

August 18, 2021

Circular No. 091 - 2021

Subject: **MAP PRIMARY ADVOCACIES FOR 2021 SECOND HALF**

Dear MAP Colleagues and Thought Leaders:

LET'S ALL HELP OURSELVES AND THE COUNTRY BY GOING FOR "OLYMPIC" MEDALS IN PHILIPPINE VACCINATION!

FINALIST AT 50% VACCINATION RATE, BRONZE AT 60%, SILVER AT 70%, AND GOLD AT 80%!!!

If you can push your company to hit the 90-100% level, you will increase the average in your community level.

The Coronavirus is here with us forever. We have NO CHOICE BUT TO LEARN TO LIVE WITH IT. Frankly, while well intentioned, it is economically and social-justice-unfair to respond with only a sledgehammer Enhanced Community Quarantine approach.

In our Inaugural Address last January, MAP highlighted 5 national crises - *Health* (COVID-19), *Economy* (negative GDP growth, unemployment), *Environmental* (irreversible Climate Change) *Education* (Learning Crisis) and *Social Justice* (4.5 million families, 18 million poor) inequalities.

We proposed "*THE GREAT RESET: Leading for the Common Good*" as our theme, with principal mission to SAFELY REOPEN THE ECONOMY, and to promote ESG and member benefits.

8 months down the road, we are down to our last 4 months, and we should take stock of what else we can do.

Health - VACCINATE, VACCINATE, VACCINATE

We may have a vigorous health versus economy debate, but all agree on the MERITS OF VACCINATION. Science shows only 756 deaths out of 11 Million (M) plus vaccinated, or only 0.006%, so the message is clear - *GET VACCINATED*, and the jab in your arm is the best vaccine.

Thankfully, our authorities have responded, with more than 40M vaccine doses delivered, over 30M administered, and over 15M Filipinos with 2 doses. Last time we checked, Makati vaccination rate has crossed 51%, Mandaluyong is at 68%, and San Juan is at 80%. Equally heartwarming are a 500,000 per day vaccine rate, and the prospect of around 50M additional vaccine doses in the second

semester. Chief Implementer Sec. Carlito Galvez said that 62% have one dose, 41% of whom are fully vaccinated in NCR early this week.

If we can have a National Vaccine Certificates for domestic and international use, even better.

Economic - INCENTIVES FOR THE VACCINATED

To safely REOPEN THE ECONOMY, we need to reopen more sectors of the NON-ESSENTIAL economy, ideally via incentives to the vaccinated; provided they take the usual health protections of masking, social distancing, and frequent washing of hands. Today, we are a Stop-Start Economy, with only the Essential Sector in full bloom. Unfortunately, we are a Service and Consumption economy, and most of our workers are in the Non-Essential category.

I propose a national policy of *INCENTIVES FOR THE VACCINATED* - for example, domestic travel, free mobility, reopening malls, restaurants, and hotels for the fully vaccinated, outdoor exercise, and allowing larger gatherings for the fully vaccinated. Special Adviser Joey Concepcion has been actively advocating this approach, while others have provided examples from Singapore, Indonesia, and Thailand. I support his and others' goal of 70% vaccination rate for community herd immunity, but I suggest major incentives for the fully vaccinated at the 50% level.

Our Board also proposes a national policy that is nuanced in its approach - that recognizes that vaccines do work to prevent or minimize the severity of the virus in vaccinated persons, but that the economy can only move forward and livelihoods maintained if fully vaccinated persons are allowed freer mobility. This policy must allow the hospitality sector (restaurants, resorts, hotels) and Outdoor Exercise enthusiasts to operate under reasonable conditions.

It will help if companies are allowed to institute an "*Only Vaccinated at Onsite Work*" policy, and to (temporarily) ask the unvaccinated to Work from Home until the end of the year. Former Chief Justice Art Panganiban wrote about this in his Inquirer August 15, 2021 column entitled "*Modify No Vaccine, No Work Ban*" addressed to the DOLE.

