Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8432

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representatives
EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA and DOMINGO C. RIVERA

AN ACT
MANDATING PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENTITIES
TO DISCLOSE SERVICE COVERAGE DATA TO THE PUBLIC

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Individuals, business, the public sector, and other groups were forced to heavily rely on technology in their daily lives due to the COVID-19 pandemic. New norms, such as distance learning in the education sector; online meeting via Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams, and others in the business sector; even the use of Netflix and other video streaming platforms for entertainment, have been widespread.

The "new normal" in the community has prompted the entry of telecommunications companies that have promised to provide more efficient services. However, their participation has not yet materialized into extensive coverage for all, especially those in remote areas.

This bill ultimately aims to increase connectivity in the country by providing readily-available data with regard the coverage of public telecommunications entities in the country. The proposed mandatory disclosure of coverage data will provide useful information to policymakers, private sector players, and other interested stakeholders, and understand the roadmap of connectivity, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of each telecommunications entity in their area.
This bill seeks to institutionalize a worldwide practice wherein telecommunications companies are mandated to release their coverage maps to the public so that the public will be aided in making their decision on what provider to choose. The disclosure of coverage data will also help decision-makers focus resources for underserved and unserved areas.

Given the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

HON. EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA

HON. DOMINGO C. RIVERA
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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Telecommunications Coverage Data Disclosure Act.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all. Towards these ends, the use of technology and increased connectivity for all citizens shall be encouraged.

SEC. 3. Mandatory Disclosure of Coverage Data. – All public telecommunications entities, including internet service providers, operating in the Philippines shall be required to disclose and publish, on an annual basis, their coverage data as provided under Section 4 of this Act. Without prejudice to Section 5 of this Act, the coverage data of each public telecommunications entities shall be publicly available and posted on their websites.
SEC. 4. Data Subject of Mandatory Disclosure. –

a. A publicly accessible map online that depicts the availability and scope of mobile and fixed broadband internet access service and/or mobile telecommunications services within the territorial jurisdiction of the Philippines; and

b. A specification of the network or internet type (GSM, 3G, 4G, LTE, etc.) used in the geographical region.

SEC. 5. Indexing System. – The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall create a unified indexing system of data released by public telecommunications entities under a singular platform. The platform shall include, but not be limited, to:

a. A display of the geographical coverage of internet and telecommunications services in the Philippines;

b. Crowdsourcing facilities that allow third party users to submit information on coverage of telecommunications and internet services; and

c. Other information that will provide the public with knowledge of the telecommunications and internet coverage in the Philippines.

SEC. 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The DICT, in consultation with relevant agencies and other stakeholders, shall promulgate and issue the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within 30 days from its effectivity.

SEC. 7. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, rules and regulations or any part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. Separability Clause. – If any part or provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, such declaration shall not invalidate other parts of this Act, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,