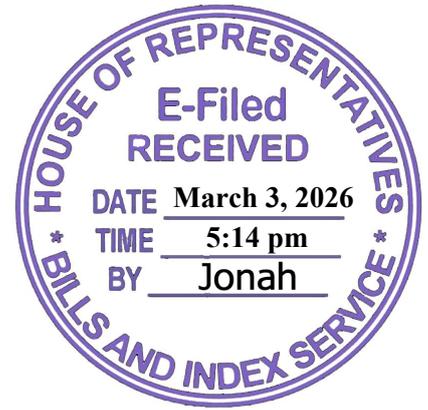




Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session



House Bill No. 8262

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Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative  
**EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA**

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

*"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6*

The Constitution mandates the State to protect the welfare, development, and mental health of children. In the digital age, this obligation necessarily extends to online environments where minors increasingly learn, socialize, and form their identities. Social media platforms have become central to youth life, yet these platforms are powered by algorithmic systems designed to maximize engagement in ways that may expose minors to psychological harm, addiction, online exploitation, and harmful or manipulative content.

Recent international developments underscore the urgency of legislative action on this matter. For example, Australia<sup>1</sup> and France<sup>2</sup> enacted laws that promote stronger age-based restrictions and regulatory controls on minors' access to social media platforms. These laws are grounded on the child-protection principles and public health concerns, particularly relating to mental well-being, exposure to harmful content, and addictive digital use. These developments reflect a growing consensus among democratic states that voluntary platform policies and parental supervision alone are insufficient to protect children online.

These developments demonstrate that the issue is no longer speculative. Governments are increasingly recognizing that safeguarding minors in digital spaces is a legitimate exercise of state authority, provided that regulation is proportionate, respectful of rights, and focused on platform responsibility rather than punishment of children or families.

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<sup>1</sup> 11 December 2025. *Australia begins enforcing world-first teen social media ban*. Reuters. Available at <https://www.reuters.com/legal/litigation/australia-social-media-ban-takes-effect-world-first-2025-12-09/> Accessed on 24 February 2026.

<sup>2</sup> 28 January 2026. *French lawmakers pass bill banning social media for under-15s*. Inquirer. Available at <https://globalnation.inquirer.net/307207/french-lawmakers-pass-bill-banning-social-media-for-under-15s> Accessed on 24 February 2026.

Protecting minors from unfiltered and harmful social media exposure is a moral and national responsibility. The unchecked impact of social media on young people—manifested in addiction, exposure to sexual and violent content, online exploitation, and identity confusion—poses long-term risks not only to individual well-being but also to social cohesion and civic life.

This bill seeks to respond to these challenges by mandating that children sixteen (16) years old and below must not be allowed access social media platforms. Rather than placing to parents and guardians the burden of regulating the access of minors to social media platforms, this bill adopts a platform-accountability framework. The measure places clear legal obligations on platform operators to prevent underage access, implement privacy-protective age assurance measures, and curb algorithmic practices that intentionally drive compulsive usage among minors.

This measure further recognizes that enforcement must be realistic and technologically feasible. The Philippines already possesses relevant infrastructure—such as SIM registration and the national ID system—that can support age assurance mechanisms, provided responsibility is shared among digital platforms, telecommunications providers, and government regulators. At the same time, the measure expressly safeguards data privacy, prohibits excessive data collection, and rejects any form of mass surveillance.

Importantly, this bill avoids simplistic or punitive approaches. Poorly designed restrictions may unintentionally push minors toward less regulated and more dangerous online spaces. For this reason, the measure must be understood as part of a broader protective framework that includes digital literacy, school engagement, and parental guidance, ensuring that safety interventions do not increase vulnerability.

By aligning with emerging international standards while remaining attentive to local realities, this bill seeks to strike a careful balance: protecting children without undermining fundamental rights, regulating platforms without enabling abuse of state power, and promoting a safer digital environment without criminalizing youth behavior.

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

  
EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA



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**HOUSE BILL NO. 8262**

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Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative  
**EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA**

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**AN ACT**  
**PROTECTING MINORS FROM SOCIAL MEDIA HARMS BY ESTABLISHING A**  
**MINIMUM AGE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESS AND IMPOSING OBLIGATIONS ON**  
**SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS**

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

1       **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Social Media*  
2 *Protection for Minors Act.*”  
3

4       **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – The State recognizes its duty under the  
5 Constitution to protect the welfare, development, and mental health of children or  
6 minors. The State further recognizes that contemporary social media platforms are  
7 designed to maximize user engagement through algorithmic systems that may expose  
8 minors to psychological harm, addictive design features, harmful content, online  
9 exploitation, and manipulation.  
10

11       Consistent with the principles of freedom of expression, due process, and data  
12 privacy, this Act adopts a platform-accountability approach that regulates digital  
13 service providers rather than penalizing minors or their parents.  
14

15       It is declared policy of the State to:  
16

- 17       a. Promote a safe digital environment for children;
- 18       b. Regulate the access of children or minors to social media platforms by  
19       establishing a minimum age to access;
- 20       c. Set clear legal obligations on platform operators to prevent access by underage  
21       users;
- 22       d. Ensure that enforcement mechanisms are proportionate, respecting of rights,  
23       and technologically neutral; and
- 24       e. Place the burden and responsibility of creating a safe digital environment more  
25       to social media platforms rather than self-regulation of parents and children.  
26

1       **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** – For purposes of this Act:  
2