We must also ask media for balance in its reporting - for example, a national daily showed 7 articles on its front page on Health bad news on August 16, 2021, and nothing on improving vaccination rates and economic hardships impacting unemployment and hunger from one-size-fits-all Hard Lockdown policies.

Environmental - GREEN EDSA

So much has been recently written internationally about the world reaching a tipping point of potentially irreversible Climate Change, and how all governments must act now and together to move towards eventual net zero carbon emission. In fact, *Agence France-Presse* and *Philippine Star* quote a global opinion poll with 73% strongly feeling this way. Thankfully, Climate Change Commission head Sec. Sonny Dominguez has been using a Climate Justice argument to lobby with the international community for more aggressive action to mitigate climate change, and is on the record pushing for legislation to ban single-use plastics.

For the MAP, we propose a symbolic but practical *“Help the Community”* project which purposely was launched on Earth Day this year - a *GREEN EDSA* - designed to transform EDSA into a tree-lined greenway and prioritize people’s mobility. The pandemic, work from home preferences, a dedicated bus lane , and some bike lanes are good first steps towards less traffic and less carbon on EDSA. What will be a nice exclamation point will be a GREEN tree-lined EDSA, both walkable and bikeable, with acceptable air quality levels.

Education - FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING IN 2022

The country, with its abysmal international survey scores in Math and Science for grade schoolers, plus more than one year of Pandemic Remote Learning, is facing its most severe Learning Crisis ever. Most developed countries worldwide have responded with a *“Vaccinate and Return to Face-to-Face Learning”* policy to alleviate lack of healthy social contact for children, and allow parents to work reasons.

We should do the same in the Philippines. Thankfully, vaccination rates are rising, and I would propose *“FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING IN 2022”* in localized CHED (Commission on Higher Education) approved schools, and area where we have minimum 50% vaccination or maximum 2% Covid active cases. Very few children worldwide can do Remote Learning for more than one year, and international studies show a significant drop in learning in Online-only classes. Most Filipinos live in cramped spaces and parents have a hard time assisting their children when they too have to work. We should of course advocate vaccination for children above a certain age, based on medical advice, as a complementary condition to permissible Face-to-Face Learning in 2022.

Social Justice - VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTER EDUCATION

Social Justice is all about inequality in economic and educational terms, and we will have an Anti-Hunger Special General Management Meeting on August 25, 2021, to discuss this topic.

For the MAP, I propose something simpler and more direct - active participation in *VOTER REGISTRATION and VOTER EDUCATION* in preparation for our May 2022 National Elections.

Thankfully, the COMELEC has recently announced online registration for deactivated voters, and that will be a major step forward in meeting the current September 30, 2021, deadline. We should equally push our member companies to educate their employees and their dependents on the merits of Voting, and the procedures for immediate Voter Registration. Homerun would be a COMELEC Extension of the currently fixed September 30, 2021 registration deadline.

For the young without government IDs, we should promote enrolling in the National ID system.

Bottomline, the quickest way to exercise one’s right to have a say on Social Justice and Inequality is to REGISTER TO VOTE IN 2022.

Conclusion

Our MAP Board has four months to go this year, and we should try to advocate meaningful, easy-to-understand One Advocacy for one National Crisis.

I therefore propose the following:

- Health - *VACCINATE, VACCINATE, VACCINATE*
- Economy - *INCENTIVES FOR THE VACCINATED*
- Environmental - *GREEN EDSA*
- Education - *FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING IN 2022*
- Social Justice - *VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTER EDUCATION*

In a sense, this will amplify our theme of *“THE GREAT RESET: LEADING FOR THE COMMON GOOD”*.

It will also assist us in our 3 main goals:

SAFELY REOPEN THE ECONOMY

Promote Shared Prosperity and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance)

Enhance MEMBER BENEFITS via Best Practice Sharing

Thank you!



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