Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2011

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A BILL

To

Amend various pieces of legislation to introduce changes to electoral and related arrangements for returning the Chief Executive and the Village Representatives and the formation of the Legislative Council and District Councils including allowing a party to an election petition concerning a Legislative Council election, District Council election or Village Representative election to lodge an appeal to the Court of Final Appeal against the determination of the petition by the Court of First Instance; allowing letters sent free of postage by several categories of candidates in a Legislative Council election and candidates in an Election Committee subsector election to contain information on certain other candidates; increasing the financial assistance to candidates in District Council elections; reflecting the change of the name of a constituent in a subsector of the Election Committee; to make technical adjustments as regards election expenses; and to make related and incidental amendments.

Enacted by the Legislative Council.

Part 1 Clause 1

Part 1

Preliminary

1. Short title and commencement

- (1) This Ordinance may be cited as the Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2011.
- (2) This Part and Parts 2 and 7 come into operation on the day on which this Ordinance is published in the Gazette.
- (3) Parts 4 and 6 come into operation on 1 September 2011.
- (4) Part 3 (except Divisions 2 and 4) and Part 5 come into operation on 25 September 2011.
- (5) Divisions 2 and 4 of Part 3 come into operation on 1 June 2012.

Part 2

Amendments Relating to Appeal in relation to Election Petitions

Division 1

Enactments Amended

2. Enactments amended

The enactments specified in Divisions 2 to 5 are amended as set out in those Divisions.

Division 2

Amendments to Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542)

3. Section 56 amended (Election to be presumed to be valid)

Section 56—

Repeal

everything after "valid"

Substitute

"until—

- (a) the Court determines, on the hearing of an election petition, that the election is invalid; or
- (b) the Court of Final Appeal determines, on hearing an appeal against the Court's determination, that the election is invalid.".

4. Section 58A added

After section 58—

Add

"58A. Candidate declared to be returned is presumed to be duly elected

Subject to section 72(1A), a person declared under section 58 as returned at an election is presumed to be duly elected until he or she is ruled by the Court or the Court of Final Appeal, on the determination of an election petition or appeal, as not duly elected."

5. Section 65 amended (Period within which election petition is to be lodged)

(1) Section 65, heading—

Repeal

"is to"

Substitute

"and appeal must".

(2) Section 65—

Renumber the section as section 65(1).

(3) After section 65(1)—

Add

"(2) Despite section 24 of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484), notice of a motion for the purpose of an application for leave to appeal to the Court of Final Appeal under section 22(1)(c) of that Ordinance must be filed within 7 working days after the date of the judgment of the Court to be appealed from, and the applicant must give the opposite party 3 days' notice of his or her intended

application at any time during the period of 7 working days.".

6. Section 67 amended (Court to determine election petition)

(1) Section 67(3)—

Repeal

everything after "end of the"

Substitute

"trial of an election petition, the Court must announce its determination by means of a written judgment.".

(2) Section 67—

Repeal subsection (4).

7. Sections 70A and 70B added

After section 70—

Add

"70A. Court's determination of election petition suspended before deadline of appeal

The effect of the determination of the Court of an election petition is suspended until the expiry of the period within which notice of a motion for the purpose of an application for leave to appeal to the Court of Final Appeal against the determination may be filed under section 65(2).

70B. Court of Final Appeal's determination

At the end of the hearing of an appeal against the determination of the Court of an election petition, the Court of Final Appeal must—

(a) determine—

- (i) if the election petition relates to an election that was not contested—
 - (A) whether the decision of the Returning Officer as to the validity of the relevant nomination was correct; and
 - (B) if the decision was not correct, whether the person declared to have been elected in that election was or was not duly elected;
- (ii) if the election petition relates to an election that was contested—
 - (A) whether the person whose election is questioned was or was not duly elected; and
 - (B) if the person was not duly elected, whether some other person was duly elected in place of the person; and
- (b) announce its determination by means of a written judgment.".

