

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6520



Introduced by the Honorable Precious Hipolito Castelo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Just last December 2019, a new strain of coronavirus which has not been previously identified in humans was detected in Wuhan, China. The new, or “novel” coronavirus, now called Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), shook the world as it continues to spread at a high rate globally.

As the world is dealing with a lot of “unknowns” regarding this novel strain of virus, people are experiencing mass hysteria and panic. The kneejerk reaction of many is to hoard face masks, sanitizers, antiseptics, and other protective goods – leading to depleted stocks and rising prices of the same.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) demand for face masks is up to 100 times higher than normal, and prices are up twentyfold, as the unprecedented global demand fueled by the COVID-19 has created potentially dangerous shortages for those who need them the most – the health workers.¹

Thus, this bill seeks to exempt face masks, sanitizers, antiseptics, and other similar personal protective goods from all taxes, duties, fees, and other charges. Through this measure, it is hoped that there will be adequate supply, stabilized prices, and prevention of hoarding of these vital commodities at the time of crisis.

There is a need to flood the market with these goods so prices would go down and unscrupulous traders would be discouraged from hoarding them and selling them later at deleterious rates.

The immediate passage of this bill is most earnestly sought.



PRECIOUS HIPOLITO CASTELO

¹ <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/02/10/1991867/who-6-month-backlog-face-mask-stocks>

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AN ACT
EXEMPTING FACE MASKS, ANTISEPTICS, SANITIZERS, AND OTHER SIMILAR GOODS
FROM TAXES, DUTIES, FEES, AND OTHER CHARGES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Face Masks and Antiseptics Tax Exemption Act".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential personal protective goods available to all people at affordable cost. Towards this end, the State shall exempt face masks, antiseptics, sanitizers, and other similar goods from all taxes, duties, fees, and other charges so that adequate supply and stabilized prices of these necessary and vital commodities will be assured.

SEC 3. Tax Exemption. – Face masks, antiseptics, sanitizers and other similar protective goods are hereby exempt from all taxes, duties, fees, and other charges.

SEC. 4. Separability Clause. – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 5. Repealing Clause. – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 6. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,