

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES
House Bill No. **3867**

Introduced by: HON. MA. THERESA B. BONOAN
4th District, City of Manila

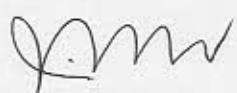
EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State recognizes the importance of the disabled sector. For example, it established the National Commission for Disabled Persons to insure that the rights of the handicapped are protected, and that all programs and services are universal and accessible to all segments of society.

Although modern technology has created devices to cater to the special needs of handicapped persons, they still need assistance with communication facilities for the hearing-impaired and speech-impaired.

This bill seeks to make the national telecommunication system accessible to the hearing-impaired and speech-impaired.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


HON. MA. THERESA B. BONOAN
4th District, City of Manila

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**AN ACT PROVIDING TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS
ACCESSIBILITY TO THE HEARING-IMPAIRED AND SPEECH-
IMPAIRED**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "*Telecommunications
Accessibility Enhancement Act.*"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to provide handicapped
persons protection and assistance to hasten their integration into the mainstream of
society.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the term:

(A) "TDD" or Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf is a machine which
employs graphic communications in the transmission of coded signals through
the nationwide telecommunications system.

(B) "Secretary" refers to the Secretary of Transportation and Communications.

SECTION 4. National Telecommunications Systems Requirements -

(a) Accessibility of Telecommunication System. - The Department of Transportation
and Communications shall issue the necessary rules and regulation to assure
that the national telecommunications system is highly accessible to hearing-
impaired and speech-impaired individuals.

(b) Specific Requirement - In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall -

1. provide for establishment of a relay system for users of TDD's;
2. within 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, expand such relay system by employing at least one additional operator;
3. within 180 days after such date of enactment -
 - i. conduct, as part of the rule-making proceeding required by subsection (a), analysis of modifications to the National Telecommunication System that the Secretary, in his discretion, determines to be necessary to achieve the objectives of subsection (a); and
 - ii. submit report on the results of such analysis to each House of the Congress.
4. within 180 days after completion of such analysis, prescribe the regulations required by subsection (a);
5. assemble, publish and maintain a directory of TDD and other devices used by national agencies to comply with such regulations, and publish in national agency directories, access numbers of TDD's and such other devices; and
6. adopt the design of a standard logo to signify the presence of a TDD or other device used to comply with such regulations.

SECTION 5. Additional Requirements. -

- a) Support for Research. - The Secretary shall seek to promote research by government agencies and private entities to reduce the cost and improve the capabilities of telecommunications devices and systems that provide accessibility to hearing-impaired and speech-impaired individuals
- b) Planning to Assimilate Technological Development - The Secretary, in planning future alterations to and modifications of the National Telecommunications System, shall take into account results of the analysis required by section 4(b)(3) and any technological improvements in telecommunications devices and systems that provide accessibility to hearing-impaired and speech-impaired individuals.

SECTION 6. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 7. Separability Clause. - If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 8. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication either in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved.