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

I am writing to propose that priority be accorded to the scrutiny of the Airport Authority (Amendment) Bill 2004, should the House Committee decide to set up a Bills Committee to examine it.

The Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council on 24 March 2004. It seeks to provide a mechanism by which the share capital of the Airport Authority (AA) may be reduced. Enactment of the Bill would enable capital restructuring of the AA, prior to its privatization. Members may recall that the partial privatization of the AA is part and parcel of the Government's asset disposal programme announced in the Financial Secretary's 2003/04 Budget. It will not only release Government funds for other pressing priorities, but will also strengthen market discipline in the operation of the airport, and broaden its access to sources of capital.

Upon the enactment of the Bill, it is the Administration's plan to move, before the end of the current LegCo term, a resolution at a full Council meeting to give effect to the capital restructuring of the AA. We therefore suggest that Members accord priority to the scrutiny of the Bill.

I should be most grateful if you would put forward our proposal for Members' consideration at the coming House Committee meeting on 16 April 2004.

(Ms CHANG King-yiu)
Director of Administration