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Paper for the House Committee meeting on 2 January 2009

**Proposal for the appointment of a subcommittee under
the House Committee to study issues relating to
Mainland-Hong Kong families**

Purpose

This paper invites Members to consider the proposed terms of reference, work plan and time frame of a subcommittee to be appointed under the House Committee (HC) to study issues relating to Mainland-Hong Kong families.

Background

2. At the House Committee meeting on 12 December 2008, Members agreed that a subcommittee should be appointed under HC to study issues relating to Mainland-Hong Kong families.

3. In accordance with Rule 20(k)(ii) of the House Rules (HR), a proposal to appoint a subcommittee under HC should contain sufficient information on the proposed terms of reference, time frame, work plan and extent of work involved in the study of the specific issue or project to facilitate the consideration by HC. As the recommendation for the appointment of the subcommittee stems from an interview by six Duty Roster Members with a deputation at the Complaints Division of the Secretariat on 5 December 2008, the six Members have been consulted as regards the terms of reference, work plan and time frame of the subcommittee. The relevant proposals, which have been drawn up on the basis of the Members' views, are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Proposed terms of reference of the subcommittee

4. The proposed terms of reference of the subcommittee, to be known as the "Subcommittee to Study Issues relating to Mainland-Hong Kong Families", is as follows –

"To study the population policy and measures relating to Mainland-Hong Kong families, and make recommendations in this regard."

Proposed work plan

5. The Subcommittee will focus its work on the following areas –
- (a) the existing population policy, in particular immigration policy, in respect of Mainlanders whose family members are Hong Kong residents, and the impact of this policy on Mainland-Hong Kong families;
 - (b) rights of Mainland-Hong Kong families, in particular the immigration and administrative measures for Mainland single parents of Hong Kong-born children to enter and reside in Hong Kong and cross-boundary students of these families to have schooling in Hong Kong;
 - (c) the procedures and waiting time in the vetting and approving of applications for One-way Permits and the administrative arrangements for interim stays in Hong Kong; and
 - (d) the rights for the use of public services and facilities, such as public health services, in particular obstetric services, by Mainlanders whose spouses are Hong Kong residents, and the level of charges for using such services and facilities.
6. The subcommittee will hold meetings with the Administration to examine the above areas of concern. The views of deputations will also be considered.

Proposed time frame

7. The Subcommittee would aim to complete its work within 12 months of its commencement and report to HC in accordance with HR 26(c).

Advice sought

8. Members are invited to endorse the proposed terms of reference, work plan and time frame of the Subcommittee as set out in paragraphs 4 to 7 above.