles

In order to implement regional autonomy, it is important to reconstruct the arrangement of the Acting Regional Head to be in accordance with the principle of autonomy as required by the 1945 Constitution. For this reason, the first thing that must be considered is the regulation of the definitive Regional Head and the Constitution and Law No. 23 of 2014 which in general can be known as follows:

1. In Article 18 of the 1945 Constitution, Regional Heads are democratically elected to run Regional Government with the principle of regional autonomy, "Regional Governments have the right to enact local regulations and other rules to carry out regional autonomy and assistance duties.
2. In Article 15 paragraphs (1) and (4) of Permendagri No. 4 of 2023, the Acting Regional Head has the same duties, authorities, obligations, and prohibitions as the definitive Regional Head.
3. In Article 15 paragraph (2) of Permendagri No. 4 of 2023, some prohibitions for Acting Regional Heads are not the same as the prohibitions for definitive Regional Heads as in Article 76 of Law No. 23 of 2014.
4. In Article 69 of Law No. 23 of 2014, regional heads are required to submit reports on the implementation of Regional Government, reports on accountability statements, and summary reports on the implementation of Regional Government to the President (Article 70), DPRD (Article 71), and the community (Article 72) which are carried out 1 time in 1 year.
5. In Article 18 of Permendagri No. 4 of 2023, the Acting Regional Head submits an accountability report to the Minister through the Governor for the Acting Regent/Mayor and to the President through the Minister at least once every 3 months.

These five things are very important things to note to make improvements to the arrangements of the Acting Head of the region. But before discussing this, the main thing that must be known is the reason for the appointment of the Acting Regional Head and the purpose of regional autonomy itself.

The purpose of appointing the Acting Regional Head is contained in the general provisions of Permendagri No. 4 of 2023, namely to carry out the duties and authorities of the definitive

Regional Head because there is a vacancy in the position of Regional Head. Both the election of the Blank Column in the Election, as well as the transition to the implementation of the Election at the end of 2024.

In addition to these two things, the appointment of the Acting Regional Head is also carried out to fill the vacancy in the position of regional agi whose definitive Regional Head is experiencing problems that lead to dismissal as happened to the City of Bandung. In order to reconstruct the arrangement on the Acting Regional Head to be in line with regional autonomy. First, the regulation should encourage the Acting Regional Head to advance the region as the purpose of regional autonomy. Second, the rules must be harmonized with Indonesia's democratic system of government.

This is even the advice of the Constitutional Court in PMK decision No. 67 / PUU-XIX / 2012 that the appointment of the Acting Regional Head should be carried out in an open, transparent and accountable manner. According to researchers, the right way to reconstruct the appointment of the Acting Chief of Daerah is to adopt the electoral system of the President of the United States, namely the electoral college system.

Indonesia and the United States have several similarities that allow it to adopt the electoral college system, including:

1. Indonesia and the United States both adopt a modern presidential democratic system.
2. The United States of America is a federal state that has a federal central leadership and also has a state while Indonesia has a central government which also has a Regional Government.
3. The United States is a federal session provided that there is a central Constitution in which the Constitution of the states must not conflict with the federal Constitution, this can be interpreted by Indonesia with its Constitution and autonomous regions with Regional Regulations.

The appointment of Acting Regional Heads with the electoral college system is at least a more democratic mechanism than the appointment by the Minister unilaterally. It will also support the running of local government by adhering to the principle of regional otomnies. Such mechanisms can be carried out provided that:

1. Selection of Acting Regional Head

With the electoral college mechanism, senators must be formed in each region to conduct elections. If in the United States representation is obtained based on the number of seats in the house of representatives, in Indonesia it can be adopted with the following conditions:

- a. For provincial regions, an elector team was formed with the provision that representatives of each Regency / City were represented by representatives of fractions in the Regency / City DPRD.
- b. For the districts/cities, each is represented by a faction representative in the Regency/City DPRD, added with a representative of each sub-district.

With this representative system, the appointment of Acting Regional Heads will be more democratic as Article 18 of the 1945 Constitution and the advice of the Constitutional Court Judges in decision No. 67/PUU-XIX/2012. This is in line with the opinion that democratic governance lies in the form of control and participation in government activities should be carried out by the community. So with the electoral college system, community participation remains.

In relation to regional autonomy, the Acting Regional Head elected through this system has a great responsibility because it is elected through the voice of the people (representatives) so that emotional attachment as a definitive Regional Head with the community will be created

which is expected that the elected Acting Regional Head can implement programs that are regional development in other words not to fill vacancies alone.

Duties and Authorities of the Acting Regional Head

Regulations on the duties, authorities, obligations, and prohibitions of regional heads must be equated with definitive regional heads with guidelines in Law No. 23 of 2014. The goal is that the Acting Regional Head can work without any obstacles in carrying out regional development. The prohibition in Article 15 paragraph (2) of Permendagri No. 4 of 2023 should not be given to the Acting Regional Head. The ban will be an obstacle in carrying out regional development. The ban indirectly forced the Acting Regional Head to support the program implemented by the previous official. While the previous officials did not necessarily succeed in running the government so that the Acting Regional Head did not aggravate the failure of the government.

Accountability of the Acting Regional Head

With the electoral college mechanism, the Acting Regional Head is elected through the participation of the Ministry of Home Affairs, DPRD, and the Community through representatives, the accountability of the Acting Regional Head is carried out in 3 channels as accountability is carried out by the definitive Regional Head, namely to the President, to the DPRD, and to the community.

With the implementation of three lines of accountability, the Acting Regional Head has the same responsibility as the definitive regional Head. Because the selection is also carried out by the community, responsibility must also be given to the community. This is expected to cause seriousness for the Acting Regional Head in running the Regional Government. It is also intended to be an evaluation material for Acting Regional Heads who may advance in the constellation of Elections after serving as Acting Regional Heads. This evaluation can be an input for the community to choose or not choose the person concerned.

Basically, the process of forming a law takes a long time where there are 5 (five) stages, namely planning, drafting, discussing, ratifying, and promulgation. From these five stages, it can be seen that the formation of laws is not short, while the problem of Acting Regional Heads is something that continues to occur so that rules regarding Acting Regional Heads can be outlined in the Permendagri in addition to preparing them to be made into law.

In Law No. 12 of 2011, Permendagri is not included in the hierarchy of laws and regulations but is recognized as a valid rule in force as long as it is implemented based on the orders of higher laws and regulations or formed based on authority. The Ministry of Home Affairs has functions as stated in Article 5 of PP No. 114 of 2021 concerning the Ministry of Home Affairs has authority related to the formulation, determination, implementation of policies to the evaluation of general and regional governments.

CONCLUSION

From the description above, it can be concluded that: First, if the scope of authority of the Acting Regional Head and the definitive Regional Head is the same, then the duties and authorities of the Acting Regional Head as a whole should be guided by Law No. 23 of 2014 as a rule that regulates the duties and authorities of the definitive Regional Head, which means that there should be no conditional duties and authorities. Second, in order for the regulation regarding the Acting Regional Head to remain democratic as mandated by the Constitution, it is better to reconstruct the arrangement of the Acting Regional Head which can be done by

adopting the electoral college system so that in carrying out their duties and authorities and responsibilities remain in line with the constitution and achieve the goals of regional autonomy.

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Syntax Transformation Journal

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