

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

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SENATE

S. B. NO. 1574

Introduced by SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING E-GOVERNANCE IN THE GOVERNMENT,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the latest doing business report prepared by the World Bank in 2020, the Philippines ranked 171st out of 190 countries in terms of starting a business, 120th in terms of registering property and 95th among paying taxes.¹ Further, according to the latest 2022 World Digital Competitiveness Ranking prepared by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), the Philippines had the lowest ranking among Southeast Asian countries at 13th among the 14 Asia-Pacific economies, ahead only of Mongolia.²

These statistics indicate that the Philippines has some catching up to do in terms of digitalization, not just for its citizens, but the government as well. The present could not be a better time as according to a study by the Asian Development Bank, the Asia and Pacific region is entering the 4th industrial revolution and must adopt and adapt to the industry's evolving needs by implementing programs geared towards transitioning to a digital economy and digital solutions.³

In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this reality in the past two years after the government and most businesses have shut down their physical operations following the imposition of community quarantines. As the world slowly opens up and recovers from the pandemic, the Philippines must continue in its path to digitalization.

1"World Bank Doing Business 2020." Retrieved from <https://www.doingbusiness.org/content/dam/doingBusiness/country/p/philippines/PHL.pdf> (date last accessed: November 27, 2022).¹

2 September 29, 2022. Philippines improves in digital competitiveness. Retrieved from <https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2022/09/29/477384/philippines-improves-in-digital-competitiveness/> (date last accessed: November 27, 2022).²



3 "Reaping The Benefits Of Industry 4.0 Through Skills Development In The Philippines." Asian Development Bank. Retrieved from <https://www.adb.org/publications/series/reaping-benefits-industry-skills-development> (date last accessed: November 27, 2022).³

This measure seeks to institutionalize electronically-enabled government processes in order to make government processes and procedures more efficient, prompt and economical. Among others, this bill:

- a) Mandates all government agencies, offices and instrumentalities, including local government units to publish all relevant information not only via the traditional mode, but also via online means;
- b) Assigns the Department of Information and Communications Technology as the lead agency to implement the provisions of the Act, including the harmonization of all national ICT plans and initiatives;
- c) Establishes the Project Management Office (PMO), which shall cater to and address the portfolio, program, and project management needs of government agencies;
- d) Establishes the Integrated Government Network which shall be the master plan and primary means for sharing and communication of resources, information and data on digital and electronic platforms across all government offices;
- e) Mandates the establishment and maintenance of a "GovMail" network to be used in all communications, information dissemination and sharing of information;
- f) Establishes the Philippine Individual Information Database, which shall be integrated with the existing database mandated under Republic Act No. 11055 or the Philippine Identification System Act;
- g) Mandates the automatic and real time updating of public information regardless of the time and location where such change or update was communicated;
- h) Creates the Public Service Directory containing the names and contact numbers of all government agencies, offices and instrumentalities and their respective officials, which shall be available to the public;
- i) Establishes the Online Public Service Portal where individuals and businesses can access information and ask for assistance;
- j) Creates the Citizens' Concerns Center where citizens can report their complaints, grievances, and concerns on acts of red tape, as defined under the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007, as amended, and other relevant corruption laws, rules and regulations;
- k) Establishes the Philippine Citizen Connect to assist and help any citizen who does not have access to, or need help with using computers, the internet, and other analogous means to transact with and request the delivery of public services from the government in their localities; and

- l) Creates the Philippine Infostructure Management Corporation (PIMC) to, among others, plan and implement infrastructure programs, such as, but not limited to, the National Broadband Plan, Free Wi-Fi for All, and expansion of the National Government Data Centers and Government Cloud.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA 

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Introduced by SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING E-GOVERNANCE IN THE GOVERNMENT,
APPROPRIATING 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 the "E-Governance Act."
2
3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy and Purposes.** - It is hereby declared the policy
4 of the State to recognize the vital role of communication and information in nation-
5 building and the necessity of harnessing the power of information and communications
6 technology in pursuit of national development and progress. The State hereby adopts a
7 policy to create, foster, and sustain a digitally empowered and integrated government
8 that provides responsive and transparent online citizen-centered services for a globally
9 competitive Filipino nation. In pursuit of this policy, this Act shall have the following
10 purposes:
11
12 a) Provide effective leadership of government efforts to develop and promote
13 electronic government services and processes by providing guidance to the
14 Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) in accordance
15 with its mandate;
16
17 b) Provide increased opportunities for citizen participation, accountability and
18 involvement in government processes by enabling them to benefit from more
19 efficient government services made possible by electronic processes;
20
21 c) Promote use of the internet, intranet and other information and communications
22 technologies to provide increased opportunities for citizen participation in
23 government;
24
25 d) Promote inter-agency collaboration in providing electronic government services,
26 where this collaboration would improve the service to citizens by integrating
27 related functions, and in the use of internal electronic government processes,
28 where this collaboration would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the

