

SENATE

F.S. Res. No. 385

20 MAY 11 12:02

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Introduced by **SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA**

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**RESOLUTION**  
**DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN, CHILDREN,**  
**FAMILY RELATIONS AND GENDER EQUALITY TO CONDUCT AN**  
**INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE RAMPANT**  
**PROLIFERATION AND RISING INCIDENCE OF CHILD CYBERSEX**  
**ABUSE IN THE PHILIPPINES ESPECIALLY DURING THE COVID-19**  
**PANDEMIC, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF PROPOSING LEGISLATIVE**  
**MEASURES AND ENSURING THAT THE WELFARE OF THE FILIPINO**  
**YOUTH AND CHILDREN ARE NOT NEGLECTED DURING A GLOBAL**  
**HEALTH CRISIS**

1           WHEREAS, Article II, Section 13 of the 1987 Constitution provides that, “[t]he  
2 State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and  
3 protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being”;

4           WHEREAS, Article XV, Section 3 of the same posits that, “[t]he State shall  
5 defend the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and  
6 special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other  
7 conditions prejudicial to their development”;

8           WHEREAS, Presidential Decree No. 603, otherwise known as the “The Child  
9 and Youth Welfare Code”, declares that “[t]he Child is one of the most important assets  
10 of the nation. Every effort should be exerted to promote his welfare and enhance his  
11 opportunities for a useful and happy life”;

12           WHEREAS, the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was implemented  
13 last 16 March 2020, and is set to continue until 15 May 2020;

14           WHEREAS, during this period where all are forced to stay home in order to be  
15 safe from the deadly COVID-19, some Filipinos, and worse Filipino children, are left

1 and trapped in the hands of yet another deadly “silent pandemic”<sup>1</sup> called online sexual  
2 trafficking—a pandemic that we have long been fighting and ending but still  
3 surreptitiously creeps its way to our society;

4 WHEREAS, given the current state of our country, a seemingly luring and  
5 attractive easy business of online exploitation puts many Filipino families at risk to  
6 devious online sexual predators;

7 WHEREAS, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF),  
8 among the main causes of child trafficking in the Philippines are: poverty, low  
9 economic development in communities of origin, gender inequalities, limited  
10 employment opportunities, existence of and access to public infrastructure, large  
11 family sizes, inadequate awareness among families, and sex tourism<sup>2</sup>;

12 WHEREAS, the Philippines remains as the top global source of child  
13 pornography, having 8 out of 10 Filipino children at risk of online sexual abuse<sup>3</sup>, and with  
14 the country also topping the world in terms of social media use, it is unfortunately not  
15 a surprise that even during a pandemic, these predators continue to hunt young and  
16 innocent people<sup>4</sup>;

17 WHEREAS, the 2018 Global Slavery Index reports showed an alarming spike  
18 in the number of victims of human trafficking in the Philippines amounting to more  
19 than 700,000 victims of human trafficking, who largely involve minors, and were  
20 exploited to promote child pornography. The dreadful reality is that the perpetrators  
21 are either their relatives or parents who claim that their customers are only looking at  
22 their children and not actually physically harassing them;<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> One News. *Secret Pandemic: Online Child Exploitation On the Rise Amid COVID-19 Problems*. 22 April 2020. Retrieved from [https://www.onenews.ph/secret-pandemic-online-child-exploitation-on-the-rise-amid-covid-19-problems?fbclid=IwAR3M3NI1LSRTbCetA8PVo9\\_n3lCysl9TPgl6YlyZub\\_7ahPir7szXBvnROE](https://www.onenews.ph/secret-pandemic-online-child-exploitation-on-the-rise-amid-covid-19-problems?fbclid=IwAR3M3NI1LSRTbCetA8PVo9_n3lCysl9TPgl6YlyZub_7ahPir7szXBvnROE)

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF. Factsheet: Child Trafficking in the Philippines. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/ipulocaltrafficking.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Pasion, Patty. Rappler. *Philippines top global source of child pornography-UNICEF*. 13 December 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/191219-philippines-top-global-source-child-pornography-unicef>

<sup>4</sup> Abad, Michelle. Rappler. *FAST FACTS: Why online sexual exploitation of children happens in the Philippines*. 11 February 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/iq/251532-things-to-know-online-sexual-exploitation-children-philippines>

<sup>5</sup> Pelayo, Marje. UNTV. *Victims of human trafficking in PH spike to over 700,000 – Global Slavery Index*. 6 December 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.untvweb.com/news/victims-of-human-trafficking-in-ph-spike-to-over-700000-global-slavery-index/>

1 WHEREAS, out of the thousands of reports and complaints received by the  
2 Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Cybercrime in 2018, only 27 online sexual  
3 exploitation of children (OSEC) perpetrators were convicted<sup>6</sup>;

4 WHEREAS, last 22 April 2020, a 25-year old woman was caught engaging in  
5 cybersex trafficking of minors, including her own four (4) children. There were a total  
6 of seven (7) children, ages 3 to 14, who were rescued<sup>7</sup>;

7 WHEREAS, last 21 April 2020, a chase occurred between a Korean sex  
8 trafficker and police operatives in Angeles city. The Korean, Younsu Na, was allegedly  
9 engaged in “pimping Filipino women”. It was reported that he would transact with  
10 customers who are predominantly foreigners and then bring the victims to pre-agreed  
11 hotels or chosen locations<sup>8</sup>;

12 WHEREAS, last 6 April 2020, Cebu cops arrested yet another 25-year old  
13 woman and her partner for online sex trafficking in separate locations in the city. Her  
14 victim was her underaged female cousin. The woman’s live-in partner allegedly  
15 sexually abused the victim<sup>9</sup>;

