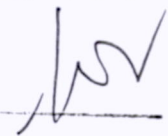


SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

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SENATE
S.B. No. 660

RECEIVED



Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC SERVICES AND ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON INTERNET AVAILABILITY, COSTS AND SPEED IN THE COUNTRY IN THE LIGHT OF A NEW REPORT THAT THE PHILIPPINES CONTINUES TO LAG BEHIND OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE ASEAN REGION, AND TO REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT OF EXISTING LAWS AND REGULATIONS ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR THIS PURPOSE

WHEREAS, Section 24, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution declares that the State "...recognizes the vital role of communication and information in nation-building.";

WHEREAS, Section 10, Article XVI of the Constitution further mandates the State to "...provide the policy environment for the full development of Filipino capability and the emergence of communication structures suitable to the needs and aspirations of the nation and the balanced flow of information into, out of, and across the country...";

WHEREAS, the provisions cited above are reiterated in Republic Act No. 7925, otherwise known as the "*Public Telecommunications Policy Act of the Philippines*" which further details the State's policy on the development and regulation of the telecommunications industry;

WHEREAS, in order to bolster the government's capacity to the implement the constitutional and statutory provisions cited above, and to keep up with the development of the information and telecommunications (ICT) sector, Congress enacted Republic Act No. 10844, otherwise as the "*Department of Information And Communications Technology Act of 2015*";

WHEREAS, last September 2015, the Philippines joined other United Nations (UN) member States in adopting the Sustainable Development Goals, which includes increasing

access to information and communications technology and striving to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet among its targets;^{1 2}

WHEREAS, according to data collected by the World Bank³, the percentage of internet users in our population has grown from 5.74% in 2006 to 55.5% in 2016, or a staggering rate of 25% per year;

WHEREAS, according to We Are Social, Filipinos spent up to 9 hours a day on the internet and 4 hours on social media in 2017, which are both the highest rates among the countries surveyed⁴;

WHEREAS, the survey conducted by We Are Social also revealed the following data about internet use by Filipinos in 2017:

- 56% of Filipino internet users accessed the internet at least once a day;
- 58% of the population are active users of social media; *and*
- 30.34 million Filipinos have purchased goods or services via E-Commerce;

WHEREAS, the data presented above shows that telecommunications services have been rapidly integrated into all Philippine economy, culture, and society, and have in the process become “impressed with public interest”, thus necessitating the State’s intervention to ensure that telecommunications companies maintain a high level of service delivery;

WHEREAS, according to a recent report of OpenSignal, 4G availability increased from 58.8% in the third quarter of 2017 to 63.7% currently, but the Philippines ranked only 75th out of 88 countries surveyed in terms of 4G availability;

WHEREAS, according to the same report, 4G speed in the country increased from 8.24 MBPs in the third quarter of 2017 to 9.5% currently, yet the Philippines ranked only 85th out of 88 countries;

WHEREAS, consider the following data which shows how our country’s 4G speed compares to other countries in the ASEAN region:

- Singapore: 44.3 Mbps;

¹Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations. “Philippines Pledges to Make the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda a Reality and to Leave No One Behind” (29 September 2015). Retrieved from <https://www.un.int/philippines/activities/philippines-pledges-make-2030-sustainable-development-agenda-reality-and-leave-no-one>

² United Nations. Sustainable Development Goal 9. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/infrastructure-industrialization/>

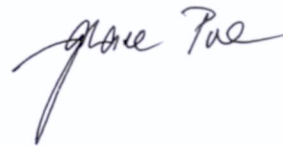
³ World Bank Data Bank. Individuals using the Internet (% of population). Retrieved from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS>

⁴ We Are Social. *Digital in 2017: Global Interview*. Retrieved <https://wearesocial.com/special-reports/digital-in-2017-global-overview>

- Vietnam: 21.5 Mbps;
- Malaysia: 14.8 Mbps;
- Thailand: 9.6 Mbps;
- Philippines: 9.5 Mbps;
- Indonesia: 8.9 Mbps;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the Senate Committees on Public Services and on Science and Technology to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on internet availability, costs and speed in the country in the light of a new report that the Philippines continues to lag behind other countries in the ASEAN region, and to review the implementation and impact of existing laws and regulations on telecommunications for this purpose

Adopted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gloria T. Poe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.