

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 9 December 2015

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

Further to LC Paper No. CB(3) 180/15-16 issued on 25 November 2015, five Members (Hon Frankie YICK, Hon SIN Chung-kai, Hon Christopher CHEUNG, Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki and Hon Starry LEE) have respectively given notice of their intention to move separate amendments to Hon Tommy CHEUNG’s motion on “Actively studying the establishment of a middle class commission” scheduled for the Council meeting of 9 December 2015. As directed by the President, the respective amendments will be printed in the terms in which they were handed in on the Agenda of the Council.

2. The President will order a joint debate on the above motion and the five amendments. To assist Members in debating the motion and the amendments, I set out below the procedure to be followed during the debate:

- (a) the President calls upon Hon Tommy CHEUNG to speak and move his motion;
- (b) the President proposes the question on Hon Tommy CHEUNG’s motion;
- (c) the President calls upon the five Members who wish to move amendments to speak in the following order, but no amendment is to be moved at this stage:
 - (i) Hon Frankie YICK;
 - (ii) Hon SIN Chung-kai;

- (iii) Hon Christopher CHEUNG;
 - (iv) Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki; and
 - (v) Hon Starry LEE;
- (d) the President calls upon the public officer(s) to speak;
 - (e) the President invites other Members to speak;
 - (f) the President gives leave to Hon Tommy CHEUNG to speak for the second time on the amendments;
 - (g) the President calls upon the public officer(s) to speak again;
 - (h) in accordance with Rule 34(5) of the Rules of Procedure, the President has decided that he will call upon the five Members to move their respective amendments in the order set out in paragraph (c) above. The President invites Hon Frankie YICK to move his amendment to the motion, and forthwith proposes and puts to vote the question on Hon Frankie YICK's amendment;
 - (i) after Hon Frankie YICK's amendment has been voted upon, the President deals with the other four amendments; and
 - (j) after all amendments have been dealt with, the President calls upon Hon Tommy CHEUNG to reply. Thereafter, the President puts to vote the question on Hon Tommy CHEUNG's motion, or his motion as amended, as the case may be.

3. For Members' reference, the terms of the original motion and of the motion, if amended, are set out in the **Appendix**.

(Ms Dora WAI)
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 9 December 2015**

1. Hon Tommy CHEUNG’s original motion

That this Council requests the Government to actively study the establishment of a middle class commission.

2. Motion as amended by Hon Frankie YICK

That the middle class has always been an important force for maintaining social stability and promoting economic development, but in recent years, the long-standing concerns in the external economic environment, the seriously lopsided development of Hong Kong’s industries, the short supply of housing, the polarization between the rich and the poor, and the never-ending political wrangling have caused the middle class to face problems of housing, taxation, education and healthcare, etc., and created a trend of downward mobility of the middle class; the Government’s support for the middle class has all along been limited to one-off relief measures such as providing tax rebates, increasing tax allowances, exempting rates or offering electricity charge subsidies, etc., but these measures are just utterly inadequate for the middle class and have not practically alleviated their plight; in addition, as currently there is no precise definition of the middle class, and the Government does not regularly provide statistics and information specific to the middle class, if the authorities or community organizations use such information to formulate policies or measures to support the middle class, such policies or measures will very often be out of focus, biased and superficial; in this connection, this Council requests the Government to actively study the establishment of a middle class commission to comprehensively review the policies or measures relating to the middle class from a focused and higher-level perspective, so as to alleviate the various problems faced by the middle class and consolidate the strength of the middle class, thereby promoting a fresh economic development and strengthening the momentum of upward mobility of the community as a whole; the relevant measures should include:

Definition

- (1) to lay down a clear and precise definition of the middle class, and regularly publish relevant statistics in respect of the definition;*

Development of industries

- (2) *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;*
- (3) *to further strengthen regional economic development for integration with the economic development circles of different regions on the Mainland, so as to provide more and better career development opportunities for middle-class professionals within or outside the territory;*

Housing

- (4) *to expedite the identification of land for developing new development areas, optimize the use of rock caverns and carry out reclamation on an appropriate scale outside Victoria Harbour, so as to increase the supply of residential land on all fronts; and to increase the transparency of the housing plans as well as the supply of and demand for residential land for the next 10 years, and conduct an interim strategic review of and make corresponding adjustment to the relevant plans every five years;*
- (5) *to actively study the exploitation of green belt areas and 'brownfield sites' for the purpose of residential development;*
- (6) *to introduce a tax allowance for rentals for the marginal middle class;*

