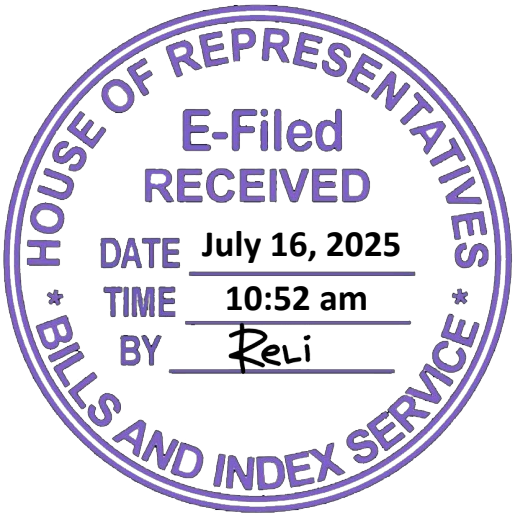


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



House Bill No. **1979**

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE RICARDO S. CRUZ, JR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

One of the challenges faced by every government is ensuring that its projects and programs are felt directly by the people it governs. While there is at least Php 100 Billion annual allotment for social welfare programs, the problem lies with ensuring the efficiency of agencies in delivering these funds to the intended beneficiaries.

The pandemic necessitated a more efficient and direct delivery of services and benefits to our countrymen. Through our shared experience, we have discovered the power of technology in terms of delivering government services and programs. The bureaucratic red tape has only served as a bottleneck to the full achievement of our state policy to “free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, rising standard of living, and improved quality of life for all.” Through the use of technology, the government found a way to bring itself and its services closer to the people.

Given that this Bill seeks to establish a contactless system through a mobile application, this representation believes that it could elevate our country’s response in its fight against the pandemic. During the third quarter of 2022, 97.3% of internet users in the Philippines used mobile phones, including smartphones and feature phones, to access the internet.¹

The proposed mobile application would promote the financial inclusion of the most vulnerable sectors of society through the adoption of an expedient means of distribution of aid and other assistance. Through this measure, it is my fervent hope to institutionalize a system that will ultimately and hopefully close the gap between the government and its people. This system could also pave the way for faster dissemination of important and urgent information, such as relevant updates on government guidelines and protocols, promoting transparency and making sure that the reports they receive are accurate to prevent any confusion or misunderstanding.

¹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/803808/digital-device-usage-among-adults-by-device-philippines/>

The government needs to take itself into the 21st century. For these reasons, the swift passage of the foregoing measure is earnestly sought.


RICARDO S. CRUZ JR.

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House Bill No. **1979**

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**AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE USE OF “MOBILE APPLICATION PARA SA PILIPINO”
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “MOBILE A.P.P.” IN THE DELIVERY OF BASIC GOVERNMENT
SERVICES AND PROGRAMS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

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 “*Mobile A.P.P. Act.*”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to provide a more efficient and direct delivery of services to the public. It is also the policy of the State to streamline its processes and reduce red tape. For this purpose, the establishment of a mobile application for the delivery of basic government services and the facilitation of government payments collection would eliminate possibilities of corruption in the government’s provision of services.

A contactless system, such as a unified mobile application, would elevate and advance the country’s assistance after the global Coronavirus Diseases 2019 pandemic. The use of a mobile application would dispense with the need for personal appearance by the public, health workers, and government personnel in the distribution of assistance and in the collection of payments, thereby ensuring their health and safety.

This interoperable system would also allow for faster dissemination of important and urgent information straight to the people, such as relevant updates on government programs, assistance, and subsidies whilst making sure that the reports they receive are accurate to prevent any confusion or misunderstanding.

Towards this end, this digital system shall ensure that the data collected is secure and that the people’s right to privacy and other constitutional and statutory rights are respected and protected at all times.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Act, the following terms are hereby defined as follows:

- (a) “Citizen” refers to a Filipino citizen, as defined in the Constitution, including those with dual or multiple citizenships in accordance with Republic Act No. 9225, otherwise known as the Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act of 2003.
- (b) “Digital collection” refers to a mode of payment wherein a government entity receives payments from individuals and entities through digital devices and where payments can be made through bank transfers, electronic money and payment cards.
- (c) “Digital disbursement” refers to a mode of payment wherein a government entity disburses money or any equivalent electronic representations of legal tender, for purposes of paying government expenditures, by crediting the target recipient’s transaction account through Advice to Debit Account or Electronic Fund Transfer facilitated by the Government Servicing Bank, or any other digital payment instruments allowed by existing laws and regulations.
- (d) “Digital payment” refers to a monetary payment transaction between two (2) parties through a digital payment instrument in which both the payer and the payee use an electronic channel.
- (e) “Electronic money (e-money)” refers to electronically stored money value which is issued in accordance with relevant regulations and issuances of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).
- (f) “Interoperability” refers to the ability or capacity of computerized systems to connect, exchange, and interpret shared data although developed by different manufacturers in different industries to enable exchange of information between applications, databases, and other computer systems.
- (g) “Mobile Application” refers to the contactless system to be established by this Act.
- (h) “Mobile Registration” refers to the ability to register in transportable registration devices or centers.
- (i) “Online Registration” refers to the ability to register using a computer or similar device connected to the internet.
- (j) “QR Code” refers to the quick response (QR) which can be read easily by a digital device and which stores information as a series of pixels in a square-shaped grid, developed and issued by the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT).
- (k) “Registration” refers to the act of entering the demographic and other relevant information of citizens to the system.