- 1 processes;
- 2
- 3 e) Improve the ability of the government to achieve agency missions and program
- 4 performance goals;
- 5
- 6 f) Promote the use of the internet, intranet, and emerging technologies within and
- 7 across government agencies to provide citizen-centric government information
- 8 and services;
- 9
- 10 g) Reduce costs and burdens for businesses and other government entities through
- 11 the use of internet, intranet, and emerging technologies;
- 12
- 13 h) Promote better informed and data-driven decision making by policy makers, taking
- 14 into consideration data analytics results;
- 15
- 16 i) Promote access to high quality government information and services across
- 17 multiple channels;
- 18
- 19 j) Make the national and local governments more transparent and accountable;
- 20
- 21 k) Transform agency operations by utilizing, where appropriate, best practices from
- 22 public and private sector organizations, both local and international;
- 23
- 24 l) Strengthen and prepare systems in place for contingencies like natural disasters
- 25 or pandemics that may otherwise limit citizen mobility and access to services; and
- 26
- 27 m) Provide enhanced access to government information and services in a manner
- 28 consistent with laws regarding protection of personal privacy, national security,
- 29 records retention, access for persons with disabilities, and other relevant laws.
- 30

31 **SEC. 3. Coverage.** - This Act shall apply to all government offices and agencies

32 including local government units (LGUs) and government-owned or controlled

33 corporations (GOCCs).

34

35 **SEC. 4. Definition of Terms.** - As used in this Act, the following terms are

36 defined as follows:

37

- 38 a) **E-Governance** refers to the use of information and communications technology by
- 39 the government and the public to enhance the access to and delivery of
- 40 government services to bring about efficient, responsive, ethical, accountable and
- 41 transparent government service;
- 42
- 43 b) **Workflow** refers to the sequence of industrial, administrative, or other processes
- 44 through which a piece of work passes from initiation to completion;
- 45
- 46 c) **Intranet** refers to a secure and private enterprise network that shares data or
- 47 application resources via Internet Protocol;
- 48
- 49 d) **Internet** refers to a secure and public enterprise network that shares data or
- 50 application resources via Internet Protocol;
- 51
- 52 e) **ICT assets** refers any data, device, equipment, infrastructure, system, or
- 53 component thereof, or property, owned or possessed by the DICT in accordance

1 with its mandate, utilized to ensure or support the proper and efficient operation
2 and implementation of ICT-related programs and delivery of ICT services; and
3

- 4 f) **ICT Plan** refers to the sum or set of goals, measures, strategies, agenda, and
5 programs for the implementation of ICT programs and projects and the use of
6 information and communications technology, including digital platforms, to deliver
7 public services or otherwise perform governmental functions.
8

9 **CHAPTER 1**
10 **ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT**

11 **SEC. 5. Responsibilities of the Heads of Government Agencies.** - The head
12 of each agency, office, and instrumentality of the national and/or local government shall
13 be responsible for:
14

- 15
16 a) Complying with the requirements of this Act, including related standards for all ICT
17 infrastructure, systems, equipment, designs, and all other technology, which shall
18 be set by the DICT;
19
20 b) Complying with the standards and protocols for cyber security, resiliency, privacy,
21 and confidentiality, which shall also be promulgated by the DICT;
22
23 c) Ensuring that the information technology standards promulgated by the DICT are
24 communicated promptly and effectively to all relevant officials within their agency;
25 and
26
27 d) Supporting the efforts of the national and local governments to develop, maintain,
28 and promote an integrated Internet-based system of delivering information and
29 services to the public.
30

31 To these ends:

- 32
33 a) Agencies shall develop performance measures that demonstrate how electronic
34 government enables progress toward agency objectives, strategic goals, and
35 statutory mandates;
36
37 b) In measuring performance, agencies shall rely on existing data collections to the
38 extent practicable. Areas of performance measurement should include customer
39 service, agency productivity, and adoption of innovative information technology
40 including the appropriate use of commercial best practices;
41
42 c) Agencies shall link their performance goals, as appropriate, to key groups,
43 including citizens, businesses, and other governments; and
44
45 d) As appropriate, agencies shall work collectively in linking their performance goals
46 to key groups and shall use information technology in delivering government
47 information and services to those groups.
48

49 **SEC. 6. Role of the Department of Information and Communications**
50 **Technology (DICT).** - The DICT shall, in addition to its mandates and functions under
51 Republic Act No. 10844, or the Department of Information and Communications
52 Technology Act of 2015:
53

- 1 a) Harmonize and coordinate all national ICT plans and initiatives to ensure
2 knowledge, information and resource-sharing, database-building, and agency
3 networking linkages among government agencies, consistent with E-Government
4 objectives in particular, and national objectives in general;
5
- 6 b) Ensure the development and protection of integrated government ICT
7 infrastructure and designs, taking into consideration the inventory of existing
8 manpower, plans, programs, software, hardware, and installed systems;
9
- 10 c) Assist and provide technical expertise to government agencies in the development
11 of guidelines in the enforcement and administration of laws, standards, rules, and
12 regulations governing ICT;
13
- 14 d) Assess, initiate, review and support ICT research and development programs of
15 the government; and
16
- 17 e) Prescribe, in accordance with applicable civil service laws and rules, the creation
18 of ICT-related government positions and corresponding compensation rates
19 aligned with the personnel needs of a digitalized government, as well as the
20 qualifications, standards, duties, and functions essential to the effective
21 development and operation of government ICT infrastructures and systems.
22

