

立法會
Legislative Council

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**Paper for the House Committee meeting
on 26 October 2001**

Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee

Proposed parliamentary visit to Canada and the United States

Purpose

This paper invites the House Committee to endorse the recommendation of the Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee on organizing a parliamentary visit to Canada and the United States (US) in February 2002.

Background

2. When considering the parliamentary liaison activities to be organized in the last session, the Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee originally proposed to organize a visit to Canada and the United States (US) in April 2001. The destinations proposed were Toronto, Ottawa and Washington DC. The Subcommittee was of the view that a visit to Canada should be accorded a high priority because while various liaison activities had been organized with the respective friendship groups of Australia, Japan, Singapore and European Parliament in the past few years, the last visit paid by Members of the former Legislative Council to Canada had taken place in 1992. In order to optimize the value of the trip, the Subcommittee considered that the delegation to be formed should also make use of the opportunity to visit the US.

3. However, as the proposed timing of the visit was not convenient to Members of the Canadian Parliament and the Ontario Legislative Assembly, the Subcommittee eventually decided to defer making a recommendation on the proposed visit until a more suitable time.

The Subcommittee's recommendation

Details of the visit

4. The Subcommittee discussed the matter again at its meeting on 9 October 2001, after consulting the Canadian and US Consulates General regarding when their respective parliaments would be in session. The Subcommittee recommends that a visit to Canada (Toronto and Ottawa) and the US (Washington DC) should be organized to enhance the Council's ties with the Canada-Hong Kong Parliamentary Friendship Group, foster liaison with members of the US Congress, and to update them on the latest developments in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

5. The Subcommittee proposes that the visit should last for nine days from 16 to 24 February 2002 during the Lunar New Year holiday break. It is intended that the programme will include meetings with parliament members and committees dealing with trade and commerce and international relations, as well as senior officials of the Canadian and US Governments, representatives of major overseas Chinese social and business communities, and other non-Government organizations. The assistance of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices in Toronto and Washington will be enlisted in drawing up a detailed programme for the visit.

6. A draft budget for the proposed visit and a proposed flight and boarding schedule are attached in **Appendices I and II** respectively. Funds are available to cover the expenses of the visit.

The delegation

7. As approved by the Legislative Council Commission at its meeting on 20 February 2001, there will be eight fully-sponsored Members on a parliamentary visit. The selection of Members for joining the delegation will be conducted in accordance with the method set out in LC Paper No. CB(3) 339/00-01 agreed by the House Committee on 19 January 2001, i.e. Members are divided into six defined groups and the eight places are allocated among these groups on a pro-rata basis; each group of Members will decide its own way to nominate the participating Members.

Decision sought

8. Members are invited to endorse the proposals in paragraphs 4 to 7 above.

9. Subject to Members' endorsement of the proposals, the Secretariat will make detailed arrangements, including liaison with the Consulates General, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices and the parliamentary offices concerned, as well as inviting applications from Members for joining the delegation.

Legislative Council Secretariat

23 October 2001

Draft budget for the visit to Canada and the United States

Date of visit : 16 (Saturday) - 24 (Sunday) February 2002

Size of delegation : 8 Members

EXPENSES

Items	Amount (HK\$)
(1) Passage Hong Kong - Toronto - Ottawa - Washington - Hong Kong Business class airfare (including airport tax): (approx. HK\$43,890 x 8 persons)	351,120
(2) Hotel accommodation Toronto: (approx. HK\$1,000 x 3 nights x 8 persons = HK\$24,000) Ottawa: (approx. HK\$1,000 x 2 nights x 8 persons = HK\$16,000) Washington: (approx. HK\$1,400 x 2 nights x 8 persons = HK\$22,400)	62,400
(3) Overseas subsistence allowance	37,792
(4) Travel insurance (approx. HK\$370 x 8 persons)	2,960
(5) Hired car service - coach (15 passengers)	33,000
(6) Official entertainment	24,000
(7) Souvenirs	3,000
(8) Sundries	5,000
TOTAL	519,272

Exchange rates as at 12 October 2001

US\$1 = HK\$7.80

CAD\$1 = HK\$5.00

Appendix II

Proposed flight and boarding schedule for the visit to Canada and the United States (16 - 24 February 2002)

<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>		<u>To</u>	<u>No. of nights</u>
16 Feb (Sat)	Hong Kong (<i>Afternoon</i>)	→	Toronto (<i>arrive on 16 Feb</i>)	3 nights
19 Feb (Tue)	Toronto (<i>Afternoon</i>)	→	Ottawa	2 nights
21 Feb (Thu)	Ottawa (<i>Afternoon</i>)	→	Washington DC	2 nights
23 Feb (Sat)	Washington DC (<i>Morning</i>)	→	Hong Kong (<i>arrive on 24 Feb</i>)	