



Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9078



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Introduced by  
Representative Roger Gaviola Mercado

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AN ACT  
PROHIBITING ACCESS TO SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS BY MINORS BELOW  
EIGHTEEN (18) YEARS OF AGE, AND IMPOSING OBLIGATIONS ON SOCIAL  
MEDIA COMPANIES AND INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS (ISPs)

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The rapid expansion of digital technology and the widespread use of social media platforms have fundamentally reshaped the way young people communicate, learn, and interact. While these platforms offer opportunities for information access, creativity, and social connection, they likewise expose minors to significant and well-documented risks, including cyberbullying, online exploitation, exposure to harmful or age-inappropriate content, and the adverse psychological effects associated with excessive and unregulated use.

In the Philippine setting, the increasing penetration of internet access among children and adolescents has outpaced the development of adequate regulatory safeguards. The use of social media platforms through the ISPs, often designed to maximize user engagement through algorithmic amplification and addictive interface features, do not sufficiently account for the developmental vulnerabilities of minors. As a result, young users are placed in environments that may impair their physical and mental health, disrupt healthy social development, and expose them to exploitation and abuse.

This proposed measure, entitled the "Social Media Regulation for Minors Act," seeks to address these concerns by establishing a comprehensive regulatory framework governing minors' access to social media platforms. It introduces an age-based access structure that limits or conditions access depending on the user's age

and level of maturity, while ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place for those who are permitted access under defined conditions.

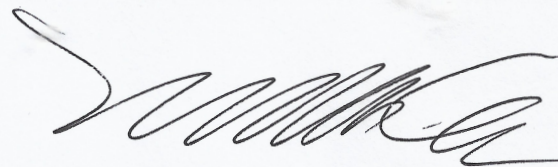
The bill imposes clear and enforceable obligations on social media companies and internet service providers (ISPs), including the implementation of robust age verification mechanisms, default safety settings, data minimization practices, and the restriction of high-risk platform features. It also mandates transparency in algorithmic systems and requires periodic compliance reporting to ensure accountability. Complementing these measures, ISPs are directed to cooperate in enforcement and provide optional filtering mechanisms for households.

At the same time, the measure recognizes and respects the constitutional rights to freedom of expression, access to information, and communication. It does not impose a blanket suppression of lawful speech but instead regulates access in a manner that is narrowly tailored, age-sensitive, and consistent with the State's compelling interest to protect the welfare of children. The bill likewise upholds the primacy of parental authority by empowering parents and guardians with tools for supervision, consent, and control over their children's digital engagement.

Furthermore, the measure adopts a whole-of-government approach by assigning key roles to the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and other relevant agencies. These institutions are tasked not only with enforcement but also with promoting digital literacy, responsible technology use, and public awareness on online risks.

By aligning platform accountability, parental involvement, and government oversight, this bill endeavors to create a safer and more developmentally appropriate digital environment for Filipino minors. Ultimately, it seeks to strike a judicious balance between embracing technological advancement and fulfilling the State's constitutional duty to promote and protect the best interests of the child.

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



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

1 SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the “Social Media  
2 Regulation for Minors Act”.

3 SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – This measure seeks to protect the physical,  
4 emotional and psychological well-being of minors by promoting their healthy  
5 development in an environment free from harmful online content, exploitation,  
6 addictive design practices and cyberbullying. It seeks to uphold constitutional rights to  
7 expression, information and communication and promotes a safe, developmentally  
8 appropriate digital environment. It recognizes the primary role of parents and  
9 guardians in guiding minors’ digital engagement and aims to provide support and  
10 guidance in the responsible use of digital technology, while ensuring that digital

1 platforms operate, and the internet service providers (ISPs) block access of covered  
2 minors to specific platforms, in a manner consistent with and responsive to the best  
3 interests of the children.

4 SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. As used in this Act:

- 5 a) *Age-Appropriate Design* refers to platform design that considers the  
6 developmental needs acting with prudence in terms of vulnerabilities of  
7 minors;
- 8 b) *Account Holder* refers any individual who creates and registers a user  
9 account on a social media platform;
- 10 c) *Age Verification Mechanism* refers to any system used to reasonably  
11 determine the age of a user through government-issued identification or  
12 other reliable means;
- 13 d) *Covered minor* refers to any person below eighteen (18) years of age;
- 14 e) *High-Risk Features* refers to functionalities that amplify exposure to harm,  
15 including algorithmic amplification, direct messaging from strangers, and  
16 infinite scroll mechanisms;
- 17 f) *Parental Consent* refers to verifiable permission granted by a parent or legal  
18 guardian;
- 19 g) *Service Provider* refers to any entity that owns, operates, or manages a  
20 social media platform and provides internet service; and
- 21 h) *Social Media Platform* refers to any online service or application that allows  
22 users to create profiles, upload and share content, interact or participate  
23 with other users enabling user-generated content and social interaction  
24 including messaging, video or data sharing in adherence to legal  
25 frameworks to protect data privacy, or networking features.

1           SEC. 4. Age-Based Access Framework. – In compliance with the age-based  
2 access framework under this section, account holder may include covered minors who  
3 are allowed limited access to social media platforms and shall be subject to regulations  
4 as follows:

- 5           a) Children under thirteen (13) years of age:
  - 6           i.       No independent account creation permitted; and
  - 7           ii.      Access to social media is allowed only through parent-managed or  
8                   platform-certified child-safe accounts with restricted features;
- 9           b) Children between thirteen (13) to fifteen (15) years of age:
  - 10          i.       Account creation is allowed only with verified parental consent; and
  - 11          ii.      Default settings must be maximum privacy and safety;
- 12          c) Children between sixteen (16) to seventeen (17) years of age:
  - 13          i.       Independent access allowed; and
  - 14          ii.      Platforms must apply enhanced protections and safety defaults.