23 **SEC. 7. DICT as the Primary Implementing Body.** - The DICT shall be the
24 primary implementing body and principal administrator of this Act, which shall ensure
25 that all ICT-related projects in the country are done in accordance with the national ICT
26 development agenda formulated by the DICT.
27

28 For this purpose, the DICT shall establish measures to implement policies under
29 this Act and ensure that all ICT projects in the Philippines, whether national or local, are
30 harmonized with the overall ICT plans of the government and in compliance with
31 applicable standards. Accordingly, the DICT shall be responsible for the following:
32

- 33 a) Adopting a national policy and process that would facilitate the entry and adoption
34 of technologies consistent with the goals of this Act;
35
- 36 b) Ensuring the quality, security, reliability, and interoperability of all ICT
37 infrastructure and services in accordance with international standards and best
38 practices;
39
- 40 c) Tapping into the private sector and entering into partnerships and joint ventures in
41 accordance with the goals of this Act;
- 42 d) Mandate and supervise the adoption of policies and processes to ensure the
43 implementation of this Act;
44
- 45 e) Mandate and supervise the interconnection or interoperability of ICT infrastructure,
46 systems, and facilities to achieve the goals of this Act; and
47
- 48 f) Regulate and supervise the operations of ICT infrastructure, systems, and
49 facilities, and in the exercise of such functions, charge reasonable administrative
50 and operational fees as may be necessary, in accordance with applicable laws,
51 rules and regulations.
52

1 The government shall also establish a framework to allow efficient interoperability
2 among agencies, offices, and instrumentalities of the national and local government
3 when using electronic signatures, including processing of digital signatures.
4

5 **SEC. 14. *Internal Email Network.*** - The government shall establish and
6 maintain an internal email and communications network to be known as "GovMail" for
7 communications, information dissemination and sharing, coordination, feedback, and
8 other similar and related purposes. It shall be structured in a manner that ensures that
9 the use and operation of such email network is accessible, safe, interactive,
10 interconnected, and interoperable.
11

12 **SEC. 15. *Migration, Digitization, and Automation of Paper-Based Workflows.***
13 - All paper-based government and bureaucratic workflows involving internal
14 communications, information dissemination and sharing, coordination, feedback, and
15 other similar and related purposes shall be migrated, digitized, and, as far as
16 practicable, automated.
17

18 Notwithstanding the provisions of this Act, communication, information
19 dissemination and sharing, coordination, and feedback which deals with critical and
20 sensitive information as may be determined by the head of the agency shall be allowed
21 to be conducted through traditional and non-digital means as may be deemed
22 appropriate for the purpose by the head of the agency.
23

24 CHAPTER 3 25 THE PHILIPPINE INFORMATION DATABASE 26

27 **SEC. 16. *The Philippine Individual Information Database and Civil***
28 ***Registration System.*** - The government shall establish, maintain, and support an
29 individual information database which shall act as a national repository and directory of
30 information and data on citizens of the Philippines, whether residing in the Philippines or
31 not; *Provided*, That such database shall, as far as practicable, be integrated with the
32 database mandated under Republic Act No. 11055 or the Philippine Identification
33 System Act.
34

35 Information and data to be stored on the database shall include names,
36 addresses, whether permanent or temporary, national identification numbers, dates and
37 places of birth, citizenship, civil status, biometric data and information, and other
38 associated information: *Provided*, that the acquisition and storage of data and
39 information on the database shall not in any way violate any applicable domestic and
40 international laws and rules on privacy of data and information, including the provisions
41 of Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.
42

43 Such database shall also include information relating to foreign nationals who
44 enters the Philippines.
45

46 **SEC. 17. *Access to and Use of the Database.*** - The database shall be
47 accessible through digital platforms such as intranet and internet to all agencies, offices,
48 and instrumentalities of the government for purposes consistent with legitimate and
49 valid public purposes in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and such other
50 applicable laws, rules and regulations.
51

52 All government agencies, offices, and instrumentalities with access to the
53 database shall maintain a record of all the instances when, where, and how such

1 agency, office, or instrumentality, or its duly authorized representatives, had accessed
2 any information or data stored on the database and the purpose/s of such access,
3 including the identity of the actual person or persons gaining access to the said
4 database.

5
6 Notwithstanding the provisions of this Act, access to and use of the resources,
7 information, and data on the database shall be in accordance with all relevant domestic
8 and international laws, rules, and regulations on data and information privacy and the
9 pertinent rules on confidentiality of government information.

10
11 **SEC.18. Automatic and Real Time Updating of Information.** - The government
12 shall establish and maintain measures to ensure that information stored on the
13 database shall automatically and in real time be updated across the entire government
14 network, regardless of when and where the change in such data or information was first
15 made or submitted, with the end view that an update made at any access point in the
16 government network shall automatically be reflected and accessible across all access
17 points in real time.

