



Republic of the Philippines
QUEZON CITY COUNCIL
Quezon City
21st City Council

PR21CC-1160

75th Regular Session

RESOLUTION NO. SP- **8650**, S-2021

A RESOLUTION STRONGLY URGING SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANIES TO STRICTLY REGULATE TROLL ACCOUNTS THAT INSTIGATE AND/OR PROLIFERATE DISINFORMATION, HATE AND CONFUSION ON THEIR PLATFORMS.

Introduced by Councilors BERNARD R. HERRERA and PATRICK MICHAEL VARGAS.

Co-Introduced by Councilors Lena Marie P. Juico, Dorothy A. Delarmente, M.D., Tany Joe "TJ" L. Calalay, Nicole Ella V. Crisologo, Victor V. Ferrer, Jr., Winston "Winnie" T. Castelo, Atty. Bong Liban, Eden Delilah "Candy" A. Medina, Ramon P. Medalla, Mikey F. Belmonte, Estrella C. Valmocina, Franz S. Pumaren, Kate Galang-Coseteng, Matias John T. Defensor, Wencerom Benedict C. Lagumbay, Jorge L. Banal, Sr., Peachy V. De Leon, Imee A. Rillo, Marra C. Suntay, Irene R. Belmonte, Resty B. Malañgen, Ivy L. Lagman, Hero M. Bautista, Jose A. Visaya, Karl Castelo, Shaira L. Liban, Ram V. Medalla, Allan Butch T. Francisco, Marivic Co Pilar, Melencio "Bobby" T. Castelo, Jr., Rogelio "Roger" P. Juan, Diorella Maria G. Sotto-Antonio, Donato "Donny" C. Matias, Eric Z. Medina, Freddy S. Roxas and Noe Dela Fuente.

WHEREAS, in their 2021 annual report, We Are Social and Hootsuite reports that Filipinos is the social media capital of the world, spending an average of 4 hours and 15 minutes per day using different social media platforms. According to the study, there are 89.00 million Filipinos social media users, which may comprise of an equivalent to 80.7% of the total population in January 2021;

WHEREAS, Disinformation has been defined as all forms of false, inaccurate, or misleading information designed, presented and promoted to intentionally cause public harm or for profit;

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WHEREAS, disinformation has been shown to distort politics, sowing confusion, undermining trust in democratic institutions, and its risk of harm includes threats to democratic political processes, including integrity of elections, and to democratic values that shape public policies in a variety of sectors, such as health, science, finance and more;

WHEREAS, in a 2017 Oxford University study titled "Troops, trolls and troublemakers: A global inventory of organized social media manipulation" looked at how political parties and candidates across 28 countries deploy "cyber troops" who use a variety of strategies, tools and techniques to shape public opinion, including the hiring of online "trolls" in social media in the Philippines to spread election propaganda, cause hate targeted to a specific person or group, and create confusion to social media users and constituents;

WHEREAS, there has been several instances where social media companies, like Twitter and Facebook, have suspended accounts from the Philippines that had been involved in suspicious activity, such as posting duplicate content across multiple accounts, creating duplicate or multiple accounts, and sending large numbers of unsolicited replies or mentions to influence public opinion on political matters.

WHEREAS, disinformation can be handled most effectively, and in manner that is fully compliant with freedom of expression, free press and pluralism, only if all major stakeholders collaborate to identify, monitor document, and alert citizens to hostile information operations" be it from foreign states or domestic groups especially in advance of elections;

WHEREAS, the growing power of platforms to enable and potentially to interfere with the free circulation of information and in the integrity of democratic processes comes with growing responsibilities. As such, they should therefore be able and willing to act in a responsible way that is commensurate with their powers and the impact that their activities can have on forming public opinion;

WHEREAS, key efforts from social media platforms towards this end include intensified steps to identify and remove illegitimate accounts and the timely flagging of posts that promote disinformation, steps to integrate signals for credibility and trustworthiness in ranking algorithms and include recommendations of alternative content to increase the visibility of credible content, attempts to demonetize for profit a fabrication of false information and, fourth, collaboration with independent source and fact-checking organizations;

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WHEREAS, social media platforms need to play a central role in accepting a high level of public accountability and in committing to help end-users make better informed choices by regulating and restricting troll accounts that instigate and/or proliferate disinformation, hate and confusion.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF QUEZON CITY IN REGULAR SESSION ASSEMBLED, to strongly urge, as it does hereby strongly urge, social media companies to strictly regulate troll accounts that instigate and/or proliferate disinformation, hate and confusion on their platforms.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that a copy of this Resolution be furnished to the offices of various social media platforms companies in the country.

ADOPTED: August 2, 2021.


GIAN G. SOTTO
City Vice Mayor
Presiding Officer

ATTESTED:


Atty. JOHN THOMAS S. ALFEROS III
City Government Dept. Head III

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this Resolution was APPROVED by the City Council on Second Reading on August 2, 2021 under Suspended Rules and was CONFIRMED on the same date.


Atty. JOHN THOMAS S. ALFEROS III
City Government Dept. Head III

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