SECTION 4. Coverage. – All departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the government, including state universities and colleges, government-owned or -controlled corporations (Covered Agencies) are hereby directed and local government units (LGUs) are hereby enjoined to adopt the Mobile APP developed and established under this Act for efficient delivery of government services, disbursements, and collections.

SECTION 5. Mobile Application Para sa Pilipino (Mobile APP). – The DICT shall primarily be tasked for the development and establishment of the Mobile Application Para sa Pilipino otherwise known as the “Mobile APP” that is accessible to all citizens and interoperable among government agencies, offices, and units.

For this purpose, the DICT may partner with relevant individuals, sectors, entities, and companies for the development of a mobile application that may also be accessible

through a website, and if necessary, engage the services of such individuals, sectors, entities, and companies.

The Mobile APP shall afford a user-friendly registration process. Thereafter, a distinct QR Code shall be generated for each individual registrant taking into consideration the efficient delivery of government services, the collection of payments, and the implementation of necessary government programs, policies, protocols, and guidelines.

- a) Purposes – The use of the Mobile APP shall have the following purposes:
 - 1. To facilitate the delivery of government services such as, but not limited to, digital disbursement of financial assistance and other benefits, including but not limited to:
 - a. Social Amelioration Program (SAP) under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD);
 - b. Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) and other cash-for-work programs of the government under the Department of Labor and Employment;
 - c. Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) under the DSWD;
 - d. Stipends and other assistance to students under the Department of Education (DepEd);
 - e. Student loans under the Landbank of the Philippines, Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), or Social Security System (SSS);
 - f. Medical assistance under the Department of Health;
 - g. Loan programs under the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI); and
 - h. Social pensions from the DSWD and LGUs.
 - 2. To improve government revenue system through digital collection of payments for taxes, fees, tolls, and other charges and impositions;
 - 3. To aid Filipino citizens in the registration, application, and validation process for availing of government services; and
 - 4. To disseminate information in a prompt and timely manner to appraise Filipino citizens on matters relevant to their health and safety.
- b) Security features – Measures shall be taken by the DICT to secure the information, accounts, and QR Codes issued to Filipinos and to avoid possible security compromises, breaches of financial accounts, and potential violations of privacy.
- c) Free of charge – No fees shall be collected regarding the provision or generation of a Philippine QR Code.
- d) Features – The Mobile APP shall, among others, have the following features:
 - 1. Available and accessible for all and every mobile operating system, such as but not limited to Android, iOS, and Windows and
 - 2. Interoperable among all relevant government agencies and services and linked to services provided by Financial Service Providers.

Nothing in this Act shall prevent government agencies from developing or utilizing their own mobile applications or other information technology solutions to implement their respective programs, actions, or projects.

SECTION 6. Data to be gathered. – The information required for registration under the herein established Mobile APP shall be limited to the following:

- a) Full Name;
- b) Sex;
- c) Date of Birth;
- d) Place of Birth;
- e) Address (Residence);
- f) Marital Status;
- g) Mobile Number (optional);
- h) E-mail address (optional);
- i) Health Status (indicate any comorbidities);
- j) Willingness to be vaccinated or not;
- k) Government assistance or benefit already being received, if any; and,
- l) Details of bank account, e-money service (i.e., GCash, Pay Maya, Ali Pay), or other preferred payment, if any.

SECTION 7. Digital Payments Committee. – A Digital Payments Committee shall be created to provide guidance and promote cost-efficiency and transparency in the procurement of digital payment solutions by Covered Agencies and LGUs. The Committee shall be composed of representatives from the following agencies and offices:

- a. Department of Finance;
- b. Department of Budget and Management (DBM);
- c. Bureau of Treasury;
- d. Bureau of Internal Revenue; and
- e. Government Procurement Policy Board.

