

CSO/ADM CR 14/3231/97

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3 March 2004

The Honourable Ms Miriam Lau, JP  
Chairman of the House Committee  
Legislative Council  
8 Jackson Road  
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### **Proposed Priority in the Scrutiny of Bills by Members**

I am writing to suggest that priority be accorded by the House Committee to the scrutiny of the eight bills on the waiting list, in accordance with the revised order proposed by the Administration at **Annex**.

Conscious of the limited time available between now and the end of the current LegCo term, and the number of bills on the waiting list, we have recently reviewed the relative priorities of bills awaiting scrutiny by LegCo. You have also raised this subject with the Chief Secretary for Administration on 18 February. The **Annex** sets out our revised order of priority of the relevant bills as a result of this review.

Members may wish to note that, of the eight bills on the waiting list, we have proposed that priority be accorded first to the Clearing and Settlement Systems Bill, and then the Waste Disposal (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill. Our reasons are as follows –

### **Clearing and Settlement Systems Bill**

The Bill was introduced into LegCo on 10 December 2003. It seeks to introduce an oversight regime for important clearing and settlement systems for funds or securities. The Bill also grants statutory protection for finality of settlement transactions effected through such systems. The enactment of the Bill is essential to facilitate early admission of Hong Kong Dollar into the Continuous Linked Settlement System, a global clearing and settlement system for cross-border foreign exchange transactions in eleven major currencies, including the US Dollar and Euro. We therefore recommend that first priority be accorded to the Bill so that the relevant Bills Committee could commence operation as soon as possible.

### **Waste Disposal (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill**

The Bill was introduced into LegCo on 17 December 2003. It seeks to promote the “polluter-pays” principle in Hong Kong by providing for the charging of construction waste disposal at landfills, construction waste sorting facilities and public fill reception facilities. Enactment of the Bill within the current legislative session is essential for the scheduled implementation of the charging scheme in 2005, in providing economic incentives for waste producers to reduce and recycle construction waste in Hong Kong, thereby alleviating the serious waste problem. We therefore suggest that second priority be accorded to the Bill so that the scrutiny work could commence as early as possible.

I should be grateful if you would put forward our above suggestion for Members’ consideration at the coming House Committee meeting on 5 March 2004.

As is our established practice, we would shortly issue for Members’ information an updated Legislative Programme 2003-04, covering the remaining months of the LegCo session. We shall continue to keep in view progress of bills committees in action and the relative priorities of bills on the waiting list, as we approach the end of the LegCo term.

( Andrew H Y Wong )  
Director of Administration

**The Administration's Proposed Priority of Bills  
on the Waiting List for Bills Committee Slots**

1. Clearing and Settlement Systems Bill
2. Waste Disposal (Amendment) (No.2) Bill 2003
3. Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill 2003
4. Bankruptcy (Amendment) Bill 2003
5. Waste Disposal (Amendment) Bill 2003
6. Vocational Training Council (Amendment) Bill 2003
7. Undesirable Medical Advertisements (Amendment) Bill 2004
8. Construction Industry Council Bill