

# QC councilors pass landmark anti-drug code

QUEZON City Vice Mayor Joy Belmonte on Monday said the 37-member city council has pioneered an anti-drug code to become the benchmark for other local government units to replicate.

"This will be the first drug code in the country, and we are happy to work with different national government agencies and the Quezon City Police District on this. We want to make sure that this drug code is consistent with the national laws and policies," she said.

As the presiding officer of the city council and chairperson of the Quezon City Anti-Drug Abuse Advisory Council, Belmonte expressed her pride in the comprehensive approach the council and the city have taken in the war against drugs.

The code consolidates the programs and procedures already in place to implement community-based efforts to rid the city of drugs.

This includes the comprehensive program to rehabilitate drug offenders who have surrendered, educate young people through schools, and enact sustainable partnerships with the police force, the church, non-government sector, and private sector, she said.

"This is such a huge success for us. So now we would like to move our accomplishments further by creating a local ordinance which contains all of the programs, the policies that we already developed," she said.

Meanwhile, Mayor Herbert M. Bautista has signed an ordinance reinforcing the organizational structure of the QC Protection Center to provide a more comprehensive service to the victims or survivors of gender-based violence and abuse.

City Ordinance 2701-2018, introduced by Councilors Irene Belmonte, Lena Marie Juico, Julienne Alyson Rae Medalla, and Diorella Maria Sotto, amends City Ordinance 2191-2012 that created the QC Protection Center for Victim-Survivors of Gender-based Violence and Abuse.

In the amendment, the QC Committee on Gender-based Violence is created to oversee the management of the protection center and to ensure that the ordinance is effectively implemented.

"To better adhere to the QC Protection Center's objectives, there is a need to reinforce its organizational structure to further provide comprehensive service to the victim-survivors of gender-based violence," the ordinance read. **Rio N. Araja**