

立法會
Legislative Council

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From : Clerk to the Legislative Council

To : All Members of the Legislative Council

Council meeting of 2 May 2012

**Amendment to motion on
“Actively studying the establishment of a middle class commission”**

Further to LC Paper No. CB(3) 652/11-12 issued on 17 April 2012, Hon Alan LEONG has given notice of his intention to move an amendment to Hon Miriam LAU’s motion on “Actively studying the establishment of a middle class commission” scheduled for the Council meeting of 2 May 2012. As directed by the President, Hon Alan LEONG’s amendment will be printed in the terms in which it was handed in on the Agenda of the Council.

2. For Members’ ease of reference, the terms of the original motion and of the motion, if amended, are set out in the **Appendix**.

(Mrs Justina LAM)
for Clerk to the Legislative Council

Encl.

(Translation)

**Motion debate on
“Actively studying the establishment of a middle class commission”
to be held at the Council meeting of 2 May 2012**

1. Hon Miriam LAU’s original motion

That, given that the global and Hong Kong economies are still facing extremely unclear risks, while the middle-class people are plagued by problems such as Hong Kong’s single-direction development of industries, etc., and have experienced quite a number of bottlenecks in their career development and are burdened with heavy pressure in the areas of healthcare, education, taxation and housing, etc.; as shown by the latest statistics of an organization, the number of middle-class people seeking counselling has increased by about 30% when compared with the number some one year ago, and some people even describe themselves as the poor middle class, thus showing that the plight of the middle class has been neglected; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to actively study the establishment of a middle class commission, comprehensively review the policies and measures relating to the middle class, put forward concrete and comprehensive corresponding strategies in a focused manner to assist middle-class families in alleviating their burdens and facilitating their personal career development, so as to boost upward social mobility in the overall community; the relevant measures should include:

Career development -

- (a) to adopt a multi-pronged approach to promote diversified development of industries in Hong Kong, so as to create more jobs at the middle and senior levels as well as business start-up opportunities in various industries and professions;
- (b) to further strengthen regional economic development to form an economic development circle with different regions on the Mainland, etc. so as to provide more and better career development opportunities for middle-class professionals;

Housing difficulties -

- (c) to increase land supply to ease property prices and launch more ‘no-frills’ small and medium sized flats, including ‘flats with limited floor area’ for Hong Kong people who are first-time home buyers, so as

to alleviate the plight of marginal middle-class people in acquiring their own homes;

- (d) to relax the eligibility criteria for purchasing flats in the Home Ownership Scheme secondary market, thereby enabling eligible white form applicants to make purchases;
- (e) to introduce a tax allowance for rentals for marginal middle-class people;
- (f) to further extend the entitlement period for deduction for home loan interest;

Taxation burden -

- (g) to adjust salaries tax downwards, in particular widening tax bands for salaries tax and lowering the marginal rate, so as to vigorously alleviate the burden of marginal middle-class people;
- (h) to relax the restrictions on the dependent parent or dependent grandparent allowance by relaxing the eligibility requirement from living in the same unit to living in the same housing estate;

Education and self-education -

- (i) to completely abolish the restrictions on kindergarten vouchers, so as to reduce children education expenses of middle-class families;
- (j) to introduce a children's education allowance, so as to alleviate the burden of children education expenses of the middle class;
- (k) to substantially increase the salaries tax deduction for self-education expenses and the subsidy under the Continuing Education Fund;

Healthcare -

- (l) to expeditiously and properly tackle the problem of 'doubly non-permanent resident pregnant women', and ensure that local pregnant women have priority in receiving confinement service in both public and private hospitals;
- (m) to provide tax deduction for medical insurance contributions;
- (n) to provide tax deduction for medical examinations, so as to encourage people to undergo such examinations on a regular basis; and

Legal aid -

- (o) to further lower the threshold of the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme, so as to assist more needy middle-class people in safeguarding their legitimate rights and interests by law.

