

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Air pollution and public health”
moved by Hon KAM Nai-wai
at the Legislative Council meeting commencing
on Wednesday, 8 December 2010**

**Motion as amended by Hon CHAN Hak-kan, Hon IP Wai-ming and
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah**

That, given that the problem of air pollution in Hong Kong has continued to be serious, posing threats to public health, yet the Government has not updated Hong Kong’s Air Quality Objectives (‘AQOs’), and at present, many highly polluting franchised buses and lorries still run on the roads, continuing to emit exhaust gas, this Council expresses its disappointment in this regard; according to the statistics of the Hedley Environmental Index, in the first 10 months of this year, air pollution caused as many as 635 premature deaths and more than 4 million attendances of medical consultation in Hong Kong; given that air pollution has incurred huge monetary losses and social costs, this Council urges the Government to implement the following proposals, so as to expeditiously improve air quality for the protection of public health:

- (a) to immediately update AQOs and formulate a timetable and relevant measures for eventually adopting the most stringent standards of the World Health Organization’s air quality guidelines, and undertake to review AQOs regularly and the effectiveness of the relevant measures in the future;
- (b) by way of financial subsidy or franchise extension, to push ahead the early phasing out and replacement of franchised buses with high emissions, so as to improve roadside air quality, and immediately install emission reduction devices on all buses that have not been phased out or replaced;
- (c) to enhance the scheme for the replacement of Euro II diesel commercial vehicles mentioned in the Budget of this year, including placing Pre-Euro and Euro-I vehicles under the scheme and allowing those vehicle owners who only write off their vehicles to receive subsidies under the scheme;

- (d) to increase the number, usage and types of electric vehicles; improve and strengthen support facilities to tie in with the introduction of electric vehicles by, for example, actively discussing with various developers the provision of recharging facilities for electric vehicles in the car parks of their properties; and expeditiously study amending the legislation to expedite and streamline the procedure for electric vehicle drivers to apply for the permit to drive on expressways, so as to assist in popularizing electric vehicles;
- (e) to urge bus companies to expand and increase the provision of interchange concessions and services which appeal to passengers, and to expedite the reorganization and improve the arrangement of bus routes, with a view to avoiding the overlapping of bus routes, relieving traffic congestion and reducing air pollution;
- (f) to encourage, through policy initiatives, the various bus companies to deploy wholly electric buses in new development areas and busy districts, so as to further improve roadside air quality in such areas;
- (g) to expeditiously implement the proposal of designating 'low emission zones', so as to restrict the entry of vehicles with high emissions into designated areas;
- (h) in respect of the situation where the Air Pollution Index reaches the 'extremely severe' level, to formulate specific guidelines, including implementation of measures to suspend schools and arrange for workers who need to work outdoors for long hours to suspend work, etc., so as to protect the health of school children and the socially disadvantaged, such as people with chronic illness, the elderly and workers working outdoors, in situations where the pollution is serious;
- (i) to actively promote the energy conservation policy, and further increase the ratio of natural gas and renewable energy in the fuel mix for power generation in Hong Kong, so as to reduce emission by power generation;
- (j) when formulating measures to improve air pollution, to adopt the latest objectives and benchmarks of the World Health Organization, and evaluate the effectiveness of each measure in improving public health, and set improving public health as the primary policy objective in addressing the problem of air pollution;
- (k) to recognize that air pollution is a public health issue, and require accountable officials from the Food and Health Bureau to participate in the formulation of policies on improving air quality; and

- (l) to actively follow up the work of collaborating with Guangdong Province on improving regional air quality after 2010, so as to ensure continuous improvement of regional air quality;
- (m) to assist the industries in resolving the technical problems that occur after the implementation of the scheme for the replacement of Euro II diesel commercial vehicles, with a view to ensuring that the repair, design and parts availability, etc., of the new vehicles after replacement can tie in with the operation of the industries;
- (n) to study and consult the public and the transport sector on a specific proposal of designating ‘low emission zones’;
- (o) to require power companies in Hong Kong to fully adopt low-emission power generation technologies and clean fuel for power generation on the premise of not increasing electricity tariffs and affecting public health, with a view to alleviating the air pollution caused by power generation emission in Hong Kong; and
- (p) to classify the related diseases contracted by employees who have to work outdoors under severe air pollution conditions as occupational diseases;
- (q) to curb the number of vehicle growth through policy formulation, green transport planning, financial measures and building a better green transport system in urban areas; and
- (r) to provide financial incentives to induce minibus operators to expedite the introduction of new minibuses with lower levels of emission to replace old minibuses.