

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 486



Introduced by Representative Roman T. Romulo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution and jurisprudence have long affirmed that publication is indispensable for the effectivity and enforceability of laws, rules, and regulations. In *Tañada v. Tuvera* (G.R. No. L-63915, December 29, 1986), the Supreme Court emphasized the necessity of due notice to the public before laws can take effect. Executive Order No. 200 (1987) amended Article 2 of the Civil Code to allow publication either in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

However, in the present digital age, this dual mode of publication—though necessary at the time—has become increasingly inefficient, cost-ineffective, and limited in reach. Government agencies, including the Official Gazette and Congress, now maintain official websites that are widely accessible and promptly updated. Despite this, online publication is not yet legally recognized as a valid mode for satisfying the constitutional requirement.

This bill seeks to amend Article 2 of the Civil Code to include online publication on an official government website as a valid and sufficient means of publication. It ensures broader public access, promotes transparency, and reflects the realities of modern governance in the digital era, without undermining the due process guarantees enshrined in law.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Romulo'.

ROMAN T. ROMULO
Lone District, Pasig City

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AN ACT
RECOGNIZING ONLINE PUBLICATION AS A VALID MODE OF
PROMULGATION OF LAWS, AMENDING ARTICLE 2 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO.
386, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CIVIL CODE OF THE
PHILIPPINES

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

1 **SECTION 1. Title.**— This Act shall be known as the “Digital Promulgation Act”.
2

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to uphold the constitutional
4 guarantee of due process by ensuring that all laws are made accessible to the public
5 through effective and timely publication. Recognizing the transformative role of digital
6 technology in governance and public service, the State affirms the legitimacy of online
7 platforms maintained by the government as valid means of promulgating laws.
8 Towards this end, the State shall broaden public access, promote transparency, and
9 modernize legal dissemination while preserving the integrity and authenticity of official
10 publications.

11 **SEC. 3. Amendment.** – Article 2 of Republic Act No. 386, otherwise known as the Civil
12 Code of the Philippines, as amended by Executive Order No. 200, is hereby further
13 amended to read as follows:

14 "Article 2. Laws shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following the completion
15 of their publication in the Official Gazette, in a newspaper of general circulation
16 in the Philippines, or on the official website of the Official Gazette or any other

1 official publication platform maintained by the National Government for such
2 purpose, unless it is otherwise provided.

3 The date of online publication shall be electronically timestamped and
4 permanently archived in a publicly accessible and secure format. The National
5 Printing Office, in coordination with the Official Gazette, shall ensure the
6 authenticity, security, and integrity of all online publications under this Article."

7 **SEC. 4. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within ninety (90) days from the
8 effectivity of this Act, the Department of Information and Communications Technology
9 (DICT) and the Department of Justice (DOJ), in coordination with other stakeholders
10 such as the National Printing Office, shall promulgate the necessary rules and
11 regulations for the implementation of this Act, including standards for digital
12 authentication, archival requirements, and cybersecurity safeguards.

13
14 **SEC. 5. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, issuances, or
15 regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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17 **SEC. 6. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
18 the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

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21 *Approved,*