



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



House Bill No. 4160

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative
EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

News has never been more accessible, thanks to the proliferation of digital platforms and social media. This increased accessibility allows people to stay informed about global events in real time. Information is being disseminated at lightning speed, making communication almost instantaneous. This immediacy enables real-time updates to be transmitted without delay, facilitates immediate public response and discourse, and allows knowledge to be shared or transferred efficiently.

However, the rapid exchange of information also introduces certain risks, most notably misinformation and disinformation. The dissemination and acceptance of inaccurate or false information can significantly influence individuals' perceptions, undermine critical thinking, and hinder their ability to make informed, evidence-based decisions.

The proliferation and impact of fake news warrant serious consideration. Various forms and contents of misinformation can foster misconceptions and beliefs founded on inaccuracies, resulting in societal division, miscommunication, and negative effects across multiple sectors of the nation. In the health sector, for example, the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) reported that approximately 32% of fake news detected during the COVID-19 pandemic include views and posts on symptoms, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment measures.¹ Other forms of fake news prevalent in the Philippines are about the government's actions and regulations (25%), false and misleading statistics (11%), and political, religious, and ethnic-targeted fake news (10%).² These statistics emphasize the harm of fake news and the importance of immediately addressing this issue through legislation.

In Germany, legislation was passed imposing fines of up to Fifty Million Euros (€50,000,000.00) on social media platforms that fail to promptly remove illegal content. Similarly, this proposed measure seeks to penalize individuals who knowingly and

¹ PIDS. *Fake news, its dangers, and how we can fight it*. Published in August 2021. Available at <https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph/CDN/PUBLICATIONS/pidspn2106.pdf> (Accessed on 30 May 2025).

² Ibid.

maliciously publish, distribute, or spread false information—whether in print, broadcast, or online—that causes or tends to cause panic, division, violence, or harm to one’s reputation. Offenders may face fines ranging from One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000.00) to Five Million Pesos (P5,000,000.00) and imprisonment of one (1) to five (5) years. Stiffer penalties shall apply if the offender is a public official.

Mass media organizations and social media platforms have a responsibility to address the spread of misinformation and should take proactive measures to prevent the dissemination of false information that may negatively impact public perception. Hence, the bill proposes to penalize channels or platforms that fail, neglect, or refuse to remove false news or information within a reasonable period after having knowledge or reasonable grounds to believe of its falsity. Violators will be punished by a fine ranging from Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000.00) to Twenty Million Pesos (P20,000,000.00) and imprisonment ranging from ten (10) to twenty (20) years. If the offender is a corporation, the President, Chief Executive Officer, and other responsible officers will suffer the penalty of imprisonment.

The passage of this bill will encourage our citizens, especially public officers, to be more responsible and circumspect in creating, distributing, and/or sharing news. Addressing national and global concerns should not be made more complicated by false news calculated to cause discord, panic, chaos, and/or violence. This issue requires prompt legislative intervention to effectively regulate the dissemination of misinformation and enhance accountability for the information that individuals share.

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


EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4160

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative
EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA

AN ACT
PENALIZING THE MALICIOUS DISTRIBUTION OF FALSE NEWS AND OTHER
RELATED VIOLATIONS

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Anti-Fake News Act.*”
2

3 **SEC. 2. Malicious Creation and Distribution of Fake News.** – It shall be unlawful
4 for any person to maliciously offer, publish, distribute, circulate and spread false news or
5 information or cause the publication, distribution, circulation or spreading of the same in
6 print, broadcast or online media, provided that, such false news or information cause or
7 tend to cause panic, division, chaos, violence, hate or which exhibit or tend to exhibit a
8 propaganda to blacken or discredit one’s reputation and the person knowingly commits
9 such act with full knowledge that such news or information is false, or with reasonable
10 grounds to believe that the same is false.
11

12 Any person who shall be found guilty of committing any of the foregoing acts shall
13 be punished by a fine ranging from One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000) to Five
14 Million Pesos (P5,000,000) and imprisonment ranging from one (1) to five (5) years.
15

16 Any person who aids or abets any person committing any of the foregoing acts shall
17 be liable for a fine ranging from Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000) to Three Million Pesos
18 (P3,000,000) and imprisonment ranging from six (6) months to three (3) years.
19

20 If the offender is a public official, they shall be liable for twice the amount of the fine
21 imposed above and be imprisoned for two times longer than the period provided herein.
22 In addition, they shall also suffer the accessory penalty of absolute perpetual
23 disqualification from holding any public office.
24

25 **SEC. 3. Failure to Remove False News.** – It shall be unlawful for any mass media
26 enterprise or social media platform to fail, neglect or refuse to remove false news or
27 information within a reasonable period after having knowledge, or having reasonable

1 grounds to believe, of its falsity. Any person violating this provision shall be punished by
2 a fine ranging from Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000) to Twenty Million Pesos
3 (P20,000,000) and imprisonment ranging from ten (10) to twenty (20) years. If the
4 offender is a corporation, the President, Chief Executive Officer, and other responsible
5 officers shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment.

6
7 **SEC. 4. Separability Clause.** – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared
8 unconstitutional, the remainder hereof or any provisions not affected thereby shall remain
9 in force and effect.

10
11 **SEC. 5. Repealing Clause.** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
12 order, letter of instruction, rule, or regulation inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is
13 hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

14
15 **SEC. 6. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete
16 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

17
18 *Approved,*