

From: J Li
Date: Saturday, January 03, 2009
Subject: Administration's paper on the proposed amendment to the Domestic Violence Ordinance (Cap. 189)

Dear Panel members of Welfare Services

I have read the consultation paper on the "Administration's proposal to amend the Domestic Violence (DVO) to include in its coverage cohabitation between persons of the same sex" issued on 8 Dec 2008. Though I am not a member of the Panel, as a Hong Kong citizen, I would like to express my view on it. I am strongly against the above suggestion to include the coverage of cohabitation between persons of the same sex in the bill with the following concerns:

- The amendment will indirectly ratify same sex marriage which has already aroused strong public debate and discomfort, in Hong Kong. As no consensus or majority view is reached by society regarding same sex marriage, its inclusion into the Marriage Ordinance was withdrawn.
- As stated in the paper, "any acts of violence are already liable to criminal sanctions under the relevant ordinances, irrespective of relationship between the abuser and the victim" and "persons in same sex cohabitation relationship are afforded the same level of protection as those in heterosexual cohabitation relationship under our existing criminal legislative framework". In view of it, I cannot see the need of adding the category of persons of the same sex into the DVO unless same sex marriage has been legislated.
- The inclusion of the same sex cohabitation relationship also causes inconsistency and confusion between the Marriage Ordinance and DVO.

In view of the above, I hope panel members can seriously reconsider the above proposal by hearing more public views on it before putting it into legislation.

Yours faithfully

Janice Li