

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 7520



Introduced by HON. MANUEL F. ZUBIRI

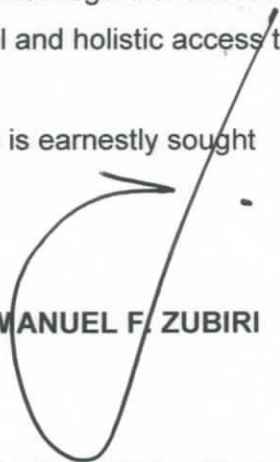
EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to require all government websites to be more accessible to Filipinos nationwide, including persons with disabilities and those who do not understand English as a medium of communication. Given the creation of the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) and the increasing computer literacy among Filipinos, it is important we keep our avenues open and accessible to each and every Filipino. Public office is a public trust, and increased access to our offices and officials is vital to retaining or improving their trust in us.

If passed, the bill will mandate every government website to contain its organizational structure, a list of the officials contained in the said structure, and the contact numbers to their respective offices. It will mandate all government websites to be user-friendly to all persons with disabilities. It will also mandate regional offices to maintain a version in their regional language(s) to allow for greater understanding and comprehension.

The Philippines, as of January 2017, has around 60 million internet users, almost 60 percent of the Filipino population¹. The latest census conducted in 2010 revealed 1,443,000 Filipinos are disabled². With a growing number of the population relying on the internet for information, the increased access to free internet with the advent of the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT), and the obstacles with which our disabled, elderly, and minority have with regard to access to our government offices, it is vital we ensure our offices grant total and holistic access to the Filipinos.

In lieu of this, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought


MANUEL F. ZUBIRI

¹ Subido, Lorenzo Kyle. "Growing 27% in 2016, PH Now Has 60 Million Internet Users", January 24, 2017, <http://www.entrepreneur.com.ph/news-and-events/ph-now-has-60-million-internet-users-growing-27-in-2016-a36-20170124>, Accessed September 12, 2017

² Philippine Statistics Authority, "Persons with Disability in the Philippines (Results from the 2010 Census), January 10, 2013, <https://psa.gov.ph/content/persons-disability-philippines-results-2010-census>, Accessed September 12, 2017

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**AN ACT MAKING ALL GOVERNMENT WEBSITES MORE ACCESSIBLE, ESPECIALLY
FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, THE MINORITIES, AND THE ELDERLY**

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

1 SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy* – It is the State's policy, in line with the principle
2 that public office is a public trust, to recognize the vital role of communication and
3 information in nation-building. It is also the State's policy to encourage the use of
4 information and communications technology (ICT) for the enhancement of key public
5 services, such as education, health, and public safety, revenue generation, and socio-civic
6 services, and to empower, through the use of ICT the disadvantaged segments of the
7 population, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, and indigenous and minority
8 groups.
9

10 SECTION. 2. *Definition of Terms* – For the purposes of this act, the term

- 11 (A) "Access" shall mean the instruction, communication with, storing data in, retrieving
12 data from, or otherwise making use of any resources of a computer system or
13 communication network;
14 (B) "Communication" means the transmission of information through ICT media,
15 including voice, video and other forms of data;
16 (C) "Chief Information Officer" shall mean a senior officer in all national government
17 agencies (NGAs) including constitutional offices, state universities and colleges
18 (SUCs), government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), and government
19 financial institutions (GFIs) responsible for the development and management of the
20 agency's ICT systems and applications;
21 (D) "Electronic government or E-Government" means the use of information and
22 communications technology (ICT) of the government and the public to enhance
23 access to and delivery of government services to bring about efficient, responsive,
24 ethical, accountable, and transparent government service;
25 (E) "Flash" means a pair of opposing changes in relative luminance that can cause
26 seizures in some people if it is large enough and in the right frequency range;
27 (F) "Information and Communications Technology" (ICT) means the totality of
28 electronic means to access, create, collect, store, process, receive, transmit,
29 present, and disseminate information;
30 (G) "Mechanism" means a process or technique for achieving a result;
31 (H) "Website" means any collection of material placed in a computer-based server file
32 archive so that it is publicly accessible, through the internet, using hypertext transfer
33 protocol (HTTP) or any successor protocol;
34 (I) "Web page" means a non-embedded resource obtained from a single universal
35 resource locator (URL) using HTTP plus any other resources that are used in the
36 rendering or intended to be rendered together with it by a user agent.
37

