

文職及專業人員協會

關於支持特區政府實行高官問責制 的意見

香港特區政府計劃從第二屆開始，實行“高官問責制”。這表明董建華先生領導的特區新政府決心勵精更始，通過施政改革，提高施政效率，建構特區政府的新形象。本會對問責制改革表示全力的支持。

本會之所以支持“高官問責制”改革方案，最基本的理由如下：

第一、改革方案是特區政府在總結了香港回歸幾年來的施政經驗之後提出來的，改革的根本目標是要在“一國兩制”的大前提下實現政府內部行政管理體制的自我改進和完善。這完全符合香港的長遠發展利益和需要。本會認為對這樣的改革方案是沒有理由不予支持的。

第二、雖然問責制改革表面看來只涉及政府十幾位主要官員，但由於這些高官分屬於不同部門，這些不同部門又覆蓋社會的方方面面，他們的權責明確了，政務辦好了，施政效率提高了，最終受惠的仍然是本港廣大市民。

第三、過去特區政府曾實行過的一些改革是由政府的不

香 港



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大 學

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

政治與公共行政學系

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

May 17, 2002

Sub-committee to Study the Proposed
Accountability System for Principal Officials
And Related Issues
Hong Kong Legislative Council
8 Jackson Road
Hong Kong

Dear Honourable Members of the Sub-Committee,

Whither the Women's Commission under the Accountability System?

In the one month since the announcement of the Accountability System for Principal Officials, discussion on the future location of the Women's Commission has been conspicuous by its absence. I am writing to raise some of my concerns with regard to the impact the new system might have on the Women's Commission, and perhaps put forward my own suggestion.

1. The Women's Commission is currently placed under the Health and Welfare Bureau. This location is not ideal as (i) women's issues are not only health and welfare issues, and locating it as such is misleading to the public; and (ii) to address women's issues properly would require concerted efforts from all bureaux. Much effort has to be made in policy co-ordination.
2. In the proposed new accountability system, the Health and Welfare Bureau will be enlarged to form the Environmental, Health and Welfare Bureau. One wonders whether the portfolio of the Director of this bureau would include women's affairs. (i) If that is the case, it is possible that women's issues might not loom large under this "super" bureau. (ii) If that is not the case, then I wonder which bureau women's affairs would come under.
3. In my view, placement of the Women's Commission under any one bureau is not a good idea. (i) Women's issues cannot be conceptualized in isolation, but are part and parcel of issues such as poverty, unemployment, economy, ageing, law and order, health, environment, housing, you name it. No single Director of Bureau should shoulder the responsibility for women's affairs, and doing so would only go against government's efforts to mainstream gender in its policymaking. (ii) The future relationship among bureaux might be one of competition for resources and credit, whole-hearted co-operation may not be easy to achieve.

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4. My suggestion, if I may, is to locate the Women's Commission under the portfolio of the Chief Secretary. It would have at least the following advantages:

- (i) The Chief Secretary is better positioned than any single bureau to perform the role of policy co-ordination.
- (ii) The HKSAR Government would be better able to claim that it has set up a *central* machinery for the advancement of women, in order to satisfy the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) introduced to Hong Kong in October 1996, and the Beijing Platform for Action arising from the UN Fourth World Conference on Women (1995). This would save the government from *further* embarrassment when it prepares its second submission to the UN CEDAW Committee next year.
- (iii) Such a move would have no resource implication, nor would it upset the structure of government, nor does it violate the Basic Law.
- (iv) In the eyes of the NGO community, it would be one step forward, albeit a small step, in reflecting the government's sincerity in addressing women's issues.

I would appreciate if the Sub-committee would seriously consider this rather neglected area, and help reflect my opinion to the relevant officials.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Yours sincerely,

Irene Tong
Assistant Professor
Politics & Public Administration
University of Hong Kong