AS INTRODUCED ON 19.10.2026

[~~TO BE~~ INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE]

A

Bill

further to amend the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) Act, 1996

WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) Act, 1996 (XVII of 1996), for the purposes hereinafter appearing;

It is hereby enacted as follows:-

1. Short title and commencement.-(1) This Act may be called the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) (Amendment) Act, 2026.

(2) It shall come into force at once.

2. Amendment of section 2, Act XVII of 1996,- In the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) Act, 1996 (XVII of 1996), hereinafter referred to as the said Act, in section 2,-

(i) after clause (c), the following new clause shall be inserted, namely:—

"(ca) "child online safety measure" means a technical, operational, consumer-protection or access-control measure intended to protect a minor from unlawful online content or content harmful to minors;

(ii) after clause (j), the following new clause shall be inserted, namely:—

(ja) "minor" means a person who has not attained the age of eighteen years;

(iii) after clause (m), the existing clauses (ma), (mb) and (mc) shall be re-numbered as (mb), (mc) and (md) and thereafter, the following new clause shall be inserted, namely:—

(ma) "prescribed child safety service" means a telecommunication service or class of services notified by the Authority for implementation of child online safety measures."

3. Amendment of section 4, Act XVII of 1996.-In the said Act, in section 4, in sub-section (1),-

(i) in clause (l), the word "and", occurring and the end shall be omitted;

(ii) in clause (m), for the full stop "." occurring at the end, a semicolon and word ";and" shall be substituted and thereafter, the following new clauses shall be added, namely:—

"(n) promote and protect the interests, privacy and safety of minors using telecommunication services in Pakistan;

(o) issue standards, directions and codes for licensees relating to child online safety measures, including parental control options, consumer warnings, safe-search settings, age-based access controls and such other safeguards as may be consistent with law;

(p) coordinate with the Federal Government, the Authority under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016, and child protection authorities for implementation of lawful child online safety measures; and

(q) require licensees to facilitate technically feasible and proportionate implementation of lawful directions for protection of minors."

4. Amendment of section 5, Act XVII of 1996.- In the said Act, in section 5, in sub-section (2),-

(i) in clause (q), the word "and", occurring and the end shall be omitted;

(ii) in clause (r), for the full stop "." occurring at the end, a semicolon and word ";and" shall be substituted and thereafter, the following new clauses shall be added, namely:—

"(s) require licensees to offer parental control or child-safe service options to subscribers in the prescribed manner;

(t) require licensees, subject to law and due process, to implement proportionate network-level warnings, safe-search defaults, restricted-access options, or such other child online safety measures as may be prescribed;

(u) prescribe consumer information obligations requiring licensees to clearly inform subscribers of available child online safety measures;

(v) require licensees to maintain records and submit compliance reports regarding child online safety measures;

(w) inspect and audit compliance by licensees with child online safety obligations imposed by or under this Act or any other law for the time being in force; and

(x) include child online safety obligations as conditions of a licence."

5. Amendment of section 6, Act XVII of 1996.- In the said Act, in section 6,-

(i) in clause (e), the word "and", occurring and the end shall be omitted;

(ii) in clause (f), for the full stop "." occurring at the end, a semicolon and word ";and" shall be substituted and thereafter, the following new clause shall be added, namely:—

"(g) the interests, privacy, safety and developmental well-being of minors using telecommunication services are duly safeguarded in accordance with law."

6. Amendment of section 23, Act XVII of 1996.- In the said Act, in section 23, after sub-section (4), the following new sub-section shall be added namely:—

"(5) For the purposes of this Act, a persistent or material failure by a licensee to comply with any lawful child online safety obligation, standard, code, direction or licence condition imposed under this Act shall constitute a contravention for the purposes of this section."

7. Amendment of section 57, Act XVII of 1996.- In the said Act, in section 57, in sub-section (2), in clause (c), for the full stop "." occurring at the end, a semicolon and word ";and" shall be substituted and thereafter, the following new clauses shall be added, namely:—

"(d) standards for parental control services and child-safe service options;

(e) consumer notice requirements relating to child online safety;

(f) coordination mechanisms with authorities responsible for online content regulation and child protection;

(g) compliance reporting, auditing and enforcement in respect of child online safety measures; and

(h) any matter ancillary to protection of minors using telecommunication services."

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) Act, 1996 establishes the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, regulates the telecommunication industry, empowers licensing, permits licence conditions, and authorizes the making of rules. The Act already allows licence conditions relating to inspection, misuse monitoring, service obligations, and consumer-interest protection, and gives the Federal Government rule-making power for carrying out the purposes of the Act.

2. With the growth of online platforms and digitally enabled harms affecting minors, it is necessary to supplement the existing telecommunication framework by expressly enabling child online safety measures at the telecom and licensee level. These measures include parental control options, child-safe service settings, consumer notices, compliance reporting, and implementation support for lawful child-protection directions issued under PECA or other law. The proposed amendments do not convert the PTA Act into a content-classification statute; rather, they enable telecommunication-side compliance and consumer protection in support of a broader child online safety framework. The Act's existing licensing, consumer-protection, contravention, appeal, and rule-making structure makes it a proper vehicle for such amendments.

3. The Bill seeks to achieve the aforesaid objects.

SENATOR SAMINA MUMTAZ ZEHRI
Member-in-Charge