38 SECTION 3. *Scope and Applicability*. – The provisions of this act shall apply to
39 websites of all government offices, agencies, and bureaus.
40

41 SECTION 4. *Minimum Information Requirements*. – All government websites, in
42 addition to their existing content, must include the following:

- 43 (1) An full and detailed organizational structure of the entire office, agency, or
44 bureau;
45 (2) The citizen's charter of such government office;

- (3) The official contact details and e-mail address of every public officer included in the organizational structure;
- (4) The exact address of the office, agency, or bureau, and the addresses of the regional offices thereof, should there be any;
- (5) A list of all services, projects, and programs being implemented by said office, agency, or bureau;
- (6) Textual instructions in availing of each service being offered by said office, agency, or bureau, and a visual representation of such instructions; and
- (7) A search functionality to allow the user to locate information more accurately.

SECTION 5. *Annually Updated.* – All information required by Section 2 hereof in the website of any government office, agency, or bureau, shall be updated annually or as often as changes in public service or convenience may require.

SECTION 6. *Languages and Dialects for Website of Regional Offices.* – Regional offices or extensions of any office, agency, or bureau shall have the content of their respective websites available in both the English and Filipino languages with corresponding translations in all local dialects in the region.

SECTION 7. *Text Alternatives.* – The website shall provide text alternatives for any non-text component so that it can be changed into other forms readable to persons with disabilities. The website shall provide alternatives in large text, speech, Braille, symbols, or simpler language.

SECTION 8. *Captions and transcripts.* – All audio, video, and audiovisual content in the website shall have captions and transcripts therefor provided in the website.

SECTION 9. *Keyboard Accessibility.* – All functionality of the website's content is operable through a keyboard interface without requiring specific timings for individual keystrokes, except where the underlying function requires input that depends on the path of the user's movement and not just the endpoints.

SECTION 10. *Prohibition Against Content Causing Seizures.* – The content of the website shall not be designed in a way or manner that is commonly known to cause seizures. Websites must not contain anything that flashes more than three times in any one-second period.

SECTION 11. *Navigability.* – The website shall provide ways to help users navigate, find content, and determine where they are. Websites shall have the following features:

- (a) Web pages must have titles which describe their topic or purpose;
- (b) The purpose of each link can be determined from the link text alone or from mouse-over pop-ups or similar audio-visual devices;
- (c) More than one way is available to locate a web page within a set of web pages except where the web page is a result of, or a step in, a process;
- (d) Headings and labels must describe their topic or purpose;
- (e) Section headings must be used to organize content; and
- (f) Must have a navigable Site Map at its homepage.

SECTION 12. *Readability.* – The website shall make the text content thereof readable and understandable. Website shall have the following features:

- (a) The user shall be given the choice of language, either Filipino, English, or the dialects common for the regional offices concerned, with which he or she shall access the web page;
- (b) A mechanism is available for identifying specific definitions of words or phrases used in an unusual or restricted way, including idioms or jargon;
- (c) Text and content requiring reading ability more advanced than the lower secondary education level after removal of proper names or titles, supplemental content, or a version shall be avoided whenever possible

SECTION 12. *Input Assistance.* – The website shall help users avoid and correct mistakes. Websites shall have the following features:

- (a) If an input error is automatically detected, the item that is in error is identified and the error is described to the user in text;
- (b) Labels or instructions are provided when content requires user input;

- 1 (c) If an input error is automatically detected and suggestions for correction are
2 known, then suggestions are provided to the user, unless it would jeopardize the
3 security or purpose of the content;
4 (d) For websites that require the user to submit information, submissions shall be
5 reversible, checked, and confirmed by the website.
6

7 SECTION 13. *Implementing Agency.* - The Department of Information and
8 Communications Technology (DICT), in consultation with all government offices, agencies,
9 and bureaus concerned, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the
10 effective implementation of this Act.
11

12 SECTION 14. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, parts of laws, decrees, presidential
13 issuances, proclamations, orders, ordinances, and administrative regulations in conflict with
14 the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, modified or repealed accordingly.
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16 SECTION 15. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
17 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.
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20 *Approved,*
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