

Republic of the Philippines  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3420



---

**INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE MILAGROS AQUINO – MAGSAYSAY**

---

#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill seeks to prohibit online gambling and penalizing related online gambling activities.

Gambling has traditionally been considered a “vice” along with prostitution, illegal drugs, and pornography. It is deemed an inherently “immoral” activity, the clear opposite of a positive “virtue”. Gambling can stimulate the brain’s reward system much like drugs and alcohol, and can thus lead to “compulsive” gambling, already a form of an addiction.

The social costs of gambling encompasses a wide range of negative impacts on individuals, families, and society as a whole. This includes financial strain, relationships problems, mental health issues, crime, and increased healthcare and social services costs. Besides financial stress or hardship, it leads to relationship breakdown often translated into family violence and criminality that a legacy of harm is transmitted intergenerationally. Much like any other “addiction”, these costs are often “hidden” or underestimated because they are not always immediately obvious or easily quantifiable.

With today’s advances in digital technology, banking services and other financial transactions are easily accessible and have become very convenient. Unfortunately, it has also become an effective tool for gambling activities as well. While technological developments are welcome signs of progress, we must be cautious in allowing them to be used and abused for purposes that result in considerable negative impacts to our communities.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly recommended.

  
MILAGROS AQUINO-MAGSAYSAY

Republic of the Philippines  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3420

---

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE MILAGROS AQUINO – MAGSAYSAY

---

**AN ACT PROHIBITING ONLINE GAMBLING, PENALIZING THE PLACING OF WAGERS OR BETS THROUGH THE INTERNET OR ANY FORM OF ONLINE GAMBLING ACTIVITIES, PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress Assembled

**SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Anti-Online Gambling Act*”.

**SECTION 2. Declaration of Policies.** - It is the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence 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.

The 1987 Constitution under its Social Justice and Human Rights provisions also mandate that: “The Congress shall give highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequalities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common good. To this end, the State shall regulate the acquisition, ownership, use, and disposition of property and its increments. The promotion of social justice shall include the commitment to create economic opportunities based on freedom of initiative and self-reliance.”

In line with these goals, the State shall adopt measures to eliminate and prohibit all forms of online gambling activities as it undermines the value of an individual’s dignified work by allowing reckless and risky expenditures at the possibility of instant monetary gain which have led many Filipinos to experience dire financial situations.

**SECTION 3. Definition of Terms.** – For purposes of this Act, the following terms are hereby defined as follows:

- a) Internet – refers to an intentional computer network of interoperable packet switched data networks. It includes the electronic medium in which online communication takes place.
- b) Bet or Wager – refers to taking or risking by any person of something of value upon the outcome of a contest of others, a sporting event, or a game subject to chance, upon an agreement or understanding that the person or another person will receive something of value in the event of a certain outcome.
- c) Internet Gambling or Online Gambling – refers to placing, receiving or otherwise knowingly transmitting a bet or wager by any means which involves the use, at least in part, of the Internet.

**SECTION 4. Prohibition on Online Gambling and Similar Acts.** - Any person who shall place, receive, or otherwise knowingly transmit a bet or wager by any means which involves the use, in whole or in part, of the internet, shall be punished by an imprisonment ranging from six (6) months to one (1) year or a fine of not less than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 500,000.00) nor more than One Million Pesos (Php 1,000,000.00), at the discretion of the court.

If the offender is a corporation, partnership, or association, the maximum penalty of five (5) years and the fine of Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php500,000.00) shall be imposed upon the President, director/s, manager, or managing partner/s and/or responsible officer/s thereof.

If the offender is a public officer or employee, or if such public officer or employee promotes, encourages, aids or abets the promotion or conduct of online gambling, the maximum penalty prescribed for the offense shall be imposed. In addition, he/she shall be dismissed from the public service and shall suffer the penalty of perpetual disqualification from holding any public office, to vote and to participate in any election.

**SECTION 5. Repeal of Authority to Regulate Online Gambling.** - All general and special laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, which are interpreted to give legal authority to regulate any forms of online gambling are hereby repealed.

**SECTION 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Department of Justice, in consultation with the appropriate government agencies and other stakeholders, shall jointly promulgate the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this measure.

**SECTION 7. Separability Clause.** - If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

**SECTION 8. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, and rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 9. Effectivity Clause.** - 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.

Approved