

May 23, 2008

DEAR HONORABLE CHAIRMAN AND LEGCO COUNCIL MEMBERS,

On behalf of

-Over 400,000 Hong Kong consumers who have signed petitions who were worried

-Over a 100 people who wrote testimonials to Chief Executive Donald Tsang, that now feel hopeful that their food choices will remain available on Hong Kong shelves

- And **DOZENS of Hong Kong residents** who took the time to write into the local newspapers to voice their concerns about the UNIQUE labeling scheme that could remove their food choices

...We all applaud the Hong Kong Governments decision to put forth an amendment to the Proposed Food Labeling Scheme.

On Monday, May 19th, I sat in the Public Gallery at LegCo, while the proposed Food labeling proposal amendment was brought forth for review. I have to agree with Emily Lau, Vincent Fang and Tommy Cheung who all voiced concerns over rushing to pass such a technically, complicated piece of legislation.

I agree with James Tien who said in his RTHK Radio 3 letter on Monday, that “the regulation in its original form, would have limited the choice and unintentionally removed a lot of healthy food from the tables of Hong Kong families”.

I support the Hong Kong government’s efforts to create a global standard that other countries may one day aspire to copy. But nutritional research changes constantly as to what the optimum intake of nutritional requirements should be, not to mention each person’s unique temperament. To this, the Hong Kong Government has listened to consumers.

To allow small volume products with or without claims to be exempt from the label scheme is definitely MOVING in the RIGHT direction. These products already comply with strict government regulations and are correctly labeled in accordance with the laws of their country of origins. The administrations amended proposal will do this by keeping a variety of the healthiest foods in the market. These proposed changes show sensitivity to those Hong Kong residents, who have special diets, allergies, health conditions and ethnic and cultural preferences to food.

In respect to the warning label, it is **NUTRITIONAL EDUCATION** that will help the public choose the most nutritious foods and live a healthier lifestyle.

I, along with thousands of other HK residents, thank the Hong Kong government for caring about the diverse dietary needs of ALL its residents. We all urge and hope that you and all LegCo members support the Hong Kong Governments amendments and vote favorably on MAY 28th.

Ellen M. Friedlander
Permanent HK Resident