

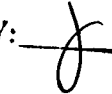
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE  
P.S.R. No. 173

RECEIVED BY: 

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Introduced by: Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

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**RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE  
TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PROPER EDUCATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESPONSIBLE SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN SCHOOLS**

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines has the second highest social media penetration rate among internet users in Southeast Asia, with 39.7 million people, representing 74% of its internet users, regularly visiting a social network in 2015;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, social media has been defined as "any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including social networks, blogs, photo sharing platforms, internet websites, internet forums, and wikis."<sup>2</sup> Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Google+;

**WHEREAS**, social media, if properly and responsibly harnessed, can serve as a valuable learning tool for students of various ages. It gives broad access to new and alternative sources of knowledge and information. It also provides students with an extensive platform for exchanging ideas and communicating to a global audience that was not available to past generations of learners;

**WHEREAS**, classroom teaching can guide, enhance and at the same time be supported by social media use by students. In a growing number of schools here and abroad, educators have started to employ social media to inspire interest, creativity and innovativeness among students;

**WHEREAS**, social media is different from traditional media in that ordinary citizens and organizations play a principal role in producing content as well as determining what content gets circulated online. No single authority or expert is responsible for controlling, or accountable for vetting the truthfulness, accuracy, and quality of, news and stories propagated in social media. While this provides a more open, democratic and creative space for sharing information, this also makes social media vulnerable to misuse and spreading of misinformation;

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.emarketer.com/Article/Southeast-Asia-Has-Among-Highest-Social-Network-Usage-World/1013275#sthash.FQhtobu5.dpuf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/SocialMedia/students/default.htm>

**WHEREAS**, the World Economic Forum (WEF) identified digital misinformation as one of the threats to human society today. It warns that such misinformation may cause “digital wildfires” that result in misunderstanding and confusion or to poor decision-making by citizens, with possible devastating consequences in the real world;<sup>3</sup>

**WHEREAS**, there is growing concern across the globe over how social media is increasingly being used and abused to spread fake news and misinformation. In the Philippines, this unfortunate phenomenon was observed widely during and following the recent national elections;<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS**, last 2016 September 13, Facebook and Twitter joined over thirty major news and technology organizations in the First Draft Partner Network to collectively address “issues of trust and truth in reporting information that emerges online.” The Network plans to share best practices and a collaborative platform for verifying news and stories shared in social media, and promote news literacy among social media users;<sup>5</sup>

**WHEREAS**, earlier in January 2015, Facebook updated its News Feed to reduce the distribution of posts that users have reported as hoaxes. Annotations were also made to posts that were frequently reported as false or misleading so as to warn others on the platform;<sup>6</sup>

**WHEREAS**, aside from the spread of misinformation, the increasing use and regularity of abusive language in social media posts has also alarmed various groups. In response, Twitter released new guidelines in December 2015 for the removal and moderation of abusive, hostile and offensive language on its platform.<sup>7</sup> Recently, Rappler, a news site with social media components, launched the “No Place For Hate” campaign and disallowed disrespectful, degrading and intimidating posts so as to reclaim the platform as a safe space for self-expression;<sup>8</sup>

**WHEREAS**, despite its popularity, social media is still a relatively new communications platform compared to print, radio, television and other traditional media. Social norms, best practices, and guidelines for social media use are still evolving and being clarified. Given this, our children and the youth need guidance on proper and responsible social media use;

**WHEREAS**, in this digital age, social media literacy is not only key to protecting Filipinos from misinformation and online threats, but also in molding an enlightened citizenry that is actively engaged in nation-building;

**WHEREAS**, peer groups, parents, and communities on their own are currently ill-equipped to educate children and the youth on social media etiquette and responsibility. Our schools can play a critical role in guiding students to become ethical

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<sup>3</sup> <http://reports.weforum.org/global-risks-2013/risk-case-1/digital-wildfires-in-a-hyperconnected-world/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://opinion.inquirer.net/94709/truth-biggest-loser-elections#ixzz4Jk0RWXbs>

<sup>5</sup> <https://firstdraftnews.com/social-networks-unite-global-newsrooms-take-action-misinformation-online/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://newsroom.fb.com/news/2015/01/news-feed-fyi-showing-fewer-hoaxes/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/jan/10/twitter-free-speech-rules-hostile-behaviour>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.rappler.com/views/143975-no-place-for-hate-change-comes-to-rappler-comments-thread>

and productive digital citizens; to communicate properly and respectfully online; to use critical thinking in determining the reliability and credibility of online news and views; to practice digital safety and prudence; and to create a positive digital footprint;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines to direct the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the proper education and development of responsible social media use in schools.

Adopted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benigno Aquino III". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "B".