



Submission regarding the Minimum Wage Ordinance

Unitarian Universalists Hong Kong is the first Unitarian Universalist community in Hong Kong. Unitarian Universalism (UU) is a liberal religion affirming and promoting the principles of justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

We support in principle the government introduction of the Minimum Wage Ordinance in providing protection for the workers, so that all workers can provide a decent minimum standard of living for themselves and their families. There are two points, however, we would like to raise.

Exclusion in Section 6(3) & (4) Application of the Ordinance

We are concerned that the exclusion in Section 6(3) of all domestic workers will disproportionately affect foreign domestic workers, who are non-Chinese and of the female gender. Section 6(3), as it is written, constitutes indirect discrimination based on race and gender.

Article 7(a) (i) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that states:

*“(i) Fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value without distinction of any kind, in particular women being guaranteed conditions of work not inferior to those enjoyed by men, with equal pay for equal work;”*

We urge the government to put this responsibility to the Minimum Wage Commission to calculate a live-in cost as part of the domestic workers’ minimum wage, so that they too would be included in the Minimum Wage Ordinance. Plus to set the minimum wage according to the need to provide their families with a reasonable minimum living standard.

As for students as intern, the definition is too narrow as there are other forms of academic internships. This definition should be expanded to include academic internships by professionals who are no longer students.

Setting maximum working hours

Currently, there is no law in limiting the maximum working hours for the employees in Hong Kong. We urge the government to put it into consideration of setting maximum working hours per day to ensure that the workers, especially those who worked according to prescribed schedule, would be able to have rest after working long hours.

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