



4 July 2006

Members, The Legislative Council

Dear Sir or Madam,

Response to “Proposal to increase the penalties for cruelty to animals”

We welcome the government's first move towards a better animal welfare system as evident in the Legislative Council Brief [File Ref: HWF(F) 6/8/2 pt.2], dated 21 June 2006, on the Proposal to increase the penalties for cruelty to animals ("The Proposal").

However, we would like to raise the following concerns:

- 1) With reference to standards in other developed countries, as well as considering local situations, the Proposal's amendment to a maximum fine of HK\$100,000 and maximum imprisonment for 12 months is very unlikely to bring sufficient increase in deterrence to put a curb on the animal abuse phenomenon.
- 2) To be in line with international standards while addressing the specific situation in Hong Kong, we propose a maximum fine of HK\$100,000 and imprisonment of 5 years under the existing Ordinance (Cap. 169) to be put into effect in the coming LEGCO session in October 2006.
- 3) While the increase in penalty under the existing scope and definitions of Cap.169 may alleviate the animal cruelty problems in the short term, Hong Kong needs a complete overhaul of legislation and policies relating to the handling of animals in order to maintain Hong Kong as a city of sustainable development in the longer term.

We hope the Council can take our concerns into account in its coming deliberation.

Thank you

David Wong Kai Yan
Founder and Chief Officer
Animal Earth