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SENATE
P.S. Res 1562

RECEIVED BY: JS

Introduced by Senator Poe

RESOLUTION

URGING A REVIEW OF EXISTING GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND INVESTMENTS IN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF REALIZING THE FULL POTENTIALS OF THE INDUSTRY, ADDRESSING THE SLOW INTERNET SPEED IN THE COUNTRY AND SUSTAINING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Whereas, Article II, Section 24 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution declares that “[t]he State recognizes the vital role of communication and information in nation-building”;

Whereas, Article III, Section 4 states that “[n]o law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances”;

Whereas, Article XVI, Section 10 of the Constitution affirms that “[t]he State shall 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, in accordance with a policy that respects the freedom of speech and of the press”;

Whereas, in 2011, the United Nations (UN) recognized Internet access as a human right. A report by the UN Human Rights Council’s 17th session underscored the “unique and transformative” nature of the Internet, allowing individuals to exercise a range of human rights and to promote the progress of society as a whole¹;

Whereas, the UN report said that “the Internet has become a key means by which individuals can exercise their right to freedom of opinion and expression, as guaranteed by article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights”;

Whereas, the UN report encouraged states to include Internet literacy skills in school curricula, and support similar learning modules outside of schools;

Whereas, the Philippines has been lagging in terms of average Internet download speed globally and in the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region.

Whereas, the Philippines the second slowest average download speed among 22 Asian countries, according to United States-based global Internet metrics provider Ookla², with a speed of 3.64 Megabytes per second (Mbps), just well above war-torn Afghanistan with 2.52 Mbps;

¹ Frank La Rue, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, 17th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, p.1

² GMA News Online, May 19, 2015. “LIST: Philippines ranks 21st of 22 Asian countries in Internet download speed.”

Whereas, the Philippines also ranked 176th out of 202 countries worldwide³ in the Ookla household download index, which compares global download speeds over a period of 30 days (between April 18, 2015 and May 17, 2015);

Whereas, the Philippines also has some of the most expensive Internet connections in the World. The study showed that Philippine Internet users spend \$18.19 per Mbps, compared with an average of \$5.21 per Mbps worldwide, placing the Philippines at 161st of 202 countries in terms of Internet spending per Mbps⁴;

Whereas, one of the reasons why Internet access is expensive in the country is lack of incentives provided by the government for the private sector⁵;

Whereas, the current state of the Internet in the Philippines is what keeps the economy from growing further, so said the National Economic and Development Authority⁶;

Whereas, the government spent about P1.76 billion in ICT development last year. For this year, the government has earmarked about P3.18 billion to develop the sector. Now the government is moving to increase the budget for ICT development next year with a proposed allocation of P4.37 billion in 2016⁷;

Whereas, Internet penetration in the Philippines stood at 36 percent in January 2014⁸, with 38 million Internet users, according to We Are Social, a global creative and communications agency that examines social media data across the globe;

Whereas, the study indicated that 32 percent of the population is engaged with social media. Of the estimated 105 million population, 34 million were active Facebook users while there were 106 million active mobile subscriptions;

Whereas, the Philippine government has recently set the minimum Internet speed at 256 kilobits per second (Kbps), the standard rate of an Internet connection in the 1990s⁹;

BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that a review of existing government infrastructure and investments in information and communications technology is necessary, with the end in view of realizing the full potentials of the industry, addressing the slow Internet speed in the country and sustain economic growth.

Adopted, 


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<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/489762/scitech/technology/list-philippines-ranks-21st-of-22-asian-countries-in-internet-download-speed>

³ Ibid at 2.

⁴ Ibid at 2.

⁵ Marasigan, Lorenz S. "PHL's slow but expensive internet service, August 25, 2015, Business Mirror.

<http://www.businessmirror.com.ph/phls-slow-but-expensive-internet-service-3/>

⁶ Ibid at 5.

⁷ Ibid at 5.

⁸ Kemp, Simon. January 9, 2014. "Global Digital Statistics 2014, We Are Social's Snapshot of Key Digital Indicators."

<http://wearesocial.net/blog/2014/01/social-digital-mobile-worldwide-2014/>

⁹ Dela Paz, Chrisee. "New Internet speed minimum throwback to '90s?" August 18, 2015. Rappler. <http://www.rappler.com/business/industries/172-telecommunications-media/99482-philippines-internet-speed-woes>