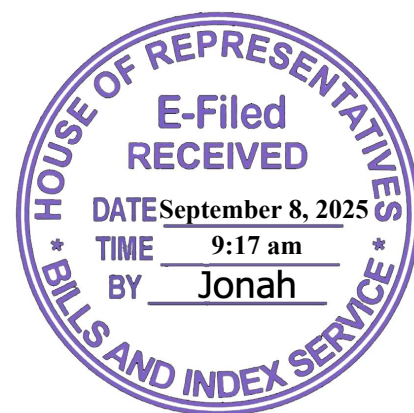


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4383



Introduced by Representatives Bryan B. Revilla, Lani Mercado-Revilla, and Ramon Jolo Revilla III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

With the rise of modern technology, a key global concern is the exposure of children and teenagers to digital media. This has led to new cultural and behavioral patterns, changing how they learn, communicate, and live.

Multiple studies have linked excessive social media use to a higher risk of mental health issues. A 2022 study in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that adolescents who spend over three hours a day on social media are more prone to anxiety, depression, and social isolation.

In the Philippines, a significant number of children have internet access. The Council for the Welfare of Children reports that one in three children aged 0-18 uses the internet. The National ICT Household Survey reveals that 60% of children aged 10-17 are active internet users. A UNICEF study also noted that this exposure makes Filipino children vulnerable to cyberbullying, body image pressures, and online harassment.

In response, some countries have started regulating minors' access to social media. For example, Australia passed a law setting a minimum age for social media use as part of a larger strategy to create safer digital spaces.

Inspired by this approach and in line with the state's policy to promote children's well-being, a bill is being proposed in the Philippines. This bill aims to protect children under 18 from online risks and harmful content by prohibiting their access to social media platforms.

This measure was prepared in close collaboration with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT). As such, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


REP. BRYAN B. REVILLA
Representative, AGIMAT Partylist


REP. LANI MERCADO-REVILLA
Representative, 2nd District of Cavite

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, stylized capital 'R' followed by a series of loops and a final downward stroke.

REP. RAMON JOLO B. REVILLA III
Representative, 1st District of Cavite

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

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4383

Introduced by Representatives Bryan B. Revilla, Lani Mercado-Revilla, and Ramon Jolo Revilla III

AN ACT
REGULATING THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS BY MINORS,
IMPOSING AGE RESTRICTIONS, PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS
THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy.** It is the policy of the State to promote and protect
2 the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of its children. Recognizing the rapid
3 growth and influence of social media platforms, the State affirms its duty to safeguard
4 children from online risks and harmful content.

5
6 It is also the policy of the State to balance the right to information and communication
7 with the duty to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate online environment
8 for Filipino children, in accordance with the best interests of the child, as recognized
9 under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and relevant Philippine
10 laws.

11
12 **SEC 2. Definition of Terms.**

13
14 a. **Age-restricted user** refers to minors below eighteen years of age;

15
16 b. **Social Media Platform** refers to any internet-based service, network,
17 application, website, or computer program that is intended to provide an
18 electronic service that satisfies the following conditions:

19
20 i. Its sole or primary purpose is to enable online social interaction
21 between two or more end-users;

22
23 ii. It allows end-users to link to, or interact with, some or all of the other
24 end-users; and

25
26 iii. It allows end-users to upload or post online content or materials on it.
27

1 **SEC 3. Use of Social Media Services, Age Restriction.** Minors shall be prohibited
2 from accessing or using social media services.

3
4 **SEC 4. Obligations of Social Media Platforms.** Social media platforms shall take
5 reasonable steps and age verification measures to prevent age-restricted users from
6 registering, accessing, or continuing to use their social media service. They shall:

7
8 a. Adopt reliable means to ensure the age and identity of its users, such as but
9 not limited to ID verification, facial recognition, and other identity authentication
10 systems;

11
12 b. Conduct regular audits of user account data to detect and remove age-
13 restricted users from the platform; and

14
15 c. Adopt prompt response mechanisms for reports or findings of age-restricted
16 users on the platform.

17
18 **SEC 5. Data Privacy.** Any personal information collected by social media platforms
19 or third-party service providers for the purpose of implementing age verification
20 measures and complying with age restriction requirements shall be subject to the
21 provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of
22 2012 and all other applicable data protection laws, rules, and regulations.

23
24 Platform providers shall ensure that:

25
26 a. The data collected is limited, secure, and retained only for the period
27 necessary to fulfill its intended lawful purpose;

28
29 b. Users are clearly informed of the purpose and scope of data collection,
30 including their rights under existing data privacy laws;

31
32 c. Reasonable security safeguards are in place to protect the information
33 against unauthorized access, use, or disclosure; and

34
35 d. Any third-party processors involved in age verification comply with equivalent
36 data protection standards.