8. Section 71 substituted

Section 71—

Repeal the section Substitute

"71. Acts of person not invalid if determined not duly elected

If the Court or the Court of Final Appeal determines that a person who was originally declared to have been duly elected as a Member was not duly elected as a Member, the determination does not invalidate acts purporting to have been done by the person as a Member before the date of the determination.".

9. Section 72 amended (What is to happen if Member is determined not to have been duly elected)

(1) Section 72(1)—

Repeal

everything after "a person"

Substitute

"who was declared under section 58 as duly elected as a Member was not duly elected as a Member—

- (a) subject to subsection (1A), that person ceases to be a Member; and
- (b) subject to subsection (2), that person's office as a Member becomes vacant from the date of the determination.".
- (2) After section 72(1)—

Add

"(1A) If—

- (a) the Court determines that a person who was declared under section 58 as duly elected as a Member was not duly elected as a Member; and
- (b) the person lodges an appeal under section 22(1)(c) of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484) against the determination,

the person continues, subject to subsection (3), to be a Member.".

(3) After section 72(2)—

Add

"(3) If, on the hearing of an appeal against the determination of the Court of an election petition, the Court of Final Appeal determines that a person who was declared under section 58 as duly elected as a Member was not duly elected as a Member—

- (a) that person ceases to be a Member; and
- (b) subject to subsection (4), that person's office as a Member becomes vacant from the date of the determination of the Court of Final Appeal.
- (4) If, on the hearing of an appeal against the determination of the Court of an election petition, the Court of Final Appeal determines that a person was duly elected as a Member in place of a person that the Court of Final Appeal has determined not to have been duly elected as a Member, the first-mentioned person becomes a Member from the date of the determination of the Court of Final Appeal."

Division 3

Amendments to District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547)

10. Section 44 amended (Election to be presumed to be valid)

Section 44—

Repeal

everything after "valid"

Substitute

"until—

- (a) the Court determines, on the hearing of an election petition, that the election is invalid; or
- (b) the Court of Final Appeal determines, on hearing an appeal against the Court's determination, that the election is invalid.".

11. Section 46A added

After section 46—

Add

"46A. Candidate declared to be returned is presumed to be duly elected

Subject to section 60(1A), a person declared under section 46 as returned at an election is presumed to be duly elected until he or she is ruled by the Court or the Court of Final Appeal, on the determination of an election petition or appeal, as not duly elected."

12. Section 53 amended (Period within which election petition is to be lodged)

(1) Section 53, heading—

Repeal

"is to"

Substitute

"and appeal must".

(2) Section 53—

Renumber the section as section 53(1).

(3) After section 53(1)—

Add

"(2) Despite section 24 of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484), notice of a motion for the purpose of an application for leave to appeal to the Court of Final Appeal under section 22(1)(c) of that Ordinance must be filed within 7 working days after the date of the judgment of the Court to be appealed from, and the applicant must give the opposite party 3 days' notice of his or her intended

application at any time during the period of 7 working days.".

13. Section 55 amended (Court to determine election petition)

(1) Section 55(3)—

Repeal

everything after "end of the"

Substitute

"trial of an election petition, the Court must announce its determination by means of a written judgment.".

(2) Section 55—

Repeal subsection (4).

14. Sections 58A and 58B added

After section 58—

Add

"58A. Court's determination of election petition suspended before deadline of appeal

The effect of the determination of the Court of an election petition is suspended until the expiry of the period within which notice of a motion for the purpose of an application for leave to appeal to the Court of Final Appeal against the determination may be filed under section 53(2).

58B. Court of Final Appeal's determination

At the end of the hearing of an appeal against the determination of the Court of an election petition, the Court of Final Appeal must—

(a) determine—

- (i) if the election petition relates to an election that was not contested—
 - (A) whether the decision of the Returning Officer as to the validity of the relevant nomination was correct; and
 - (B) if the decision was not correct, whether the person declared to have been elected in that election was or was not duly elected;
- (ii) if the election petition relates to an election that was contested—
 - (A) whether the person whose election is questioned was or was not duly elected; and
 - (B) if the person was not duly elected, whether some other person was duly elected in place of the person; and
- (b) announce its determination by means of a written judgment.".

