

29 August 2017

SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS
Chairperson
Committee on Women, Children
Family Relations and Gender Equality
Senate of the Philippines
Pasay City

Dear **Chairperson Hontiveros:**

This refers to the request of your Committee for our Department's official position on Senate Bill Nos. 180 (The E-VAW Law of 2016) and 1251 (Gender-Based Electronic Violence Act of 2016) which were filed by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay and the Chairperson herself.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development supports the intention of these bills to address emerging forms of violence against women, their children and members of the LGBTQ community resulting from the use of information and communications technology.

To contribute to the bills' enhancement, may we share with you the following comments and recommendations:

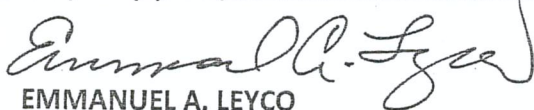
1. Gender-based electronic violence should also cover abuses committed over social media.
2. The term "LGBTQ" should be defined in the bill including its scope. There are suggestions that this term be replaced with "persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity or expression (SOGIE)".
3. The Inter-Agency Council created under RA 9262 may now consider inviting the Department of Information and Communications (DICT) as a member agency for discussions related to electronic violence. Related to this, the bill should also specify whether DICT will be the agency responsible for the immediate blocking, blacklisting or removal of any e-violence related data.

Further, representatives of LGBTQ Communities may be invited to sit as Council members to shed light on the specific acts of violence committed against the sector.

4. There is merit in looking into the gaps of existing laws that protect women and children from various forms of abuse and exploitation i.e. *the Anti-Child Pornography Act, the Anti-Photo and Video Voyeurism Act, the Cybercrime Act and the Anti-Mail Order Spouse Act* to avoid possible duplication. Responses to these gaps may be comprehensively addressed and integrated in the bills.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,



EMMANUEL A. LEYCO

Officer-in-Charge