
立法會秘書處

Legislative Council Secretariat

新聞稿 Press Release

LegCo to resume Second Reading debate on the Legislative Council
(Amendment) Bill 2012

The Legislative Council will hold a meeting on Wednesday (May 2) at 11 am in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Complex. During the meeting, Members will resume Second Reading debate on the Legislative Council (Amendment) Bill 2012.

The Bill is to amend the Legislative Council Ordinance to provide for a restriction that a LegCo Member who has resigned from office would be prohibited from standing in any by-elections in the same LegCo term within six months of his resignation. If the Bill is supported by Members and receives its Second Reading, it will then go through the Committee Stage and be read the Third time.

In addition, the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2012 will be introduced into the Council for First and Second Readings. Second Reading debate on the bill will be adjourned.

On Motions, the Secretary for Home Affairs will move a proposed resolution under the Legal Aid Ordinance to amend the Legal Aid Ordinance (Cap. 91).

Hon LEE Cheuk-yan will move a motion on the 4 June Incident. The motion, states: "That this Council urges that: the 4 June incident be not forgotten and the 1989 pro-democracy movement be vindicated."

Hon WONG Yuk-man will move an amendment to Hon LEE Cheuk-yan's motion.

Hon Miriam LAU will move a motion on actively studying the establishment of a middle class commission. The motion, states: "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.

Hon Alan LEONG will move an amendment to Hon Miriam LAU's motion. Hon Starry LEE will move an amendment to Hon Alan LEONG's amendment.

Meanwhile, Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming will move a motion for the adjournment of the Council under Rule 16(4) of the Rules of Procedure. The motion, states: "That this Council do now adjourn for the purpose of debating the following issues: the impact of the announcement made by the MTR Corporation Limited to increase its fares by 5.4% under the Fare Adjustment Mechanism ("FAM") on the general public, as well as FAM, fare concession measures and the Government's corresponding arrangements."

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 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 Chamber of the Legislative Council Complex. They may reserve seats by calling 3919 3399 during office hours. Seats will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. Members of the public can also watch or listen to the meeting via the web broadcast system on the Legislative Council homepage.

Ends/Monday, April 30, 2012

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