- 3       a. *Minor* refers to any person sixteen (16) years of age and below.  
4
- 5       b. *Social Media Platform* refers to any website, mobile application, or digital  
6       service including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly  
7       Twitter), YouTube, and other similar platforms that:  
8       1. Allows users to create accounts or profiles;  
9       2. Enables users to generate, share, or interact with content or with other  
10      users either publicly or semi-publicly; and  
11      3. Uses algorithmic systems to recommend, rank, or amplify content or  
12      social interactions; which include but not limited to, platforms offering  
13      feeds, timelines, recommendations, messaging with unknown users,  
14      livestreaming, or social networking features.  
15
- 16      c. *Platform Operator* refers to any natural or juridical person that owns, operates,  
17      controls, or makes available a social media platform to users in the  
18      Philippines.  
19
- 20      d. *Age Assurance Measures* refer to reasonable, proportionate, and privacy-  
21      protective technical or organizational measures used to determine whether a  
22      user meets the minimum age requirement under this Act, without requiring  
23      the collection or retention of unnecessary personal data.  
24
- 25      e. *Third-party tool* refers any software applications, hardware, or services that  
26      can be used to indirectly create, maintain, or access social media platforms.  
27

28       **SEC. 4. Prohibition to Minors of Access to Social Media Platforms** – No  
29      minor shall be permitted to create, maintain, or access an account on a social media  
30      platform as defined in this Act. This prohibition shall apply regardless of whether  
31      access is obtained directly, indirectly, or through third-party tools.  
32  
33

34       **SEC. 5. Obligations of Platform Operators** – All platform operators offering  
35      services in the Philippines shall undertake the following responsibilities:  
36

- 37      a. *Prevent Access to Minors* – Take reasonable and proportionate steps to  
38      prevent minors from creating or maintaining accounts on their platforms. This  
39      obligation includes undertaking a mechanism that detects accounts that use  
40      falsified credentials.  
41
- 42      b. *Implement Age Assurance Measures* – Adopt age assurance systems that  
43      effectively prevent access to minors, minimize collection and/or retention of  
44      personal data and documents of minors; and comply with the Data Privacy Act  
45      of 2012 and all applicable regulations of the National Privacy Commission.  
46
- 47      c. *Account Removal* – Promptly review, suspend, deactivate, or remove accounts  
48      suspected or reasonably believed to be operated by minors, subject to notice  
49      and review procedures.  
50

- 1 d. *Transparency Reporting* – Submit annual reports to the DICT disclosing the  
2 measures taken to enforce the provisions of this Act, aggregate data on account  
3 removals related to age violations, general description of age assurance  
4 systems used, and identified risks or limitations in enforcement.  
5

6 **SEC. 6. Prohibited Acts** – It shall be unlawful for any social media platform  
7 operator to:

- 8  
9 a. Allow minors to create and maintain active accounts;  
10 b. Design or deploy systems that deliberately circumvent age assurance  
11 measures;  
12 c. Collect or retain unnecessary personal data under the guise of age  
13 verification; or  
14 d. Design or allow algorithmically amplified content intended to attract and  
15 increase usage of minors.  
16

17 **SEC. 7. Duty of Parents and Guardians.** – Parents and guardians shall  
18 exercise reasonable supervision and parental authority to ensure that minors under  
19 their care do not access or use social media platforms in violation of this Act. They  
20 shall likewise have the right to request platform operators the immediate review,  
21 suspension, deactivation, or removal of accounts suspected or confirmed to belong to  
22 minors under their care.  
23

24 **SEC. 8. Criminal, Civil or Administrative Liability for Minors, Parents or**  
25 **Guardians** – No criminal, civil, or administrative liability shall attach to minors who  
26 access or attempt to access social media platforms; or parents, or guardians of such  
27 minors.  
28

29 However, in cases of gross negligence and repeated violations of duties of  
30 parents and guardians under this Act, they must be required to attend digital safety,  
31 responsible technology use, or parenting support programs to be crafted by the DICT  
32 in coordination with the proper agencies.  
33

34 Enforcement under this Act shall be directed exclusively to social media platform  
35 operators, consistent with child-protection principles.  
36

37 **SEC. 9. Data Privacy of Minors.** – Nothing in this Act shall be construed to  
38 diminish rights under the Data Privacy Act of 2012, authorize mass surveillance or  
39 identity databases, or require minors to surrender personal data beyond what is strictly  
40 necessary for age assurance.  
41

42 All enforcement actions shall observe due process and transparency.  
43

44 **SEC 10. Social Media Platforms for Educational Use.** – Schools and other  
45 learning institutions which utilize social media platforms as a tool for learning shall  
46 adopt mechanisms that harmonize and comply with the provision of this Act.  
47

48 **SEC. 11. Penalties.** – Platform operators who will violate the provisions of this  
49 Act shall be subjected to the following penalties:

- 50 a. Written warnings and compliance orders;

- 1           b. Fines proportionate to the scale and duration of non-compliance; and/or  
2           c. Suspension of platform operations within the Philippines for repeated or  
3           willful violations.  
4

5           Penalties shall be graduated and proportionate, taking into account the gravity  
6 and scale of harm to minors, the size and reach of the platform, good faith, and  
7 compliance efforts.  
8

9           **SEC. 12. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The Department of  
10 Information and Communications Technology, in coordination with relevant agencies  
11 and stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations within ninety  
12 (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.  
13

14           The DICT shall serve as the primary agency responsible for implementing for the  
15 enforcement of this Act.  
16

17           **SEC. 13. Separability Clause.** – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared  
18 unconstitutional, the remainder hereof or any provisions not affected thereby shall  
19 remain in force and effect.  
20

21           **SEC. 14. Repealing Clause.** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,  
22 executive order, letter of instruction, rule, or regulation inconsistent with the provisions  
23 of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.  
24

25           **SEC. 15. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
26 complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.  
27

28           *Approved,*