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Legislative Council

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From : Clerk to the Legislative Council

To : All Members of the Legislative Council

Council meeting of 3 December 2008

**Proposed amendments to motion on
“Alleviating the disparity between the rich and the poor and
assisting the grassroots in facing up to economic adversities”**

Further to LC Paper No. CB(3) 160/08-09 issued on 20 November 2008, four Members (Hon TAM Yiu-chung, Hon WONG Sing-chi, Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun and Hon LI Fung-ying) have respectively given notice of their intention to move separate amendments to Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee’s motion on “Alleviating the disparity between the rich and the poor and assisting the grassroots in facing up to economic adversities” scheduled for the Council meeting of 3 December 2008. As directed by the President, the respective proposed amendments will be printed in the terms in which they were handed in on the Agenda of the Council.

2. To assist Members in debating the above motion and amendments, I set out below the procedure to be followed during the debate:

- (a) Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee moves his motion;
- (b) the President proposes the question on Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee’s motion, and orders a joint debate;
- (c) the President calls on the four Members, who intend to move amendments, to speak in the following order, but no amendment is to be moved at this stage:
 - (i) Hon TAM Yiu-chung;
 - (ii) Hon WONG Sing-chi;

- (iii) Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun; and
- (iv) Hon LI Fung-ying;
- (d) the President calls upon the designated public officer(s) to speak;
- (e) joint debate on the motion and the amendments follows thereafter;
- (f) the President gives leave to Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee to speak for the second time on the amendments;
- (g) the President calls upon the designated public officer(s) again to speak;
- (h) in accordance with Rule 34(5) of the Rules of Procedure, the President has decided that he will call upon the four Members to move their respective amendments in the order set out in paragraph (c) above. The President invites Hon TAM Yiu-chung to move his amendment to the motion, and forthwith proposes and puts to vote the question on Hon TAM Yiu-chung's amendment;
- (i) after Hon TAM Yiu-chung's amendment has been voted upon, the President deals with the other three amendments; and
- (j) after all amendments have been dealt with, the President calls upon Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee to reply. Thereafter, the President puts to vote the question on Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee's motion, or his motion as amended, as the case may be.

3. For Members' ease of reference, the terms of the original motion and of the motion, if amended, are set out in the **Appendix**.

(Mrs Justina LAM)
for Clerk to the Legislative Council

Encl.

(Translation)

**Motion debate on
“Alleviating the disparity between the rich and the poor and
assisting the grassroots in facing up to economic adversities”
to be held at the Legislative Council meeting
of Wednesday, 3 December 2008**

1. Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee’s original motion

“That, as the growth in Gross Domestic Product for the third quarter has slackened to 1.7%, the effects of the financial tsunami have gradually surfaced, the risk of the economy entering into recession has substantially increased, layoffs and pay cuts take place one after another, the unemployment rate has rebounded but there is no notable downward adjustment in the prices of goods, causing people’s livelihood to become more difficult; moreover, a latest report of the United Nations points out that Hong Kong ranks first among all Asian cities in the disparity between the rich and the poor, with the Gini Coefficient which reflects the inequality of income distribution rising to a record high of 0.533, indicating that the disparity between the rich and the poor is increasingly serious, this Council therefore urges the Government to re-establish the Commission on Poverty to explore and recommend focused measures to assist the grassroots in facing up to economic adversities and to formulate comprehensive and long-term policies to effectively allocate community resources and narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, thereby protecting the basic livelihood of the grassroots and promoting harmonious social development.”

2. Motion as amended by Hon TAM Yiu-chung

“~~That, as the growth in Gross Domestic Product for the third quarter has slackened to 1.7%,~~ the effects of the financial tsunami *on the world* have gradually surfaced, the risk of *Hong Kong’s* economy entering into recession has substantially increased, layoffs and pay cuts take place one after another, the unemployment rate has rebounded ~~but there is no notable downward adjustment in the prices of goods,~~ causing people’s livelihood to become more difficult; moreover, a latest report of the United Nations points out that ~~Hong Kong ranks first among all Asian cities in the disparity between the rich and the poor,~~ with the Gini Coefficient which reflects the ~~inequality of income distribution rising~~ *of Hong Kong has risen* to a record high of 0.533, indicating that the disparity between the rich and the poor is increasingly serious, this Council therefore urges the Government to *take proactive actions to fully implement the recommendations in the Report of the Commission on Poverty released by the Financial Secretary on 14 June 2007, and when necessary,* re-establish the Commission on Poverty to *further* explore and recommend focused

measures to assist the grassroots in facing up to economic adversities and to formulate comprehensive and long-term policies to effectively allocate community resources and narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, thereby protecting the basic livelihood of the grassroots and promoting harmonious social development.”