15. Section 59 substituted

Section 59—

Repeal the section Substitute

"59. Acts of person not invalid if determined not duly elected

If the Court or the Court of Final Appeal determines that a person who was originally declared to have been duly elected as an elected member was not duly elected as an elected member, the determination does not invalidate acts purporting to have been done by the person as an elected member before the date of the determination.".

16. Section 60 amended (What is to happen if an elected member is determined not to have been duly elected)

(1) Section 60(1)—

Repeal

everything after "a person"

Substitute

"who was declared under section 46 as duly elected as an elected member was not duly elected as an elected member—

- (a) subject to subsection (1A), that person ceases to be an elected member; and
- (b) subject to subsection (2), that person's office as an elected member becomes vacant from the date of the determination.".
- (2) After section 60(1)—

Add

"(1A) If—

- (a) the Court determines that a person who was declared under section 46 as duly elected as an elected member was not duly elected as an elected member; and
- (b) the person lodges an appeal under section 22(1)(c) of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484) against the determination,

the person continues, subject to subsection (3), to be an elected member.".

(3) After section 60(2)—

Add

- "(3) If, on the hearing of an appeal against the determination of the Court of an election petition, the Court of Final Appeal determines that a person who was declared under section 46 as duly elected as an elected member was not duly elected as an elected member—
 - (a) that person ceases to be an elected member; and
 - (b) subject to subsection (4), that person's office as an elected member becomes vacant from the date of the determination of the Court of Final Appeal.
 - (4) If, on the hearing of an appeal against the determination of the Court of an election petition, the Court of Final Appeal determines that a person was duly elected as an elected member in place of a person that the Court of Final Appeal has determined not to have been duly elected as an elected member, the first-mentioned person becomes an elected member from the date of the determination of the Court of Final Appeal."

Division 4

Amendments to Village Representative Election Ordinance (Cap. 576)

17.	Section 34	amended	(Election to	o be	presumed	valid)
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Section 34—

Repeal

everything after "valid"

Substitute

"until—

- (a) the Court determines, on the hearing of an election petition, that the election is invalid; or
- (b) the Court of Final Appeal determines, on hearing an appeal against the Court's determination, that the election is invalid."

18. Section 36A added

After section 36—

Add

"36A. Candidate declared to be returned is presumed to be duly elected

Subject to section 50(1A), a person declared under section 36 as duly elected as a Village Representative is presumed to be duly elected until he or she is ruled by the Court or the Court of Final Appeal, on the determination of an election petition or appeal, as not duly elected as a Village Representative.".

19. Section 43 amended (Period within which election petition is to be lodged)

(1) Section 43, heading—

Repeal

"is to"

Substitute

"and appeal must".

(2) Section 43—

Renumber the section as section 43(1).

(3) After section 43(1)—

Add

"(2) Despite section 24 of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484), notice of a motion for the purpose of an application for leave to appeal to the Court of Final Appeal under section 22(1)(c) of that Ordinance must be filed within 7 working days after the date of the judgment of the Court to be appealed from, and the applicant must give the opposite party 3 days' notice of his or her intended application at any time during the period of 7 working days."

20. Section 45 amended (Court to determine election petition)

(1) Section 45(3)—

Repeal

everything after "end of the"

Substitute

"trial of an election petition, the Court must announce its determination by means of a written judgment.".

(2) Section 45—

Repeal subsection (4).

21. Sections 45A and 45B added

After section 45—

Add

"45A. Court's determination of election petition suspended before deadline of appeal

The effect of the determination of the Court of an election petition is suspended until the expiry of the period within which notice of a motion for the purpose of an application for leave to appeal to the Court of Final Appeal against the determination may be filed under section 43(2).

