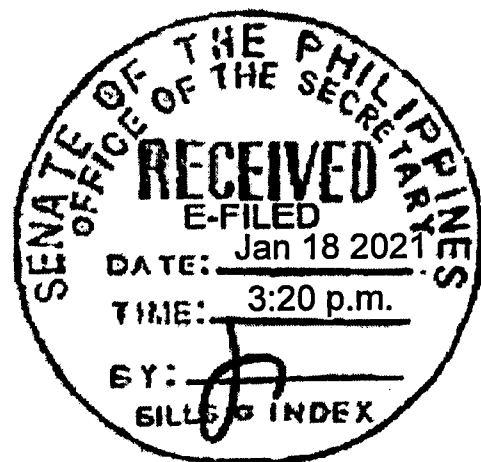


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



SENATE

S. No. **1990**

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

AN ACT

ESTABLISHING THE INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE INTEGRATION PROGRAM IN ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TO SAVE COSTS AND ACCELERATE THE DEPLOYMENT OF INTERNET CONNECTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In today's world, internet connectivity is an important aspect of education, entrepreneurship, communication, work and of almost every activity of daily life. Internet connectivity is a necessity. In fact, the internet is a very essential service that it has become a factor for economic development. In a January 2019 Asia Foundation publication¹, it was reported that a "10% increase in broadband penetration is correlated with a 1.35% increase in GDP for developing countries." The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) acknowledged the importance of internet connectivity in the "National Broadband Plan"² as it noted the benefits that can be reaped from investing in this area – economic transformation, productive efficiency, improved public administration and service delivery, social inclusion, among others.

The government must therefore provide a policy and regulatory environment conducive for the realization of internet connectivity for all. This bill intends to contribute to this goal.

¹ <https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CfC-Reform-Story-11-Improving-Internet-Access-in-the-Philippines.pdf>


² <https://dict.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2017.08.09-National-Broadband-Plan.pdf>

This proposed measure aims to establish the Internet Infrastructure Integration program in the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). This program is designed to reduce the cost and accelerate the deployment of internet connectivity by minimizing the number and scale of repeated excavations for the installation and maintenance of internet infrastructure in rights-of-way. The DPWH is mandated to identify existing and planned road infrastructure projects such as, but not limited to, farm-to-market roads, local and national roads, bridges road widening, road maintenance, etc., which shall be utilized for the inclusion or integration of internet infrastructure such as fiber-optic cable installation during the construction of said projects using the same rights-of-way. This program is envisioned as an efficient and cost-saving way of providing internet connectivity particularly to unserved and underserved areas. Through this, installation may happen simultaneous or side-by-side with the road construction. Unnecessary and repeated excavations and construction works will be avoided which, as experience reveals, cause total or partial road closures and traffic build-up. To encourage private sector participation, the DPWH, in coordination with the DICT and the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), shall establish a system for the notification, coordination and participation of broadband providers, internet service providers and telecommunications companies in this program, subject to the payment of reasonable fees and other terms and conditions that the DPWH deems necessary and appropriate.

This bill institutionalizes into law and provides for the operationalization of the "Dig Once" policy³ mentioned in the National Broadband Plan which similarly aims to "minimize road disruptions and enhance cost-efficiencies."

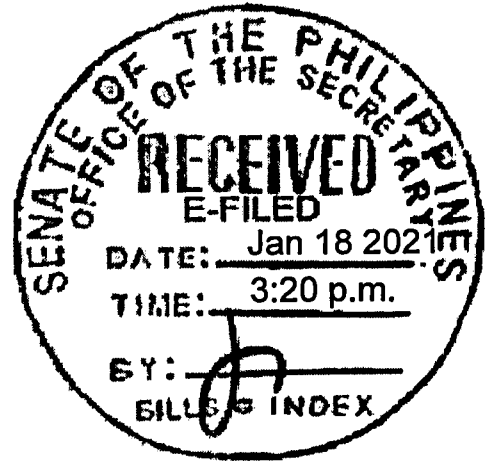
Through this program, our government will be building not only physical roads and streets, but as well as the highways of internet connectivity, the backbone of a digital Philippines.

In view of this, early passage of this bill is sought.


MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID
Senator

³ Id. at page 35

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE INTEGRATION PROGRAM IN ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TO SAVE COSTS AND ACCELERATE THE DEPLOYMENT OF INTERNET CONNECTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as "*Internet Infrastructure*
2 *Integration Act.*"

3
4 Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared as the policy of the
5 State to accelerate the provision of Internet connectivity in the entire country in an
6 efficient and cost-saving manner. Pursuant to this, Internet Infrastructure must be
7 integrated in all government road infrastructure projects in order to use the same
8 rights-of-way and reduce unnecessary and repeated excavations for the laying down
9 of cables, wires, and similar facilities and materials.

10
11 Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall
12 be defined as follows:

13 a) *Internet Infrastructure* - means any buried or underground facility and any

1 wireless or wireline connection that enables the provision of internet
2 connectivity, such as fiber-optic cables and any similar technology that may be
3 developed in the future; and

4 b) *Internet Infrastructure Integration* - a requirement designed to reduce the cost
5 and accelerate the deployment of internet connectivity by minimizing the
6 number and scale of repeated excavations for the installation and maintenance
7 of internet infrastructure in rights-of-way, especially to unserved and
8 underserved areas in the country.

9
10 Section 4. *Internet Infrastructure Integration Program*. – The Internet
11 Infrastructure Integration Program is hereby established under the Department of
12 Public Works and Highways (DPWH). The DPWH shall identify existing and planned
13 road infrastructure projects such as, but not limited to, farm-to-market roads, local
14 and national roads, bridges, road widening, road maintenance, etc., which shall be
15 covered by the program and shall be utilized for the integration of internet
16 infrastructure in their implementation. This program entails the inclusion or integration
17 of internet infrastructure such as fiber-optic cable installation during the construction
18 of any government road infrastructure project using the same right-of-way. Priority
19 shall be given to unserved and underserved areas, as determined by the Department
20 of Information and Communications Technology (DICT).

21
22 Section 5. *Private Sector Participation*. – The DPWH, in coordination with the
23 DICT and the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), shall establish a
24 system for the notification, coordination and participation of broadband providers,
25 internet service providers, telecommunications companies and similar private entities
26 in this program, subject to the payment of reasonable fees and other terms and
27 conditions that the DPWH deems necessary and appropriate.

28
29 Section 6. *Appropriations*. - The amount necessary for the implementation of
30 this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations for the year following
31 its enactment into law and thereafter.

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Section 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DPWH, DICT, NTC and other relevant government agencies and stakeholders, shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

Section 8. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

Section 10. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,