Note: Hon TAM Yiu-chung’s amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

3. Motion as amended by Hon WONG Sing-chi

“That, as ~~the~~ *being struck by the financial tsunami, Hong Kong’s* growth in Gross Domestic Product for the third quarter has slackened to 1.7%, the effects of the financial tsunami have gradually surfaced, the risk of the economy entering into recession has substantially increased, layoffs and pay cuts take place one after another, the unemployment rate has rebounded but there is no notable downward adjustment in the prices of goods, causing people’s livelihood to become more difficult; moreover, a latest report of the United Nations points out that Hong Kong ranks first among all Asian cities in the disparity between the rich and the poor, with the Gini Coefficient which reflects the inequality of income distribution rising to a record high of 0.533, indicating that the disparity between the rich and the poor is increasingly serious, this Council therefore urges the Government to ~~re-establish~~ *adopt the following measures to alleviate the problem of disparity between the rich and the poor:*

- (a) *the Government should create new positions at the middle and low ranking levels to absorb those groups which have a more serious employment problem, such as young people and middle-aged low-skilled workers, etc;*
- (b) *expanding the Transport Support Scheme to cover the 18 districts in the territory to benefit people with low income and job-seekers;*
- (c) *encouraging Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) recipients to increase their income through employment, and assisting low-income or unemployed CSSA recipients who are employable to engage in employment and upgrade their skills in order to help them leave the CSSA net;*
- (d) *allocating funds to set up district poverty funds, and formulating focused proposals to alleviate poverty having regard to the poverty situation in various districts; and*
- (e) *expeditiously implementing all the recommendations in the Report of the Commission on Poverty, and re-establishing the Commission on Poverty to explore and recommend focused measures to assist the grassroots in facing up to economic adversities and to formulate comprehensive and long-term policies to*

effectively allocate community resources and narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, thereby protecting the basic livelihood of the grassroots and promoting harmonious social development.”

Note: Hon WONG Sing-chi’s amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

4. Motion as amended by Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun

“That, as the growth in Gross Domestic Product for the third quarter has slackened to 1.7%, the effects of the financial tsunami have gradually surfaced, the risk of the economy entering into recession has substantially increased, layoffs and pay cuts take place one after another, the unemployment rate has rebounded but there is no notable downward adjustment in the prices of goods, causing people’s livelihood to become more difficult; ~~moreover~~, a latest report of the United Nations points out that Hong Kong ranks first among all Asian cities in the disparity between the rich and the poor, with the Gini Coefficient which reflects the inequality of income distribution rising to a record high of 0.533, indicating that the disparity between the rich and the poor is increasingly serious; *in this connection*, this Council ~~therefore~~ urges the Government to re-establish the Commission on Poverty to explore and recommend focused measures to assist the grassroots in facing up to economic adversities and to formulate comprehensive and long-term policies to effectively allocate community resources and narrow the gap between the rich and the poor; *at the same time, focusing on the persistently high food prices, the Government should expeditiously implement short-term food assistance projects and study the further extension of their scope of implementation*, thereby protecting the basic livelihood of the grassroots and promoting harmonious social development; *on the other hand, taking into account the fact that the unemployed population in Hong Kong may increase substantially, the Government should take precautionary measures to organize more training courses in collaboration with local tertiary institutions or training bodies and subsidize the unemployed to pursue continuing education to help them add value to and transform themselves, so as to soothe their emotions and restore their confidence in the future.*”

Note: Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun’s amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

5. Motion as amended by Hon LI Fung-ying

“That, as the growth in Gross Domestic Product for the third quarter has slackened to 1.7%, the effects of the financial tsunami have gradually surfaced, the risk of the

economy entering into recession has substantially increased, layoffs and pay cuts take place one after another, the unemployment rate has rebounded but there is no notable downward adjustment in the prices of goods, causing people's livelihood to become more difficult; moreover, a latest report of the United Nations points out that Hong Kong ranks first among all Asian cities in the disparity between the rich and the poor, with the Gini Coefficient which reflects the inequality of income distribution rising to a record high of 0.533, indicating that the disparity between the rich and the poor is increasingly serious, this Council therefore urges the Government to ~~re-establish the Commission on Poverty to explore and recommend focused measures~~ ***establish an unemployment loan fund to assist those employees who have been laid off; allocate additional resources to expedite the implementation of the recommendations in the Report of the Commission on Poverty; and suspend the collection of provisional tax, so as*** to assist the grassroots in facing up to economic adversities and to formulate comprehensive and long-term policies to effectively allocate community resources and narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, thereby protecting the basic livelihood of the grassroots and promoting harmonious social development.”

Note: Hon LI Fung-ying's amendment is marked in ***bold and italic type*** or with deletion line.