

Department of Trade and Industry

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DTI to push ecommerce growth, support legislation to strengthen ecommerce law in PH

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in commemoration of the 20th year of Republic Act No. 8792 or the “eCommerce Act of 2000” signed last 14 June 2000, committed to implement policies to strengthen and grow ecommerce in the country while supporting current legislative measures by Congress.

“Twenty years after this pioneering legislation was passed, we need to revisit the law to make it more relevant to the times and future-proofing it. We need to take into account the substantial developments in technology, the widespread use of internet, and the growing ecommerce sector,” said DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez.

He further noted that there was an accelerated adoption of ecommerce during the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) and with the current COVID-19 pandemic.

“To strengthen ecommerce in the country, DTI is supporting the various bills related to ecommerce, particularly House Bill (HB) No. 6122 or the ‘Internet Transactions Act’ authored by Trade Committee Chair Representative Wes Gatchalian,” Sec. Lopez said.

HB 6122 seeks to establish an eCommerce Bureau that will, among others, focus on the following: promoting the development of ecommerce in the country by building trust between sellers and consumers, stronger online consumer protection, safer e-payment gateways, easier online business registration, and formulating other policies and programs to increase the number of online merchants and consumers.

Aside from the Internet Transactions Bill, various related bills are being tackled in Congress that aim to promote the digital economy. These include: HB 6927 on e-Government Act principally authored by Deputy Speaker Lray Villafuerte; HB 6926 and Senate (SB) 1469 on the national digital careers act; and SB 1470 on the National Digital Transformation policy.

“While we need to update our 20-year old eCommerce Act of 2000, DTI is also bringing our eCommerce Philippines 2022 Roadmap up to date,” Sec. Lopez said.

The trade chief explained: “With a strategy that focuses on ‘Security, Speed, and Structure’ to increase Sales, DTI is moving to further bolster ecommerce in the country. But we also need to strengthen protection of online consumers and online merchants, particularly our Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).”

The 2019 Google Temasek Study noted that ecommerce in the Philippines is expected to grow from US\$2.5B in 2019 to US\$12B in 2025. Likewise, according to statistics from EuroMonitor, there is a huge potential for growth of online commerce given that it accounts for only 3.78% of total retail in the Philippines, valued at US\$63.2B.

Sec. Lopez said: "With ecommerce growing and evolving, we need to tackle structural and legal impediments to ecommerce and digital marketplace growth. The upshot is that this is expected to boost our economy in terms of opening markets to facilitate sales and consumption, upgrading traditional manufacturing and service, and developing new industries for business opportunities." **END**