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Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(3) 126/12-13

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From : Clerk to the Legislative Council

To : All Members of the Legislative Council

Council meeting of 14 November 2012

**Amendments to motion on
“Alleviating poverty”**

Further to LC Paper No. CB(3) 100/12-13 issued on 2 November 2012, 11 Members (Hon Frederick FUNG, Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG, Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che, Hon TAM Yiu-chung, Hon Michael TIEN, Hon Albert HO, Hon Frankie YICK, Hon Christopher CHEUNG, Hon Alan LEONG, Hon Albert CHAN and Hon Kenneth LEUNG) have respectively given notices of their intention to move separate amendments to Hon CHAN Yuen-han’s motion on “Alleviating poverty” scheduled for the Council meeting of 14 November 2012. 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 the 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 upon Hon CHAN Yuen-han to speak and move her motion;
- (b) the President proposes the question on Hon CHAN Yuen-han’s motion;
- (c) the President calls upon the 11 Members who intend to move amendments to speak in the following order but no amendment is to be moved at this stage:
 - (i) Hon Frederick FUNG;

- (ii) Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG;
 - (iii) Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che;
 - (iv) Hon TAM Yiu-chung;
 - (v) Hon Michael TIEN;
 - (vi) Hon Albert HO;
 - (vii) Hon Frankie YICK;
 - (viii) Hon Christopher CHEUNG;
 - (ix) Hon Alan LEONG;
 - (x) Hon Albert CHAN; and
 - (xi) Hon Kenneth LEUNG;
- (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 CHAN Yuen-han to speak for the second time on the amendments;
 - (g) the President calls upon the designated public officer(s) to speak again;
 - (h) in accordance with Rule 34(5) of the Rules of Procedure, the President has decided that he will call upon the 11 Members to move their respective amendments in the order set out in paragraph (c) above. The President invites Hon Frederick FUNG to move his amendment to the motion, and forthwith proposes and puts to vote the question on Hon Frederick FUNG's amendment;
 - (i) after Hon Frederick FUNG's amendment has been voted upon, the President deals with the other 10 amendments; and
 - (j) after all amendments have been dealt with, the President calls upon Hon CHAN Yuen-han to reply. Thereafter, the President puts to vote the question on Hon CHAN Yuen-han's motion, or her 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**.

(Odelia LEUNG)
for Clerk to the Legislative Council

Encl.

(Translation)

**Motion debate on
“Alleviating poverty”
to be held at the Council meeting of 14 November 2012**

1. Hon CHAN Yuen-han’s original motion

That since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government’s poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria;
- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc.; and
- (e) improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation.

2. Motion as amended by Hon Frederick FUNG

That, *the seriously lopsided social and economic policies in the past have led to the worsening of the disparity between the rich and the poor, continuous increase in the population in poverty and aggravation of class conflicts in society*; since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes ~~for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the,~~ *and the latest* Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; *while* the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, ~~but~~ the authorities *must formulate comprehensive and long-term policies to allocate social resources and wealth effectively and narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, and* must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria, *and set up an evaluation mechanism to examine the possible impact of all policies and measures of the Government on the disparity between the rich and the poor before their introduction*;
- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ('CSSA') system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc., *and introduce the concept of a second safety net on top of the CSSA system*; and
- (e) *improve the economic structure, develop a diversified economy, and* improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge

profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation.

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

3. Motion as amended by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG

That *the poverty problem in Hong Kong is serious*; since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria;
- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc.; ~~and~~
- (e) *expeditiously conduct studies and formulate proposals on providing members of the public with retirement, disability, death and unemployment protection in the form of social insurance; and*
- (~~e~~)(f) improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge

profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation.

Note: Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

4. Motion as amended by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che

That, *given that the poverty problem in Hong Kong is serious*, since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report ~~regularly~~ *every half year* to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) ~~expeditiously establish a poverty line~~ *set a poverty line within one year after the establishment of the Commission on Poverty, with 60% of the median household income as the yardstick*, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria;
- (c) introduce new *and adjust* poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance *and the upward adjustment of the monthly income limits under the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme*, to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively ~~review~~ *reform* the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices ~~and~~, *abolishing the system of 'declaration of not providing support to parents' and applications 'on a household basis', as well as raising* the amount of rent allowance, etc.; ~~and~~

- (e) improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax *and negative income tax*, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation; *and*
- (f) *since the current absence of rent control has imposed a heavy burden on the grassroots, reinstate rent control to prevent landlords from increasing rents drastically and terminating tenancy agreements arbitrarily, so as to protect the rights and interests of grassroots tenants.*

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

5. Motion as amended by Hon TAM Yiu-chung

That, *given that the poverty problem has been plaguing the society for years*, since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

Policy-making mechanism -

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria;