18
19 **SEC. 19. Creation of Data Exchange Protocols.** - The DICT shall establish a
20 data exchange protocol between and among agencies and private sector which shall
21 ensure legitimacy of access to data, security of information, and compliance with
22 applicable domestic and international laws on data privacy.

23 24 **CHAPTER 4** 25 **THE PUBLIC SERVICE DIRECTORY**

26
27 **SEC. 20. Public Service Directory.** - The government shall establish, maintain,
28 and support a directory to be known as the "Philippine Public Service Directory" of all
29 civil and public officials and servants throughout the country, including names, titles,
30 telephone and facsimile numbers, departmental names, office locations, and e-mail
31 addresses. Any changes to the information in the directory shall be reflected in real
32 time.

33
34 **SEC. 21. Access to and Use of the Directory.** - The directory shall be
35 accessible through digital or other platforms to the public consistent with civil service
36 rules and regulations and the right of the public to information; *Provided*, That in all
37 cases, such access to and use of the resources, information, and data on the directory
38 shall be in accordance with all relevant laws, rules, and regulations on data and
39 information privacy and the pertinent rules on confidentiality of government information.

40 41 **CHAPTER 5** 42 **THE GOVERNMENT E-PORTALS**

43
44 **SEC. 22. Establishment of Online Public Service Portal for Individuals and**
45 **Business.** - In accordance with the policy of the government to maintain and promote
46 an integrated internet-based system of providing the public with access to government
47 information and services, the government, through the DICT, shall establish, maintain,
48 and continuously update a portal which shall serve as a helpdesk where citizens and
49 legitimate businesses can request for information and assistance on government
50 frontline services, service procedures, and report commendations, appreciation,
51 complaints, and feedback.

52

1 The online portal shall also serve as a centralized contact point where all
2 communications from the public through such portal may be routed, logged, responded
3 to, and ultimately distributed to the different government agencies for proper handling
4 and resolution, and follow through if necessary.
5

6 **SEC. 23. Access to and Use of the Online Public Service Portal.** - The portal
7 shall be accessible through digital platforms to the public for purposes consistent with
8 the efficient delivery of public services; *Provided*, That in all cases, such access to and
9 use of the resources, information, and data on the portal shall be in accordance with all
10 relevant laws, rules, and regulations on data and information privacy and the pertinent
11 rules on confidentiality of government information.
12

13 **SEC. 24. Government Frontline Services Through the Portal.** - All government
14 agencies, offices, and instrumentalities which provide frontline services, as defined
15 under Republic Act No. 9485 or the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007, as amended by
16 Republic Act No. 11032 or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government
17 Service Delivery Act of 2018, shall establish and maintain measures to ensure that such
18 services are accessible and capable of delivery to the public through the portal. All
19 offices and agencies which provide frontline services are hereby mandated to regularly
20 undertake time and motion studies, undergo evaluation and improvement of their
21 transaction systems and procedures and re-engineer the same if deemed necessary to
22 maximize the use of the portal for efficiency and transparency.
23

24 **SEC. 25. Access to Frontline Services.** - The following process and procedures
25 shall be adopted by all government offices and agencies that provide frontline services:
26

- 27 a) **Acceptance of applications and request.** All officers or employees shall accept
28 written applications, requests, and/or documents being submitted by clients of the
29 office or agency through the portal. The responsible officer or employee shall
30 acknowledge receipt of such application and/or request by writing or printing
31 clearly thereon, through the portal, his/her name, the unit where he/she is
32 connected with, and the time and date of receipt. The receiving officer or
33 employee shall perform a preliminary assessment of the request to promote a
34 more expeditious action on requests.
35
- 36 b) **Action of offices.** All applications and/or requests submitted through the portal
37 shall be acted upon by the assigned officer or employee during the period stated
38 in the Citizen's Charter which shall not be longer than three (3) working days in the
39 case of simple transactions and seven (7) working days in the case of complex
40 transactions from the date the request or application was received. Depending on
41 the nature of the frontline services requested or the mandate of the office or
42 agency under unusual circumstances, the maximum time prescribed above may
43 be extended. For the extension due to nature of frontline services or the mandate
44 of the office or agency concerned the period for the delivery of frontline services
45 shall be indicated in the Citizen's Charter. The office or agency concerned shall
46 notify the requesting party in writing of the reason for the extension and the final
47 date of release for the extension and the final date of release of the frontline
48 service/s requested. No application or request shall be returned to the client
49 without appropriate action. In case an application or request is disapproved, the
50 officer or employee who rendered the decision shall send a formal notice to the
51 client within five working days from the receipt of the request and/or application,
52 stating therein the reason for the disapproval including a list of specific
53 requirement/s which the client failed to submit.