37
38 Violation of this provision shall subject the platform to penalties under the Data Privacy
39 Act and any other administrative, civil, or criminal penalties as may be prescribed by
40 law.

41
42 **SEC 6. Role of the Department of Information and Communications Technology.**
43 The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall serve
44 as the primary implementing agency of this Act. In line with this mandate, the DICT
45 shall have the following powers and functions:

46
47 a. Monitor compliance of social media platforms with age restrictions, identity
48 verification protocols, and other requirements under this Act;

b. Establish reporting mechanisms for violations, including unauthorized use by minors and non-compliance by platforms or service providers;

c. Conduct investigations, motu proprio or upon complaint, on alleged violations such as underage user access, data privacy breaches, or failure of platforms to act;

d. Issue Disabling Orders directing the takedown, removal, or deactivation of accounts found in violation of age restrictions;

e. Enforce administrative sanctions against internet service providers, including fines, suspension, or revocation of permits for failure to comply with this Act;

f. Issue directives and impose penalties on social media platforms, including administrative fines and access restrictions, for any violation of this Act or its implementing rules and regulations; and

g. Coordinate with relevant government agencies, including the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), National Privacy Commission (NPC), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and Department of Education (DepEd), to ensure consistent, child-sensitive, and effective enforcement of this Act.

SEC 7. Disabling Order. Upon determination that a social media account is owned or operated by an age-restricted user in violation of this Act, the DICT shall issue a Disabling Order directing the immediate takedown, removal, or deactivation of the said account.

Within three (3) days from the issuance of the Disabling Order, the DICT shall notify the NTC and instruct it to monitor the compliance of concerned social media platforms and internet service providers with the Order. The NTC shall coordinate with relevant entities to ensure enforcement and may recommend further administrative action in case of non-compliance.

Failure to comply with a Disabling Order shall subject the platform or service provider to administrative penalties that may be imposed by the DICT or NTC pursuant to this Act and other applicable laws.

SEC 9. Penalties. Any social media platform, internet service provider, or third-party service provider that fails to comply with any provision of this Act, including but not limited to the failure to implement adequate age verification systems, refusal to comply with a Disabling Order, or unauthorized retention or misuse of personal data collected under this Act, shall be subject to the following administrative penalties, without prejudice to any civil or criminal liability under existing laws:

a. For Social Media Platforms and Service Providers:

i. An administrative fine of not less than One Million Pesos (P1,000,000) but not exceeding Twenty Million Pesos (P20,000,000) for each act of

1 non-compliance, depending on the gravity and frequency of the
2 violation;

3
4 ii. A daily fine of not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos
5 (P100,000) for each day of continuing violation after due notice;

6
7 iii. Suspension or revocation of access, operations, or licenses within the
8 Philippines, upon repeated or willful violations, subject to due process.

9
10 b. For Internet Service Providers:

11
12 i. An administrative fine of not less than Three Hundred Thousand Pesos
13 (P300,000.00) but not more than Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000) for
14 failure to execute or enforce a Disabling Order issued by the DICT;

15
16 ii. Temporary suspension or revocation of permits, or licenses for gross
17 or repeated failure to comply.

18
19 c. For Third-Party Age Verification Providers:

20
21 i. An administrative fine of not less than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos
22 (P500,000.00) but not more than Five Million Pesos (P5,000,000) for
23 breach of data privacy provisions or failure to meet verification standards
24 set under this Act;

25
26 ii. Permanent ban from offering related services to platforms operating
27 in the Philippines upon a finding of gross negligence or willful
28 misconduct.

29
30 The imposition of the above penalties shall be without prejudice to prosecution under
31 the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (R.A. No. 10173), the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012
32 (R.A. No. 10175), or any other applicable penal law.

33
34 **SEC 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** Within ninety (90) days from the
35 effectivity of this Act, the DICT, in consultation with the NPC, the Department of
36 Justice, the NTC, the DSWD, and relevant stakeholders from the education, child
37 protection, and technology sectors, shall promulgate the necessary rules and
38 regulations for the implementation of this Act.

39
40 **SEC 11. Separability Clause.** If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
41 unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and
42 subsisting.

43
44 **SEC 12. Repealing Clause.** Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
45 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or
46 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended
47 accordingly.

1 **SEC 13. *Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
2 the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the
3 Philippines.

4
5 *Approved,*