

# In line with Pride Month, Belmonte vows support of gender-responsive governance

IN line with this year's Pride Month, Quezon City Mayor-elect **Joy Belmonte** has vowed to continue gender-responsive governance through comprehensive **gender and development (GAD)** programs and projects supporting the LGBT (lesbian, gays, bisexual, and transgender) community in the city.

"In the new administration, we will definitely continue our commitment to making Quezon City a safe space that respects the rights of all people," Belmonte said in an interview as the outgoing Vice Mayor after three terms in office.

According to Belmonte, the local government will continue to "institutionalize laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and that penalize harassment of any kind".

"I think it's important that we highlight the programs of Quezon City in this regard because, to me, the celebration of Pride Month is a call to local government leaders

to take action," she said.

"When we say we are proud and that we respect the members of the LGBT community, it shouldn't end with this month or with the upcoming Pride March. It's an ongoing commitment to create programs and implement laws that support the cause," Belmonte explained, citing the 2019 Metro Manila Pride March happening on June 29.

Quezon City is the first local government unit to pass an ordinance called the "Gender-Fair City" ordinance aimed at ensuring the rights of members of the LGBT community in the workplace, in schools, in accommodation and in accessing basic services.

The ordinance legislates affirmative acts for the cause—for instance, adding gender options for sexual orientation or genders in forms, conducting gender-sensitivity training, disseminating anti-discrimination materials in schools, workplaces and communities, and commemorating LGBT events in the city.