2. Motion as amended by Hon Alan LEONG

That, ~~given that~~ *as* the global and Hong Kong economies are still facing extremely unclear risks, while the middle-class people are plagued by problems such as Hong Kong's single-direction development of industries, etc., and have experienced quite a number of bottlenecks in their career development and are burdened with heavy pressure in the areas of healthcare, education, taxation and housing, etc.; as shown by the latest statistics of an organization, the number of middle-class people seeking counselling has increased by about 30% when compared with the number some one year ago, and some people even describe themselves as the poor middle class, thus showing that the plight of the middle class has been neglected; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to actively study the establishment of a middle class commission, comprehensively review the policies and measures relating to the middle class, put forward concrete and comprehensive corresponding strategies in a focused manner to assist middle-class families in alleviating their burdens and facilitating their personal career development, so as to boost upward social mobility in the overall community; the relevant measures should include:

Career development -

- (a) to adopt a multi-pronged approach to promote diversified development of industries in Hong Kong, so as to create more jobs at the middle and senior levels as well as business start-up opportunities in various industries and professions;
- (b) to further strengthen regional economic development to form an economic development circle with different regions on the Mainland, etc. so as to provide more and better career development opportunities for middle-class professionals;
- (c) *to optimize the use of government land resources and increase land supply, so as to alleviate the pressure of shop rents on business operations for middle-class people;*

Housing difficulties -

- (e)(d) to increase land supply to ease property prices and launch more ‘no-frills’ small and medium sized flats, including ‘flats with limited floor area’ for Hong Kong people who are first-time home buyers, so as to alleviate the plight of marginal middle-class people in acquiring their own homes;
- (d)(e) to relax the eligibility criteria for purchasing flats in the Home Ownership Scheme secondary market, thereby enabling eligible white form applicants to make purchases;
- (e)(f) to introduce a tax allowance for rentals for marginal middle-class people;
- (f)(g) to further extend the entitlement period for deduction for home loan interest;

Taxation burden -

- (g)(h) to adjust salaries tax downwards, in particular widening tax bands for salaries tax and lowering the marginal rate, so as to vigorously alleviate the burden of marginal middle-class people;
- (h)(i) to relax the restrictions on the dependent parent or dependent grandparent allowance by relaxing the eligibility requirement from living in the same unit to living in the same housing estate;

Education and self-education -

- (i)(j) to completely abolish the restrictions on kindergarten vouchers, so as to reduce children education expenses of middle-class families;
- (j)(k) to introduce a children’s education allowance, so as to alleviate the burden of children education expenses of the middle class;
- (k)(l) to substantially increase the salaries tax deduction for self-education expenses and the subsidy under the Continuing Education Fund;

Healthcare -

- (l)(m) to expeditiously and properly tackle the problem of ‘doubly non-permanent resident pregnant women’, ~~and ensure that~~ ***including ensuring a ‘zero’ delivery quota for ‘doubly non-permanent resident pregnant women’ in public and private hospitals in 2013, enabling***

local pregnant women ~~have priority in receiving~~ ***and mainland pregnant women with Hong Kong husbands to be given priority in receiving*** confinement service in both public and private hospitals; ***strengthening the effort to combat agencies and hostels for pregnant women; in accordance with Article 22 of the Basic Law, advising the Central Government to suspend the vetting and approving entry into Hong Kong of ‘doubly non-permanent resident pregnant women’ from the Mainland; and amending the Basic Law when necessary, so that babies born to ‘doubly non-permanent resident pregnant women’ will not be entitled to the right of abode in Hong Kong;***

~~(m)~~(n) to provide tax deduction for medical insurance contributions;

~~(n)~~(o) to provide tax deduction for medical examinations, so as to encourage people to undergo such examinations on a regular basis; ~~and~~

Legal aid -

~~(o)~~(p) to further lower the threshold of the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme, so as to assist more needy middle-class people in safeguarding their legitimate rights and interests by law; ***and***

The elderly -

(q) ***to allocate funding for establishing a seed fund for universal retirement protection, so as to provide all elderly people with pensions and alleviate the financial burden of middle-class families.***

Note: Hon Alan LEONG’s amendment is marked in ***bold and italic type*** or with deletion line.