

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(3) 168/11-12

Ref : CB(3)/M/MM

Tel : 3919 3300

Date : 24 November 2011

From : Clerk to the Legislative Council

To : All Members of the Legislative Council

Council meeting of 30 November 2011

**Amendments to motion on
“Comprehensively reviewing and perfecting the
Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme”**

Further to LC Paper No. CB(3) 148/11-12 issued on 17 November 2011, five Members (Hon LI Fung-ying, Hon IP Wai-ming, Hon IP Kwok-him, Hon Miriam LAU and Hon WONG Yuk-man) have respectively given notices of their intention to move separate amendments to Hon WONG Sing-chi's motion on “Comprehensively reviewing and perfecting the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme” scheduled for the Council meeting of 30 November 2011. As directed by the President, the respective amendments will be printed in the terms in which they were handed in on the Agenda of the Council.

2. The President will order a joint debate on the above motion and amendments. To assist Members in debating the motion and amendments, I set out below the procedure to be followed during the debate:

- (a) the President calls Hon WONG Sing-chi to speak and move his motion;
- (b) the President proposes the question on Hon WONG Sing-chi's motion;
- (c) the President calls upon the five Members, who intend to move amendments, to speak in the following order, but no amendment is to be moved at this stage:

- (i) Hon LI Fung-ying;
 - (ii) Hon IP Wai-ming;
 - (iii) Hon IP Kwok-him;
 - (iv) Hon Miriam LAU; and
 - (v) Hon WONG Yuk-man;
- (d) the President calls upon the designated public officer(s) to speak;
- (e) the President invites other Members to speak;
- (f) the President gives leave to Hon WONG Sing-chi to speak for the second time on the amendments;
- (g) the President calls upon the designated public officer(s) again to speak;
- (h) in accordance with Rule 34(5) of the Rules of Procedure, the President has decided that he will call upon the five Members to move their respective amendments in the order set out in paragraph (c) above. The President invites Hon LI Fung-ying to move her amendment to the motion, and forthwith proposes and puts to vote the question on Hon LI Fung-ying's amendment;
- (i) after Hon LI Fung-ying's amendment has been voted upon, the President deals with the other four amendments; and
- (j) after all amendments have been dealt with, the President calls upon Hon WONG Sing-chi to reply. Thereafter, the President puts to vote the question on Hon WONG Sing-chi's motion, or his motion as amended, as the case may be.

3. For Members' ease of reference, the terms of the original motion and of the motion, if amended, are set out in the **Appendix**.

(Mrs Justina LAM)
for Clerk to the Legislative Council

Encl.

(Translation)

**Motion debate on
“Comprehensively reviewing and perfecting the
Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme”
to be held at the Council meeting
of 30 November 2011**

1. Hon WONG Sing-chi’s original motion

That travelling expenses are an important item of daily expenses borne by the vast number of employees and job-seekers in Hong Kong; the Government announced last year the idea of the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme (‘WITSS’) and started to receive applications in October this year, but there are still voices in society calling for further review and improvement of WITSS, so that more low-income workers and grass-root people may benefit from WITSS; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) immediately review afresh all the details of WITSS, including simplifying and improving its application procedure, as well as re-assessing and announcing the latest number of people who will benefit from WITSS, instead of waiting for a year to conduct a mid-term review;
- (b) relax the eligibility criteria of WITSS, adopt a dual-track approach for each unit of application and relax the income and asset limits, so as to achieve the purposes of subsidizing low-income grass-root employees and promoting employment;
- (c) review the amount of monthly allowance per person under WITSS, and consider raising the amount having regard to actual living circumstances; and
- (d) study including the Job Search Allowance provided under the former Transport Support Scheme in WITSS, and refrain from tightening the eligibility requirements for applicants for the Job Search Allowance and from lowering the ceiling of reimbursement.

2. Motion as amended by Hon LI Fung-ying

That ~~travelling expenses are an important item of daily expenses borne by the vast number of employees and job-seekers in Hong Kong~~ *the fares of public transport in Hong Kong are high, constituting a heavy burden on the grassroots*; the Government announced last year ~~the idea of the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme ('WITSS')~~ and started to receive applications in October this year, but *the application requirements are harsh, and* there are still voices in society calling for further review and improvement of WITSS, so that more low-income workers and grass-root people may benefit from WITSS; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) immediately review afresh all the details of WITSS, including simplifying and improving its application procedure, as well as re-assessing and announcing the latest number of people who will benefit from WITSS, instead of waiting for a year to conduct a mid-term review;
- (b) relax the eligibility criteria of WITSS, ~~adopt a dual-track approach for each unit of application and relax the income and asset limits~~ *abolish the requirement regarding applicants' household asset test, and replace it with applicants' remunerations as the vetting and approval criteria*, so as to achieve the purposes of subsidizing low-income grass-root employees and promoting employment;
- (c) review the amount of monthly allowance per person under WITSS, and consider raising the amount having regard to actual living circumstances; and
- (d) study including the Job Search Allowance provided under the former Transport Support Scheme in WITSS, and refrain from tightening the eligibility requirements for applicants for the Job Search Allowance and from lowering the ceiling of reimbursement.

