

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Formulating a comprehensive elderly policy”
moved by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
at the Legislative Council meeting
of Wednesday, 14 January 2009**

**Motion as amended by Hon TAM Yiu-chung, Hon WONG Kwok-hing and Hon
Frederick FUNG Kin-kee**

That the Government estimates that elderly people aged 65 and above in 2036 will constitute 27% of the total population and amount to over two million; however, the services in areas such as welfare, housing, medical and health care as well as life development currently provided by the Government for the elderly are insufficient to cater for the needs of the elderly in various aspects, coupled with the fact that at present the majority of the elderly people do not have full retirement protection, rendering it unable to cope with the trend of an ageing population, this Council urges the Government to consolidate the various existing elderly services and coordinate the relevant bureaux and executive departments to formulate a comprehensive and forward-looking elderly policy which includes:

- (a) reviewing the various measures for elderly healthcare vouchers, including the registration procedure, publicity and promotion, etc; increasing the value of elderly healthcare vouchers to \$1,000 per elderly person per year and lowering the eligible age to 65;
- (b) urging the MTR Corporation to reinstate fare concessions to the elderly on Sundays and make it a permanent measure; urging franchised bus companies to implement fare concessions to the elderly on holidays on a permanent basis;
- (c) comprehensively reviewing the policy on Old Age Allowance (‘OAA’) and Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (‘CSSA’) payments for the elderly, abolishing the absence limit for OAA; introducing an ‘elderly maintenance grant scheme’ for elderly persons aged over 60 who are ineligible for CSSA; allowing the elderly to receive Disability Allowance and OAA concurrently, so as to more comprehensively safeguard the basic needs of the elderly;
- (d) providing sound primary healthcare services for the elderly, and promoting a positive and healthy lifestyle among them;
- (e) reducing the burden of medical expenses on the elderly; reducing public medical fees for the elderly by half; establishing an elderly dental care scheme;
- (f) increasing the places in subvented residential care homes for the elderly, and

improving various community-based elderly care services;

- (g) providing a favourable living environment for the elderly, including implementing 'barrier-free' designs for the elderly in public places, and introducing a subsidy scheme for providing additional barrier-free facilities to allow easy access for the elderly;
- (h) proactively advocating a proper perspective about the elderly, and encouraging public and private organizations to make good use of the knowledge and experience of the elderly; and
- (i) promoting 'lifelong learning' to enrich the lives of the elderly,

so as to cater for their physical and psychological needs and provide the elderly with more opportunities to enable them to actively participate in social building and continue to contribute to the community, thus providing 'golden twilight years' for the elderly; such a comprehensive elderly policy should also basically cover the following:

- (a) conducting extensive consultation on the elderly policy by comprehensively collecting the views of the elderly, deputations and service organizations, and formulating a comprehensive and forward-looking elderly policy, improvement measures and implementation timetable on the basis of such consultation;
- (b) drawing up an integrated retirement protection plan to benefit all the people of Hong Kong;
- (c) launching various measures to encourage children to live with their elderly parents, such as expanding the schemes to foster harmonious families in public rental housing and providing home purchase assistance and loan schemes, etc, so as to advocate the spirit of respecting and caring for the elderly;
- (d) relaxing the requirement for elderly persons to apply for CSSA on a household basis, and ensuring that CSSA and allowances can meet the basic needs of the elderly;
- (e) allocating additional resources to improve elderly services at the community level, including increasing the number of elderly centres across the territory, increasing the places for the Integrated Home Care Services, and providing diversified district services;
- (f) studying the provision of comprehensive financial planning, management and services for the elderly; and
- (g) formulating comprehensive, proactive and forward-looking hospice care services;

this Council also urges the Government to expeditiously implement the recommendations made by the Legislative Council Subcommittee to Study the Subject of Combating Poverty in its Report on Elderly in Poverty and the recommendations on elderly issues put forward in the Report of the Commission on Poverty.