Taxation

- (7) *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 the marginal middle class;*
- (8) *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

- (9) *to introduce a tax allowance for children's education to alleviate the burden of children education expenses on middle-class families;*

- (10) *to substantially increase the salaries tax deduction for self-education expenses and the subsidy under the Continuing Education Fund;*

Healthcare

- (11) *to provide tax deduction for medical insurance contributions; and*
- (12) *to provide tax deduction for medical examinations to encourage the middle class to undergo such examinations on a regular basis.*

Note: Hon Frankie YICK's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type*.

3. Motion as amended by Hon SIN Chung-kai

That *as the Government has disregarded the needs of the middle class over the years*, this Council requests the Government to actively study the establishment of ~~a~~ *concerns of the middle class commission, which include:*

- (1) *raising the various tax allowances, including the basic allowance for individuals, married person's allowance as well as dependent parent allowance, and widening the tax bands for salaries tax and abolishing the standard rate for salaries tax, so that members of the public pay their salaries tax according to the marginal tax rate, thereby alleviating the tax burden on the middle class;*
- (2) *reintroducing the Sandwich Class Housing Scheme to increase the opportunities for the middle class to acquire homes;*
- (3) *increasing the numbers of days of paid maternity leave and paternity leave and introducing flexible working hours to perfect family-friendly policies and promote a culture of work-life balance;*
- (4) *reviewing the teaching quality of government and subsidized schools, and allocating additional resources for such schools to adopt the teaching mode of Direct Subsidy Scheme schools and the merits of International Baccalaureate programmes, so that children of middle-class families can enjoy quality education;*
- (5) *upholding local core values and combating corruption to rebuild a society with integrity and fairness, thereby providing the middle class with an environment with fair competition; and*
- (6) *formulating proposals for electing the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council by universal suffrage with equal rights to make nomination, to vote and to stand for election in an open, fair and*

impartial manner, with a view to forging a consensus on promoting democracy, thereby strengthening the middle class's sense of belonging to Hong Kong.

Note: Hon SIN Chung-kai's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

4. Motion as amended by Hon Christopher CHEUNG

That *the middle class, despite being the mainstay of Hong Kong society, has to bear increasingly heavy livelihood and financial burdens and face pressures of downward mobility; in this connection,* this Council requests the Government to ~~actively study the establishment of~~ *expeditiously establish* a middle class commission *to formulate permanent and focused policies and measures, with a view to alleviating the livelihood and financial burdens of the middle class and providing them with more opportunities for upward mobility and room for development.*

Note: Hon Christopher CHEUNG's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

5. Motion as amended by Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

That *as the Government's measures to assist the middle class in recent years have no merit worth mentioning, the middle class has been unable to resolve their livelihood difficulties; in this connection,* this Council requests the Government to ~~actively study the establishment of~~ *expeditiously establish* a middle class commission *whose functions include studying the following matters:*

- (1) *immediately constructing subsidized housing on idle Government land and increasing the number of subsidized sale flats to provide the middle class with a home acquisition ladder, and to enable the middle class to purchase flats for self-occupation at reasonable prices;*
- (2) *expeditiously implementing 15-year free education and stepping up the regulation of Direct Subsidy Scheme schools to ensure that the tuition fees of such schools are set at a reasonable level, thereby alleviating the burden of children education expenses on middle-class families;*
- (3) *refraining from using a salary-based approach to define the scope of application of standard working hours to ensure that the middle class has more leisure time to enjoy life; and*

- (4) *stepping up the regulation of private hospitals, enhancing the service quality of public hospitals, allocating additional land for constructing private hospitals, and immediately abolishing the Drug Formulary system, so as to alleviate the healthcare burden on the middle class.*

Note: Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

6. Motion as amended by Hon Starry LEE

That, *as the middle class is the mainstay of society*, this Council requests the Government to actively study the establishment of a middle class commission *to cater for the interests of the middle class and respond to their different demands, as well as to create more opportunities for upward mobility to expand the ratio of the middle-class population, thereby enabling the society to develop in a sustainable, stable and harmonious manner.*

Note: Hon Starry LEE's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type*.