



Legislative Council
Panel on Safety and Environment Hygiene

4 May 2005

Dear Chairman,

RE: Proposed Labelling Scheme on Nutrition Information

As a professional association consisting of multidisciplinary healthcare workers and scientists with special concerns on obesity and its effects on morbidity and mortality in Hong Kong, we, the Hong Kong Association for the Study of Obesity (HKASO), are writing in supporting the Government's proposal on staged implementation of Labelling Scheme on Nutrition Information.

Obesity is now a major public health problem in Hong Kong. According to a local epidemiological study in 1995, over one-third of Hong Kong adults were obese with a Body Mass Index (BMI) ≥ 25 kg/m². Obesity-related diseases including certain types of cancers, coronary heart disease, cerebrovascular disease and diabetes mellitus are amongst the leading causes of deaths in Hong Kong. Proper labeling of nutrient contents and scientifically supported nutritional and functional claims should allow general public to make more appropriate food choices and facilitate healthcare providers to educate patients more effectively for disease prevention and management.

Our Association considers mandatory nutritional labeling for prepacked food products should be enforced through legislative amendment to the regulations made

under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132). Many developed countries such as the United States, European Union and Japan have already taken an active role in regulating nutrition information on food labels. It is therefore important that the Hong Kong SAR Government should not further delay the implementation of this long overdue regulation in light of the magnitude and urgency of obesity-related health problems.

In conclusion, it is the position of the HKASO to support the Government in this important initiative and HKASO will be pleased to provide any related scientific information if required.

With very best wishes.

Yours faithfully,

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For and on behalf of the Hong Kong Association for the Study of Obesity

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