
立法會秘書處

Legislative Council Secretariat

新聞稿 Press Release

LegCo to debate a motion on reviewing the coverage of the safety net

The Legislative Council will hold a meeting this Wednesday (November 17) at 11 am in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building. During the meeting, Members will debate a motion on reviewing the coverage of the safety net.

The motion, to be moved by Hon Miriam LAU, states: "That, as the Government has adopted a conservative fiscal policy for years, surpluses exceeding the expected levels were often recorded in the past; in addition, since the Exchange Fund had recorded a huge profit of \$74.1 billion in the third quarter of this year, the accumulated surplus for the first nine months of the year increased by \$42 billion, and given the substantial proceeds from land auctions this year, the chance of the Treasury continuing to be 'flooded by cash' has become much greater, yet not only are some grassroots unable to enjoy the fruit of economic development, but they are also unable to benefit from the social security system, resulting in cases of 'falling through the net'; in this connection, this Council proposes that the Administration should identify loopholes in the existing safety net, appropriately extend the safety net to cover more grassroots of different types, and strengthen the support to assist grassroots in climbing up the social ladder and sharing the fruit of economic development, thereby easing class conflicts and promoting social harmony; the relevant measures should include:

- (a) to strengthen the support for the working poor, including removing the stigma attached to the low-income recipients of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ('CSSA'), lower the threshold of application, and provide such recipients with a 'low-income living supplement', so as to alleviate their conditions of poverty;
- (b) to comprehensively strengthen the in-service training for the middle-aged, increase the number of retraining places, and raise the subsidies for continuing education;
- (c) through promoting the local community economy, developing the six industries with competitive edge and positively supporting the development of social enterprises, to create more jobs suitable for grassroot workers;
- (d) to comprehensively strengthen child care and after-school care services to enable parents of low-income families to work without worries, and proactively cater for the needs of grassroot children, including providing additional subsidies for extracurricular activities;
- (e) to actively assist poor families living in cage homes or cubicle apartments in improving their living environment;
- (f) to strengthen the employment counselling services for young people waiting for employment;
- (g) to further relax the absence limit in respect of Old Age Allowance and CSSA for the elderly, increase the amount of Elderly Healthcare Vouchers to at least \$1,000 a year, and provide needy elderly persons with

a living supplement, so as to improve the life of the elderly in their twilight years; and

- (h) to expeditiously increase the number of residential care places for the elderly and provide them with elderly care vouchers, so as to enable elderly persons waiting for residential care services to choose those elderly services that suit them."

Hon LEE Cheuk-yan, Hon WONG Sing-chi, Hon IP Wai-ming, Hon James TO, Hon TAM Yiu-chung, Hon Ronny TONG, Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che, Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung, Hon CHAN Kin-por and Hon Frederick FUNG will move amendments to Hon Miriam LAU's motion respectively.

Members will debate another motion on territory-wide participation in building the West Kowloon Cultural District. The motion, to be moved by Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG, says: "That, as the West Kowloon Cultural District ('WKCD'), which costs \$21.6 billion to develop, is a cultural entity belonging to Hong Kong people and should be shared by every member of the public, and not be a sight-seeing spot solely for tourists, the Government should examine the WKCD project from a more macro perspective, including local community economy and employment, support facilities in surrounding areas, easy accessibility as well as art and cultural software, etc.; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to adopt measures on the following fronts:

Local community economy and employment—

- (a) to provide more opportunities for local professionals and workers to participate in the construction works of WKCD, so as to ensure that the Hong Kong economy can really benefit from the development of WKCD;

Support facilities in surrounding areas—

- (b) with low-carbon and low emission as the objectives, to develop WKCD as a project blending artistic and cultural development and green concepts;
- (c) to expeditiously improve the water quality of the Victoria Harbour in the vicinity of WKCD, especially the water quality of the New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter, so as to upgrade the overall planning profile;

Accessibility—

- (d) to expeditiously implement the construction of a waterfront promenade extending from Kai Tak to Sham Shui Po and cutting through WKCD, making it more convenient for residents to have direct access to WKCD via the waterfront promenade;
- (e) to enhance the external transport facilities for WKCD, and improve the accessibility of the surrounding roads, so as to foster a feeling of alignment with WKCD among the residents of Kowloon district;

Cultural software—

- (f) to attach importance to the development of cultural software, implement a macro art policy, and promote and popularize art education at the levels of tertiary and basic education, so as to avoid WKCD becoming a hardware facility in form; and
- (g) to pay heed to the unique cultural characteristics of ethnic minorities and the local community, so as to enhance and capitalize on Hong Kong's geo-cultural advantage."

Hon Miriam LAU, Hon LEE WING-tat, Hon James TO, Hon Alan LEONG, Hon Starry LEE, Hon Prof Patrick LAU and Hon Cyd HO will move amendments to Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG's motion respectively.

Meanwhile, Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury will move a resolution under the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance to amend the Deposit Protection Scheme (Representation on Scheme Membership and Protection of Financial Products under Scheme) (Amendment) Rules 2010 laid on the table of the Legislative Council on 20 October 2010.

During the meeting, Hon Tommy CHEUNG will move a resolution under the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance to extend the period for amending the Waterworks (Amendment) Regulation 2010, laid on the table of the Legislative Council on 20 October 2010, to the meeting of 8 December 2010.

In addition, Hon Miriam LAU will move a motion under the Rule 49E(2) of the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Council. The motion states: "That this Council takes note of the Report No. 4/10-11 of the House Committee laid on the Table of the Council on 17 November 2010 in relation to the subsidiary legislation and instrument(s) as listed below:

- (1) Inland Revenue (Double Taxation Relief and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income) (Republic of Hungary) Order;
- (2) Inland Revenue (Double Taxation Relief and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and Capital) (Republic of Austria) Order;
- (3) Inland Revenue (Double Taxation Relief and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and Capital Gains) (United Kingdom of Great Britain and

Northern Ireland) Order;

- (4) Inland Revenue (Double Taxation Relief and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income) (Ireland) Order; and
- (5) Specification of Arrangements (The Mainland of China) (Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income) (Third Protocol) Order."

Members will also ask the Administration 20 questions on various policy areas, six of which require oral replies.

The agenda of the above meeting can be obtained via the LegCo InfoFax Service (Tel: 2869 9568) or the LegCo website (<http://www.legco.gov.hk>). Please note that the agenda is subject to change, and the latest information about the agenda could be found in the LegCo website.

Members of the public are welcome to observe the proceedings of the meeting from the public galleries of the LegCo Chamber. They may reserve seats by calling 2869 9399 during office hours. Seats will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. Members of the public can also listen to the meeting via the web broadcast system on the LegCo website.

Ends/Monday, November 15, 2010

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