

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
House Bill No. **7697**



Introduced by Representative Victor A. Yap

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The age of social media is already here. With the advent of the Internet, the proliferation of information, whether true or not, is moving at an exponential pace. A post, a news, or a story posted online can be accessed by anyone from any part of the globe that has internet access in a matter of seconds. Indeed, the internet age has made the modern man truly global.

However, these technological advancements have also made people more vulnerable and susceptible to false allegations of fact and to the spread of fake news. The power of social media to reach a wide range of audience has made it easier for nefarious individuals to manipulate social media platforms to influence and sway public opinion.

The rise of the internet has definitely presented new challenges on laws regulating and penalizing disinformation to the public. With the anonymity that social media platforms provide, it is more difficult for law enforcers to identify the people behind the nefarious acts perpetuated in social media. Another prevalent scheme in social media is the use of dummy accounts and identity theft. Criminals can easily use false information regarding their identities to commit illegal acts.

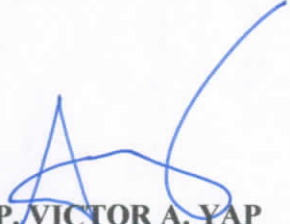
Unfortunately, our legal system is untested in dealing with crimes perpetrated through social media. The still infant law on cybercrime prevention is yet to be discussed thoroughly by the courts of the land. Thus, we are left with the provisions of the Revised Penal Code on Libel, the Civil Code provisions on Abuse of Rights and Quasi-delict, and Presidential Decree No. 90, series of 1973, which declares unlawful rumor-mongering and spreading false information, to deal with crimes perpetrated through social media.

Yet we, as legislators, must not allow this legal situation impede us. We must find ways to control the rise of social media and prepare the youth of our generation to use it responsibly. This bill therefore seeks to include social media education in the K-12 curriculum as well as the National Service Training Program. We hope that this bill will inculcate to the youth, the virtues of discernment and critical-thinking in their unavoidable daily immersion in Social Media.

Further, this bill will mandate all government agencies, including local government units and non-government organizations to formulate policies for the responsible, transparent and fair utilization of social media in their respective offices. The Philippine Communications Operations Office, in coordination with the Department of Information and Communication Technology will conduct training programs and strategy development seminars to enhance social media use and counter the spread of misinformation.

As with all the challenges that we face as a nation, the answer always lie in education. With the advent of the internet, social media literacy is the only way to go.

In the interest of education and social justice, support for the passage and approval of this legislation is earnestly sought.


REP. VICTOR A. YAP
Second District, Province of Tarlac

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 7697

Introduced by Representative Victor A. Yap

AN ACT

INCORPORATING THE VALUE OF RESPONSIBLE, FAIR AND TRUTHFUL
UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITIES, GOVERNMENT
AGENCIES, NON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION, PRIVATE CORPORATIONS,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. Title.** - This Act shall be known as the “*Social Media Awareness Act of*
2 *2018*”.

3

4 **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** – The State has constitutionally-declared policies
5 to serve and protect the people, to give priority to education to foster patriotism and nationalism
6 and to recognize the vital role of communication and information in nation-building. Towards
7 this end, it is the objective of this Act to cope up with the mercurial rise of the influence and
8 prevalence of use of Social Media by inculcating onto the youth and/or students the virtues of
9 discernment and critical-thinking in their unavoidable daily immersion in Social Media. Further,
10 government agencies as well as private institutions shall contribute to ensuring social media
11 literacy in the nation.

12

13 **SECTION 3. Inclusion of Social Media in the Curricula for Primary and Secondary**
14 *Education.* – Social Media awareness shall be part of the K-12 curriculum, in public and private
15 schools, with the following objectives:

- 16
- 17 a. Inculcate how various types of Social Media aid in the effective and efficient
18 dissemination of information;
- 19 b. Inculcate how Social Media helps in shaping public discourse and opinion;
- 20 c. Inculcate how Social Media helps in fostering a more participative democracy;

- 1 d. Inculcate the importance of upholding truth and the veracity of facts, figures and
2 events in Social Media;
3 e. Inculcate responsible and fair use of Social Media; and
4 f. Inculcate the virtues of discernment and critical-thinking in the use and/or enjoyment
5 of Social Media.
6

7 The Department of Education (DepEd), in consultation with the Department of
8 Information and Communications Technology (DICT), shall immediately formulate the
9 necessary steps and measures to achieve the objectives of this Section.
10

11 **SECTION 4. *SocialMedia Awareness as part of the National Service Training***
12 ***Program (NSTP)*** – Social Media awareness must be made part of the National Service
13 Training Program (NSTP), particularly in the service components pertaining to the Literacy
14 Training Service (LTS) and the Civic Welfare Training Service (CWTS).
15

16 The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills
17 Development Authority (TESDA), in consultation with the DICT, shall immediately formulate
18 the necessary steps and measures to achieve the objectives of this Section.
19

20 **SECTION 5. *Social Media Literacy.*** - All government agencies, including local
21 government units and non-government organizations must formulate policies for the
22 responsible, transparent and fair utilisation of social media in their respective offices.
23

24 **SECTION 6. *Training Programs and Strategy Development Seminars.*** The
25 Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO), in coordination with the DICT shall
26 be tasked to conduct training programs and strategy development seminars to enhance social
27 media use and counter the spread of mis information.
28

29 **SECTION 7. *Contribution of the Private Sector in Social Media Awareness*** -
30 Private corporations must formulate and implement effective measures and/or policies in
31 relation to the responsible, fair and truthful utilization and/or enjoyment of various types of
32 Social Media. Private corporations must likewise promote the foregoing as part of their
33 respective Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
34

35 The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), in consultation with the DICT, shall
36 immediately formulate the necessary steps and measures to achieve the objectives of this
Section.

1 **SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The DepEd, CHED, SEC,
2 PCOO in consultation with the DICT, shall have the joint responsibility for the adoption of the
3 implementing rules of this Act
4

5 **SECTION 9. *Separability Clause*** – If any section or provision of this Act shall be
6 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the sections or provisions not affected thereby shall remain
7 in full force and effect.
8

9 **SECTION. 10. *Effectivity*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
10 publication in two (2) newspapers of national circulation.
11

12 Approved,