

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4580



Introduced by **HON. GUS S. TAMBUNTING**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE INTEGRATION PROGRAM IN ROAD
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TO SAVE COSTS AND ACCELERATE DEPLOYMENT OF INTERNET
CONNECTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

We currently live in a digital era wherein almost everyone can access the internet through handheld devices. With the technological advancements in recent years, people can access a vast pool of information within just a few clicks. As such, the internet has become a very essential service for education, entrepreneurship, communication, work, and almost all transactions in our day-to-day lives. Truly, the internet has the potential to influence economic growth and social change. It allows for transformation in workplaces towards cost-efficient transactions and processes. The Philippines, however, lags behind its Southeast Asian neighbors in terms of accessibility and speed. The COVID-19 pandemic exemplified the country's inadequate capacity for heavier usage. Since the implementation of strict quarantine measures in Metro Manila and later on Luzon, there have been numerous complaints of slow internet speeds from users due to a sudden spike in internet usage due to work-from-home setups and online classes. As such, there is a need for issues such as these that impede Filipinos from accessing this essential service.

Considering the importance of internet connectivity to a nation's economic growth, there is the need to accelerate the deployment of internet infrastructure which would allow for greater internet accessibility or connectivity. This measure provides for the integration of internet infrastructure to all government road infrastructure projects to use the same rights-of-way and reduce unnecessary and repeated excavations for the laying down of cables, wires, and similar facilities and materials. The Department of Public works and Highways shall be responsible for identifying existing and planned road infrastructure projects covered by the program and shall be utilized for the integration of internet infrastructure (such as fiber-optic cable installation, etc.) in their implementation.

On behalf of the people of Parañaque City's Second District, and for the common good of the Filipino people, the approval of the said measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Gus S. Tambunting".

REP. GUS S. TAMBUNTING
2nd District, Parañaque City

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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 "Internet Infrastructure Integration Act".

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to accelerate the provision of internet connectivity in the entire country in an efficient and cost-saving manner. Under this, internet infrastructure must be integrated into all government road infrastructure projects to use the same rights-of-way and reduce unnecessary and repeated excavations for the laying down of cables, wires, and similar facilities and materials.

Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- a) Internet Infrastructure - means any buried or underground facility and any wireless or wireline connection that enables the provision of internet connectivity, such as fiber-optic cables and any similar technology that may be developed in the future; and
- b) Internet Infrastructure Integration- a requirement designed to reduce the cost and accelerate the deployment of internet connectivity by minimizing the number and scale of repeated excavations for the installation and maintenance of internet infrastructure in rights-of-way, especially in unserved and underserved areas in the country.

Section 4. *Internet Infrastructure Integration Program.* – The Internet Infrastructure Integration Program is hereby established under the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). The DPWH shall identify existing and planned road Infrastructure projects such as, but not limited to, farm-to-market roads, local and national roads, bridges, road widening, road maintenance, etc., which shall be covered by the program and shall be utilized for the integration of internet infrastructure in their implementation. This program entails the inclusion or integration of internet Infrastructure such as fiber-optic cable installation during the construction of any government road Infrastructure project using the same right-of-way. Priority shall be given to unserved and underserved areas, as determined by the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT).

Section 5. *Private Sector Participation.* – The DPWH, in coordination with the DICT and the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), shall establish a system for the notification, coordination, and participation of broadband providers, internet service providers, telecommunications companies and similar private entities in this program, subject to the payment of reasonable fees and other terms and conditions that the DPWH deems necessary and appropriate.

Section 6. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations for the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

Section 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectiveness of this Act, the DPWH, DICT, NTC, and other relevant government agencies and stakeholders, shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

Section 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules, and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

Section 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

Approved,