

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Air pollution and public health”
moved by Hon KAM Nai-wai
at the Legislative Council meeting
of Wednesday, 7 January 2009**

**Motion as amended by Hon CHAN Hak-kan, Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee and
Hon LEE Wing-tat**

That there is no marked improvement in the air quality in the Pearl River Delta Region, posing an increasing threat to Hong Kong people's health, but the Government still uses the first stage objectives of the World Health Organization ('WHO') as the goals of the reform in its recent review of Air Quality Objectives, this Council expresses disappointment at this; quite a number of local and overseas studies nowadays have proved that serious air pollution will increase death rates as well as direct and indirect medical costs, and result in a loss in productivity, in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) establish a 'smog alarm system' and formulate guidelines and corresponding measures for the alarm system, so as to enable the public to know more about the impact of air pollution on health;
- (b) adopt the latest objectives of WHO as the benchmark for formulating measures to improve air pollution, evaluate the effectiveness of each of these measures in improving public health, and set improving public health as the primary policy objective in addressing the problem of air pollution;
- (c) conduct a long-term tracking study to accurately calculate the loss of life expectancy in the territory resulting from air pollution, as well as the impact of air pollution on the health of people of different ages (including the elderly and children) and on those suffering from various forms of respiratory illnesses and cardiovascular diseases in the territory, so as to provide reference data for formulating long-term policies; and provide financial support to those academic institutions and non-profit-making bodies which are interested in conducting the above study;
- (d) in conducting the review of Air Quality Objectives, entrust the Food and Health Bureau with the responsibility of assessing whether the intended benefits to public health as a result of the implementation of new Air Quality Objectives have been achieved and, based on the assessment results, formulate the guiding framework, timetable and corresponding air quality improvement measures for implementing the new Air Quality Objectives;

- (e) continue to implement measures to regulate the emission standards of vehicles in areas with busy traffic, develop footbridge networks and encourage the public to use mass transit systems;
- (f) improve the subsidy scheme for owners of commercial diesel vehicles to replace such vehicles with new ones and attract more owners to participate in the scheme, as well as expand the subsidy scheme to cover franchised buses;
- (g) gradually implement the mandatory Building Energy Codes and mandatory energy efficiency labelling for electrical appliances, and expeditiously set the caps on the emissions of air pollutants from power companies for the next stage, so as to reduce pollution caused by generation of electricity; and
- (h) expeditiously discuss with the Guangdong Provincial Government the post-2010 cross-boundary cooperation plan between Hong Kong and the Mainland for improving air quality, and draw up the post-2010 emission reduction targets to further improve the air quality in the Pearl River Delta Region;
- (i) implement appropriate policies and measures to encourage owners of private cars to use cleaner cars; and
- (j) expeditiously formulate a timetable and an action plan for achieving the target of raising the proportion of electricity generated by natural gas to 50%;
- (k) relocate the sources of air pollution (e.g. concrete plants) which are adjacent to residential areas, so as to reduce the impact of pollutants on the health of the residents nearby; and
- (l) step up tree-planting and greening efforts on roads and in high-rise buildings, and introduce more greening concepts into the procedures for renewal of old districts and construction of new roads.