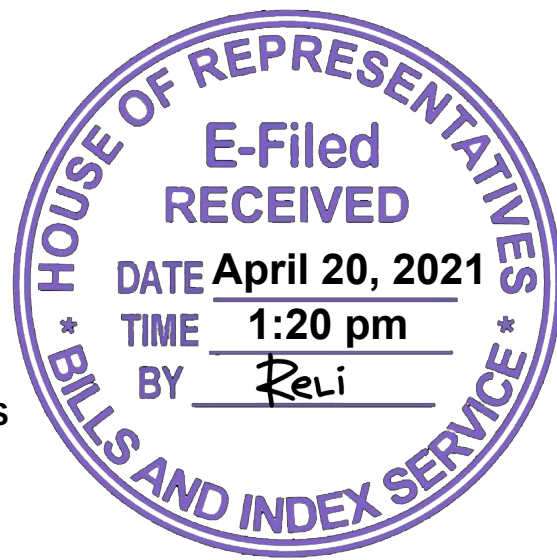


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL No. 9226

Introduced by Representative DEOGRACIAS VICTOR B. SAVELLANO

AN ACT
PROMOTING ANTI-DISINFORMATION AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF MEDIA,
ESTABLISHING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EXPERTS'
OPINION (NCEO), SUPPORTING SUCH EFFORTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Today's level of technology has given us an outlet to read and watch news stories in just a tick of a click. With this, mass media has been provided an avenue to disseminate information reaching a wider audience.

Unfortunately, it is also the same time that the distribution of false information has propagated exponentially, created digital diversion and has led the public's eyes to lies and deception.

The disinformation, when left unverified, has the potential to sow confusion in public dialogue, to exacerbate political issues, and to promote distrust and loss of confidence to democratic institutions.

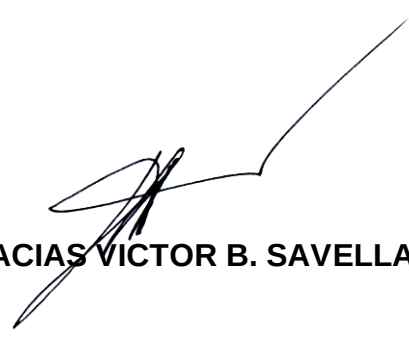
This proposed measure seeks to promote anti-disinformation and the responsible use of media by instituting a National Council of Experts' Opinion (NECO). This will be composed of experts coming from various disciplines to come up with a harmonized statement on a pressing public issue.

The statement will help people have a discourse that is direct on the subject and a deeper understanding of the matter.

This bill also aims to encourage responsible and credible journalism, as well as mitigating the distortion of facts.

The passage of this legislative proposal will help us combat misleading and deceptive news that causes divisiveness, poses security risks, panic and chaos to this country. Further, making our citizens informed of the quality of fact they deserved is a very important investment to the future.

For this reason, I enjoin my colleagues in Congress to shepherd the approval of this bill.



DEOGRACIAS VICTOR B. SAVELLANO

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

Section 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “*Anti-Disinformation and Responsible Use of Media Act of 2021*”

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State gives due recognition in the vital role of communication and information to nation-building. Therefore, it is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of its people to factual, accurate, and truthful information. Towards this end, the State shall not compromise the truth at all times and shall remain cognizant of the people’s fundamental rights to the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

Sec. 3. *Creation of the National Council of Experts' Opinion (NCEO).* – There is hereby created and established the National Council of Experts' Opinion (NCEO), hereinafter referred to as the Council, which shall be under the Office of the President of the Philippines. The Council shall have the duty to study, examine, and evaluate the present case of a pressing issue that is timely and of public concern. Thereafter, the Council shall issue an official statement on the matter duly endorsed by the panel of experts.

Sec. 4. *Composition.* – The Council shall be composed of the following clusters:

- i. Transportation and Infrastructure Development;
- ii. Health and Human Development;
- iii. Security, Justice, Peace and Unity;
- iv. Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Preparedness; and,
- v. Labor, Employment, and Economic Development.

Provided, That the Secretary of the Presidential Communication Operations Office (PCOO) shall serve as the Chairperson of the Council. *Provided further,* that the Head of each cluster shall be selected by the President. *Provided finally,* that the Head and Members of each cluster shall be selected on the basis of their specialization from the academe or the professional and legitimate organization that they represent.

Sec. 5. *Membership to NCEO Clusters.* – The Chairperson, as the case may be, shall have the authority to require the participation and fullest cooperation of government agencies and its instrumentalities, academic institutions, and civil service organizations in the Council, as may be deemed necessary.

Sec. 6. *Role and Responsibility of Mass Media Outlets (MMOs).* – The Mass Media Outlets (MMOs) shall refer to any entity incorporated to carry on the business of radio and television broadcasting and granted a valid government franchise to operate such

business or that publishes newspaper with regular public circulation and uses print, online or whatever means to disseminate content for commercial purposes.

It shall be unlawful for any MMOs to create and immediately disseminate news of public concern without consulting the Council. The commission of such unlawful act shall constitute a liability under existing laws.

Sec. 7. *News of Public Concern.* – Any news of public concern shall include, but not limited to:

- i. Detecting/Exposing crime or serious impropriety;
- ii. Protecting public health and safety; and,
- iii. Preventing the public from being misled from any action or statement of an individual or organization.

Sec. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulation.* – The Council shall formulate and promulgate, within ninety days (90) from its effectivity, the rules and regulations necessary to implement this Act.

Sec. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions thereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Sec. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, and other presidential issuances which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 11. *Effectivity.* – This Act takes effect immediately after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,