Digital literacy inclusion in basic education eyed

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TO combat misinformation, disinformation and fake news, a lawmaker called for the swift passage of a bill integrating digital literacy in the basic education curriculum. This is being sought by Quezon City Rep. Patrick Michael D. Vargas in his House Bill (HB) 8831, or the proposed Digital Literacy in Schools Act, which emphasizes the Internet as "a vast and unfiltered space where truth and falsehoods coexist."

"We must empower our younger generation with the tools to critically assess online content, ensuring that they are not easily misled by misinformation," Vargas said.

The bill seeks to institutionalize digital literacy education in public schools. The bill mandates the Department of Education to incorporate modules on fact- checking, source verification, responsible social media use, and critical online content analysis into the existing curriculum. It also proposes capacity- building programs for educators to teach digital literacy effectively.

The proposed measure is currently pending with the House Committee on Basic Education and Culture. Vargas remains optimistic that the 19th Congress will push the bill forward.

"With the Lower House taking a firm stand against fake news and misinformation, I am hopeful that my fellow legislators will prioritize this bill. Its passage is especially urgent as we approach the election season when a well- informed and discerning electorate is more critical than ever," added Vargas, who is also a member of the House Committee on Public Order and Safety.

Meanwhile, the House of Representatives recently convened a Tri- Committee Meeting consisting of the Committees on Information, Communications and Technology, Public Order and Safety, and Public Information to investigate the online influencer's proliferation of fake news. The initial hearing of the Tricomm began on February 4, 2025, when only three out of about 40 invited social media personalities attended.