Note: Hon LI Fung-ying's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

3. Motion as amended by Hon IP Wai-ming

That, *given that* travelling expenses are an important item of daily expenses borne by the vast number of employees and job-seekers in Hong Kong; ~~the Government,~~ *the Government thus* announced last year the idea of the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme ('WITSS') and started to receive

applications in October this year, but there are still voices in society calling for further review and improvement of WITSS, so that more low-income workers and grass-root people may benefit from WITSS; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) immediately review afresh all the details of WITSS, including simplifying and improving its application procedure, as well as re-assessing and announcing the latest number of people who will benefit from WITSS, instead of waiting for a year to conduct a mid-term review;
- (b) relax the eligibility criteria of WITSS, adopt a dual-track approach for each unit of application ~~and~~, relax the income and asset limits, ***including specifying the exclusion of the cash value of insurance policies, severance payments and long service payments, etc., from asset calculation, and consider calculating applicants' total assets and incomes on the basis of their household expenditure patterns***, so as to achieve the purposes of subsidizing low-income grass-root employees and promoting employment;
- (c) review the amount of monthly allowance per person under WITSS, and consider raising the amount having regard to actual living circumstances; ~~and~~
- (d) study including the Job Search Allowance provided under the former Transport Support Scheme in WITSS, and refrain from tightening the eligibility requirements for applicants for the Job Search Allowance and from lowering the ceiling of reimbursement;
- (e) ***to introduce employment and livelihood protection and activate the assistance mechanism of the Community Care Fund, so as to assist grass-root workers who fall outside government labour and welfare protection in obtaining wage subsidies and basic livelihood protection, including offering subsidy support to people with monthly personal incomes below \$6,500 who are ineligible for WITSS on a household basis; and***
- (f) ***to formulate a comprehensive review mechanism for the regular and comprehensive review of WITSS-related matters and periodic adjustments.***

Note: Hon IP Wai-ming's amendment is marked in ***bold and italic type*** or with deletion line.

4. Motion as amended by Hon IP Kwok-him

That ~~travelling expenses~~ are *the public transport network in Hong Kong is well-developed, but, as fares are high, travelling expenses constitute* an important item of daily expenses borne by the vast number of employees and job-seekers in Hong Kong; the Government announced last year the idea of the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme ('WITSS') and started to receive applications in October this year, but there are still voices in society calling for further review and improvement of WITSS, so that more low-income workers and grass-root people may benefit from WITSS; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) immediately review afresh all the details of WITSS, including simplifying and improving its application procedure, as well as re-assessing and announcing the latest number of people who will benefit from WITSS, instead of waiting for a year to conduct a mid-term review;
- (b) relax the eligibility criteria of WITSS, adopt a dual-track approach for each unit of application and relax the income and asset limits, so as to achieve the purposes of subsidizing low-income grass-root employees and promoting employment;
- (c) review the amount of monthly allowance per person under WITSS, and consider raising the amount having regard to actual living circumstances; ~~and~~
- (d) study including the Job Search Allowance provided under the former Transport Support Scheme in WITSS, and refrain from tightening the eligibility requirements for applicants for the Job Search Allowance and from lowering the ceiling of reimbursement; *and*
- (e) *in the long run, study replacing WITSS by a 'maintenance grant scheme for low-income families', so as to enable more families whose incomes are on the low side but who are ineligible for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance to receive maintenance grant.*

Note: Hon IP Kwok-him's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

5. Motion as amended by Hon Miriam LAU

That, *given that* travelling expenses are an important item of daily expenses borne by the vast number of employees and job-seekers in Hong Kong, *and such expenses even constitute a heavy financial burden on grass-root people with low incomes*; the Government announced last year the idea of the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme ('WITSS') and started to receive applications in October this year, but there are still voices in society calling for further review and improvement of WITSS, so that more low-income workers and grass-root people may benefit from WITSS; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) immediately review afresh all the details of WITSS, including simplifying and improving its application procedure, as well as re-assessing and announcing the latest number of people who will benefit from WITSS, instead of waiting for a year to conduct a mid-term review;
- (b) relax the eligibility criteria of WITSS, adopt a dual-track approach for each unit of application ~~and~~, relax the income and asset limits, *and rationalize the unreasonable arrangement of small discrepancies in household income limits among families with two or more members*, so as to achieve the purposes of subsidizing low-income grass-root employees and promoting employment;
- (c) review the amount of monthly allowance per person under WITSS, and consider raising the amount having regard to actual living circumstances; and
- (d) study including the Job Search Allowance provided under the former Transport Support Scheme in WITSS, and refrain from tightening the eligibility requirements for applicants for the Job Search Allowance and from lowering the ceiling of reimbursement.

Note: Hon Miriam LAU's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

6. Motion as amended by Hon WONG Yuk-man

That travelling expenses are an important item of daily expenses borne by the vast number of employees and job-seekers in Hong Kong; the Government announced last year the idea of the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme ('WITSS') and started to receive applications in October this year, but there are

still voices in society calling for further review and improvement of WITSS, so that more low-income workers and grass-root people may benefit from WITSS; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) immediately review afresh all the details of WITSS, including simplifying and improving its application procedure, as well as re-assessing and announcing the latest number of people who will benefit from WITSS, instead of waiting for a year to conduct a mid-term review;
- (b) ~~relax~~ **adopt** the eligibility criteria of WITSS, ~~adopt a dual-track approach for each~~ **the former Transport Support Scheme with individual as the** unit of application and relax the income and asset limits **of the unit of application concerned**, so as to achieve the purposes of subsidizing low-income grass-root employees and promoting employment;
- (c) review **annually** the amount of monthly allowance per person under WITSS, ~~and consider raising~~ **on the basis of commodity prices to align it with the fare adjustment mechanism that allows fares to go upwards and downwards, and raise** the amount having regard to actual living circumstances; and
- (d) study including the Job Search Allowance provided under the former Transport Support Scheme in WITSS, and refrain from tightening the eligibility requirements for applicants for the Job Search Allowance and from lowering the ceiling of reimbursement.

Note: Hon WONG Yuk-man's amendment is marked in ***bold and italic type*** or with deletion line.