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- c) **Denial of request for access to government service.** Any denial of request for access to government service shall be fully explained in writing through the portal and/or via physical means, stating the name of the person making the denial and the grounds upon which such denial is based. Any denial of request is deemed to have been made with the permission or clearance from the highest authority having jurisdiction over the government office or agency concerned.
- d) **Access to progression of frontline service requests through the online portal.** All offices, agencies, and instrumentalities shall make accessible through the portal the progress of all frontline service requests in real time.
- e) **Adoption of working schedules to serve clients through the online portal.** Heads of offices and agencies which render frontline services shall adopt appropriate working schedules to ensure that all clients have requested for public services through the portal are attended to and served even during lunch break and after regular working hours, in accordance with pertinent civil service rules and regulations.
- f) **Identification of public employees.** All employees transacting with the public shall be provided with an official identification card which should be publicly accessible through the online portal. Government agencies, offices, and instrumentalities mandated under this Act to provide and deliver public services through the portal shall not in any way require the person requesting for such public service to physically go and report to the physical office of such agency, office, or instrumentality where the purpose of such physical presence may be reasonably accomplished through the online portal.

SEC. 26. Government Online Payment System. - In conjunction with the online portals for the delivery of public services, the government shall establish an internet-based electronic payment system and facility to enable citizens and businesses to remit payments through digital platforms to and from the government agencies to which such payments are due. For this purpose, the government may engage the services of and interconnect with public and private payment systems and facilities, in accordance with applicable laws, rules and regulations.

SEC. 27. The Citizens' Concerns Center. - There is hereby established a Citizens' Concerns Center (the "Center"), which shall serve as a mechanism where citizens may report their complaints, grievances, and concerns on acts of red tape, as defined under the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007, as amended, and other relevant laws, and/ or corruption or misconduct on the part of any government agency, GOCC, government financial institution (GFI), and other instrumentalities of the government or any of its officers, officials, or employees. The Center shall be under the direction and supervision of the Office of the Cabinet Secretary, in coordination with the DILG and representatives from the local government units.

SEC. 28. Integration with Existing Public Feedback Mechanisms. - All existing public feedback mechanisms for similar purposes established and/or maintained by agencies, offices, and instrumentalities, and local government units, shall be fully integrated with the Center. For this purpose and in accordance with the objectives of this Act, the Center may enter into such arrangements as are necessary for the interconnection, interoperability, and integration of the public feedback mechanisms.

1 **SEC. 29. *Integration with the Internal Government Network and Database.*** -
2 The Center, including its sub-operations units, and its operations shall be fully
3 integrated with the internal government network and database for real time updating of
4 data and information.
5

6 **SEC. 30. *Minimum Operating Standards.*** - The Center, including its sub-
7 operational units, shall have the following minimum operating standards:
8
9

10 a) **Communications channels.** The Center shall provide communications channels
11 which shall include, but are not limited to, (i) telephone; (ii) short messaging
12 services (SMS) or text messaging services; (iii) electronic mail (email); (iv) social
13 media; or (v) such other emerging communications media which can reasonably
14 be used to fulfill the purposes of the Center;
15

16 b) **Operating hours.** The Center shall operate, through any of its communications
17 channels, twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week, including national
18 holidays and days in which work is suspended for whatever reason, for which
19 purpose the Center may establish effective measures to ensure continuity of
20 service;
21

22 c) **Process flow.** A citizen's concern received through any of the communications
23 channels shall immediately be encoded onto the Philippine Information Database
24 and referred in real time to the concerned agency, office, or instrumentality for
25 appropriate action through the internal government network. The complainant shall
26 be given advice or feedback on the status of the concern until its resolution;
27

28 d) **Period to take action.** All complaints and/or concerns shall be acted upon within
29 seventy-two (72) hours from receipt by the proper government agency or
30 instrumentality, which action shall be communicated to the citizen concerned. For
31 purposes of this provision, the period provided shall exclude such time outside the
32 normal office hours of the agency or office concerned.
33

34 **SEC. 31. *Cooperation of Government Agencies and Local Government Units.***
35 - To ensure that the public is served efficiently and expeditiously in accordance with the
36 objectives of this Act, all national government agencies, offices, and instrumentalities,
37 GOCCs, GFIs, and LGUs are enjoined to cooperate and coordinate with the Office of
38 the Cabinet Secretary and each other to ensure prompt action on the concerns received
39 through the communications channels of the Center.
40

41 CHAPTER 6 42 THE PHILIPPINE CITIZEN CONNECT PROGRAM 43

44 **SEC. 32. *The Philippine Citizen Connect Program.*** - The government shall
45 establish a program, to be known as the "Philippine Citizen Connect," to assist and help
46 any citizen who does not have access to, or need help with using computers, the
47 internet, and other analogous means to transact with and request the delivery of public
48 services from the government in their localities.
49

50 **SEC. 33. *Free Internet for the Public.*** - Pursuant to Republic Act No. 10929 or
51 the Free Internet Access in Public Places Act, the government, through the DICT, shall
52 establish a program that will provide free access to internet service in public places,
53 with particular focus on unserved or underserved areas, throughout the country, to

1 enable access to the online portals, promote knowledge-building among citizens, and
2 enable them to participate and compete in the evolving information and communication
3 age.
4

