

PRESS RELEASE

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PBGs laud Senate for moving 'Konektadong Pinoy' closer to passage

Philippine Business Groups, led by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), Philippine Exporters Confederation, Inc. (PHILEXPORT), and the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), laud the Senate for moving the Konektadong Pinoy (also known as the "Open Access in Data Transmission") bill closer to passage.

The PBGs acknowledge, in particular, Senator Alan Peter Cayetano, chairperson of the Senate Committee on Science and Technology, for sponsoring the bill last August 5.

In his sponsorship speech, Cayetano said that Konektadong Pinoy aims to update outdated laws that have made it difficult to improve internet connectivity in the Philippines.

Echoing this sentiment, Senator Sherwin Gatchalian, in his co-sponsorship speech, highlighted the benefits of Konektadong Pinoy. "Konektadong Pinoy is a transformative bill that seeks to bridge the long-standing digital divide and to address the geographic challenges and competitive barriers in data transmission services, in the telecommunications sector that have hindered our progress for years." He added, "in a rapidly evolving digital landscape, it is imperative that we provide access to equitable high-speed internet ensuring that no Filipino is left behind."

Konektadong Pinoy is included in a shortlist of six bills identified by Senate President Chiz Escudero as priority measures, which are now set for plenary deliberation and approval on final reading in the Senate. The six bills are the proposed Blue Economy Act, Enterprise-Based Education and Training Framework Act, amendments to the Universal Health Care Act, establishment of the Department of Water Resources, Open Access in Data Transmission Act, and Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises to Maximize Opportunities for Reinvigorating the Economy or CREATE MORE.

"MSMEs make up 99.5% of businesses in the country. Bringing them online is crucial to make them competitive. With Konektadong Pinoy, small entrepreneurs even in the rural areas can participate in e-commerce and use e-payments," according to Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) President, Consul Enunina V. Mangio.

"Harnessing the power of AI requires robust connectivity. With Konektadong Pinoy, businesses of all sizes can leverage AI and other digital technologies to increase productivity and develop a globally competitive workforce," said Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) Chairman, Mr. Edgardo G. Lacson.

"Filipino businesses are ready for the global market," stated Dr. Sergio R. Ortiz-Luis, Jr., President and CEO of the Philippine Exporters Confederation, Inc. (PHILEXPORT). "Once passed into law, Konektadong Pinoy will bring reliable and secure Internet that will help exporters access modern technologies and participate in international trade", Ortiz-Luis added.

The Konektadong Pinoy bill seeks to empower ISPs in bringing accessible, reliable, and affordable internet to communities. It will do so by making it easier for new players to enter the market and drive competition; promoting efficient management of the radio spectrum, which is essential for expanding coverage of wireless internet, particularly in areas that are currently underserved; and sharing of infrastructure, which helps reduce operational costs and help extend services to regions with limited or no connectivity.

The three PBGs recently joined 20 other organizations, including the Joint Foreign Chambers, ICT groups, and civil society groups in calling on President Marcos, Jr. to certify the bill as urgent for immediate enactment.

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