

Child Welfare Scheme supports the Bill to prohibit idling engines



Child Welfare Scheme
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Chairman and Members
Legislative Council

c/o Clerk to Bills Committee on Motor Vehicle Idling (Fixed Penalty) Bill
Legislative Council Secretariat
3/F Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Central, Hong Kong
(By Fax: 2121 0420)
sylam@legco.gov.hk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Bills Committee on Motor Vehicle Idling (Fixed Penalty) Bill

The Child Welfare Scheme (CWS) in principle supports the introduction of the Motor Vehicle (Fixed Penalty) Bill targeting idling vehicles at the roadside, as we believe that it will make drivers and the public at large, more mindful of the dangers of roadside pollution.

However, we are concerned that too many exemptions could weaken the effect of the regulation and that that the Bill could be confusing in that it may require motorists to switch off vehicle engines at particular hours and in particular zones. This confusion could cause chaos and dilute any measurable effectiveness.

The Child Welfare Scheme remains very concerned by the health impacts of street level air pollutants in Hong Kong, including chronic respiratory and cardiovascular problems and the links to higher risk of asthma and lung cancer. Our children are most at risk from air pollution as their higher breathing rates mean greater exposure to air pollution. Local and international studies show that air pollution causes DNA damage to children in utero, damages the development of children's lungs, reduces the lung function and physical performance of children, and is related to higher rates of hospitalizations. Not only should a child's public health be protected according to Hong Kong's Air Pollution Control Ordinance, but a child's health, in particular, is protected under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child have in fact addressed the detriment air pollution causes to children's health in other countries.

We consider the passing of this bill as a positive step but urge for more concrete measures by the HKSAR Government to tackle the local and regional air pollution problems.

Yours sincerely



Ciara Shannon, CEO
Child Welfare Scheme (CWS HK)

About the Child Welfare Scheme in Hong Kong (CWS HK) & S.A.V.E

Child Welfare Scheme is a Hong Kong registered charity dedicated to supporting children through education, health care and social opportunities. CWS started its life-saving work in 1995 in Nepal but due to a growing concern about the state of Hong Kong's air pollution and the threat it poses to children's health, CWS HK now runs a campaign called S.A.V.E educating children on how air pollution affects their health. For further information please visit: <http://savehk.org> or www.cwshk.org