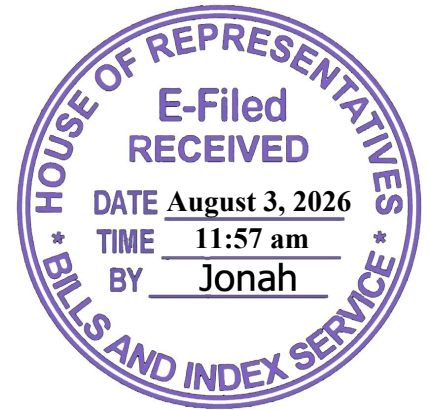


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
20TH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session



House Bill No. 10486

Introduced by: **REP. JOEL R. CHUA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Children today are growing up in a digital environment where social media, online games, and other online platforms have become an integral part of their daily lives. While these technologies offer opportunities for learning, they also expose minors to serious risks.

Despite this, **there is currently no comprehensive Philippine law requiring digital platforms to implement uniform age verification systems or subjecting them to meaningful accountability for failing to protect minors.** Many platforms continue to rely solely on self-declared birth dates, allowing underage users to easily circumvent age restrictions.

This measure seeks to fill this gap by empowering the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) to establish age classifications and child safety standards for digital platforms, require reasonable age verification mechanisms, and hold platform operators and developers accountable for violations, while ensuring full respect for the constitutional rights to privacy, due process, freedom of expression, and access to information. It likewise preserves the primary responsibility of parents and legal guardians in guiding and supervising their children's online activities.

By requiring digital platforms to exercise greater responsibility in protecting Filipino children, this bill promotes a safer digital environment where innovation and technology can flourish without compromising the welfare and best interests of the youth.

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

JOEL R. CHUA
Representative, 3rd District, Manila

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House Bill No. 10486

Introduced by: **REP. JOEL R. CHUA**

AN ACT ESTABLISHING SAFEGUARDS FOR THE USE OF ONLINE GAMES, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND DIGITAL PLATFORMS BY MINORS THROUGH THE MOVIE AND TELEVISION REVIEW AND CLASSIFICATION BOARD (MTRCB), PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 “Digital Platforms Accountability Act of 2026”.

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to:

- (a) Protect children from online exploitation, harmful digital content, excessive exposure to addictive technologies, and other digital risks;
- (b) Promote responsible innovation while ensuring that technology companies exercise reasonable care in protecting minors;
- (c) Hold digital platform operators accountable for failures in implementing effective child safety mechanisms;
- (d) Ensure that online services accessible within the Philippines adopt reasonable and effective safeguards to prevent unauthorized access by minors; and
- (e) Promote responsible use of digital technology while respecting the constitutional rights to freedom of expression, privacy, due process, and access to information.

Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act:

- (a) **Digital Platform** refers to any online service accessible through the internet, including social media platforms, online games, gaming services, live-streaming platforms, virtual worlds, messaging applications with public interactive features, and similar digital services.
- (b) **Platform Operator** refers to any person or entity that owns, develops, controls, manages, or operates a Digital Platform.

- (c) **Developer** refers to any natural or juridical person responsible for creating or publishing a Digital Platform.
- (d) **Minor** refers to any person below eighteen (18) years of age.
- (e) **Age Verification** refers to reasonable and reliable methods of determining whether a user satisfies the minimum age prescribed under this Act.
- (f) **Philippine User** refers to any user physically located within Philippine territory.

Section 4. *Additional Powers and Functions of the MTRCB.* – In addition to its powers under existing laws, the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) shall have the following powers and functions for purposes of this Act:

- (a) Determine the minimum age appropriate for access to various categories of Digital Platforms;
- (b) Classify online games, social media platforms, and other Digital Platforms according to age appropriateness and risk level;
- (c) Prescribe mandatory child safety standards applicable to Digital Platforms;
- (d) Establish standards and guidelines for age verification and age assurance systems;
- (e) Conduct compliance audits and investigations of Platform Operators and Developers;
- (f) Issue compliance certifications and age classifications required under this Act;
- (g) Order corrective measures and impose administrative sanctions for violations of this Act;
- (h) Receive, investigate, and resolve complaints involving violations of this Act;
- (i) Coordinate with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Health (DOH), National Privacy Commission (NPC), National Youth Commission (NYC), and other relevant government agencies in the implementation of this Act;
- (j) Coordinate with foreign regulators and international organizations for the enforcement of this Act against foreign Platform Operators and Developers; and
- (k) Exercise such other powers as may be necessary to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

Section 5. *Mandatory Age Classification.* – Every Digital Platform accessible within the Philippines shall secure an Age Classification and Compliance Certification from the MTRCB before offering its services to Philippine Users.

