



19 February 2008

Hon Howard YOUNG, SBS, JP

Chairman

Bills Committee on Legislative Council (Amendment) Bill 2007

Legislative Council Secretariat

3/F, Citibank Tower, Garden Road, Central

(Attention: Clerk to Bills Committee)

By fax (2509-9055)

Dear Mr. Chairman,

RE: Legislative Council (Amendment) Bill 2007

I write to express our comments on the captioned Bill which aims to update the electorate of the Functional Constituencies.

As a think-tank for professionals, we believe that the electoral base of the Functional Constituencies should be enlarged as much as practicable under the constitutional constraints and that the HKSAR Government should not engage in minor technical changes only for 2008.

Here the Information Technology Functional Constituency (IT FC) can be used as an example.

The composition of the IT FC is stated under Section 20Z of the Legislative Council Ordinance ("LCO") (Chapter 542). In this section, specified members of 21 IT professional bodies or trade associations are eligible to register as electors for the ITFC. However, there are different requirements for the members of different organizations for obtaining the eligibility. For certain professional organizations and those be newly included in ITFC, such as Information Systems Audit and Control Association (Hong Kong Chapter) Limited and Professional Information Security Association, the requirements for their members to register as ITFC electors are exceptionally high as compared with the rest of the organizations as listed in Section 20Z of LCO. These provisions do constitute unfair and unequal treatment towards members of the Information Technology sector and, as result, should be rectified.

Email: info@procommons.org.hk Website: www.procommons.org.hk Tel:(852)8200 6332 Fax:(852)2903 0089
Address: 10-A, Times Media Centre, 133 Wanchai Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong 香港灣仔道 133 號 10A 室



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According to the "2006 Manpower Survey Report: Information Technology Sector" as conducted by the Vocational Training Council, there are more than 64,000 IT professionals in Hong Kong. However, the existing size of potential electorate for ITFC is 7,200, which is only about 11.25% of the total number of IT professionals in Hong Kong; noted there is a possibility of "double-counting" because of a person may be a member of more than one eligible IT professional associations under Section 20Z of LCO at the same time. The figures clearly demonstrate that the Information Technology sector is not well represented as compared with the other Functional Constituencies. We identified the key reason for this situation is the rigid eligibility for voter registration. The appropriate arrangement for the ITFC should be that every IT professionals is eligible for ITFC elector registration.

We believe that the same problem exists in other professions. Knowing that the Bills Committee is prepared to meet with deputations of the organizations at a committee meeting, to be held at 8.30 am on 21 February 2008, we would urge the Bills Committee to allow representatives from The Professional Commons to present our views on the aforesaid issues.

Should you have further enquiries, please kindly contact Mr. Jeffrey Au (Phone:

Email: ; or Mr. Stanley Ng (Phone: Email:

). I look forward to your favorable reply.

Yours faithfully,

Albert Lai

Chairman

The Professional Commons

cc: All members of Bills Committee, Legislative Council