45B. Court of Final Appeal's determination

At the end of the hearing of an appeal against the determination of the Court of an election petition, the Court of Final Appeal must—

- (a) determine—
 - (i) if the election petition relates to an election that was not contested—
 - (A) whether the decision of the Returning Officer as to the validity of the relevant nomination was correct; and
 - (B) if the decision was not correct, whether the person declared to have been elected in that election was or was not duly elected;
 - (ii) if the election petition relates to an election that was contested—
 - (A) whether the person whose election is questioned was or was not duly elected; and
 - (B) if the person was not duly elected, whether some other person was duly elected in place of the person; and
- (b) announce its determination by means of a written judgment.".

22. Section 49 substituted

Section 49—

Repeal the section Substitute

"49. Acts of person not invalid if determined not duly elected

If the Court or the Court of Final Appeal determines that a person who was originally declared to have been duly elected as a Village Representative for a Village at an election was not duly elected as the Village Representative for the Village, the determination does not invalidate acts purporting to have been done by the person as the Village Representative for the Village before the date of the determination."

23. Section 50 amended (What is to happen if a Village Representative is determined not duly elected)

(1) Section 50(1)—

Repeal

everything after "a person"

Substitute

"who was declared under section 36 as duly elected as a Village Representative was not duly elected as a Village Representative—

- (a) subject to subsection (1A), that person ceases to be a Village Representative; and
- (b) subject to subsection (2), that person's office as a Village Representative becomes vacant from the date of the determination.".
- (2) After section 50(1)—

Add

"(1A) If—

(a) the Court determines that a person who was declared under section 36 as duly elected as a Village Representative was not duly elected as a Village Representative; and

(b) the person lodges an appeal under section 22(1)(c) of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484) against the determination,

the person continues, subject to subsection (3), to be a Village Representative.".

(3) After section 50(2)—

Add

- "(3) If, on the hearing of an appeal against the determination of the Court of an election petition, the Court of Final Appeal determines that a person who was declared under section 36 as duly elected as a Village Representative was not duly elected as a Village Representative—
 - (a) that person ceases to be a Village Representative; and
 - (b) subject to subsection (4), that person's office as a Village Representative becomes vacant from the date of the determination of the Court of Final Appeal.
 - (4) If, on the hearing of an appeal against the determination of the Court of an election petition, the Court of Final Appeal determines that a person was duly elected as a Village Representative in place of a person that the Court of Final Appeal has determined not to have been duly elected as a Village Representative, the first-mentioned person becomes a Village Representative from the date of the determination of the Court of Final Appeal.".

Division 5

Amendments to Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484)

24. Part II, Division 2 heading amended

Part II, Division 2, heading—

Repeal

"Chief Executive".

25. Section 22 amended (Civil appeals)

(1) Section 22(1)(c)(i)—

Repeal

"or".

(2) Section 22(1)(c)(ii)—

Repeal

"Executive."

Substitute

"Executive;".

(3) After section 22(1)(c)(ii)—

Add

- "(iii) a determination of the Court of First Instance under section 67 of the Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542);
 - (iv) a judgment or order of the Court of First Instance in—
 - (A) an application for judicial review under section 21K of the High Court Ordinance (Cap. 4); or

- (B) any other proceedings under that Ordinance, which put in issue whether a candidate declared under section 58 of the Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542) as duly elected at an election can lawfully assume the office of a Member of the Legislative Council;
- (v) a determination of the Court of First Instance under section 55 of the District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547);
- (vi) a judgment or order of the Court of First Instance in—
 - (A) an application for judicial review under section 21K of the High Court Ordinance (Cap. 4); or
 - (B) any other proceedings under that Ordinance, which put in issue whether a candidate declared under section 46 of the District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547) as duly elected at an election can lawfully assume the office of the elected member of the District Council constituency concerned;
- (vii) a determination of the Court of First Instance under section 45 of the Village Representative Election Ordinance (Cap. 576); or
- (viii) a judgment or order of the Court of First Instance in—
 - (A) an application for judicial review under section 21K of the High Court Ordinance (Cap. 4); or

(B) any other proceedings under that Ordinance, which put in issue whether a candidate declared under section 36 of the Village Representative Election Ordinance (Cap. 576) as duly elected at an election can lawfully assume the office of the Village Representative for the village concerned.".

