

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **4271**

Introduced by Kabataan Party-List Representative Raymond V. Palatino

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The internet has proven to be one of the greatest and most valuable venues where people can exercise their democratic freedoms, from their personal rights as individuals to freely express their sentiments, to the people's collective rights to air out political opinions and grievances.

The Free Public Wi-Fi Act seeks to move government one step forward in providing democratic access to the world wide web. Notwithstanding the issue of the mass accessibility and availability of personal electronic devices that people have to use in order to access public networks, government has to recognize that the internet is one important mechanism in encouraging the people's participation in governance and in democracy and one way to foster this democratic participation is by at least providing the people access to the internet in many, if not all, of our government buildings and public establishments. It will also encourage people to visit and look upon our government institutions as truly public spaces where they can assemble and converge for discussions, talk with government officials, and participate in democratic processes.

The approval of this act will signal the government's genuine determination in truly and effectively using information and communications technology in further advancing the people's democratic rights and interests.

Adopted,


HON. RAYMOND V. PALATINO
Representative, Kabataan Party-list

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FREE PUBLIC WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESSIBILITY IN
NATIONAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, MUNICIPAL HALLS AND
PROVINCIAL CAPITOLS, STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES, PUBLIC
PARKS AND PLAZAS, PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION TERMINALS BY INSTALLING WIRELESS INTERNET
CONNECTIONS IN THEIR BUILDINGS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS
THEREOF

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Free Public Wi-fi Act.”

2

3 **SECTION 2. Installation of Wireless Internet Connections.** – Wireless internet connection
4 shall, as far as practicable, be installed and be made available in buildings of all national
5 government offices including its regional and satellite offices, in municipal halls and in
6 provincial capitols, in state universities and colleges, in public parks and plazas, in public
7 hospitals and in public transportation terminals such as airports and public bus stations.

8

9 **SECTION 3. Internet Service Provider.** – The Department of Science and Technology (DOST)
10 shall, as far as practicable, provide the internet connectivity necessary to comply with the
11 provisions of this Act. Only in cases where the DOST is technically unable to provide internet
12 connectivity shall the administration or management of a government office, state university or
13 college, public park, public hospital or public transportation terminal concerned avail of the
14 services of commercial internet service providers.

1
2 **SECTION 4. *Wi-fi Access.*** – No restrictions, in the form of passwords and other similar
3 mechanisms, shall be imposed with regard to access to the free public wi-fi network. Only
4 in cases where there is a clear and present security or technical risk that cannot be remedied
5 through normal technical solutions shall the administration or management of a government
6 office, state university or college, public park, public hospital or public transportation
7 terminal limit access to the network through the use of passwords, which shall be easily
8 provided to the public upon request by individuals. No fee may be charged for access to the
9 free public wi-fi network.
10

11 **SECTION 5. *Places of Access.*** – At the minimum, government offices, state universities
12 and colleges, public hospitals and public transportation terminals shall ensure that access to
13 the free public wi-fi network is available at the main lobbies and main hallways of each
14 distinct and separate publicly-accessible building in government offices, state universities
15 and colleges, public hospitals and public transportation terminals and at the main assembly
16 points in a public park or plaza.
17

18 **SECTION 6. *Implementing Agency.*** – The Commission on Information and
19 Communications Technology shall be the lead agency in charge of ensuring the
20 implementation of this Act. It shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the
21 effective implementation of this Act, and will likewise ensure compliance therewith. It shall
22 also formulate project proposals that will ensure that the government can fully provide for
23 itself the technology and infrastructure necessary to comply with the Act.
24

25 **SECTION 7. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act
26 shall be incorporated in the annual General Appropriations Act.
27

28 **SECTION 8. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
29 in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Adopted,