16 WHEREAS, Civil Society Organizations under the Child Rights Network (CRN)  
17 reported the increasing numbers of complaints regarding online users sharing and  
18 selling child sexual abuse materials. “With the widening availability of internet  
19 connection in the Philippines, and with the ECQ prompting children to spend more  
20 time online, sexual predators can find it easier to prey on children.”, the group said<sup>10</sup>;

21 WHEREAS, according to Ysrael Colorado Diloy, a Senior Advocacy Officer at  
22 Stairway Foundation, “Because of the ECQ, kids are online more. Predators are also at  
23 home and have more time on their hands”<sup>11</sup>;

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<sup>6</sup> Santos, Ana P. Rappler. [OPINION | Dash of SAS] *Online sexual exploitation of children is a family business*. 30 November 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/thought-leaders/246082-dash-of-sas-online-sexual-exploitation-of-children-family-business>

<sup>7</sup> Rappler. *Trapped with abusers; 7 kids rescued from sex trafficker in Luzon*. 25 April 2020. Retrieved from [https://www.rappler.com/nation/258987-trapped-with-abusers-children-rescued-from-sex-trafficker-luzon?utm\\_medium=Social&utm\\_campaign=Echobox&utm\\_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1KzlgkSzt1121b6BSfPiC87aZUvRQNmJNQVjIMTNWKVyeYbwNMTQU#Echobox=1587783951](https://www.rappler.com/nation/258987-trapped-with-abusers-children-rescued-from-sex-trafficker-luzon?utm_medium=Social&utm_campaign=Echobox&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1KzlgkSzt1121b6BSfPiC87aZUvRQNmJNQVjIMTNWKVyeYbwNMTQU#Echobox=1587783951)

<sup>8</sup> Malig, Jun A. Rappler. *Korean arrested for pimping during coronavirus lockdown in Pampanga*. 25 April 2020. Retrieved from [https://www.rappler.com/nation/259328-korean-arrested-for-pimping-during-coronavirus-lockdown-in-pampanga#cxrecs\\_s](https://www.rappler.com/nation/259328-korean-arrested-for-pimping-during-coronavirus-lockdown-in-pampanga#cxrecs_s)

<sup>9</sup> Rappler. *Online sex trafficker arrested in Lapu-Lapu City*. 18 April 2020. Retrieved from [https://www.rappler.com/nation/258331-online-sex-trafficker-arrested-lapu-lapu-city-april-2020#cxrecs\\_s](https://www.rappler.com/nation/258331-online-sex-trafficker-arrested-lapu-lapu-city-april-2020#cxrecs_s)

<sup>10</sup> Supra Ibid 1

<sup>11</sup> Supra Ibid 8

1           WHEREAS, the CRN likewise reports that some of these OSEC perpetrators are  
2     hiding and lurking in social media platforms such as Twitter which allegedly hosts an  
3     “alter community” consisting of various sexual abuse materials<sup>12</sup>;

4           WHEREAS, in Facebook, there are private groups which propagate the culture  
5     of posting explicit videos and photos without the consent of the involved parties.<sup>13</sup>  
6     Facebook also failed to catch hundreds of cases of OSEC worldwide over the past six  
7     years<sup>14</sup>;

8           WHEREAS, the CRN said that with the drastic upsurge of OSEC cases in the  
9     country each day, the laws enacted to address online sexual exploitation of children in  
10    the country “failed”. The group highlighted the ultimate need for an “all-  
11    encompassing” law that would cover all kinds and ranges of OSEC activities thus  
12    leaving no escape way for sexual predators<sup>15</sup>;

13           WHEREAS, the same group recommended that “reporting and referral lines  
14    should be widely and actively disseminated to empower victims and witnesses to  
15    report cases of abuse and exploitation.”<sup>16</sup>;

16           WHEREAS, the State and concerned agencies need to do a comprehensive  
17    detection of gaps and loopholes in current laws and identify as to why despite the  
18    numerous legislations aimed to protect children, online sexual exploitation is still  
19    widespread and appears to be a growing industry in the country;

20           WHEREAS, the State must be more vigilant and aggressive in hunting and  
21    tracking down these sexual predators as it poses greater danger to the young who are  
22    not only experiencing the effects of this global pandemic but are also apparently not  
23    safe from another ‘silent pandemic’ and its chronic effects to families and society;

24           WHEREAS, the Filipino youth, especially those who are trapped and confined  
25    in their homes and have no other means of help must not be neglected during these

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<sup>12</sup> Supra Ibid 6

<sup>13</sup> Supra Ibid 8

<sup>14</sup> Paul, Kari. The Guardian. *Over 300 cases of child exploitation went unnoticed by Facebook – study*. 4 March 2020. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/mar/04/facebook-child-exploitation-technology>

<sup>15</sup> Servallos, Neil Jayson. PhilStar. *Laws fail to protect kids from online sexual exploitation*. 17 February 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/02/17/1993729/laws-fail-protect-kids-online-sexual-exploitation>

<sup>16</sup> Supra Ibid 8

1 trying times. They, who are in dire need of the State's protection, must be rescued from  
2 the detestable, predatory and malevolent activities related to sex-trafficking;

3 **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY**  
4 **RESOLVED**, to direct the Senate Committee on Women, Children, Family relations  
5 and Gender equality to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the rampant  
6 proliferation and rising incidence of child cybersex abuse in the Philippines, especially  
7 during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the end in view of proposing legislative measures  
8 and ensuring that the welfare of the Filipino youth are not neglected during a global  
9 health crisis.

Adopted,

  
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