

LC Paper No. CB(2)1186/01-02(02)

February 18, 2002

Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP
Chairman
Panel on Constitutional Affairs
Legislative Council
c/o Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
HONG KONG GOVERNMENT

Dear

Employees of Subvented Organizations Taking up Public Offices

We understand that the Panel on Constitutional Affairs will discuss the captioned subject in today's meeting and we would like to express a few points for the consideration of members of the panel.

1. We believe that staff of social welfare organizations, as any other citizens of HKSAR, should be encouraged to contribute to the society in various means including the taking up of public offices. This is in line with the altruistic aims of social welfare organizations, which could be achieved not only through the direct provision of social services and empowerment of people at disadvantaged positions, but also through other public education and advocacy work.
2. As a key element of the Third Sector, social welfare organizations have the responsibility of enhancing public understanding of the situation and needs of vulnerable groups and promoting collaboration among the government, commercial and not-for-profit sectors. Participation in public affairs including taking up of public offices is certainly a means to achieving this.

3. We support that social welfare organizations, subvented or non-subvented, should have clear policy and administrative procedures regarding their employees' taking up of public offices. While many social welfare organizations have already formulated their own policies, the guidelines issued by the Social Welfare Department would serve as a reference for all social welfare organizations in reviewing or setting up such a policy. Since different organizations might have different mission, visions and sources of funding, it is not practicable to require them to comply with a set of mandatory requirements.

4. Social welfare organizations receiving subvention from Social Welfare Department have to satisfy the requirements of the Service Performance Monitoring System, which includes a set of Service Quality Standards and Funding and Service Agreement between SWD and each subvented service unit. We believe that this is already a safeguard for both the quality and quantity of subvented services, as well as the proper use of public subvention.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Your sincerely,

Virginia Chan
Business Director
(Agency Development and Liaison)

c.c. Secretary for Health and Welfare (Attn.: Mr. Robin Gill, DSHW)
Director of Social Welfare (Attn.: Mr. Lee Wing Wai, ADSW)