

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7116



Introduced by: Kababaihan Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list
Representative Iris Marie D. Montes

AN ACT
REGULATING DIGITAL ADVERTISING PRACTICES ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND
ONLINE VIDEO-SHARING PLATFORMS, MANDATING USER CONTROL OVER
ADVERTISEMENT VIEWING THROUGH A FIVE-SECOND SKIP MECHANISM TO
PROTECT CONSUMERS FROM EXCESSIVE AND INTRUSIVE DIGITAL
ADVERTISING

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article 2 of Republic Act No. 7393, otherwise known as the "Consumer Act of the Philippines" declares that it is the policy of the State to protect the interests of the consumers, promote their general welfare and to establish standards of conduct for business and industry.

Towards this end, this bill seeks to mandate platform-controlled advertisements to be skippable after a maximum of five (5) seconds -- a duration that is being proposed as a reasonable balance between advertisers' interests and users' rights, thus, allowing brand exposure without unduly burdening the public.

The bill focuses on platform-controlled advertisements where users have no meaningful bargaining power and no practical alternative but to submit to forced viewing.

It follows the Vietnam regulatory model that adopted a rights-based approach to digital platform regulation, emphasizing the user's right to control content consumption while imposing clear technical obligations on platform operators. Under this approach, advertising is permitted, but coercive or excessive exposure is restricted.

It was reported that a study by RMN Research reveals that YouTube's intrusive ads—frequent, unskippable, and mid-roll placements—are creating significant barriers to seamless information consumption, violating fundamental consumer protections.¹

¹ YouTube's Intrusive Ads Spark Consumer Rights Concerns Over Information Access (<https://www.rmnfoundation.org/youtubes-intrusive-ads-spark-consumer-rights-concerns-over-information-access/>) Accessed on 07 January 2026

"The research highlights growing user frustration, with many viewers feeling bombarded by ads that disrupt their ability to engage with educational, cultural, or entertainment content. This ad-heavy approach is seen as a violation of consumers' right to access information, a principle enshrined in laws like the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP), which emphasize fair treatment and access to essential services, including digital platforms. The UNGCP calls for businesses to avoid practices that harm consumers' ability to make informed choices, and YouTube's aggressive ad model arguably undermines this by prioritizing monetization over user experience."²

Indeed, the rapid expansion of social media and online video-sharing platforms has transformed how people access information and entertainment. Albeit these platforms have become essential digital infrastructure, their increasing reliance on forced, prolonged, and unskippable advertising, however, has resulted in growing consumer dissatisfaction and raised concerns over fairness, user autonomy, and proportionality in digital advertising practices.

This measure aims to protect Filipino consumers and to promote their right to fair digital market practices through the adoption of a technology-neutral, proportionate, and user-centered regulatory framework thereby ensuring that access to online content remains reasonable, dignified, and consistent with evolving international norms.

Moreover, the bill recognizes the need to promote gender equality, increase women participation and enhance their capacities in information and communications technology (ICT) sector.

While the gender distribution of Filipino social media users is nearly equal, with 47.8% male and 52.2% female,³ the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) says that millions of individuals, especially women, are still excluded from the digital world.⁴ Also, women are often deliberately targeted by marketers in their ad campaigns as they drive 70-80% of consumer purchasing decisions.⁵

According to the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), although men and women have the same opportunities online and more women are enrolled in digitaljobsPH courses, cultural barriers restrict women to less complex and low-paying jobs. It was likewise noted that women earn 18.4 percent less than men, indicating that the gender wage gap exists even in digital jobs.⁶

² Ibid.

³ Social Media Statistics in the Philippines [Updated 2025] Sue Howe, June 18, 2025 (<https://www.meltwater.com/en/blog/social-media-statistics-philippines>) Accessed on 07 July 2026

⁴ Bridging the Digital Divide: Policymakers Unite for Gender-Responsive ICT, November 21, 2025 (<https://pcw.gov.ph/bridging-the-digital-divide-policymakers-unite-for-gender-responsive-ict/>) Accessed on 07 January 2026

⁵ Why Do Marketers Target Females?, IslaMarie Turnbull, December 14, 2022 (<https://www.redevolution.com/blog/why-do-marketers-target-females>)

⁶ Gender bias: Women digital workers face lower wages (<https://www.pids.gov.ph/details/news/in-the-news/gender-bias-women-digital-workers-face-lower-wages>) Accessed on 07 January 2026

Further, continued sexualization, exploitation, and objectification of women in online advertisements that target Filipino consumers through sponsored content persists, a situation that normalize harmful gender stereotypes and violate women's dignity and human rights.⁷

Hence, the need to support programs that promote women's digital inclusion, literacy and financial capability, as well as those that improve digital infrastructure such as connectivity, especially in the far-flung areas of the country.

