

LC Paper No. CB(2)1165/00-01(01)

**香港餐飲聯業協會 (餐飲聯)****Hong Kong Federation Of Restaurants & Related Trades (HK FORT)**

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The Secretariat
Committee Member
Karaoke Establishments Bills
Legislative Council,
8 Jackson Road,
Central, Hong Kong.

23/3/2001

Dear Sir,

**Re: Manifesto of the HK Fort -- In Response to the
Karaoke Establishments Bills**

We are writing in response to the captioned Bills.

The Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants and Related Trades (HK Fort) is one of the most active Trade Unions in Hong Kong representing restaurant industry and related trades, which includes karaoke group. Since inception, HK Fort have actively and extensively participated in various consultations and licensing affairs with the Hong Kong SAR Government Departments and Concern Groups.

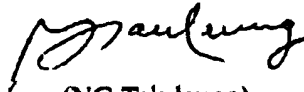
On the request of our members, we would like to submit to you the manifesto of the HK Fort for your kind consideration and dissemination to the Honorable members of your Committee as follows:

1. The Security Branch conducted a consultation exercise on the proposed Karaoke Control Ordinance about 2 years ago, which included a consultation paper circulated to the Karaoke trade. Written submission was made to the appropriate Authority after having had numerous meetings with the appropriate Government Departments. Regrettably, the proposed Karaoke Bills contain quite a large number of things, the licensing control in particular, which had never been mentioned in the consultation paper. This totally destroys the trust and respect of the Trade to the Hong Kong SAR Government.
2. The proposed Karaoke Ordinance is too tough and is jeopardizing the survival of the existing legitimate operators of Karaoke and the investment incentive of the Trade.
3. At present, the business atmosphere and opportunities are weakening. A further unreasonable and unnecessary harsh control is undermining today's Hong Kong economic and business environment whereby the proposed Karaoke Ordinance would create a "high-risk" situations discouraging investors from investment and further investment.
4. The difficulty in Karaoke business will inevitably pose an unemployment threat to the industry, which the Karaoke Trade offers nearly 10,000 job posts.

5. Under years of development, Karaoke Box is now providing to its customers a healthy entertainment both for social and family gatherings. It is well received by all walks of life, and in particular youngster and teenagers, where they enjoy Karaoke singing in their leisure hours. The bona-fide Karaoke pose no negative social problem. Besides, the existing Liquor License has already a strong enforcement capability on the security and safety.
6. The tragedy happened a few years ago at the Karaoke Box was an arson case, which is rare and isolated. It should therefore not an excuse to discriminate the legitimate Karaoke business.
7. The definition of operating a Karaoke business in the proposed Ordinance is quite unclear, and adding more red tapes to the Trade unnecessarily; A normal restaurant with 'add-on' karaoke equipment is required to apply for exemption each and every year. It casts doubt on the sincerity of the Government whether, as they claim, they are helping the business section to enhance the competition ability and efficiency, or as in the proposed Ordinance, to increase more red tapes in the licensing.

We should be much grateful if your Committee would kindly review the propose Bills in a fair manner. Please keep us informed of the outcome of this case. Your kind assistance in this matter is highly appreciated.

Yours truly,



(NG Tak-leung)
Chairman