



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 5791

BY REPRESENTATIVES RIDON, LEE, DUAVIT, ROMUALDO, VELARDE,
ABAYA, LAGDAMEO (M.), TINIO, DELA CRUZ AND PRIMICIAS-AGABAS,
PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 737

AN ACT PROVIDING FREE PUBLIC WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS, TERMINALS, PARKS AND PLAZAS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

*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 “Free Public
2 Wi-Fi Act”.

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State recognizes the vital role of
4 information and communications technology in nation-building and with
5 appropriate training programs and institutional policy changes, the State shall
6 develop human resources to foster an information technology intensive
7 country.

8 In pursuance thereof, the State shall create an information-friendly
9 environment and shall encourage the active participation of the private sector,
10 local government units (LGUs) and community-based organizations in the
11 production, distribution and application of investments and services in
12 telecommunications and information technology to ensure the availability,

1 diversity, and affordability of such products and services for national
2 development.

3 *SEC. 3. Installation of Wireless Internet Connections.* -- The
4 government, including LGUs and government-owned and -controlled
5 corporations (GOCCs) shall install broadband hotspots in public areas that
6 will provide a stable and reliable wireless internet connection at all times,
7 thereby encouraging discourse and trade in internet-related goods, services,
8 and content.

9 Areas that will be provided with broadband hotspots shall include the
10 following:

11 (a) All buildings of national government offices, including its regional
12 and satellite offices, provincial capitols, and municipal halls;

13 (b) Buildings of state universities and colleges;

14 (c) Public parks and plazas;

15 (d) Public hospitals; and

16 (e) Public transportation terminals such as airports, seaports, and
17 public bus stations.

18 *SEC. 4. Internet Service Provider.* -- Consistent with its objective of
19 providing internet service for all, the Information and Communications
20 Technology Office (ICTO) of the Department of Science and Technology
21 (DOST) shall provide the internet connectivity necessary to comply with the
22 provisions of this Act. The internet connectivity infrastructure required for a
23 mesh of networks shall cover public spaces throughout the country that will be
24 provided with broadband hotspots. In cases where the ICTO is technically
25 unable to provide internet connectivity, said hotspots shall be made available
26 using initially the services of existing commercial internet service providers
27 (ISPs).

1 The ICTO shall likewise be the lead agency for the promotion and
2 implementation of the government's information and communications
3 technology (ICT) related efforts which shall include policy formulation and
4 industry development and shall monitor the progress of the implementation of
5 a broadband infrastructure and its maintenance.

6 SEC. 5. *Wi-Fi Access.* -- Within a period of two (2) years, all public
7 spaces as stated in this Act shall be provided a range of broadband hotspots.
8 Internet connection to any of the broadband hotspots in the designated public
9 spaces shall not be restricted with passwords. Only in cases where there is a
10 clear and present security or technical risk that cannot be remedied through
11 normal technical solutions shall the administration or management of public
12 broadband hotspots limit access to the network through the use of passwords,
13 which shall, however, be easily provided to the public upon request.

14 No fees shall be collected for users to connect to the internet using the
15 public broadband hotspots or the free public wi-fi network.

16 SEC. 6. *Non-Collection of Data.* -- The government shall respect the
17 privacy of citizens who use the public broadband hotspots. In no case shall
18 the administration or management of public broadband hotspots engage in the
19 collection, use, or disclosure of user data, including the collection of
20 anonymous traffic data, in accordance with existing laws.

21 SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.* -- If any provision or part hereof is held
22 invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall
23 remain valid and subsisting.

24 SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* -- All laws, decrees, issuances, orders,
25 letters of instruction, rules and regulations or portions thereof contrary to or
26 inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed,
27 modified or amended accordingly.

1 SEC. 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
2 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

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