

St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service
聖約翰座堂輔導服務

August 7, 2002

Mrs. Constance Li
Clerk – Bills Committee
Legislative Council Secretariat
3/F Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Central

Re: Written Submission to the Bills Committee
Juvenile Offenders (Amendment) Bill 2001

Dear Ms. Li,

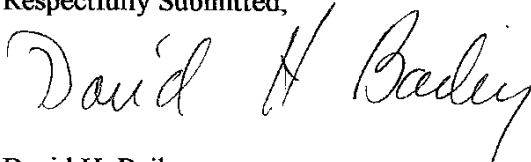
St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service fully supports the two (2) major proposals of this Bill which include raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility from seven to ten years of age, as well as retaining the rebuttable common law presumption of Doli Incapax for children between the revised minimum age of ten and below 14.

As our agency stated in 1999 during the public consultation exercise, our principal reason for increasing the age was the generally accepted view of experts in child development that young children are not able to understand and/or appreciate the severity of criminal actions, nor indeed able to understand the judicial process.

Raising the age of criminal responsibility to age ten will bring Hong Kong more in line with many countries, and hopefully will go a long way towards positively responding to the concerns of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Human Rights Committee.

This measure will be a big step forward for the criminal justice system in Hong Kong.

Respectfully Submitted,



David H. Bailey
Director

