

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



20 OCT 12 P1:50

SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 542

RECEIVED BY

Introduced by Senator Ralph G. Recto

RESOLUTION

URGING THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMELEC) AND THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (DICT) TO DEVISE AND INSTALL AN EFFECTIVE TOOL THAT WOULD DETECT AND REPEL POTENTIAL FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN ELECTIONS, AND DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN PROPELLING FOREIGN INTERFERENCE, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF SAFEGUARDING THE 2022 PHILIPPINE NATIONAL ELECTIONS

1 WHEREAS, on September 22, 2020, social media giant Facebook's Head of
2 Security Policy, Nathaniel Gleicher, announced that Facebook removed 155 accounts,
3 11 Pages, 9 Groups and 6 Instagram accounts for violating its policy against foreign
4 or government interference which is "coordinated inauthentic behavior" on behalf of
5 a foreign or government entity;

6 WHEREAS, about 133,000 accounts followed one or more of these Pages,
7 around 61,000 people joined one or more of these Groups, and about 150 accounts
8 followed one or more of these Instagram accounts;

9 WHEREAS, advertising in the abovementioned social media accounts showed
10 that about \$60 in spending for ads on Facebook were paid for in Chinese yuan;

11 WHEREAS, Facebook's investigation into suspected "coordinated inauthentic
12 behavior" revealed that the said activity originated in Fujian province of China and

1 focused primarily on the Philippines and Southeast Asia more broadly, as well as on
2 the United States;

3 WHEREAS, Mr. Gleicher explained that the people behind this activity
4 coordinated with one another and used fake accounts as a central part of their
5 operations to mislead people about who they are and what they are doing;

6 WHEREAS, Facebook's crackdown triggered discussions alleging that the move
7 exposed China's sharp power operations to disrupt democracies, including the
8 Philippines, ahead of its 2022 national elections;

9 WHEREAS, these accounts posted in Chinese, Filipino and English about global
10 news and current events including, among others, Beijing's interests in the South
11 China Sea, Hong Kong issues relevant to the overseas Filipino workers, and praises as
12 well as some criticisms of China;

13 WHEREAS, various Filipino experts expressed that as China tries to tighten its
14 grip on the Philippines, it would interfere in the Philippine national elections in 2022
15 by backing a presidential candidate, even fielding two or more "Manchurian
16 candidates";

17 WHEREAS, the said experts also forewarned that China's online trolls making
18 comments on the country's online news sites as well as the latter's fund contribution
19 to candidates of their choice are threats of China interfering in the 2022 national
20 elections;

21 WHEREAS, these social media interferences may pose bigger problems for the
22 country's sovereignty;

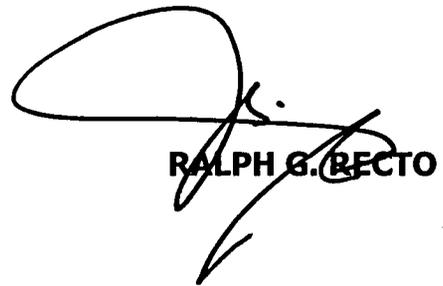
23 WHEREAS, these social media accounts and sites, whether they are peddling
24 fake news or counterfeit products or bogus services, and regardless of where they are
25 being operated, should have no space in social media platforms;

26 WHEREAS, in view of this threat, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) and
27 the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) should
28 coordinate and plan together on how to install an effective device that would keep
29 foreign-generated or foreign-funded content from disseminating inaccurate
30 information, fomenting hatred and widening the division among the Filipinos;

1 WHEREAS, the Philippine government should exercise its power to secure the
2 2022 national elections from foreigners that might meddle in the exercise of our
3 country's democratic system: Now, therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, as it is hereby resolved, To urge the COMELEC
5 and the DICT to devise and install an effective tool that would detect and repel
6 potential foreign interference in the elections and directing the appropriate Senate
7 Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the use of social media
8 platforms in propelling foreign interference with the end in view of safeguarding the
9 2022 Philippine national elections.

Adopted,



RALPH G. RECTO

/mabm