5 **SEC. 34. Provision and Maintenance of Internet-Capable Devices in all**
6 **Barangay Centers and Corresponding Personnel.** - All barangay centers shall
7 provide and maintain internet-capable devices for the purpose of enabling efficient and
8 timely access to government services, and corresponding personnel shall be hired
9 and/or assigned to assist citizens in using such devices.
10

11 **CHAPTER 7**
12 **GOVERNMENT WEBSITES AND E-BULLETIN BOARDS**
13

14 **SEC. 35. Government E-Bulletin Board.** – Each of the government agencies,
15 offices, instrumentalities and LGUs covered under this Act shall establish and maintain
16 a website and an e-bulletin board for the purposes of information sharing and
17 dissemination, which shall be structured and maintained to ensure accessibility and
18 security.
19

20 **SEC. 36. Online Information Dissemination.** - All government offices, agencies,
21 instrumentalities and LGUs shall publish all information intended for public consumption
22 via the traditional modes and through publication on their websites and e-bulletin
23 boards.
24

25 Notwithstanding the provisions of this Act and other relevant laws, the publication
26 of notices, documents, or any other information on the website and e-bulletin board
27 shall be construed as sufficient notice to the public for purposes of compliance with laws
28 and rules requiring publication; *Provided,* That such website or e-bulletin board is
29 accessible at such point in time where accessibility is claimed; *Provided, further,* That
30 the start of publication shall be the date on which the notice, document, or information
31 was first uploaded and made accessible to the public.
32

33 **SEC. 37. Minimum Standards for Government Websites and Information**
34 **Portals.** - The following shall be the minimum standards for government websites and
35 information portals:
36

- 37 a) It shall include direct and easily identifiable links to (i) description of the mission,
38 statutory authority, and the organizational structure of the agency; and (ii)
39 commonly asked questions and the corresponding answers, and other common
40 matters of public concern; and
41
42 b) It shall include direct and easily identifiable links to the relevant and applicable
43 portals for the delivery of public services.
44

45 **CHAPTER 8**
46 **SECURITY AND PRIVACY**
47

48 **SEC. 38. Data and Information Security.** - All resources, information, or data
49 stored on or transmitted through the IGN and all networks interconnected to and
50 interoperable with it, the Philippine Information Database, the Public Service Directory,
51 the portals, and websites shall be kept secure and free from interference or
52 unauthorized access that can hamper or otherwise compromise the integrity of the
53 information and communication technology assets.

1
2 Access to and use of the resources, information, and data on the IGN shall be
3 limited to the government and its duly authorized officers and agents, in accordance
4 with all relevant laws, rules, and regulations on data and information privacy and the
5 pertinent rules on confidentiality of government information.
6

7 Any person who shall knowingly commit an act which results in the compromise of
8 the security and integrity of the IGN and all networks interconnected to and
9 interoperable with it to the detriment of the government and the public shall incur
10 criminal liability in accordance with the provisions of applicable laws.
11

12 **SEC. 39. Responsibility of the National and Local Governments.** - All
13 agencies, offices, and instrumentalities of the national and local governments under this
14 Act shall be responsible for:
15

- 16 a) Providing information security protections commensurate with the risk and
17 magnitude of the harm resulting from unauthorized access, use, disclosure,
18 disruption, modification, or destruction of information collected or maintained by or
19 on behalf of the agency; and information systems used or operated by an agency
20 or by a contractor of an agency or other organization on behalf of an agency;
21
- 22 b) Determining the levels of information security appropriate to protect such
23 information and information systems and implementing the same;
24
- 25 c) Periodically testing and evaluating information security controls and techniques to
26 ensure that they are effectively implemented;
27
- 28 d) Complying with the requirements of pertinent laws on information security and
29 privacy, related policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines, including
30 information security standards promulgated by the DICT; and information security
31 standards and guidelines for national security systems issued in accordance with
32 law and as directed by the President; and
33
- 34 e) Ensuring that information security management processes are integrated with
35 agency strategic and operational planning processes.
36

37 **CHAPTER 9**
38 **PARTICIPATION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR**
39

40 **SEC. 40. Government Cooperation with the Private Sector.** - Nothing in this
41 Act shall prevent the government, both national and local, from entering into contracts,
42 agreements, or partnerships with the private sector to provide various resources,
43 assets, and services in order to comply or enhance compliance with the provisions of
44 this Act, subject to applicable laws, rules and regulations on public accountability,
45 transparency and good governance.
46

47 **CHAPTER 10**
48 **THE PHILIPPINE INFOSTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT CORPORATION**
49

50 **SEC. 41. The Philippine Infostructure Management Corporation.** - For the
51 purpose of ensuring proper and efficient operations and management of the ICT assets
52 of the DICT, and a faster implementation of infrastructure programs related to
53 connectivity, data center and cloud infrastructure, there is hereby established a body

1 corporate to be known as Philippine Infostructure Management Corporation (PIMC).
2 The PIMC shall be an attached agency to the DICT, and shall exist for a period of fifty
3 (50) years from the date of the approval of this Act. The PIMC shall be subject to the
4 rules and regulations as the DICT may impose from time to time.
5

