



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

20th CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7714



Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER A. LAGBAS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Social media has become an integral part of the daily lives of Filipino children and adolescents. While these platforms provide opportunities for creativity, communication, and learning, they also expose younger users to serious risks, including cyberbullying, exploitation, harmful and age-inappropriate content, and algorithmic features that can lead to excessive or addictive use. Numerous studies from child-safety agencies worldwide confirm that early exposure to social media heightens these vulnerabilities, especially when children access online platforms without adequate safeguards or parental supervision.

The Philippines continues to rank among the highest in the world in terms of social media usage, with Filipino children often accessing platforms at increasingly younger ages. Many platforms rely only on self-declared ages or limited verification mechanisms, enabling children to create accounts long before they are developmentally prepared for the demands and risks of online environments. The absence of dedicated legal safeguards increases the likelihood that minors will be subjected to manipulative design features, inappropriate contact from adults, data-harvesting practices, and harmful content that can affect their physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

Other jurisdictions, like Australia and Spain, have adopted stronger protections to address these concerns. The use of privacy-preserving age-verification technologies; the imposition of liability on non-compliant platforms rather than minors or parents; and the requirement that platforms implement safer design features and disable accounts of users who do not meet minimum-age requirements demonstrate a growing recognition that digital platforms must share responsibility for protecting children online.

This proposed measure adapts these principles to the Philippine context by establishing thirteen (13) years of age as the minimum threshold for social media access. It prohibits social media

platforms from allowing children below thirteen (13) to create or maintain accounts and mandates robust, verifiable age-assurance systems to prevent circumvention.

This measure does not seek to remove children from technology or limit their participation in digital spaces. Rather, it seeks to ensure that online environments are developmentally appropriate and safe. It reflects the State's constitutional duty to protect the welfare of the youth, uphold the dignity of every Filipino, and respond to modern challenges through thoughtful, protective, and future-ready legislation.

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



HON. JENNIFER A. LAGBAS
Representative
First District, Misamis Oriental



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AN ACT
REGULATING THE ACCESS OF MINORS TO SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS,
ENSURING AGE VERIFICATION AND PARENTAL CONSENT, AND PROVIDING
PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN ONLINE

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the “Social Media Regulation and Protection Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to protect children from online harms, including cyberbullying, exploitation, harmful content, addictive design, and data-driven manipulation. The State shall adopt measures that promote safe, age-appropriate, and developmentally suitable online environments in accordance with the constitutional mandate to protect the physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being of the youth.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - For purposes of this Act:

(a) *Age-restricted user* refers to minors below thirteen (13) years of age;

(b) *Age-restricted social media platform* refers to:

(i) An electronic service that satisfies the following conditions:

- (1) The sole purpose, or a significant purpose, of the service is to enable online social interaction between two (2) or more end-users;
- (2) The service allows end-users to link to, or interact with, some or all of the other end-users; and
- (3) The service allows end-users to post material on the service.

Online social interaction includes online interaction that enables end-users to share material for social purposes

- (c) *Age-Verification System* refers to a privacy-preserving mechanism that reliably determines a user's age using government-recognized credentials; and
- (d) *Parental Consent* refers to verifiable authorization granted by a parent or legal guardian for a minor's creation, continued use, or data processing on a social media platform;

SEC. 4. *Prohibition on Access by Children Below Thirteen (13) Years of Age.* - No age-restricted social media platform shall allow the creation, registration, or continued use of an account by an Age-restricted User below thirteen (13) unless verifiable parental consent is provided and continuously maintained.

Platforms shall immediately suspend or delete accounts reasonably believed to be operated by a child without parental consent.

SEC. 5. *Mandatory Age-Verification Systems.*-

- (a) All age-restricted social media platforms operating in the Philippines shall deploy accredited age-verification systems, subject to standards issued by the regulator under this Act;
- (b) Age-verification systems shall:
 - (i) Minimize data processing;
 - (ii) Prohibit retention of identification documents beyond verification;
 - (iii) Not disclose user identity to the platform, only age status;
 - (iv) Be subject to independent audit and approval by the regulator; and

All age-restricted social media platforms, age-verification providers, and third-party processors engaged under this Act shall strictly comply with Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and all other applicable data protection laws, rules, and regulations.

SEC. 6. *Parental Consent Mechanisms.* - Age-restricted social media platforms shall establish verifiable parental consent procedures, including:

- (a) Submission of approved identity credentials;
- (b) Biometric or digital signature verification; and
- (c) One-time authentication linked to the parent or guardian's account.

Parents may revoke consent at any time, and age-restricted social media platforms must delete or suspend the child's account accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Duties and Responsibilities of Government Agencies.* - The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), in coordination with National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) and the National Privacy Commission (NPC), shall:

- (a) Issue implementing rules and standards for age-assurance;
- (b) Accredite age-verification providers;
- (c) Conduct audits and compliance checks;
- (d) Receive complaints and impose administrative penalties;
- (e) Order access restrictions against noncompliant platforms.

SEC. 8. Penalties.-

(a) For age-restricted social media platforms:

- (i) An administrative fine of not less than Five Million Pesos (₱5,000,000) but not more than Ten Million Pesos (₱10,000,000) for each act of non-compliance, depending on the gravity and frequency of allowing unverified minor accounts;
- (ii) A daily penalty of not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱100,000) for continuing violations;
- (iii) Temporary suspension or permanent revocation of access, operations, or licenses within the Philippines, upon repeated or willful violations, subject to due process.

(b) For Third-Party Providers:

- (i) An administrative fine of not less than One Million Pesos (₱1,000,000) but not more than Five Million Pesos (₱5,000,000) for breach of data privacy provisions or failure to meet verification standards set under this Act;
- (ii) Accreditation may be suspended or revoked for failure to uphold age-verification standards or for data-privacy violations.

SEC. 9. Appropriations. - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against current appropriations of DICT, NTC, and NPC. Thereafter, funds shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). - The DICT, NTC, and NPC shall promulgate the IRR within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 11. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act is held invalid, the remaining provisions shall remain in force.

SEC. 12. Repealing Clause. - All laws, orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 13. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect thirty (30) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,