

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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From : Clerk to the Legislative Council  
To : All Members of the Legislative Council

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**Council meeting of 1 March 2017**

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

Further to LC Paper No. CB(3) 336/16-17 issued on 14 February 2017, seven Members (Hon Frankie YICK, Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, Hon HUI Chi-fung, Hon KWOK Wai-keung, Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, Hon Michael TIEN and Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki) 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 1 March 2017. 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 seven 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 seven 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) Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok;

- (iii) Hon HUI Chi-fung;
  - (iv) Hon KWOK Wai-keung;
  - (v) Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT;
  - (vi) Hon Michael TIEN; and
  - (vii) Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki;
- (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 seven 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 six 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**.

(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 1 March 2017**

**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, 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, 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 Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok**

That *the middle class, despite being the mainstay of Hong Kong society and its great significance in maintaining the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, 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 explore and formulate permanent and focused policies and measures, with a view to providing the middle class with more opportunities for upward mobility and room for development.*

Note: Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

### **4. Motion as amended by Hon HUI Chi-fung**

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 middle class commission *to explore the following concerns of the middle class, including:*

- (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 as to enable members of the*

*public to 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 and adjusting the ratio of Green Form and White Form applicants under the Home Ownership Scheme to increase opportunities for the middle class to acquire homes, and introducing tax deduction for rental payments to lessen the high rental pressure on the middle class;*
- (3) amending the Building Management Ordinance to combat bid-rigging activities, so as to enhance the protection for middle-class property owners;*
- (4) 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, and increasing child care and elderly care services to strengthen support for carers in middle-class families;*
- (5) reviewing the teaching quality of government and subsidized schools, allocating additional resources for such schools to adopt the teaching mode of Direct Subsidy Scheme schools and the merits of International Baccalaureate programmes, and abolishing the Territory-wide System Assessment, so that children of middle-class families can receive quality education and study in a pressure-free environment;*
- (6) increasing the number of funded places in local universities and studying extending the applicability of the Non-means-tested Loan Scheme for Full-time Tertiary Students to students studying in overseas institutions, with a view to reducing the expenses of middle-class families on the overseas education of their children;*
- (7) while promoting the development of high technologies, encouraging local industrial production, so as to achieve diversified development of the Hong Kong economy and create more employment opportunities, thereby enhancing the social mobility of the middle class;*
- (8) reviewing the existing mechanism and the relevant ordinances to strengthen the regulation of overseas property projects on sale in Hong Kong, so as to safeguard the rights and interests of middle-class investors;*
- (9) perfecting the conservation policy, including bringing the administrative grading system for historic buildings within the*

*regulatory ambit of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance, with a view to preserving local characteristics and the humanistic and historical values which the middle class cherishes;*

- (10) *amending the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance to introduce an independent assessment system for assessing controversial projects which have environmental impacts, and enact legislation on tree conservation, so as to ensure a quality living environment for the middle class;*
- (11) *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*
- (12) *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 HUI Chi-fung's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type*.

#### **5. Motion as amended by Hon KWOK Wai-keung**

That *while middle-class employees in Hong Kong often need to face the problems of uncompensated overtime work, long working hours, few rest days and great work pressure, they also need to shoulder heavy livelihood and family burdens; hence*, this Council requests the Government to actively study the establishment of a middle class commission *to formulate specific improvement measures in areas such as occupational right, family-friendliness, retirement protection, taxation, housing, living environment, healthcare protection, transport, education and further studies, as well as personal career development, with a view to providing support to the middle class on all fronts, thereby alleviating the various kinds of pressures and burdens facing them.*

Note: Hon KWOK Wai-keung's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type*.

#### **6. Motion as amended by Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT**

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 society to develop in a sustainable, stable and harmonious manner.*

Note: Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type*.

## **7. Motion as amended by Hon Michael TIEN**

That *as the Government has all along failed to provide adequate assistance to the middle class*, this Council requests the Government to actively study the establishment of a middle class commission *for conducting studies on the following matters:*

### *Economy*

- (1) *formulating a diversified industrial policy, including the promotion of innovation and technology, cultural, sports, arts and creative industries, so as to provide the middle class with more jobs at the middle and senior levels and business start-up opportunities;*
- (2) *developing more commercial areas to attract the stationing of enterprises, so as to create more job opportunities for the middle class;*

### *Education*

- (3) *providing full subsidy to whole-day and long whole-day kindergartens; earmarking lands for kindergarten construction in public and private residential development projects to provide sufficient kindergarten places; and fully implementing free early childhood education to alleviate the burden of children education expenses on middle-class families;*
- (4) *fostering a good English-learning environment in kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools and allocating one extra Native-speaking English Teacher post to each primary school, so as to answer the demand of middle-class families for quality English language education;*
- (5) *increasing the subsidy under the Continuing Education Fund to enhance the support for middle-class people wishing to pursue further studies;*



- (6) *increasing the number of publicly-funded university degree programmes to enable more children from middle-class families to receive quality post-secondary education;*

#### *Transport*

- (7) *improving ancillary transport facilities in remote districts, such as studying the construction of a Tung Chung East to Airport Railway circular route and the fifth cross-harbour railway, as well as perfecting the transport network of the New Development Areas in Northwest New Territories, so as to enable the middle class to purchase properties in remote districts;*

#### *Housing*

- (8) *introducing a tax allowance for renting private properties to alleviate the rent burden of the middle class;*

#### *Welfare*

- (9) *allowing the middle class to withdraw the contributions from the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme for purchasing their first property, so as to alleviate the burden of the middle class to purchase properties;*

#### *Foreign domestic helpers*

- (10) *introducing a probation system for foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) and requiring that employers need not pay intermediary charges to intermediaries for FDHs until the expiry of the probation period, so as to avoid employers' financial losses arising from the job-hopping of FDHs; and*

#### *Taxation*

- (11) *studying taxation proposals favourable to the middle class with the tax policy unit to be set up.*

Note: Hon Michael TIEN's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type*.

## 8. Motion as amended by Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

That this Council requests the Government to actively study the establishment of 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) *expeditiously implementing standard working hours, so that the middle class can achieve work-life balance and have more leisure time to enjoy family life;*
- (4) *expeditiously implementing a universal retirement protection scheme to enable all retired elderly persons to receive monthly pensions without any means-tests, with a view to lessening the pressure on middle-class families arising from supporting elderly family members;*
- (5) *increasing public healthcare expenditure to enhance the service quality of public hospitals, stepping up the regulation of private 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;*
- (6) *building in various districts additional cultural, recreational and leisure facilities, including libraries, community centres, indoor stadiums, swimming pools and sports grounds, to increase the opportunities of the middle class to participate in arts, recreation and sports activities; and*
- (7) *halting the privatization and marketization of public services, and launching measures to counter the practices of power companies, bus companies, railway company, etc. to increase tariffs and fares every year, so as to relieve the livelihood pressure of the middle class.*

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