

# Sotto urged: Let Senate vote on LGBT bill

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Even if Senate President Vicente Sotto III had been cold to the passage of the antidiscrimination bill, Bataan Rep. Geraldine Roman isn't losing hope that he would be reasonable enough to allow the Senate to vote on the long-languishing measure, which seeks to provide equal rights to members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community.

Roman said she believed that Sotto "has the heart to recognize the rights of members of the LGBT community."

## Staunchly opposed

The new Senate President staunchly opposed the passage of a sexual orientation and gender identity and expression (Sogie) bill during his time as Senate majority leader. "I'm confident that the Senate President will enter into reason and that he will be open to further discussing the antidiscrimination bill on the floor, and base his judgments on the merits of an intelligent debate and discussion," Roman said at the sidelines of the launch of Medical Center Manila's gender diversity center on Friday.

## La Salle gathering

More than 500 members of student councils, youth groups and the LGBT community gathered on Friday night at De La Salle University in Manila to denounce the Senate for delaying the bill's passage.

"We don't know what the main causes of the delay are, but we are hoping that with the new Senate leadership, those delays will be ended," said Lance dela Cruz, media relations officer of Sogie Equality Group.

While the House of Representatives passed the bill last year, its counterpart bill in the Senate, authored by Sen. Risa Hontiveros, is still facing an uphill climb.