

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 11493



Introduced by

HON. ATTY. GERVILLE "JINKY BITRICS" R. LUISTRO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The proliferation of social media platforms has revolutionized the way Filipinos communicate, access information, and participate in public discourse. These platforms have become essential tools for education, business, governance, and social interaction. However, the rapid expansion and influence of social media have also brought challenges, including the spread of misinformation, hate speech, cyberbullying, privacy violations, and other harmful online behaviors that threaten public order and individual rights.

The **Social Media Platform Regulation Act of 2026** seeks to establish a comprehensive legal framework to regulate social media platforms operating in the Philippines. This legislation aims to balance the protection of freedom of expression and innovation with the need to ensure accountability, transparency, and the safety of users in the digital space.

The key provisions of the bill include:

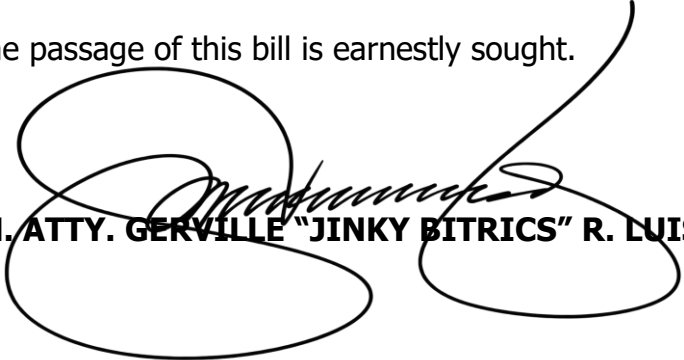
- The establishment of clear guidelines for the operation of social media platforms to prevent the dissemination of harmful content such as fake news, hate speech, and illegal activities;
- Requirements for transparency in content moderation policies and algorithms used by social media companies;
- Safeguards to protect user privacy and data security;
- Mechanisms for prompt and effective response to complaints and grievances from users;
- Promotion of digital literacy and responsible online behavior among Filipinos;

- Strengthening the cooperation between the government, social media platforms, and civil society to foster a safer and more accountable online environment.

This bill seeks to address that gap by **mandating the registration and regulation of social media platforms operating in the Philippines**, especially those with a significant user base or content reach in the country. It aims to ensure that these platforms observe standards of transparency, cooperate with government agencies in identifying sources of fake news, and implement robust mechanisms to detect and take down harmful content without infringing on constitutionally protected freedoms. It also seeks to promote accountability and discourage the spread of false information by imposing heavy fines and criminal prosecution, ensuring that addressing national and global issues is not hindered by disinformation.

By enacting this law, the State reaffirms its commitment to uphold the constitutional rights of every Filipino while adapting to the evolving challenges posed by digital technologies. It ensures that social media platforms contribute positively to nation-building, democracy, and social cohesion.

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



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AN ACT
REGISTERING AND REGULATING SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

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

3
4 **SECTION 1. *Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the "Social Media Platform
5 Regulation Act of 2026."
6
7

8 **SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – The State recognizes the crucial role
9 of social media in promoting free expression and facilitating digital commerce.
10 However, it is also the policy of the State to protect the public from the harmful effects
11 of disinformation, online criminal activity, unregulated commercial operations, and
12 abuse of digital platforms. It shall be the responsibility of the government to ensure
13 that social media platforms operating in the Philippines are held accountable for
14 activities occurring on their services, and that they comply with national laws on
15 content, taxation, business registration, and data protection.
16

17 **SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.*** –

- 18 a. *Fake News* – refers to information that is wholly or partially false, fabricated,
19 or misleading, presented or disseminated as news or factual content with
20 the intent to deceive, mislead, or cause public confusion;
21 b. *Disinformation* – refers to deliberately false or misleading information that
22 is created, disseminated, or promoted with the intention to deceive the
23 public, manipulate opinion, or cause harm to individuals, groups, or
24 institutions;
25 c. *Social Media Platforms* – refer to digital platforms or online services that
26 enable users to create, share, distribute, or access user-generated content

