

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. 3519



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PM VARGAS

AN ACT
INCORPORATING THE VALUE OF RESPONSIBLE, FAIR USAGE, AND
ENJOYMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN EDUCATION CURRICULA
NATIONWIDE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

With the rapid advancement of information and communications technology, along with the widespread availability of mobile devices and public access to Wi-Fi and mobile data, Filipinos have become the most active internet users globally.

In 2023, the Philippine Statistics Authority reported that more than half of the Filipino households¹ or more than 87 million had access to the internet. Filipinos also rank among the highest in the Asia-Pacific region for time spent online, averaging more than eight and a half hours daily, primarily on social networking, sharing photos and videos.

While the internet offers significant opportunities for youth development- such as easy access to information and educational resources- there are also serious risks. These include exposure to online predators, cyberbullying, and privacy violations, especially among children and teenagers.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates that the State prioritize education, science, and technology, to foster social progress and protect the well-being of the youth, encouraging their active involvement in nation-building (Sections 17 and 13, Article II). This bill aims to respond to these

¹ Philippine Statistics Authority (2023)

mandates by promoting safe, responsible, and effective use of social media among Filipino students. It seeks to empower them to participate meaningfully in public discourse and develop critical thinking skills in navigating present and future digital platforms.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'PM VARGAS', is positioned above the printed name.

REP. PM VARGAS

Fifth District, Quezon City

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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 “*Social Media Education Act*.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - The State has constitutionally-declared policies to serve and protect the people, to give priority to education to foster patriotism and nationalism, and to recognize the vital role of communication and information in nation building. Towards this end, it is the objective of this Act to adapt to the mercurial rise of the influence and prevalence of use of Social Media by inculcating in the youth and for students the virtues of discernment and critical thinking in their unavoidable daily immersion in social media.

SECTION 3. Inclusion of Social Media in the Curricula for Primary and Secondary Education. – Social Media Awareness shall be part of the curriculum for both primary and secondary education, in public and private schools, with the following objectives: .

- a. To inculcate how various types of Social Media aid in the effective and efficient dissemination of information;
- b. To inculcate how Social Media helps in shaping public discourse and opinion;
- c. To inculcate how Social Media helps in fostering a more participative democracy;
- d. To inculcate the importance of upholding truth and the veracity of facts, figures, and events in Social Media;
- e. To inculcate responsible and fair use of Social Media; and

- f. To inculcate the virtues of discernment and critical thinking in the use and/or enjoyment of Social Media.

The Department of Education (DepEd), in consultation with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), shall immediately formulate the necessary steps and measures to achieve the objectives of this Section.

SECTION 4. *Social Media Awareness as part of the National Service Training Program (NSTP).* – Social Media Awareness shall be made part of the National Service Training Program (NSTP), particularly in the service components pertaining to the Literacy Training Service and the Civic Welfare Training Service (CWTS).

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in consultation with the DICT, shall immediately formulate the necessary steps and measures to achieve the objectives of this Section.

SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DepEd shall, in consultation with CHED, TESDA, and DICT, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act: *Provided*, That the failure of the concerned agencies to promulgate the said rules and regulations shall not prevent the implementation of this Act upon its effectivity.

SECTION 6. *Non-Impairment Clause.* – Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to diminish, impair, or repeal rights recognized, granted, or made available to disadvantaged, marginalized, or specific sectors under existing laws.

SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.* - If any part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,