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'This is a free country!': Sotto bucks restrictions for the unvaccinated

Published August 2, 2021, 11:04 AM

by [Vanne Elaine Terrazola](#)

Senate President Vicente Sotto III on Monday, August 2, rejected a reported plan of a local government to deny unvaccinated individuals access to certain places.



Senate President Vicente 'Tito' Sotto III

In a tweet, Sotto said the Interagency Task Force (IATF) on the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases pushed to restrict movement for people who have yet to get vaccinated against the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

This would be “utterly wrong”, the Senate chief said.

He added that vaccinated individuals may still contract the coronavirus and infect others.



Tito Sotto
@sotto_tito



We should not force our people to be vaccinated if they refuse. Last time I heard this a free country!



Tito Sotto @sotto_tito
IATF Proposed sec 4 disallowing unvaxxed to certain places is utterly

wrong. What about recovered unvaxxed? Vaxxed can carry virus ah!

8:49 AM · Aug 2, 2021



165 ⚡ See the latest COVID-19 information on Twitter

"We should not force our people to be vaccinated if they refuse. Last time I heard this a free country!" Sotto pointed out.

President Duterte earlier said that he wanted to prohibit unvaccinated individuals from leaving their homes to control the spread of the disease, especially with the emergence of the Delta coronavirus variant.

Duterte also called for a law that would penalize unvaccinated individuals.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque, however, clarified last July 29, that the government will [not yet](#) impose restrictions against the unvaccinated as majority of the Philippines' population have yet to get inoculated against the coronavirus.

While Sotto did not specify where the supposed order came from, it appeared that the move was only part of an executive order issued by Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu Mayor Junard Chan – and not the IATF – to temporarily suspend certain activities and impose measures to control the spread of the COVID-19 in the city.

Section 4 of the mayor's executive order states that only vaccinated persons shall be allowed entry to public and private markets, including supermarkets and convenience stores, in Lapu-Lapu City. This takes effect on August 25.

While Roque commended the Chan's initiative, he said such a "no vaccine, no entry" policy is not [timely](#), maintaining that many people have yet to get vaccinated.

Earlier, Sotto asked the IATF to [carefully study](#) the plan to control mobility for the unvaccinated.

Some of his colleagues, on the other hand, had argued that the government has the [authority](#) to require vaccination and restrict movement in consideration of public health.



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