6 **SEC. 42. Powers and Functions.** - To carry out its main purpose and in
7 accordance with applicable laws and rules, the PIMC shall have, in addition to any and
8 all powers granted to a corporation under the general corporation laws of the
9 Philippines, the following functions and powers:

- 10
11 a) Plan and implement infrastructure programs, such as, but not limited to, the
12 National Broadband Plan, Free WiFi for All, and expansion of the National
13 Government Data Centers and Government Cloud;
14
15 b) Manage ICT assets of the DICT;
16
17 c) Prescribe, repeal, and alter its own by-laws;
18
19 d) Determine its operating policies, and to issue such rules and regulations as may
20 be necessary to achieve its main purpose;
21
22 e) Adopt, alter and use a corporate seal;
23
24 f) Acquire and own real and personal property, and to sell, mortgage or otherwise
25 dispose of the same;
26
27 g) Sue and be sued, enter into contracts, and borrow money from both local and
28 foreign sources; *Provided*, That such loans shall be incurred only upon favorable
29 recommendation of the DICT and upon approval by the President of the
30 Philippines;
31
32 h) Hold, own, purchase, acquire, sell or otherwise invest, or reinvest in stocks, bonds
33 or other securities capable of giving the PIMC a reasonably assured income
34 sufficient to support its activities; and
35
36 i) Provide ICT counseling and technical services to government and private entities,
37 on its own or by contracting third party consultants to render such service.
38

39 **SEC. 43. Board of Trustees.** - The corporate powers and functions of the PIMC
40 shall be vested in and exercised by a Board of Trustees that shall be composed of the
41 following:
42

- 43 a) The Secretary of the DICT, as *ex officio* Chairman and Chief Executive Officer;
44
45 b) The Undersecretary of the DICT, as the *ex officio* Executive Vice Chairman;
46
47 c) The Commissioner of the National Telecommunications Commission, or his/her
48 duly designated undersecretary, as *ex officio* member;
49
50 d) The Undersecretary of the Department of Budget and Management, or his/her
51 duly designated undersecretary, as *ex officio* member;
52
53 e) The Undersecretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government, or

- 1 his/her duly designated undersecretary, as *ex officio* member;
- 2
- 3 f) One (1) representative from the private sector from the Information Technology
4 and Business Process Outsourcing Industry, who shall be appointed by the
5 President of the Philippines;
- 6
- 7 g) One (1) representative from the private sector from the Telecommunications
8 Industry, who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines; and
- 9
- 10 h) One (1) representative each from the League of Provinces of the Philippines,
11 League of Cities of the Philippines, League of Municipalities of the Philippines and
12 Liga ng mga Barangay.
- 13

14 The representatives from the private sector shall be appointed only upon a
15 favorable recommendation of the DICT and the Government Commission on GOCCs.
16 They shall be persons of unquestionable integrity, probity, and intellect, at least thirty-
17 five (35) years of age, possessed with demonstrated administrative skill and ability in
18 the field of ICT, and with a minimum of ten (10) years of professional experience in the
19 ICT sector.

20

21 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the PIMC shall execute and administer the
22 policies and resolutions approved by the Board of Trustees, prepare its agenda, and
23 direct and supervise the operations and management of the Corporation. The CEO
24 shall have direct control and supervision of the business of the PIMC in all matters
25 which are not by this Act or by the by-laws of the Corporation specifically reserved to be
26 done by the Board of Trustees.

27

28 All members of the Board shall serve for a term of seven (7) years. The
29 Chairman shall have authority, exercisable at his discretion, to determine from time to
30 time the organizational divisions to be headed by each member serving full time and to
31 make the corresponding shifts in designations pursuant thereto. The compensation of
32 the Chairman and the members of the Board of Trustees shall be in accordance with
33 applicable laws, rules and regulations on compensation in the civil service.

34

35 The Chairman of the Board shall be assisted by an Executive Vice-Chairman
36 and one or more Vice-Chairmen who shall be chosen and may be removed by the
37 Board of Trustees. The salaries of the Vice-Chairmen shall be fixed by the Board of
38 Trustees with the approval of the President of the Philippines.

39

40 **SEC. 44. Authorized Capital Stock.** - The PIMC shall have an authorized capital
41 stock of Five Billion pesos (PHP5,000,000,000.00), divided into Five Million
42 (5,000,000) shares of common stock with a par value of One Thousand Pesos
43 (PHP1,000.00) per share, which shall be fully subscribed by the government.

44

45 Of the total capital subscribed by the government, One Billion Pesos
46 (PHP1,000,000,000.00) shall be paid by the Government within one year from the
47 effectivity of this Act, and the remaining subscribed capital shall be paid in four (4) equal
48 annual installments of One Billion Pesos (PHP1,000,000,000.00) each every year
49 thereafter. The budget for the payment of such subscription price shall be appropriated
50 in the annual General Appropriations Act.

