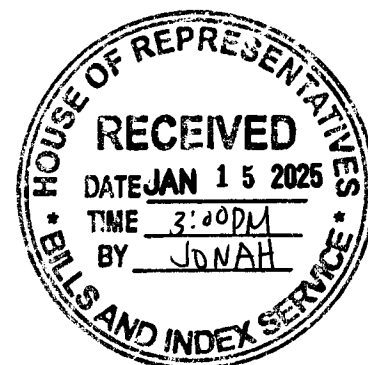


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. **11294**



Introduced by Representative Ron P. Salo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Transparency and accountability are fundamental principles of democratic governance. The advent of digital technology offers unprecedented opportunities to enhance public access to government proceedings and strengthen citizen engagement. However, Republic Act No. 7160, also known as the Local Government Code of 1991, does not explicitly provide for the utilization of online streaming platforms to make local legislative sessions, particularly for Sangguniang Bayans, accessible to all citizens.

As a democratic country, it is only fitting to strive toward enhancing the accessibility, inclusivity, and openness of governmental processes. At the national level, both Houses of Congress have already embraced the practice of livestreaming all legislative and committee sessions and meetings in Facebook and Youtube. This provides citizens with unprecedented access to the legislative process, allowing them to observe how policies are formulated, debated, and decided upon. It fosters transparency and ensures that public officials are held accountable for their actions.

A study investigating the impact of digital technology on public service delivery and citizen engagement in Isabela City, Basilan also revealed that digital technology has become an indispensable tool for accessing public services. This highlights the importance of utilization and accessibility of digital technologies such as online streaming platforms in order to empower citizens to engage better in public governance.

In Ilocos Norte, the Laoag City Council has been livestreaming their proceedings since July 19, 2022. This initiative builds upon a 2017 local ordinance mandating the livestreaming of legislative sessions, which emphasizes that by providing residents with real-time online access to the deliberation on measures affecting the city, citizens are given the opportunity to actively contribute to improving governance and providing valuable feedback to local leaders.

By making local governance more accessible, citizens are empowered to fully engage in participatory democracy. Local leaders have a duty to the people who entrusted them with their votes to demonstrate competence, integrity, and dedication in public service. The public has the right to know whether they made the right choice in electing their representatives. Livestreaming the sessions of the Sangguniang

Bayan via online platforms provides citizens with the opportunity to witness firsthand how their leaders deliberate on critical issues. This measure aligns with global and local best practices in governance while setting a higher standard for public service in the Philippines.

This initiative represents a forward-thinking approach to modernizing governance, ensuring that it evolves alongside technological advancements in today's digital age. By enabling citizens to directly observe legislative deliberations, it combats misinformation and ensures the public remains accurately informed about their leaders' actions and decisions. Institutionalizing the livestreaming of Sangguniang Bayan sessions bridges the gap between local governments and the people they serve, fostering a more informed, engaged, and empowered citizenry.

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



RON P. SALO
KABAYAN Part List

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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NINETEENTH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. 11294

Introduced by Representative Ron P. Salo

AN ACT MANDATING THE LIVESTREAMING OF SANGGUNANG BAYAN SESSIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 50 AND 52, CHAPTER III OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991"

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

SECTION 1. Short Title – This Act shall be known as the "*Livestreaming of Sangguniang Bayan Sessions Act*".

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policies – It is the policy of the State to promote transparency, accountability, and good governance at all levels of government, in accordance with the constitutional mandate of ensuring the public's right to information on matters of public concern. Toward this end, the State recognizes the critical role of digital technology in fostering greater public access to government proceedings and strengthening citizen engagement.

To uphold these principles, it shall be the policy of the State to require the livestreaming of Sangguniang Bayan sessions through online platforms, such as social media and video-sharing services, ensuring that legislative processes are made visible and readily available to the public, thereby empowering citizens and promoting participatory democracy.

SECTION 3. Section 50 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the "Local Government Code of 1991", is hereby amended to read as follows:
Section 50. Internal Rules of Procedure. –

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(b) The rules of procedure shall provide for the following:
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(6) GUIDELINES MANDATING ONLINE LIVESTREAMING OF ALL REGULAR AND SPECIAL SESSIONS, INCLUDING THE USE OF OFFICIAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT'S (LGU) SOCIAL MEDIA PAGE FOR STREAMING AND THE ARCHIVING OF SESSION RECORDINGS.

(7) Such other rules as the sanggunian may adopt.

SECTION 4. Section 52 of R.A. No. 7160 is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

Section 52.A. Sessions. -

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(E) ALL REGULAR AND SPECIAL SESSIONS OF THE SANGGUNIAN SHALL BE LIVESTREAMED AND MADE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH ONLINE PLATFORMS, EXCEPT IN CASES WHERE THE SESSION IS DECLARED CONFIDENTIAL UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THIS CODE.

(F) Each sanggunian shall keep a journal and record of its proceedings which may be published upon resolution of the sanggunian concerned.

SECTION 5. A new section designated as Section 52.B of R.A. No. 7160, is hereby inserted to read as follows:

SECTION 52.B. LIVESTREAMING OF SESSIONS. – THE SANGGUNIAN SHALL ENSURE THE REAL-TIME LIVESTREAMING OF ITS SESSIONS USING OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT-SANCTIONED ONLINE PLATFORMS. RECORDINGS OF SUCH LIVESTREAMS SHALL BE ARCHIVED AND MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC UPON REQUEST, ENSURING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS SHALL ADOPT TECHNOLOGY-BASED MEASURES, SUCH AS LIVESTREAMING AND DIGITAL ARCHIVING, TO FACILITATE WIDER PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ACCESSIBILITY IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE.

SECTION 6. Separability Clause – If any provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions thereof not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect

SECTION 7. Repealing Clause – All other laws, presidential decrees, executive orders and issuances, and rules and regulations which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 8. Effectivity – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,