

3 July 2009

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sirs

Supporting an Additional 5 Racedays and 20 Simulcasts each Season

As a Hong Kong citizen, I must say the Hong Kong Jockey Club has, over the past 100 years, done a lot of good to the local community. Indeed, every single year over the past decade, it had contributed over HK\$1 billion to the much needed welfare agencies, built schools, hospitals, clinics and supported numerous sporting and cultural events. The 2008 Olympic Equestrian Event would not be such a roaring success without the monetary contribution and the professional expertise that the Jockey Club has unreservedly rendered. In terms of tax dollars, the Jockey Club, through its betting duty, contributed over HK\$10 billion every year to the public purse, amounting to a significant portion of the total tax income for Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club is an important employer in Hong Kong. It currently hires over 25,000 full time and part time staff. With an additional 5 racedays, I am sure it will create many more jobs. The recent opening of a Telebet Centre in Tin Shui Wai is a vivid example how valuable the newly created positions are, in particular for our young graduates.

Amidst keen competition from the casinos in Macau, illegal bookmakers and online gaming avenues which siphon money away from Hong Kong with no tax contribution and no charitable contribution, the Jockey Club should be allowed to moderately adjust its racing fixture by 5 races and to increase its simulcast meetings to 20. This will only extend the racing season by probably 1-2 weeks into the summer months, allowing sufficient time for racegoers to spend time with their family.

Some may argue that increasing the number of racedays will foster the problem of pathological gambling. I am of the opinion that such pathological gamblers are more likely to be casino players where they normally spend consecutive hours and bet on credit. On the contrary, going to the races is a great form of sporting entertainment where one can socialize with business associates, family members and friends. The Hong Kong Jockey Club has all along been a very good corporate citizen. They run their business with integrity with no credit betting and did not entertain those under 18 year olds. They even contribute money to the Ping Wo Fund to support the running of Treatment Centres for problem gamblers. In short, the Jockey Club has never let Hong Kong people down.

I am sure the Legco members will consider my views above and indeed they also represent the voice of the many recipients of the Jockey Club charitable funds all along these years.

  
Christine Chan

Pokfulam, Hong Kong