51

- 1
2 c) To promote the development of globally competitive skills and drive an inclusive
3 economic growth;
4
5 d) To promote, foster, and nurture the right of all citizens to quality education in ICT;
6
7 e) To lead the country in setting standards in the development of ICT curriculum and
8 training;
9
10 f) To create and foster partnerships with different persons, entities, and institutions
11 for purposes of developing and updating the Academy's resources, its ICT
12 curriculum, modules, pedagogical approaches; and
13
14 g) To regularly assess the state of the country in terms of comparative ICT skills and
15 performance, and suggest responsive policies to address concerns.

16
17 The ICT Academy provided under this Act shall be integrated with the existing ICT
18 Academy of the DICT or any similar unit therein in-charge of ICT training. The ICT
19 Academy shall also coordinate with the Technical Education and Skills Development
20 Authority (TESDA) with regard to its course offerings in order to ensure cooperation and
21 maximize the use of government resources.
22

23 **SEC. 50. *Satellite units.*** - The ICT Academy shall have satellite units in all
24 regions. Satellite units shall also be established in other provinces or highly urbanized
25 cities if, upon determination of the DICT, in coordination and consultation with the
26 Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and TESDA, it is found to be necessary to
27 ensure broader access to quality ICT trainings and skills development.
28

29 **SEC. 51. *Access and Admission.*** - The Academy shall be accessible to all
30 citizens, regardless of skill, age, gender, religious belief, economic status, ethnicity,
31 physical disability, and political opinion or affiliation. The DICT shall institute an
32 admissions process to ensure that citizens shall have equal access to ICT education.
33

34 **SEC. 52. *Finances.*** - The Academy's operations shall be financially supported by
35 appropriations under the General Appropriations Act, all reasonable fees and dues
36 collected, and all donations made to the Academy.
37

38 All income collected by the Academy shall be retained and disbursed for the
39 benefit of the students, faculty, trainers, and advisers; for the acquisition, construction,
40 and maintenance needs of the Academy, and the proper administration of its programs
41 and the attainment of the purposes of the Academy; *Provided*, That such retention and
42 disbursement shall be subjected to applicable laws and rules on government audit and
43 accountability.
44

45 Donations and fees collected shall be held in a fund, to be administered in trust by
46 a Committee created by the DICT for such purpose. The fund shall in no case be
47 impaired and shall be used only for the purposes for which they were donated.
48

49 **SEC. 53. *Partnerships.*** - The Academy may form partnerships with different
50 educational institutions and private entities for the purpose of achieving the goals of the
51 Academy. Partnerships may be in the form of resource sharing, module and training
52 development, faculty exchange, standard development, trainings collaboration, and

1 other similar forms. All partnerships to be entered into by the Academy shall be in
2 accordance with the law, approved by the DICT Secretary, and shall not require the
3 disbursement of any funds by the Academy or the government.

4
5 **CHAPTER 12**
6 **MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**
7

8 **SEC. 54. *Transitory provisions.*** - In accordance with the objectives of this Act,
9 the DICT, in coordination with relevant government agencies and instrumentalities, as
10 well as private stakeholders and civic organizations, shall study, formulate, and
11 implement a master plan for the transition of the government and its provision of
12 services in the digital age.

13
14 For purposes of this Act, until such time that the government shall have completed
15 the transition in accordance with the provisions of this Act, all government activities
16 covered under this Act shall be conducted in the manner provided for under existing
17 laws, rules and regulations.

18
19 The government shall complete the transition in a maximum of five (5) years from
20 effectivity of this Act.

21
22 **SEC. 55. *Regular Status Reports.*** - All agencies, offices, and instrumentalities of
23 the national and local governments covered under this Act shall submit to the Congress,
24 the President, and to the DICT, an annual report on the status of implementation of this
25 Act. These reports shall likewise be made publicly available on and through the e-
26 portals. The consolidated report shall be submitted to the President and the Congress
27 of the Philippines on or before June 30 of each year.

28
29 **SEC. 56. *Appropriations.*** - The amount necessary to cover the initial
30 implementation of this Act in the national government level shall be charged against the
31 current year's appropriation of the national government agency, office, or instrumentality
32 concerned. Thereafter, such sums as may be needed for its continued implementation
33 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

34
35 The amount necessary to implement this Act in the local government level shall be
36 charged against the funds of the local government unit concerned.

37
38 **SEC. 57. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - Within ninety (90) days from
39 the effectivity of this Act, the DICT, in coordination with relevant offices, agencies, and
40 instrumentalities of the national and local governments, and upon consultation with
41 other stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to properly
42 and efficiently implement this Act.

43
44 **SEC. 59. *Separability clause.*** - If any provision of this Act shall be declared
45 invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect the validity of the remaining
46 provisions of this Act.

47
48 **SEC. 60. *Repealing clause.*** - All provisions of laws, presidential decrees, letters
49 of instruction and other presidential issuances which are incompatible or inconsistent
50 with the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed amended or repealed.

51

1 **SEC. 61. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect within fifteen (15) days following
2 its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of
3 general circulation.

4
5

Approved