

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. 2077



Introduced by Representative

BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA

**AN ACT RESTRICTING THE USE OF BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCING OR
CALL CENTER OPERATIONS FOR POLITICAL PROPAGANDA AND
CAMPAIGNING, PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY IN POLITICAL ADVERTISING,
AND IMPOSING PENALTIES FOR TROLL FARM OPERATIONS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the age of social media and rapid digital communication, the Philippines has witnessed a dramatic shift in how information shapes public opinion and influences elections. While digital platforms have given citizens unprecedented access to political discourse and participation, they have also become vulnerable to abuse through organized troll farms, coordinated disinformation networks, and the misuse of legitimate Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) facilities for unethical political ends.

Investigations and Senate inquiries in recent years have revealed the alarming reality that certain political operators and interest groups exploit BPOs and call centers to produce, amplify, and spread false or misleading political propaganda. Such operations manipulate the sentiments of ordinary Filipinos, distort the truth, undermine fair competition during elections, and ultimately weaken trust in democratic institutions. The Philippines, as a global leader in the outsourcing industry, bears a serious responsibility to protect the integrity of its BPO sector while safeguarding the sanctity of its electoral and public discourse.

This measure addresses these challenges by restricting the use of BPOs and call center operations for partisan propaganda and organized troll operations. It strengthens accountability

by imposing clear prohibitions and meaningful penalties against individuals, corporations, or political entities found engaging in or benefiting from such deceptive practices. It further seeks to promote transparency in online political advertising by requiring the clear disclosure of funding sources and spending amounts for political content posted on digital platforms, ensuring that Filipino voters know who is behind the messages they encounter online.

Recognizing the fast-evolving nature of disinformation and digital manipulation, this bill also establishes a robust regulatory and enforcement framework through the creation of a Special Regulatory Unit under the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT). This Unit will have the mandate to monitor compliance, conduct audits, investigate reports of troll farm operations, and coordinate with the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), the National Privacy Commission (NPC), and other relevant agencies. Social media platforms are likewise required to cooperate fully by implementing systems to detect and remove coordinated inauthentic accounts and by submitting regular transparency reports on political advertising and disinformation takedowns.

This legislative measure reaffirms the policy of the State to protect the integrity of elections, defend freedom of expression from abuse, and uphold the people's right to credible, fact-based information. It is rooted in our Constitution's mandate to ensure free and fair elections and supports international best practices on responsible digital governance. The Anti-Troll Farm Act aims to strike a fair balance between our globally competitive outsourcing industry and our people's democratic right to honest and transparent public discourse.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought to defend our democratic institutions from digital manipulation, promote transparency and accountability in political campaigning, and preserve the credibility of the BPO industry as a pillar of the Philippine economy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brian Poe", with a stylized, flowing script.

HON. BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA

Representative

FPJ Panday Bayanihan Party-List

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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-Troll Farm Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to safeguard the integrity of public discourse, protect free and fair elections, and promote transparency and accountability in the use of digital platforms. The State condemns the use of organized online operations—including Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and call center facilities—for the production and dissemination of political propaganda and disinformation.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

1. Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Operations – Refers to third-party service providers engaged in handling customer support, data processing, or digital services, including call

centers and back-office support operations.

2. Troll Farm Operations – Organized efforts, whether coordinated by individuals or groups, to manipulate public opinion by producing, disseminating, or amplifying political propaganda or disinformation through digital platforms.
3. Political Propaganda – Any communication intended to influence public opinion, election outcomes, or political decisions through false, misleading, or biased information.
4. Online Political Advertising – Paid content on digital platforms that advocates for or against a candidate, party, or political issue.

SECTION 4. Prohibition on BPOs and Call Centers for Political Propaganda. – No BPO or call center, whether operating within the Philippines or serving foreign clients from the Philippines, shall engage in the production, dissemination, or amplification of political propaganda or disinformation for political campaigns, elections, or related purposes.

SECTION 5. Transparency in Political Advertising. – Any political advertisement or campaign content posted online must clearly disclose the source of funding, including the name of the individual or organization responsible, and the amount spent on the advertisement. The Commission on Elections (COMELEC) shall maintain a public database of such disclosures.

SECTION 6. Penalties. – Any person, corporation, or entity found violating this Act shall be subject to the following penalties:

- a. For Individuals: A fine of not less than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱500,000) but not more than Two Million Pesos (₱2,000,000), or imprisonment of up to five (5) years, or both, at the discretion of the court.
- b. For BPOs and Call Centers: A fine of not less than Five Million Pesos (₱5,000,000), revocation of business registration, and prohibition from operating within the Philippines for a period of five (5) years.
- c. For Political Campaigns/Parties Benefiting from Violations: Disqualification from holding public office or participating in elections for a period of five (5) years, subject to due process by the COMELEC.

SECTION 7. Regulatory Oversight and Monitoring. – A Special Regulatory Unit on Digital Disinformation shall be created under the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) to:

1. Monitor compliance with this Act;
2. Conduct regular audits of BPO operations and digital campaigns;
3. Investigate reports of troll farm operations; and
4. Coordinate with COMELEC, the National Privacy Commission (NPC), and other relevant agencies.

SECTION 8. Obligations of Social Media Platforms. – Social media platforms operating within the Philippines shall adopt measures to prevent the use of their services for coordinated disinformation campaigns, including:

1. Implementing robust detection and removal systems for inauthentic accounts and coordinated inauthentic behavior;
2. Complying with requests for data access and investigation by the DICT Regulatory Unit; and
3. Submitting quarterly transparency reports on political advertisements, disinformation takedowns, and coordinated activity detected.

SECTION 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DICT, in coordination with COMELEC, NPC, DTI, and relevant stakeholders, shall issue the necessary IRR for the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 10. Appropriations. – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SECTION 11. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 12. Repealing Clause – All laws, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 13. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brian Poe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" and last name "Poe" clearly distinguishable.

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