



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 4881

Introduced by Representative Howard Guintu

EXPLANATORY NOTE

With the launching of new models of mobile phones, laptops, tablets and other electronic gadgets almost occurring every year, it is expected that thousands, if not millions, of new gadgets flood the market on an annual basis. Users then frequently discard or dispose of their old gadgets for brand-new units, which in turn, contributes to the escalating electronic waste problem in our country. A study conducted by engineers from the University of the Philippines yielded an estimate that by 2021 the number of discarded phones will hit over 24.9 Million, with respondents saying that they were replacing phones at a rate of once every one to two years. This means that Filipinos are throwing out their gadgets despite not being totally unusable and not being beyond their estimated useful life. Some of this electronic waste may not even be "waste" at all.

This wastage ignores the fact that access to an electronic gadget is severely limited for lower income households. A 2020 study by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) revealed that only 69% of poor households have mobile phones, while only 1% and 6% of poor and low-income families have computers, respectively. With the shift to remote learning modalities for 2020-2021 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this digital divide is rendered more evident. In the National Capital Region (NCR) alone, around 648,405 public school students lack gadgets. On the side of our teachers, 13% of them have no laptops or computers at their home based on a recent Department of Education (DepEd) survey. This lack of access to gadgets to be used for distance learning, coupled with the problem concerning internet connectivity, may have forced some of our youth to skip school and not enroll for the current school year, or at least until they have procured the necessary tools and equipment.

The contrast between the needless disposal of still-functional electronic gadgets, on the one hand, and the shortage of such devices among students from poor and low-income households, on the other, serves as the primary rationale for this proposed measure.

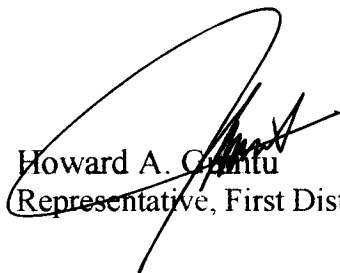
This bill seeks to establish a nationwide Electronics Donation and Recycling Program. Under the program, all manufacturers and retailers of electronic gadgets shall be required to set up donation and recycling booths within the premises of their sales outlets, stores, service centers, and similar locations. These booths will serve as designated points for accepting and processing electronic gadgets that their owners intend to donate and/or recycle.

For collected gadgets which are intended for donation, the recipient shall be the Department of Education (DepEd) for distribution to poor students, subject to appropriate guidelines to be issued by the said agency.

For collected gadgets which are intended for recycling, the same shall be disposed of or turned over to Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-accredited facilities capable of recycling electronic gadgets and components.

Thus, this bill will serve two purposes - protecting the environment by controlling the unnecessary wastage of electronic devices and at the same time, bridging the digital divide that had hampered our poor students from participating in a modern educational system.

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



Howard A. Oñofre
Representative, First District of Capiz



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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING AN ELECTRONICS DONATION AND RECYCLING PROGRAM
ALL OVER THE COUNTRY

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 "Electronics Donation and Recycling Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote and protect the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. In consonance with this objective, the proliferation of electronic waste shall be addressed through programs that encourage the proper recycling of electronic gadgets that will channel electronic waste to the appropriate disposal facilities and the donation of still fit-for-use gadgets to poor students.

SEC. 3. *Electronics Donation and Recycling Program.* - All manufacturers and retailers of electronic gadgets shall be required to establish and set up donation and recycling booths within the premises of their sales outlets, stores, service centers and similar locations all over the country for the purpose of processing and accepting electronic gadgets intended by their respective owners for donation and/or recycling. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), shall issue the specific guidelines regarding the layout, contents, sorting and recycling processes, simple repairs required for donated items and other relevant details for the operation and maintenance of these booths.

DTI shall maintain a publicly-accessible website containing the following: (1) detailed and updated list of sales outlets, stores, services centers, etc. which have donation and recycling booths within their premises; (2) contact information of those listed in no. 1; (3) basic information on electronics donation and recycling; and (4) hotline/s for inquiries, feedback and reporting of problems and issues.

SEC. 4. *Destination of Collected Electronic Gadgets.* - For collected gadgets which are intended for donation, the recipient shall be the Department of Education (DepEd) for distribution to poor students, subject to appropriate guidelines to be issued by the said agency.

For collected gadgets which are intended for recycling, the same shall be disposed of or turned over to Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-accredited facilities capable of recycling electronic gadgets and components.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), and other relevant government agencies and stakeholders, shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,