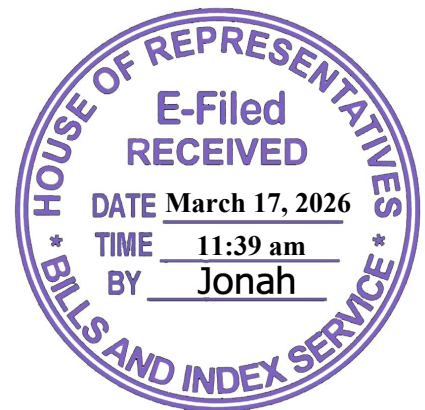


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8598



Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP

AN ACT
PROTECTING CHILDREN AND MINORS IN SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS,
STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY AND USER CONTROLS, AND ENSURING
PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION IN THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Social media has become an important part of everyday life. It allows people to communicate, learn, do business, and take part in public discussions. However, it also exposes children and minors to serious risks such as online sexual abuse and exploitation, grooming, privacy violations, and unhealthy or excessive use. Because social media platforms collect and process large amounts of personal data, these risks can grow quickly and affect many young users. There is therefore a clear need to strengthen protections for children in the online environment.

Philippine law already recognizes the duty of the State to protect children online. The **Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials Act (Republic Act No. 11930)** requires internet platforms and intermediaries to adopt measures that prevent, detect, and report online sexual abuse and exploitation of children. At the same time, the **Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173)** protects personal data and gives the **National Privacy Commission** the authority to enforce privacy standards. This bill builds on these existing laws by strengthening the responsibility of social media platforms to provide safer online spaces for children while respecting privacy rights and freedom of expression.

Accordingly, this measure seeks to establish clear and practical protections for children and minors using social media platforms. These include age-appropriate safety measures, stronger privacy settings for minors by default, tools for parents and guardians, easier reporting systems for harmful content, and greater transparency about how platforms collect and use children's data. By promoting safer design and responsible data practices, the bill aims to reduce online abuse, protect young users' privacy, and empower families to better manage children's digital experiences.

In view of the foregoing, **ug sa ngalan sa SERBISYONG TINUORAY**, the undersigned respectfully requests the immediate passage of this measure.


CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP
Representative, Second District of Southern Leyte

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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 “*Social Media Child Protection and Privacy Act.*”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is the policy of the State to protect children and minors from online risks, strengthen consumer transparency and user control in social media use, and uphold the constitutional rights to privacy and freedom of expression.

Regulation under this Act shall be **content-neutral**, narrowly tailored to legitimate State interests, and implemented with clear standards and safeguards to avoid overbreadth and chilling effects.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. — As used in this Act:

- (a) **Social Media Platform** refers to an online service or application that primarily enables users to create accounts or profiles and to create, share, view, or interact with content and other users.

- (b) **Child** refers to a person below thirteen (13) years of age.
- (c) **Minor** refers to a person thirteen (13) years of age but below eighteen (18) years of age.
- (d) **Parent/Legal Guardian** refers to a parent, legal guardian, or person exercising substitute parental authority under applicable laws.
- (e) **Personal Information, Sensitive Personal Information, Personal Information Controller, and Personal Information Processor** shall have the meanings provided under the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

SECTION 4. Duties of Social Media Platforms; Minimum Child and Minor Protections. — All Social Media Platforms operating in the Philippines and offering services to Philippine users shall implement the following minimum measures:

- (a) **Age-Appropriate Access and Safeguards.** Platforms shall implement reasonable and proportionate age-assurance measures and user experience controls to protect Children and Minors.
- (b) **Default Privacy and Safety Settings for Minors.** Accounts reasonably determined to belong to Minors shall, by default, be set to the highest available privacy settings, including limitations on discoverability, direct messaging by non-contacts, and public visibility, subject to user/parental adjustments.
- (c) **Enhanced Protections for Children.** Platforms shall take reasonable measures to prevent or restrict the creation and use of accounts by Children and shall provide clear pathways for reporting and rapid action on suspected child accounts.
- (d) **Parental Tools.** Platforms shall provide optional parental/guardian tools for Minors, including at least: activity summaries, privacy setting guides, and reporting channels.
- (e) **Time-Use Transparency Tools.** Platforms shall provide an in-app dashboard that allows users to view time spent on the platform and to set voluntary reminders or limits. For Minors, such reminders shall be enabled by default, subject to adjustment.

- (f) **Limits on Behavioral Profiling of Minors.** Platforms shall not engage in targeted advertising or behavioral profiling of Minors based on sensitive personal information and shall adopt privacy-by-design measures appropriate for minors.
- (g) **Ban on Collection of Children's Personal Data Without Proper Basis.** Platforms shall not collect or process personal information of Children except in accordance with the Data Privacy Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, including rules on lawful criteria and protection of data subjects.

SECTION 5. Data Privacy; Non-Exemption Clause. — Nothing in this Act shall be construed as an exemption from the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

SECTION 6. Complaints and Enforcement Framework. — The National Privacy Commission (NPC) with its function to monitor and ensure compliance of the country with international standards set for data protection in accordance with Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012 shall:

- (a) **National Privacy Commission (NPC).** For matters involving the processing of personal data, including unlawful collection, processing, retention, disclosure, or security incidents, the NPC shall exercise its powers under the Data Privacy Act, including rulemaking, compliance monitoring, and issuance of appropriate orders and remedies.
- (b) **DICT Coordinating Role.** The DICT shall serve as the coordinating agency for platform compliance reporting and public digital literacy initiatives relevant to this Act, without prejudice to the NPC's regulatory authority over personal data protection.
- (c) **Referral and Inter-Agency Coordination.** The NPC, DICT, and other concerned agencies may enter coordination mechanisms for complaints referral, technical assistance, and public advisories, consistent with their mandates.

SECTION 7. Research Program on Child and Adolescent Digital Well-Being. — The Department of Health (DOH), in coordination with relevant agencies and academic institutions, shall establish a research program on the health and developmental effects of social media use among children and minors, and shall issue evidence-based public health advisories.

SECTION 8. Transparency Reports. — Social Media Platforms shall publish periodic transparency reports, in such form as may be prescribed in the IRR, including aggregated data on: (a) child/minor safety reports received; (b) actions taken; (c) average response times; and (d) user education measures.

SECTION 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — Within ninety (90) days from effectivity, the DICT, in coordination with the NPC, DOH, and other concerned stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations: ***Provided,*** That rules affecting personal data processing shall be consistent with the Data Privacy Act and NPC’s rule-making and advisory functions.

SECTION 10. Separability Clause. — If any portion of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions not affected hereby.

SECTION 11. Repealing Clause. — All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 12. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,