In view thereof, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


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⁷ PCW wants sexualization of women in online ads stopped, Ma. Teresa Montemayor, July 29, 2025 (<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1255385>) Accessed on 07 January 2026

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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 "Skippable Advertisements to Protect Digital Consumers Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect the welfare, rights, and interests of Filipino consumers in the digital environment by ensuring that access to online information and entertainment is not unreasonably restricted or disrupted by excessive or coercive digital advertising. Towards this end, it shall promote transparency, fairness, and accountability in digital advertising practices and balance the legitimate interests of advertisers, content creators, and platform operators with the fundamental rights of users to reasonable, non-intrusive access to digital content.

SEC. 3. *Coverage.* - This Act shall apply to all providers of social networks, video-sharing platforms, and digital content services that distribute or insert advertisements to users of digital content and monetize user attention through platform-controlled advertising systems regardless of their place of incorporation or principal office.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

(a) *Dark Interface Practice* refers to any interface design that obstructs, delays, conceals, or manipulates user choice regarding advertisement skipping;

(b) *Forced Advertisement Viewing* refers to any technical or design measure that compels a user to continue viewing advertising content without the ability to skip;

(c) *Platform-Controlled Advertisement* refers to advertising content that is technically inserted, scheduled, or enforced by the service provider through its system;

(d) *Service Provider* refers to any organization or enterprise that establishes, manages, or operates a social network, video-sharing platform, or digital content service;

(e) User refers to any natural person accessing digital content through a covered platform within the territory of the Philippines; and

(f) *User-Initiated Skip Function* refers to a technical function that allows the user to immediately terminate advertisement playback and proceed to selected content.

SEC. 5. *Right of Users to Skip Advertisements.* - Any person accessing digital content shall have the right to skip platform-controlled advertisements through the user-initiated skip function after a maximum duration of five (5) seconds.

Any technical or design method such as dark interface practice that interferes with this right or compels users to forced advertisement viewing shall be deemed a violation of this Act. For this purpose, service providers shall ensure that the skip function shall be:

- (a) Automatically enabled after five (5) seconds;
- (b) Continuously visible during playback; and
- (c) Requires no additional confirmation or action.

SEC. 6. *Responsibilities of Service Providers.* - All providers covered under Section 3 of this Act shall:

- (a) Design advertising systems that comply with the five-second skip requirement by default;
- (b) Prevent cumulative or sequential advertisements from effectively nullifying the skip right;
- (c) Ensure that skipping advertisements does not result in degraded service quality; and
- (d) Maintain technical logs demonstrating compliance for audit purposes.

SEC. 7. *Prohibited Acts.* - Service providers shall be prohibited from:

- (a) Enforcing unskippable advertisements beyond five (5) seconds;
- (b) Circumventing the skip requirement through countdown resets, chained ads, or interface manipulation;

- (c) Penalizing users for skipping advertisements; and
- (d) Misclassifying advertisements as system messages or mandatory notices.

SEC. 8. *Exceptions.* - Sections 5, 6 and 7 of this Act may not apply to:

- (a) Government-issued or government-authorized public service announcements; Provided that they do not exceed thirty (30) seconds;
- (b) Emergency alerts, disaster warnings, and public safety notices; and
- (c) Advertisements voluntarily embedded within the content by the creator, such as sponsorship mentions, product placements, or host-read promotions, provided these are not inserted or enforced by the platform.

SEC. 9. *Administrative Supervision and Compliance Audits.* -

- (a) The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall serve as the lead implementing agency for matters involving consumer protection of this Act.
- (b) The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) shall provide technical and regulatory support such as, but not limited to, technical inspections; system documentation; and algorithmic and interface compliance to enforce the pertinent provisions of this Act.
- (c) The DTI, in consultation with the DICT and NTC, shall conduct compliance audits, issue cease-and-desist orders, impose administrative penalties, and require corrective measures and reporting.

Service providers shall submit compliance reports upon request by any of the agencies concerned.

SEC. 10. *Cross-Border Applicability.* - Foreign service providers shall comply with this Act insofar as they provide services to Philippine users or generate advertising revenue from Philippine-based access.

Non-compliance may result in administrative enforcement measures within Philippine jurisdiction.

SEC. 11. *Administrative Sanctions.* - Any service provider found violating any provision of this Act shall be subject to the following administrative penalties to be imposed by the DTI after due notice and hearing:

- (a) Monetary fines of not less than One Million Pesos (Php1,000,000.00) per violation;
- (b) Progressive penalties for continued non-compliance; and
- (c) Suspension of advertising operations within Philippine jurisdiction for repeated or willful violations and such other sanctions as may be determined by the regulating agencies, consistent with due process.

SEC. 12. *Disposition of Fines Collected.* - All fines collected under this Act shall be earmarked solely and used exclusively to support programs that promote digital connectivity, inclusion, literacy, and financial capability of the marginalized, especially of women in rural communities, as identified by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), in consultation with relevant agencies.

SEC. 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DTI, in coordination with the DICT, NTC, and PCW, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 14. *Separability Clause.* - If any part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts or provisions thereof shall remain valid and effective.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,