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# CEBU BUSINESS WEEK

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## SMORGASBORD

# ID FOR EACH CEBU CITY CONSTITUENT

By: **ELIAS O. BAQUERO**

I AM happy to learn that Cebu City Councilor Philip S. Zafra has proposed an ordinance requiring identification card (ID) to all constituents of Cebu City which is useful to combat Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) pandemic.

Zafra, a former barangay captain of Tisa and former Association of Barangay Councils (ABC) president, said had this Cebu City ID Ordinance passed by

the Cebu City Council before Covid-19 hit the city, it would have been easy to identify all Cebu City residents, determine the accurate number of residents and their living condition, hence, easy to distribute relief goods and financial assistance.

I think Zafra was correct in saying that It is not too late to pass the Cebu City ID Ordinance not only to fight Covid-19 but to have an accurate population count of bonafide residents. Hopefully, this ordinance will be passed by the Cebu City Council headed by Vice

Mayor Michael “Mike” Rama, the presiding officer, within this month of August 2020

I like Zafra’s idea that the Cebu City ID will be the major requirement in availing City Hospitalization Assistance and Medicines Program (CHAMP), securing medicines from Botika ng Bayan for the sick people, facilitating burial assistance for a deceased family member, or enrolling in college under a scholarship program.

“Wa nay daghang dokumento nga gikinahanglan kon dunay Cebu City ID.”

Earlier, Engineer Ariel Florindo of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said the census of population will be done every five years. The last was in 2015 and the next census of population was mandated for this year.

Florindo said the census of population was scheduled from May to September 2020 to come up with the official population count. But this was not made possible due to Covid-19 pandemic.

For his part,

Zafra said that if the ID ordinance will be passed soon, and the PSA will conduct census of population on the last quarter of this year, the Cebu City ID can ride on in the count of Cebu City residents.

“With the census of population and the legality of the ID, it would now be easy to identify who are the real Cebu City residents,” Zafra said.

Zafra added that while the National ID System is mandatory under the law passed by Congress, this Cebu City ID shall be voluntary. But he said that those who will not secure Cebu City ID will have a hard time facilitating transactions and complying with the voluminous requirements..

“The City ID is free and there is no reason for bonafide residents not to secure it,” Zafra said.

Zafra added that the city ID can also vouch a person’s identity in times of emergency or criminality because a person’s resume will be recorded once he will secure an ID.

To top it all, a government-issued ID like a City ID is required in all trans-

actions including depositing or withdrawing money from banks, business transactions or even job applications.

All sectors need to validate a person’s background. So, Zafra’s proposed measure should be supported by all members of the Cebu City Council and the people.

The ID system can also help in purging the masterlist of about 80,000 senior citizens who are receiving financial assistance of P1,000 a month or P12,000 a year.

In Manila, Mayor Francisco Dumagoso or Isko Moreno has conducted a review of the masterlist of 150,000 senior citizens. After the review, only 80,000 senior citizens were qualified.

In Cebu City, I was informed that the 80,000 senior citizens are not really residing here but in the neighboring provinces of Bohol and Leyte among others who were just listed by their relatives who are working here.

If that senior citizen’s masterlist will be reviewed, there may be a possibility that this will be trimmed down and the City Government can save money.



CEBU CITY COUNCILOR PHILIP ZAFRA