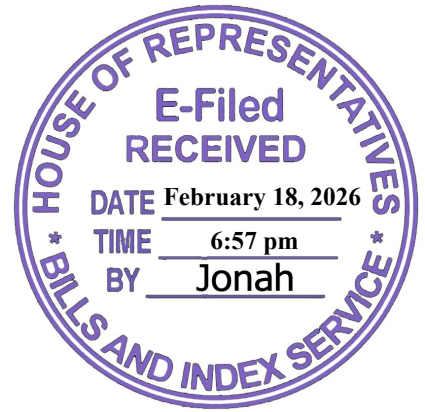


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7895



Introduced by 2nd District of Iloilo Representative
HON. KATHRYN JOYCE F. GORRICETA, M.D.

AN ACT
PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM HARMFUL AND INAPPROPRIATE
ONLINE CONTENT AND PROMOTING SAFE DIGITAL PRACTICES, TO BE
KNOWN AS THE “SCREEN ACT”

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XV, Section 3(2) of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to defend the right of children to proper care and protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development. Article II, Section 13 further compels the State to promote and protect the physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being of the youth. In today’s digital environment, this duty necessarily extends to safeguarding minors from harmful and inappropriate online content.

Internet access among Filipino children has become nearly universal. Data from the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) show that a majority of Filipino minors go online daily, often with minimal supervision and increasing exposure to smartphones at younger ages. While digital platforms offer meaningful opportunities for learning, creativity and social connection, they also expose children to risks such as sexually explicit material, excessive violence, self-harm content, cyberbullying, online predation and algorithm-driven recommendations that may lead them toward harmful material.

Current Philippine laws, including the Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children Act (Republic Act No. 11930), address the most serious forms of online abuse but do not fully cover the broader spectrum of harmful digital content that can influence a child’s psychological and emotional development. This measure aims to fill that gap by adopting reasonable and effective safeguards that prevent minors from being exposed to inappropriate and developmentally harmful material online.

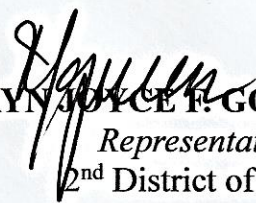
International parallels underscore the need for such protections. The United States’ Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) imposes obligations on digital services to protect children under 13, while the United Kingdom’s Online Safety Act of 2023 establishes a “duty of care” requiring platforms to reduce children’s exposure to harmful content, including pornography, violent imagery and materials promoting self-harm. These global frameworks

recognize that children's online experiences significantly affect their development and that digital platforms must assume responsibility in mitigating harm.

The proposed *Safe Child Responsible Electronic Environment and Navigation (SCREEN) Act* follows these global best practices by requiring internet service providers and online platforms to implement content filtering mechanisms, provide accessible parental control tools, and establish clear reporting systems for harmful online material. It also strengthens digital literacy and responsible internet use by mandating the integration of online safety education into the basic education curriculum. Compliance standards, reporting procedures and technical guidelines will be established through implementing rules and regulations to ensure flexibility and responsiveness to evolving technologies.

By promoting a safer digital environment and empowering parents, schools and communities with the tools and knowledge to guide children's online behavior, this measure aligns with constitutional mandates and reinforces the State's commitment to the welfare and protection of Filipino children.

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


KATHRYN JOYCE F. GORRICETA, M.D.
Representative
2nd District of Iloilo

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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 “*Safe Child Responsible Electronic Environment and Navigation (SCREEN) Act.*”

SEC. 2. ***Declaration of Policy.*** It is the policy of the State to recognize the vital role of children in nation-building and to protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being. Consistent with this duty, the State shall ensure a safe digital environment for children by preventing their exposure to harmful and inappropriate online content, promoting responsible online behavior and strengthening digital literacy among the youth.

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

- a) *Minor* refers to any person below eighteen (18) years of age.
- b) *Harmful Online Content* refers to material that is sexually explicit, excessively violent, promotes self-harm or suicide, involves online exploitation or predatory behavior or is otherwise inappropriate for minors pursuant to community standards and existing laws.
- c) *Online Platform* refers to any website, mobile application, social media service or digital platform that publishes, transmits or hosts content accessible over the internet.
- d) *Internet Service Provider (ISP)* refers to any entity that provides internet connectivity to users.

- e) *Parental Control Tools* refer to software, applications or system settings that allow parents or guardians to restrict, filter or monitor a minor's access to online content.

SEC. 4. ***Responsibilities of Internet Service Providers and Online Platforms.*** All ISPs and online platforms operating in the Philippines shall:

- a) Implement reasonable and effective content filtering mechanisms to reduce minors' exposure to harmful online content.
- b) Provide free, accessible and user-friendly parental control tools to subscribers and users.
- c) Establish and publicize reporting mechanisms for harmful content involving minors.
- d) Act promptly to restrict access to harmful content upon detection or verified complaint, consistent with due process and existing child-protection and cybercrime laws.
- e) Conduct regular information and awareness campaigns on online safety for children, parents and guardians.

SEC. 5. ***Digital Literacy and Online Safety Education.*** The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), shall integrate digital literacy, online safety and responsible internet use into the basic education curriculum.

DepEd and DICT shall also develop training modules for teachers, parents and guardians.

SEC. 6. ***Penalties.*** Any internet service provider, online platform or digital content operator that fails to comply with the provisions of this Act shall be subject to an administrative fine ranging from Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000) to Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P500,000), depending on the gravity and frequency of the violation.

The imposition of administrative fines under this Act shall be without prejudice to the filing of criminal, civil or other administrative actions under applicable laws, including Republic Act No. 11930, Republic Act No. 10175 and other statutes protecting children from exploitation and harmful online content.

SEC. 7. ***Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DICT, in coordination with DepEd, DOJ, NTC, DSWD and relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) necessary for its effective implementation.

The IRR shall include, but not limited to, technical standards, operational guidelines, reporting mechanisms, due process procedures and compliance-monitoring systems.

SEC. 8. ***Appropriations.*** Funds necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of concerned agencies. Thereafter, such amounts as may be necessary for continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. ***Separability Clause.*** If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. ***Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,