



29 January 2018

**REPRESENTATIVE BERNADETTE HERRERA-DY**

Chairperson  
Committee on Public Information  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City

Dear **Representative Herrera-Dy**:

The Department of Social Welfare and Development submits our comments on **House Bill No. 2481** entitled, "An Act Allowing Advertisers and Advertising Agencies to Determine Billboard Content and Prescribing Self-Regulatory Criteria Therefor", introduced by Representative Winston Castelo which seeks to regulate billboard activities by advertisers and advertising agencies.

1. The Committee should reconsider giving advertisers and advertising agencies full discretion to determine the content of billboards on open public display in Metro Manila and other cities, and to prescribe self-regulatory criteria. This may conflict with the responsibility of the State to monitor the compliance of all government agencies or instrumentalities as regards their security and technical measures, and recommending the necessary action in order to meet minimum standards for protection of the content.

As an advocate of child rights, the DSWD also espouses continued regulation by the local authorities of billboard contents to ensure that the public, particularly children and the youth, are shielded from any illegal, obscene and inappropriate matter which may be harmful to their growth and development.

2. Under Section 3:
  - a. The Committee may consider assigning a different agency that will cover the whole of the Philippines since the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is limited to the National Capital Region (NCR) only.
  - b. The guidelines to be crafted should cover the billboards' content (extent of allowable obscenity), location (specific areas should be identified to avoid cluttering and accidents), type (digital billboards such as LCD and LED should also be included) and size.
  - c. Existing guidelines and ethical conducts of organizations of advertisement agencies may also be studied in the creation of guidelines.
3. The bill should also be harmonized vis-à-vis existing laws such as Republic Act No. 10173 (Data Privacy Act) and Consumer Act of the Philippines (Republic Act No. 7394) among others.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emmanuel A. Leyco', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

**EMMANUEL A. LEYCO**  
Undersecretary and Officer-in-Charge