



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4137

INTRODUCED BY REP. HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The potential to streamline and improve the efficiency of government processes is immense due to the wide availability of digital technologies in the market. Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, we have seen a rise in contactless procedures in accomplishing daily tasks such as bills payment, communication, data storage, video conferencing, and many more. These methods have also proven to be faster, easy to understand, and convenient.

In the past, other governments understood the usefulness of digital technology, as the shift towards E-government has become a trend worldwide. This trend did not only see the benefits in convenience and efficiency, but also in cost-effectiveness on the part of the government and the people. For instance, the E-government will minimize the need to visit government offices, cutting down costs on travel.

Hence, this legislation aims to integrate digital technology into the processes of the government, in hopes of reducing red tape, making transactions with the government more convenient, and bringing government closer to the people.

Through the E-government Master Plan, the Information Communications Technology (ICT) employed by various government agencies will be integrated with each other, boosting interoperability, transactions such as paying taxes will be made easier through an online payment system, and the government will be made more transparent through an open-access online archive.

In the 17th Congress, this bill was filed by Rep. Luis Raymund "LRay" F. Villafuerte Jr., and was received by the Senate in the 18th Congress.

Considering the merits of this Bill, its immediate approval is earnestly sought.


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HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE E-GOVERNMENT, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND
FUNCTIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 "E-Government Act".

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State hereby adopts the following policies.

- 1) The State shall provide effective leadership for the government to develop and promote electronic government services and processes;
- 2) The State shall provide increased opportunities for citizen participation in government;
- 3) The State shall promote inter-agency collaboration in providing electronic government services;
- 4) The State shall promote the use of the Internet and emerging technologies within and across government agencies to provide citizen-centric government information and services;
- 6) The State shall ensure that costs and burdens are reduced for businesses and other government entities;

- 7) The State shall promote better-informed decision-making by policy makers;
- 8) The State shall promote access to high quality government information and services across multiple channels; and
- 9) The State shall make the government more transparent and accountable.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

(a) Information and Communications Technology or ICT shall mean the totality of electronic means to access, create, collect, store, process, receive, transmit, present and disseminate information,

(b) Electronic Government or E-Government shall mean the use of ICT by the government and the public to enhance the access to and delivery of government services to bring about efficient, responsive, ethical, accountable and transparent government service;

(c) ICT-Enabled Services shall mean those engaged in providing services that require the intrinsic use of ICTs including engineering or architectural design, informatics service providers, offshoring and outsourcing service providers such as call centers, back office processing, software development, medical or legal transcription, animation, game development, and other services that require the intrinsic use Of a networked information infrastructure;

(d) Chief Information Officer or CIO shall mean a senior officer in all national government agencies (NGAs), including constitutional offices, state universities and colleges (SUCs), government-owned and –controlled corporations (GOCCs), and government financial institutions (GFIs) responsible for the development and management Of the agency's ICT systems and applications;

(e) Interoperability shall mean the ability of different operating and software systems, applications, and services to communicate and exchange data in an accurate, effective, and consistent manner.

SECTION 4. E-Government Master Plan. – The Department of Information and Communications Technology shall establish and promote an E-Government Master Plan to encourage excellence in facilitating the development and enhancement of all electronic Government services and processes. The E-Government Master Plan shall be reviewed and revised every three years.

SECTION 5. E-Government Programs. - The E-Government Master Plan shall include, but not limited to, the following programs:

1) **Philippine Government Interoperability Framework.** – A Philippine government interoperability framework shall be developed to guide and govern basic technical and informational interoperability of government ICT systems. Such a framework will guide all shared operations and services of the Philippine government—between and among its various agencies, as well as for these agencies in dealing with their various constituencies.

2) **Archives and Records Management Information System.** – An archives and records management information system shall be designed to systematically and efficiently manage government documents and records. This includes the digitization of paper based documents and records and the development of systems that will manage these documents – from creation, routing, tracking, and archiving to disposal – while adhering to existing policies, laws and ISO standards.

3) **Government Online Payment System.** – An Internet-based electronic payment facility and gateway that will enable citizens and businesses to remit payments electronically to government agencies shall be created. It shall render services through various delivery channels, which include debit instructions (ATM accounts), credit instructions (credit cards) and mobile wallets (SMS),

4) **Citizen Frontline Delivery Services.** – Services that are needed to facilitate business registration-related transactions shall be made efficient by integrating all agencies involved in business registration, such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), Social Security System (SSS), Home Development Mutual Fund (PagIBIG), Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), Local Government Units (LGUs) and other permit/license-issuing agencies.

5) **Public Financial Management.** – Various financial systems in government (e.g. taxation, payment systems, accounting, business registries) shall be harmonized and managed

6) **Procurement System** - An online and real-time service that encompasses all procurement processes involving bidding, contract agreements, and payment for services or supplies shall also be developed.

The E-Government Master Plan shall likewise include the following:

1. Inventory and purchase of hardware and software of all government offices.
2. Utilization of servers, network connections and data centers in all government offices.
3. Security, disaster recovery plans and archiving considering existing services and capabilities already available as well as future information systems.
4. Standardization of systems across government agencies to promote interoperability and database management.

SECTION 6. DICT Secretary as E-Government Head. – The Secretary of the Department of Information and Communications Technology shall head the E-Government initiative. The Secretary is expected to spearhead all aspects of accomplishing the implementation of the E- Government Master Plan to catalyze the optimum use of ICT in government to expand and improve public services, government operations and capabilities.

SECTION 7. Chief Information Officers. – Chief Information Officers will be assigned and deployed to national and key governmental units with the function of:

1. Advising agencies on how best to leverage ICTs to optimize the delivery of public services, and achieve efficient and cost effective operations;
2. Developing, maintaining and managing the agency's information systems;
3. Managing and supervising the implementation of ICT-based projects, systems and processes;
4. Formulating and implementing processes in relation to the adoption of CT-based solutions as provided by the E-Government plan;
5. Managing operational risks related to ICT in coordination with the agency's management and stakeholders; and
6. Ensuring that the ICT programs and operations are consistent with national policies and standards.

SECTION 8. LGU ICT Officers. - Each Local Government Unit shall have an Information Officer assigned to manage and supervise its adoption of the E-Government Plan. The LGU ICT Officer is likewise tasked to spearhead seminars and other means of educating the community to maximize E-Government initiatives.

SECTION 9. E-Government Status Report. - Each agency and local government unit shall compile and submit an annual E-Government Status Report on – (A) the status Of the implementation of electronic government initiatives; (B) compliance by the agency with this Act; and (C) performance in delivering programs through the E-Government to constituencies.

SECTION 10. Appropriation. – The amount needed for the initial implementation of this Act shall be taken from the current fiscal year's appropriation of the ICTO and all agencies herein absorbed by or attached to the Department of Information and Communications Technology.

SECTION 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The DICT shall issue within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 12. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 13. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issues or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 14. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.