15           SEC. 5. Prohibition. – It shall be unlawful for any covered minor to create,  
16 maintain, or use an account on any social media platform and misrepresent their age  
17 for the purpose of accessing such platform. Social media platforms are hereby  
18 prohibited from allowing covered minors to register or maintain accounts on their  
19 platforms and are required to implement effective age verification mechanisms subject  
20 to Age-Based Access Framework. The ISPs are required to block access of covered  
21 minors to specific platforms in compliance with the age-based access framework.

22           SEC. 6. Obligations of Social Media Platforms and ISPs. – All social media  
23 platforms accessible within the Philippines and local ISPs shall uphold a minimum age  
24 requirement designed to mitigate risks, as follows:

- 1 a) Implement robust age assurance and verification systems prior to
- 2 account creation;
- 3 b) Require government-issued identification or equivalent verification
- 4 method ensuring data privacy compliance in accordance with applicable
- 5 laws;
- 6 c) Provide default safety settings for minors with private accounts and
- 7 restriction of contact from unknown users;
- 8 d) Limit data collection and targeted advertising;
- 9 e) Provide age-appropriate designs and restrict high-risk features by
- 10 disabling or limiting algorithmic amplification of harmful content,
- 11 providing nighttime notifications and suppressing addictive interface
- 12 designs i.e., infinite scrolling for younger users;
- 13 f) Make available transparent algorithms by providing understandable
- 14 explanations of content recommendation systems affecting minors;
- 15 g) Deny account registration and access of covered minors;
- 16 h) Conduct periodic audits and remove accounts reasonably determined
- 17 to belong to covered minors;
- 18 i) Provide parental control mechanisms for users aged sixteen (16) to
- 19 below eighteen (18);
- 20 j) Make available easy reporting and redress mechanisms by providing
- 21 one-click reporting tools and fast-track resolution for child safety
- 22 concerns; and
- 23 k) Submit compliance reports to the appropriate government agency.

24 SEC. 7. Responsibilities of ISPs. – The ISPs shall:

- 25 a) Cooperate with government agencies in enforcing this Act; and

1           b) Provide optional filtering mechanisms for households to restrict  
2           access to social media platforms for covered minors.

3           SEC. 8. Role of Parents and Guardians. – Parents or legal guardians shall  
4           exercise reasonable supervision over the internet usage of covered minors, may  
5           provide parental consent and may be provided tools and guidance by the government  
6           to enforce compliance. Parents and guardians shall have the right to grant or revoke  
7           at any time parental consent issued, monitor account activity proportionate to the  
8           child’s age, and set usage limits and content restrictions.

9           SEC. 9. Duties of Government Agencies. – The Department of Information and  
10          Communications Technology (DICT) has primary responsibility to issue technical  
11          standards on all social media platforms and ISPs, maintain a registry of compliant  
12          platforms, conduct nationwide awareness campaigns, audit and check compliance  
13          and conduct oversight to determine strict compliance of the enforcement chain with  
14          this Act. The Department of Education (DepEd) shall integrate digital literacy  
15          citizenship, online safety, media literacy into K-12 curriculum and require responsible  
16          technology use in curricula. The Department of Social Welfare and Development  
17          (DSWD) shall monitor compliance and provide intervention programs for affected  
18          minors.

19          SEC. 10. Implementing Agency. – The DICT, in coordination with the  
20          Department of Justice, DSWD, DepEd, National Telecommunications Commission,  
21          and the National Privacy Commission shall implement and enforce the provisions of  
22          this Act.

23          SEC. 11. Penalties. - Any social media platform found guilty of violating any  
24          provision of this Act in its operations within the Philippines shall, subject to due  
25          process, be punished with:

- 1 a) A fine of not less than One million pesos (₱1,000,000) but not more than  
2 Two million pesos (₱2,000,000) on the first offense;
- 3 b) A fine of not less than Two million five hundred pesos (₱2,500,000) but not  
4 more than Four million pesos (₱4,000,000 on the second offense; and
- 5 c) a fine of not less Five million pesos (₱5,000,000) but not more than Six  
6 million pesos (₱6,000,000) and suspension of operations or revocation of  
7 authority to operate within the Philippines, on the third and subsequent  
8 offenses.

9 The corporate officer or employee of any social media platform who knowingly  
10 allows violations of any provision of this Act may be held administratively liable and be  
11 punished with a fine of not less than Five hundred thousand pesos (₱500,000) but not  
12 more than One million pesos (₱1,000,000).

13 SEC. 12. Data Privacy and Protection. – In order to ensure a secured  
14 collection, processing and storage of personal data for lawful purposes, the age  
15 verification mechanisms must be in compliance with Republic Act 10173 or the Data  
16 Privacy Act of 2012.

17 SEC. 13. Information and Education Campaign. – The DepEd, in coordination  
18 with the DICT, shall conduct nationwide campaign to educate students, parents, and  
19 educators on responsible digital usage and the risks of early exposure to social media.

20 SEC. 14. Incentives for Compliance. – Platforms demonstrating exemplary child  
21 safety standards may be rewarded a public certification seal, regulatory incentives or  
22 recognition.

23 SEC. 15. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within ninety (90) days from  
24 the effectivity of this Act, the DICT, in coordination with relevant agencies, shall  
25 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations.

1           SEC. 16. Separability Clause. - If any part, section or provision of this Act is  
2 held invalid or declared unconstitutional, other parts or provisions hereof not affected  
3 thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

4           SEC. 17. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, or regulations inconsistent  
5 with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

6           SEC. 18. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
7 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

8           Approved,