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Please respond to
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By E-mail & Mail

The Hon. Ip Kwok-him, Chairman
The Hon. Tanya Chan, Deputy Chairman
Panel on Home Affairs
Legislative Council

Dear Sirs,

**Submission from Lions Clubs International District 303 on
Hong Kong Jockey Club's proposals on extra race days**

Lions Club International District 303 was established in 1960. Our stated objective is: "To encourage service minded people to serve their community without personal reward or gain and to serve their fellow men by giving their sympathy to those in distress, their aid to the weak and their substance to the needy."

We very much share the values of the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC), namely to serve the community in a selfless manner. We therefore believe it is appropriate for us to comment on the HKJC's proposal to increase horse racing meetings.

Governments all over the world reckon the important role played by the third sector i.e. the NGOs due to the finite resources of governments. No government will be able to look after every facet of the society that requires care and support. Even for some countries in Europe which offer very comprehensive social welfare protection for their citizens, the service provided by NGOs such as the Lions Club International is indispensable. Hong Kong is an advanced economy but the scope of service that the community requires from the third sector will never be fully provided for. This explains the vital importance of the Hong Kong Jockey Club which contributes as much as \$1 billion to various needy charities annually.

The proposal to add several racedays a year should be supported as this is a very insignificant change to the racing calendar but will bring about hundreds of millions of dollars of tax revenue for the Government and also ensure that the charitable donations of the HKJC can be sustained.

We at the Lions Club International 303 understand very well that undertaking a donation

drive is like fighting an uphill battle in times of economic stress such as SARS in 2003 and the financial tsunami today. We therefore are in great sympathy with the many charitable organisations and NGOs in Hong Kong which are facing huge challenges to stay afloat. The timing of the Jockey Club's proposal therefore cannot be better and it is hoped that the Panel on Home Affairs would give the proposals its favourable consideration.

I will be pleased to further share with you my thoughts.

Yours sincerely ,

Tony T. N. Chan
Chairperson, Hong Kong Lions Cup

c.c. Ms Betty Fong, Secretariat, Legco Home Affairs Panel

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