



Sotto seeks Senate probe into continued use of face shields

BY RAYMOND AFRICA

SENATE President Vicente Sotto III wants the government's health experts to justify the decision to continue the mandatory wearing of face shields in outdoor and indoor spaces and has asked the Senate Committee of the Whole to open an inquiry into its supposed effectiveness in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

In filing Senate Resolution No. 757, Sotto expressed dissatisfaction with the explanation of the Department of Health's recommendation for the mandatory use of face shields.

"Wearing face shield is not

among the recommended protocol from world health experts to prevent the transmission of COVID-19... For the marginalized and poor, face shield is very costly for something that do not afford protection against the virus. Our people should rather invest in a proper mask that is scientifically proven to protect them," Sotto said in the resolution.

As requested by Sotto, the DOH last Monday submitted a list of countries that use face shields as an added protection against the virus. The countries include China, South Korea, Malta, United Kingdom, and Oregon (a particular part of the US).

Sotto said that after a review of the list, he found out that "that the public's use of face shield or visor in these countries are not mandatory."

He added: "According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, face shields are not as effective at protecting you or the people around you from respiratory droplets. Face shields are only an alternative for people who are not advisable to wear face masks.

Sotto, citing a study of the American Journal of Infection Control, said surgical masks alone provide good protection against the virus "surpassing the protection provided by face shields alone."

"If mask and face shield are used together, the combined protection was similar to face mask alone. Mask and/or shield together showed no significant improvement compared to masks alone. When face shields are used in combination with masks, no significant improvement was observed as compared to masks alone," he added.

He said the World Health Organization also did not recommend the use of face shields as a way to prevent the transmission of the virus. It said that observance of basic public health safety protocols is enough to prevent the further spread of the disease. — **With Gerard Naval**