Part 3

Amendments Relating to Promotional Letters Sent by Candidates

Division 1

Enactments Amended

26. Enactments amended

The enactments specified in Divisions 2 to 5 are amended as set out in those Divisions.

Division 2

Amendment to Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542)

27. Section 43 amended (Candidates entitled to send letter to electors free of postage)

After section 43(4)—

Add

- "(4A) A letter sent under this section by or on behalf of a list of candidates which is validly nominated for a geographical constituency may contain information on one single list of candidates which is validly nominated for the District Council (second) functional constituency.
 - (4B) A letter sent under this section by or on behalf of a list of candidates which is validly nominated for the District Council (second) functional constituency may contain information on one single list of candidates

- which is validly nominated for any geographical constituency.
- (4C) A letter sent under this section by or on behalf of a candidate who is validly nominated for the Labour functional constituency may contain information on any other candidate who is also validly nominated for that constituency.
- (4D) A letter which contains information on any candidate or list of candidates under subsection (4A), (4B) or (4C) is not to be regarded, for the purposes of subsections (1) and (2), as being sent by or on behalf of that candidate or list of candidates."

Division 3

Amendment to Chief Executive Election Ordinance (Cap. 569)

28. Schedule, section 38 amended (Subsector candidates entitled to send letters to voters free of postage)

The Schedule, after section 38(2)—

Add

- "(2A) A letter sent under subsection (1) by a candidate who is validly nominated at a subsector election—
 - (a) may contain information on any other candidate who is also validly nominated at that election; and
 - (b) is, if it contains any information mentioned in paragraph (a), not to be regarded, for the purposes of subsection (1), as being sent by that other candidate.".

Division 4

Amendment to Electoral Affairs Commission (Electoral Procedure) (Legislative Council) Regulation (Cap. 541 sub. leg. D)

29. Section 101A amended (Letters that may be sent free of postage by candidates)

Section 101A(1)(b), before "contain"—

Add

"subject to section 43(4A), (4B) and (4C) of the Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542),".

Division 5

Amendment to Electoral Affairs Commission (Electoral Procedure) (Election Committee) Regulation (Cap. 541 sub. leg. I)

30. Section 99 amended (Letters that may be sent free of postage by candidates)

Section 99(1)(b), before "contain"—

Add

"subject to section 38(2A) of the Schedule to the Chief Executive Election Ordinance (Cap. 569),".

Part 4

Amendments Relating to Financial Assistance to Candidates in District Council Election

31. District Councils Ordinance amended

The District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547) is amended as set out in sections 32 and 33.

32. Section 60D amended (Amount payable as financial assistance)

(1) Section 60D(1)—

Repeal

"lower"

Substitute

"lowest".

(2) Section 60D(1)—

Repeal paragraph (b)

Substitute

- "(b) 50% of the maximum amount of election expenses that can be incurred by or on behalf of the candidate under section 3 of the Maximum Amount of Election Expenses (District Council Election) Regulation (Cap. 554 sub. leg. C);
 - (c) the declared election expenses of the candidate.".
- (3) Section 60D(2)—

Repeal

"lower"

Substitute

"lowest".

Part 4 Clause 33

(4) Section 60D(2)—

Repeal paragraph (b)

Substitute

- "(b) 50% of the maximum amount of election expenses that can be incurred by or on behalf of the candidate under section 3 of the Maximum Amount of Election Expenses (District Council Election) Regulation (Cap. 554 sub. leg. C);
 - (c) the declared election expenses of the candidate.".

