

香港僱主聯合會的信頭
Letterhead of EMPLOYERS' FEDERATION OF HONG KONG

10 May 2000

Clerk to Bills Committee
Family Status Discrimination (Amendment) Bill 2000
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Sirs,

Family Status Discrimination Ordinance

The Employers' Federation of Hong Kong fully agrees that employees should be treated fairly, equally and without prejudice. We appreciate the intent of the Family Status Discrimination Ordinance which aims to enable employees, who have the responsibility for the care of immediate family member(s), to engage in employment without being subjected to discrimination.

The prompt action of the government in addressing our concern by clarifying that it is not unlawful for an employer to afford benefits only to one or more categories of immediate family members of his employees without affording the same to all immediate family members is appreciated. We understand that the above clarification was in the progress of reading in the Legislative Council.

At present, many employers are offering dependent-based benefits to their employees. Just name a few, they include medical benefits, free transportation, bursary scheme, compassionate leave, waived credit card annual fee, supplementary credit card application, long service award, club membership, etc. A full list of these benefit items is considered impractical as they will vary over time with inevitable changes in the human resource policies of the many companies involved. Some items like free flight tickets, on the other hand, are difficult to determine whether they fall within the exempted or non-exempted benefits.

Because of such complications, we strongly believe that the problem is not solved by providing an expanded exemption list however attractive this may superficially appear to be. Worst of all, it might only hamper employers from introducing new benefit provision and create tension on the employee relations.

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To address the problem promptly, the proposed clarification needs to be put in force as soon as possible. We thus earnestly hope that the Legislative Council would proceed the concerned reading without posing any unnecessary uneasiness among employers and employees.

Should you need any further information or discussion on this subject, please feel free to contact Mrs Jackie Ma, the Executive Director of the Federation at 2528 0712.

Yours sincerely,

Ross Sayers
Chairman

c.c. Mr C M Wong, Home Affairs Bureau

*Mr Norman Yuen JP, Chairman of Employee Relations & Legislation Issues
Committee*

Dr Kim Mak, Labour Advisory Board Representative