

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Thirteenth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 4002



Introduced by Honorable Catalino V. Figueroa

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Rapid advances in science and technology are fast reshaping the way people do business. At a touch of a button, mails from even the most remote parts of the globe reach their destinations in split-second duration regardless of distance.

Considering the sorry state of communications in the country, especially among government agencies, it has become greatly imperative for the government to capitalize on the state-of-the-art communications and information technology readily available today. The present communication system in the government, which is at best, obsolete, and at worst ancient, has to be transformed into a reliably fast system using the *Internet*.

Utilization of the internet will lead to faster, almost instantaneous and more reliable communication among government agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) and local government units (LGUs). The start up financial requirements will be huge but it will be less costly for the government in the long run. Instead of sending official communications via express mail, courier services or fax, government agencies and units can resort to the Internet.

This proposed measure provides for the establishment of a Philnet that will bind all government agencies, GOCCs and LGUs via the Internet. The goal is simple: to revolutionize the communication system within the Philippine government. It is envisioned that passage of this bill will help make the bureaucracy become more efficient and responsive to public interest through faster and better communications. If the government has to realize its goal of a peaceful, progressive Philippines in the foreseeable future, the country must be able to compete in the technological terms in the global arena and to provide mechanism for grater cooperation with its ASEAN neighbors and the rest of the international community of nations.

An integrated government internet access will be a major stride in that direction.

In view of the foregoing considerations, the approval of this bill is strongly recommended.



CATALINO V. FIGUEROA

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**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR INTERNET ACCESS AMONG VARIOUS GOVERNMENT
AGENCIES, GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND CONTROLLED
CORPORATIONS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the
Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the Philippine Internet
(Philnet) Access Act of 2005.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. The State recognizes the vital role
of communication and information in nation-building. For this purpose, the
State shall develop and implement a nationwide government program that will
optimize the utilization of information technology infrastructure towards the
attainment of continued economic growth and development.

SECTION 3. Philippine Internet (Philnet) Access Plan. The Department
of Science and Technology (DOST) shall develop the Philippine Internet
(Philnet) Access Plan, hereinafter referred to as the "Philnet", to provide a
rational and integrated framework for information technology development

among the various government agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) and local government units (LGUs).

The Philnet shall be focused on the installation of an information technology infrastructure that can link up the entire government organization and can easily be integrated with an Internet service provider.

SECTION 4. Administrator of Philnet. An administrator, who shall have the competence and experience in the technical field of computer science, shall have be appointed by the Secretary of Science and Technology to be primarily responsible for the conduct of an overall and integrated approach, management and control of Philnet.

SECTION 5. Powers and Functions. The Administrator shall have the following power and functions:

- a) To execute and administer Philnet for the realization of the policy set forth in this Act;
- b) To direct and supervise the operation and internal administration of Philnet and for this purpose, to delegate some or any of his powers and functions to appropriate subordinate officials;
- c) To appoint and fix the number and compensation of officials and employees necessary to implement Philnet, subject to civil service laws, rules and regulations;
- d) To render to the Secretary of Science and Technology an annual report within thirty (30) days after the end of each calendar year, which shall include recommendations for appropriate remedial legislation; and

- e) To exercise such powers and duties that are proper or necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 6. Security and Privacy. Philnet shall provide precautionary measures necessary to ensure the security and privacy of transmissions and integrity of information accessed via the Internet. It shall likewise facilitate the management and protection of classified information affecting national security and public order.

SECTION 7. Appropriations. The initial amount of One Billion Pesos (P1,000,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be appropriated in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law. Thereafter, any amount as maybe necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 8. Repealing Clause. All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issuances inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 9. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect after the lapse of fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,