

'22 JUL 18 P1:46

SENATE  
S. No. 709

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Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

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**AN ACT  
INCORPORATING THE VALUE OF RESPONSIBLE, FAIR AND TRUTHFUL  
USAGE AND ENJOYMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SCHOOLS AND  
UNIVERSITIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to "Digital 2021: The Philippines", a report from Hootsuite and We are Social showing people's online behavior around the world, Filipinos spend an average of 10 hours and 56 mins a day on the internet using any device—well-above the global average time of 6 hours and 54 mins.<sup>1</sup>

The Report also revealed the following: (a) there are 89 million Social Media users in the Philippines as of January 2021, which is equivalent to 80.7% of the population; (b) the number of Social Media users in the Philippines increased by 16 million (or by 21.9%) between 2020 and 2021; and (c) Filipinos still lead the world ranking in terms of time spent on Social Media, with an average of 4 hours and 15 mins per day compared to the global average of 2 hours and 25 mins per day.<sup>2</sup>

The above figures reflect how essential the worldwide web is to Filipinos, especially Social Media. It has become a way to communicate with family and friends, more so during the lockdown when mobility became severely limited. Social Media has also become an important means for Filipinos to access news, with 72% citing it as a source of news in 2021.<sup>3</sup> Ultimately, it has become part of our daily lives, and has been woven in on almost every aspect of our community.

Given the above phenomenon, the primary duty of the Government to serve and protect the people must be attuned accordingly. The Constitution mandates that

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<sup>1</sup> Kemp, Simon. (11 February 2021). "Digital 2021: The Philippines". Accessed from: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-philippines>;

Kemp, Simon. (27 January 2021). "Digital 201: The Latest Insights Into the 'State of Digital'". We are Social. Accessed from: <https://wearesocial.com/blog/2021/01/digital-2021-the-latest-insights-into-the-state-of-digital/>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Chua, Yvonne T. (2021). "Philippines". *Digital news Report 2021*. Reuters Institute. Accessed from: <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2021/philippines>

all educational institutions shall, among others, inculcate patriotism and nationalism, foster love of humanity, respect for human rights, strengthen ethical and spiritual values, develop moral character and personal discipline, encourage critical and creative thinking, and broaden scientific and technological knowledge.<sup>4</sup> The Constitution likewise recognizes the vital role of communication and information in nation-building<sup>5</sup>, as well as the vital role of the youth in nation-building.<sup>6</sup>

In line with these Constitutional mandates, this legislative measure seeks to include the topic of Social Media—its importance, role in information dissemination and public discourse, as well as the responsible and fair use thereof—into the curriculum for both primary and secondary education in the country. This bill seeks to inculcate in our youth the virtues of discernment and critical thinking, especially in view of the proliferation of "fake news" on Social Media. Additionally, this Bill seeks to implement the following:

1. Corporations are to formulate and implement effective measures in relation to responsible, fair and truthful utilization of Social Media, and must promote the same as part of their respective Corporate Social Responsibility; and
2. Social Media education and mentorship shall be made part of the National Service Training Program (NSTP).

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



GRACE POE

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<sup>4</sup> Section 3(2), Article XIV, 1987 Constitution.

<sup>5</sup> Section 24, Article II, 1987 Constitution.

<sup>6</sup> Section 13, Article II, 1987 Constitution.

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*First Regular Session* )



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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**AN ACT**  
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**USAGE AND ENJOYMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SCHOOLS AND**  
**UNIVERSITIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1           Sec. 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Social Media Awareness in*  
2 *Schools and Universities Act of 2022*".

3           Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – In line with the increasing significance of  
4 Social Media, as well as the Constitutional recognition of the vital role of  
5 communication and information in nation-building, the role of education in fostering  
6 patriotism and nationalism, accelerating social progress, and promoting total human  
7 liberation and development, as well as the vital role of the youth in nation-building,  
8 it is the declared policy of the State to inculcate unto the youth the virtues of  
9 discernment, critical-thinking, and responsible and fair use of Social Media.

10           Sec. 3. *Inclusion of Social Media in the Curricula for Primary and Secondary*  
11 *Education.* – Social Media awareness shall be part of the curriculum for both primary  
12 and secondary education, in public and private schools, with the following  
13 objectives:

14           a. Inculcate how various types of Social Media aid in the effective and efficient  
15 dissemination of information; help in shaping public discourse and opinion;  
16 and facilitate in fostering a more participative democracy;

- 1 b. Instill the importance of upholding truth and the veracity of facts,  
2 figures and events in Social Media;  
3 c. Train students in responsible and fair use of Social Media; and  
4 d. Foster the virtues of discernment and critical-thinking in the use and  
5 enjoyment of Social Media.

6 Sec. 4. *Social Media Awareness as part of the National Service Training*  
7 *Program (NSTP).* – Social Media awareness must be made part of the National  
8 Service Training Program (NSTP), particularly in the service components pertaining  
9 to the Literacy Training Service (LTS) and the Civic Welfare Training Service (CWTS).

10 Sec. 5. *Contribution of the Private Sector in Social Media Awareness.* – Private  
11 corporations must formulate and implement effective measures and/or policies in  
12 relation to the responsible, fair and truthful utilization and enjoyment of various  
13 types of Social Media. Private corporations must likewise promote the foregoing as  
14 part of their respective Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

15 Sec. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DepEd, CHED, the  
16 Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and SEC, in  
17 consultation with the Department of Information and Communications Technology  
18 (DICT), shall jointly formulate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act  
19 within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act.

20 Sec. 7. *Separability Clause.* – If any section or provision of this Act shall be  
21 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not affected  
22 thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

23 Sec. 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, or rules and regulations  
24 which are inconsistent or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby amended  
25 or repealed accordingly.

26 Sec. 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
27 publication in two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,