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24 February 2006

The Hon Miriam Lau, GBS, JP
Chairman
Legislative Council House Committee
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms Lau,

Thank you for your letter of 10 February to the Financial Secretary (FS), enclosing the Report on Working Poverty by the Subcommittee to Study the Subject of Combating Poverty (the Subcommittee). The FS has asked me to reply on his behalf.

The Government is equally concerned about the situation of the working poor in our society. The Commission on Poverty chaired by the FS has at its January 2006 meeting reviewed the various existing support available to them and their families. Besides ensuring that their basic daily-living requirements can be met where necessary, the Commission agreed that our policies should be proactive in nature, focusing on promoting employment and enhancing the capacities of the working poor to grasp the opportunities and move out of poverty.

We note that we share a lot in common with the Subcommittee in this direction, and the Report has also highlighted many pragmatic areas for continued efforts. As stated in the FS' motion debate speech delivered on 15 February in response to the recommendations in the Report, the Government would continue to work closely with the Legislative Council to identify pragmatic ways forward to further improve our existing policies/measures.

Yours sincerely,

(Shirley Yuen)
Administrative Assistant to
Financial Secretary