- 1 or interact with others, including but not limited to Facebook, X (formerly
2 Twitter), YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and similar applications or websites;
- 3 d. *Resident Agent* – refers to an individual or entity based in the Philippines,
4 designated by a foreign social media platform to officially receive
5 communications, notices, and legal processes from the Philippine
6 government.
- 7 e. *Online Illegal Activity* – includes, but is not limited to, the following:
8 - Disinformation or Fake News
9 - Online Gambling without proper government authorization
10 - Pornographic content accessible to minors
11 - Unregistered and untaxed online commercial activities
12 - Promotion of illegal drugs, terrorism, or violence
- 13 f. *DICT* – refers to the Department of Information and Communications
14 Technology.
- 15 g. *Publisher* – refers to any individual, organization, or entity, whether natural
16 or juridical, that creates, curates, or disseminates content or information to
17 the public through traditional media outlets or digital and online platforms;
- 18 h. *Deepfake* – refers to any image, audio, or video content that has been
19 synthetically generated, altered, or manipulated using artificial intelligence
20 or similar technologies, with the intent to deceive or mislead viewers;
- 21 i. *Public Interest* – refers to matters that affect the general welfare, safety,
22 security, health, and democratic rights of the people, including the integrity
23 of public discourse, elections, and the protection of civil liberties;
- 24 j. *Harmful Content* – refers to material that, by its nature or intent, poses a
25 threat to public order, incites violence, promotes discrimination, undermines
26 public trust in institutions, or causes emotional, reputational, or physical
27 harm;

28
29 **SECTION 4. *Mandatory Registration and Designation of Resident***
30 ***Agent.*** – All foreign social media platforms with users, advertisers, or commercial
31 activities in the Philippines shall:

- 32 a. Register with the DICT and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC),
33 or the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), as applicable.
- 34 b. Designate a Resident Agent or Representative Office in the Philippines to
35 whom legal processes and official communications may be served.
- 36 c. Comply with applicable laws on taxation, labor, advertising, and e-
37 commerce.

38
39 **SECTION 5. *DICT Oversight and Regulatory Authority.*** – The DICT shall
40 serve as the lead regulatory agency in charge of:

- 41 a. Developing implementing rules and guidelines for compliance by social media
42 platforms;
- 43 b. Coordinating with other government agencies such as the Bureau of Internal
44 Revenue (BIR), National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), Philippine
45 National Police (PNP), and the Department of Justice (DOJ) in enforcing this
46 Act;
- 47 c. Receiving and investigating public complaints related to online content, illegal
48 activities, and consumer fraud.

SECTION 6. *Obligations of Social Media Platforms.* – All social media platforms operating in the Philippines shall be required to:

- a. Deploy moderation and reporting systems to prevent the spread of disinformation or false content;
- b. Prohibit and actively remove content related to illegal gambling, pornography, and other forms of online criminal activity;
- c. Cooperate with the BIR to identify commercial accounts and sellers who may be evading taxes;
- d. Ensure that sellers and business accounts on their platforms comply with DTI, BIR, and LGU licensing and permitting requirements;
- e. Implement age verification mechanisms to restrict minors from accessing adult content.

SECTION 7. *Prohibition Against Unregistered Commercial Activity.* – No person or entity shall engage in the sale of goods or services through social media platforms without proper registration with the BIR and the DTI or relevant government agencies. Social media platforms shall be required to:

- a. Establish a verification system for business accounts;
- b. Share business account data with the BIR and DTI, subject to applicable data privacy laws.

SECTION 8. *Content Regulation and Enforcement Mechanisms.* – To ensure compliance with this Act, platforms shall be mandated to:

- a. Submit annual transparency reports on their takedown actions, community guidelines enforcement, and cooperation with Philippine authorities;
- b. Immediately remove flagged content within twenty-four (24) hours upon receipt of a lawful order or notice from a competent authority;
- c. Retain data relevant to investigations for a period of one (1) year.

SECTION 9. *Penalties.* – Failure to comply with the provisions of this Act shall result in the following:

- a. A fine of not less than Five Million Pesos (₱5,000,000) and not more than Fifty Million Pesos (₱50,000,000) for each violation;
- b. Suspension or blocking of access to the platform in the Philippines upon continued non-compliance;
- c. Criminal liability for individuals who knowingly and willfully disseminate disinformation or operate illegal businesses online.

SECTION 10. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DICT. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DICT, in consultation with the BIR, DOJ, DTI, SEC, and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

1
2 **SECTION 12. Separability Clause.** — If any provision of this Act is declared
3 invalid or unconstitutional, the provisions of this Act or any provisions not affected
4 thereby shall remain in force and effect.
5

6 **SECTION 13. Repealing Clause.** — All laws, decrees, ordinances, rules and
7 regulations, executive or administrative orders, and other presidential issuances
8 inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.
9

10 **SECTION 14. Effectivity.** — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
11 its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
12

13 Approved,