

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Resolution No. 1939



Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN
INQIDRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED SURGE OF ONLINE AND
COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN DURING THE COVID- 19
PANDEMIC

WHEREAS, Online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC) refers to child sexual exploitation which is facilitated or takes place through the Internet and other related media. Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), on the other hand, occurs when people under the age of 18 engage in or are forced into prostitution and pornography in exchange for money or material payment;

WHEREAS, at present, there is a legal mandate to combat OSEC and CSEC in the country as provided in the Republic Act 10364 (Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012) and Republic Act 9775 (Anti Child-Pornography Act of 2009). Despite this however, online and commercial sexual exploitation of children remains to be a significant problem in the country;

WHEREAS, a 2016 study by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) tagged Philippines as the global epicenter of live stream sexual abuse with 8 out of 10 of children in the country being vulnerable to being victims of online sexual abuse or bullying. In 2018, at least 600,00 child sexual abuse materials from the Philippines were shared and sold online—marking a 1,300% increase from the previous year;

WHEREAS, UNICEF cautioned that the online sexual abuse and exploitation in the Philippines is “worsening” amid the COVID-19 pandemic especially considering that the Philippines has the longest and most restrictive lockdowns in the world—forcing children to stay at home due to quarantine restrictions, make them at risk of falling victim to online abuse and exploitation;

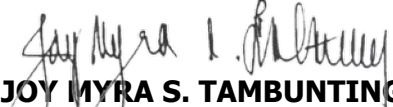
WHEREAS, the full scale of OSEC and CSEC situation in the country is still unknown as cases of OSEC remain largely undetected and underreported;

WHEREAS, it is ultimately the responsibility of the State, as provided in the Section 3 of Article XV of the Philippine Constitution, to “defend the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development”;

WHEREAS, in the interest of upholding Children’s rights and protecting them from abuse and exploitation, there is clearly a need to look into alarming rise in the incidence of OSEC and CSEC cases in the country and to update and adopt measures towards effectively combating OSEC and CSEC in the Philippines.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives direct the appropriate House committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported surge of online and commercial sexual exploitation of children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Adopted,


JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING
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