The classification shall indicate:

- minimum age;
- parental supervision requirements;
- content advisories;
- risk level;
- interactive features;

- gambling-like mechanics;
- monetization systems.

Section 6. *Platform Obligations.* – Every Platform Operator shall:

- (a) implement effective age verification systems;
- (b) prevent creation of accounts by underaged users;
- (c) disable accounts found to belong to underaged users;
- (d) implement parental controls;
- (e) maintain audit logs;
- (f) promptly investigate and resolve reports of underage accounts; and
- (g) submit annual compliance reports to the MTRCB.

Section 7. *Prohibited Acts.* – It shall be unlawful for any Platform Operator or Developer to:

- (a) knowingly permit minors below the prescribed age to create or maintain accounts;
- (b) rely solely on self-declared birth dates where more reliable age assurance methods are reasonably available;
- (c) intentionally design systems to circumvent age restrictions;
- (d) fail to remove underage accounts after notice;
- (e) fail to verify and resolve a report within fourteen (14) days; and
- (f) advertise prohibited platforms to minors.

Section 8. *Foreign Digital Platforms.* – Any foreign Platform Operator or Developer offering services to Philippine users shall:

- (a) designate and maintain an authorized Philippine representative empowered to receive legal processes, notices, subpoenas, and administrative orders;
- (b) register with the MTRCB before making its services available in the Philippines;
- (c) submit to Philippine administrative jurisdiction with respect to matters arising under this Act;
- (d) comply with lawful orders issued by the MTRCB and Philippine courts.
- (a) Failure to designate a Philippine representative shall constitute grounds for enforcement measures under this Act.

Section 9. *Enforcement Against Foreign Entities.* – Where a foreign Platform Operator or Developer refuses to comply with this Act, the MTRCB may recommend to the proper agencies, after due notice and hearing, one or more of the following:

- (a) suspension or removal of the application from digital application marketplaces operating in the Philippines;
- (b) suspension of local advertising services;
- (c) suspension of monetization through Philippine payment gateways and financial service providers;
- (d) blocking or restriction of access within Philippine jurisdiction, subject to appropriate judicial authorization when required by law;

- (e) coordination with foreign regulatory authorities under applicable treaties or reciprocal enforcement arrangements; and
- (f) institution of civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings against the operator, its local representative, or both, where authorized by law.

The foregoing remedies shall be without prejudice to other actions available under existing laws.

Section 10. *Administrative Fines.* – The MTRCB may impose administrative fines as follows:

First offense: ₱5,000,000

Second offense: ₱10,000,000

Third offense: ₱25,000,000

Subsequent offenses: up to five percent (5%) of the platform's gross annual Philippine-generated revenue, or ₱100,000,000, whichever is higher.

Each underage account knowingly permitted to remain active after valid notice may be treated as a separate violation.

Section 11. *Criminal Liability.* – Any responsible officer who willfully authorizes or directs systematic violations of this Act shall, upon conviction, be punished by:

- (a) imprisonment of six (6) years to twelve (12) years;
- (b) a fine of not less than ₱10,000,000 but not exceeding ₱50,000,000; or
- (c) both, at the discretion of the court.

Where the offender is a juridical entity, the responsible directors, officers, or managing employees who knowingly participated in or authorized the violation shall be held liable.

Section 12. *Non-Diminution of Other Liabilities and Parental Responsibility.* – The liability of a Platform Operator, Developer, or any other person under this Act shall be without prejudice to the civil, criminal, or administrative liability of any other person under existing laws for acts or omissions arising from the same incident. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to diminish, impair, or relieve the parental authority and responsibility of parents or legal guardians over their minor children as provided under the Family Code of the Philippines and other applicable laws.

Section 13. *Coordination with the National Privacy Commission.* – The MTRCB and the National Privacy Commission shall jointly formulate standards governing age verification and age assurance systems to ensure that only the minimum personal data necessary is collected, appropriate data privacy and security safeguards are implemented, privacy-enhancing technologies are adopted whenever practicable,

and all processing of personal data complies with Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the "Data Privacy Act of 2012," and its implementing rules and regulations.

Section 14. *Citizen Complaints.* – Parents, legal guardians, schools, government agencies, or any concerned citizen may file complaints before the MTRCB regarding violations of this Act.

Section 15. *Rule-making Authority.* – Within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the MTRCB, in coordination with the DICT, DSWD, DOJ, NPC, and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations.

Section 16. *Appropriations.*
The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the MTRCB. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 17. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 18. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, and administrative orders or parts thereof inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

Section 19. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.