SECTION 8. Registration and Interoperability – The DICT, in coordination with other relevant agencies, shall develop and maintain a unified website for the same purpose as the Mobile APP and shall ensure their interoperability among relevant government agencies and supplied Financial Service Providers under Section 6(l) of this Act.

The LGUs, in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the DICT, shall conduct house-to-house registration, being mindful of health protocols. They shall also organize temporary mobile registrations, in such a number and frequency as needed, to allow individuals, especially those without access to internet or without the proper electronic equipment, to register under this Act.

Once an individual is issued a QR Code, LGUs may print out the QR Codes of individuals upon the latter's request and without expense to them.

SECTION 9. Special Registration of Minors, senior citizens, persons with disabilities (PWDs), illiterate persons, and indigenous peoples. – The DICT, in creating the website and Mobile APP, shall consider the vulnerabilities and special needs of different individuals and sectors of society such as but not limited to minors, senior citizens, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and indigenous peoples. *Provided*, That registration of minors shall be with the consent of parents or guardians of legal age. *Provided*, further, That QR codes generated for PWDs shall be printable in documents that allow them to be readable by PWDs. *Provided*, finally, That traditions and culture of indigenous peoples shall likewise be considered.

SECTION 10. Documentary requirements. – Any of the following documents shall be primary proof of recognition for purposes of verifying the registrant’s identity under this Act:

- a. Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)-issued Certificate of Live Birth;
- b. Any government-issued identification document which bears full name, front-facing photograph, and signature or thumb mark;
- c. Philippine Passport or e-Passport issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA); or
- d. GSIS or SSS-issued Unified Multi-purpose Identification Card (UMID).

If the registrant does not have any of the above-mentioned documents, he or she may submit any of the following secondary documents:

- a. National Statistics Office (NSO)-issued Certificate of Live Birth with Birth Reference Number (BreN)
- b. Local Civil Registry Office (LCRO)-issued Certificate of Live Birth
- c. PSA-issued Report of Birth
- d. PSA-issued Certificate of Foundling
- e. Seaman’s Book
- f. Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) ID
- g. License to Own or Possess Firearms (LTOPF) ID
- h. National Bureau of Investigation Clearance
- i. Police Clearance/ID
- j. Solo Parent’s ID
- k. Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) ID
- l. PhilHealth ID

The following identification documents shall also be accepted as secondary supporting documents provided that they have a front-facing photograph, signature/thumbmark, full name, permanent address, and date of birth:

- a. Employee ID
- b. School ID
- c. Barangay Clearance/Certificate
- d. Barangay ID
- e. City/Municipal ID

SECTION 11. Protection of data. – The DICT shall implement reasonable and appropriate organizational, technical, and physical security measures to ensure that the information gathered under this Act is protected from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, and against accidental or intentional loss, destruction, or damage.

While upholding the confidentiality provisions under Republic Act No. 10625, otherwise known as the “Philippine Statistical Act of 2013”, all data collated by the DICT under this Act may be used to generate aggregate data or statistical summaries without reference to or identification of any specific individual: *Provided*, that nothing in this Act shall be construed as prohibiting or limiting the sharing or transfer of any personal data that is already authorized or required by law.

SECTION 12. Information Campaign. - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DICT, together with the DILG and other government agencies, shall undertake an extensive information campaign to promote and explain the concept and use of the Mobile APP to all citizens.

SECTION 13. Establishment of Citizens' Grievance Hotline. – The DICT shall establish a Citizens' Information and Grievance Hotline which shall serve as a mechanism where citizens may ask information, report complaints and grievances, or request assistance relevant to the Mobile APP.

SECTION 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). – Within sixty (60) days upon approval of this Act, the DICT, together with appropriate government agencies, shall promulgate rules and regulations and exchange existing technologies and best practices on authentication and data security and development of the Mobile APP to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 15. Pilot Testing. – Within thirty (30) days after the promulgation of the IRR of this Act, a pilot testing of the Mobile APP shall be conducted for the delivery of one (1) basic program or service of an agency deemed appropriate by DICT. In addition, within five (5) months from the implementation of the pilot testing, Covered Agencies shall fully implement digital disbursements and collections.

SECTION 16. Transition. – All Covered Agencies are encouraged to establish programs to capacitate their personnel on innovative technologies, cybersecurity, and data privacy protection tools to ensure the full implementation of this Act. Covered Agencies shall also ensure the continuous delivery of public services during such transition, particularly the acceptance of non-digital mode of payments.

SECTION 17. Appropriations. – The sum deemed appropriate by DICT and Department of Budget and Management is hereby authorized to be appropriated, out of any funds in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 18. Separability Clause. If, for any reason, any portion or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 19. Repealing Clause. All laws, executive orders, proclamations, rules, regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 20. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,