

## Arrest hoarders, solon asks gov't, PNP, LGU

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Amid the tight supply of paracetamol and other drugs for flu-like symptoms, a lawmaker on Thursday asked authorities to arrest hoarders and price manipulators of medicines.

Quezon City Rep. **Precious Hipolito Castelo** made the appeal in the wake of reports that hoarding of fever drug paracetamol is prevalent.

She pointed out that there are laws, and even local ordinances prohibiting hoarding and price manipulation of drugs and other important consumer products.

“The concerned authorities should enforce these to protect the interest and welfare of our people, especially the poor. Hoarding denies the poor access to essential products like medicines and increases the prices of these commodities,” Castelo said.

She called on the Department of Trade and Industry, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Health (DoH), Philippine National Police (PNP), and local government units (LGU) to act jointly in going after individuals taking advantage of the dramatic increase in the number of people stricken with flu and Covid-19.

Castelo said LGU could suspend or revoke the business permits of establishments that hoard or manipulate the prices of products or engage in activities in restraint of trade.

She urged the government and the manufacturers to ensure enough supply of Covid-19 medicines.

While people complained of being unable to purchase paracetamol and other drugs for flu-like symptoms amid a sudden increase in demand for these products, the DoH assured that there is no shortage. It claimed delivery issues and demand have affected the stocks.