33. Schedule 7 amended (Financial assistance: specified rate)

Schedule 7—

Repeal

"\$10"

Substitute

"\$12".

Part 5 Clause 34

Part 5

Amendment Relating to Election Expenses Limit for Chief Executive Election

34. Maximum Amount of Election Expenses (Chief Executive Election) Regulation amended

The Maximum Amount of Election Expenses (Chief Executive Election) Regulation (Cap. 554 sub. leg. A) is amended as set out in section 35.

35. Section 2 amended (Maximum amount of election expenses)

Section 2—

Repeal

"\$9,500,000"

Substitute

"\$13,000,000".

Part 6 Clause 36

Part 6

Amendment Relating to Election Expenses Limit for District Council Election

36. Maximum Amount of Election Expenses (District Council Election) Regulation amended

The Maximum Amount of Election Expenses (District Council Election) Regulation (Cap. 554 sub. leg. C) is amended as set out in section 37.

37. Section 3 amended (Maximum amount of election expenses)

Section 3—

Repeal

"\$48,000"

Substitute

"\$53,800".

Part 7 Clause 38

Part 7

Amendment Relating to Constituent in Education Subsector of Election Committee

38. Chief Executive Election Ordinance amended

The Chief Executive Election Ordinance (Cap. 569) is amended as set out in section 39.

39. Schedule, section 2 amended (How Election Committee is to be constituted)

The Schedule, section 2, Table 5, item 6, column 3, paragraph (4)—

Repeal subparagraph (d)

Substitute

"(d) Hong Chi Association—Hong Chi Pinehill Integrated Vocational Training Centre;".

Explanatory Memorandum Paragraph 1

Explanatory Memorandum

The object of this Bill is to amend various pieces of legislation for the purposes set out in the long title.

Part 1 of the Bill

2. Clause 1 sets out the short title and provides for commencement.

Part 2 of the Bill

- 3. Clauses 3 to 25 amend the Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542), the District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547), the Village Representative Election Ordinance (Cap. 576) and the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484).
- 4. Under current legislation, an election to return a Member of the Legislative Council, an elected member of a District Council and a Village Representative may be questioned by an election petition. The determination of the Court of First Instance of an election petition is final and is not subject to appeal.
- 5. The amendments in clauses 3 to 25 allow an appeal to be lodged directly to the Court of Final Appeal from the determination of the Court of First Instance of an election petition.

Part 3 of the Bill

6. Clauses 27 and 29 amend the Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542) and the Electoral Affairs Commission (Electoral Procedure) (Legislative Council) Regulation (Cap. 541 sub. leg. D) to allow letters sent free of postage by certain categories of candidates under the Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542) to include information on certain other candidates.

Explanatory Memorandum Paragraph 7

7. Clauses 28 and 30 amend the Chief Executive Election Ordinance (Cap. 569) and the Electoral Affairs Commission (Electoral Procedure) (Election Committee) Regulation (Cap. 541 sub. leg. I) to allow letters sent free of postage by a candidate in a Labour subsector election to include information on any other candidate in the same subsector.

Part 4 of the Bill

8. Clauses 32 and 33 amend the District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547) to increase the amount of financial assistance payable by the Government to candidates in District Council elections.

Part 5 of the Bill

9. Clause 35 amends the Maximum Amount of Election Expenses (Chief Executive Election) Regulation (Cap. 554 sub. leg. A) to raise the upper limit of election expenses that can be incurred by or on behalf of a candidate in a Chief Executive election.

Part 6 of the Bill

10. Clause 37 amends the Maximum Amount of Election Expenses (District Council Election) Regulation (Cap. 554 sub. leg. C) to raise the upper limit of election expenses that can be incurred by or on behalf of a candidate in a District Council election.

Part 7 of the Bill

11. Clause 39 amends the Chief Executive Election Ordinance (Cap. 569) to reflect the change of the name of a constituent in a subsector.