Employment assistance -

- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;
- (d) *through the promotion of the local community economy and active support for social enterprises, etc., create more jobs suitable for grassroots workers;*
- (e) *comprehensively strengthen the in-service training for the middle-aged and the employment training for young people, increase the number of retraining places, and raise the amounts of subsidies for continuing education;*
- (f) *strengthen the assistance for ethnic minorities in securing employment and resolving their livelihood difficulties, including establishing additional community support service centres for ethnic minorities, reviewing the entry requirement in respect of Chinese language proficiency for civil service posts, and employing more ethnic minorities as civil servants;*
- (g) *comprehensively strengthen child care and after-school care services, and extend the scope of the plans subsidizing child care services, so as to enable parents of low-income families to go out to work without worries;*

Financial assistance -

- ~~(d)~~(h) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc.; ~~and~~
- (i) *improve the existing Old Age Allowance ('OAA') system, including abolishing the existing asset and income test for application for Normal OAA, allowing elderly recipients of Disability Allowance to receive OAA at the same time, and expeditiously implementing the 'Guangdong Scheme' and extending it to Fujian Province;*
- (j) *extend the service scope of the subsidy for dental services for the elderly programme under the Community Care Fund and relax its eligibility requirements;*
- (k) *set up a 'subsidy system for carers of persons with disabilities', so as to mitigate the impact on the livelihood of carers due to their inability to go out to work;*

- (l) *introduce ‘healthcare vouchers for children’, so as to mitigate grassroot families’ burden arising from their children’s healthcare expenses;*
- (m) *provide full level of assistance to all students who have passed the means test under the Student Travel Subsidy Scheme;*
- (n) *reduce the burden of loan interest on students, set an interest rate ceiling for the Non-means Tested Loan Scheme at 2.5%, and replace the means-tested loans with interest-free loans;*
- (o) *build more public rental housing flats and provide rent allowance to assist applicants on the Waiting List who meet the income and asset requirements; and*

Social distribution of wealth -

- (e)(p) improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation.

Note: Hon TAM Yiu-chung’s amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

6. Motion as amended by Hon Michael TIEN

That *Hong Kong has all along lacked an objective mechanism for measuring poverty*; since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government’s poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria;
- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, ~~including the provision of employment living allowance,~~ to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc.; and
- (e) ~~improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits~~ ***comprehensively review the tax regime, and conduct a study on broadening the tax base,*** with a view to increasing ***recurrent*** tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation.

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

7. Motion as amended by Hon Albert HO

That, ***given that*** since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; ***the United Nations pointed out as early as 2009 that Hong Kong was the city with the most serious disparity between the rich and the poor in the whole of Asia, and Hong Kong ranked first among all developed places in the world in terms of the disparity between the rich and the poor, reflecting the dire urgency of resolving the disparity between the rich and the poor;*** the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria, ***and formulate a comprehensive policy on poverty eradication;***
- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc.; ~~and~~
- (e) improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation, ***and conduct studies on implementing negative income tax in order to provide subsidies to low-income people, so as to assist them in getting out of poverty; and***
- (f) ***establish a comprehensive retirement protection system to ensure basic protection for the livelihood of the elderly, so as to improve the situation of elderly poverty.***

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

8. Motion as amended by Hon Frankie YICK

That since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; ***given that*** the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong,

but the authorities must also ~~conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation~~ *open up new resources for the purpose of alleviating poverty*; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria;
- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc., *and introduce a mechanism for encouraging recipients to re-enter the labour market and assisting them in achieving self-reliance, so that they can gradually get rid of poverty, build up self-confidence and contribute to society*; and
- (e) ~~improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and~~ *set aside as far as possible the investment income portion in the Exchange Fund for economic and social development as well as* meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation.

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

9. Motion as amended by Hon Christopher CHEUNG

That since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of

alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, ~~but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:~~

- (a) ~~request *requests* the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible, *implement the proposed measures after obtaining a consensus in society*, and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;~~
- (b) ~~expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria;~~
- (c) ~~introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;~~
- (d) ~~comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc.; and~~
- (e) ~~improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation.~~

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

10. Motion as amended by Hon Alan LEONG

That since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria, *e.g. the respective extent of reduction of the population in poverty and the Gini Coefficient every year*;
- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc.; ~~and~~
- (e) improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation; *and*
- (f) *adopt the recommendations in the Report of the Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation noted by the Fourth Legislative Council, and put in place the 15 recommendations of the Report on poverty alleviation measures, most of which have yet to be implemented.*

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

11. Motion as amended by Hon Albert CHAN

That since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria;
- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc.; ~~and~~
- (e) improve the tax regime by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation; *and*
- (f) *disburse \$8,000 to the Hong Kong citizens in the 2013-2014 financial year, so as to alleviate the pressure on the livelihood of the poor.*

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

12. Motion as amended by Hon Kenneth LEUNG

That since the 1970s, the Census and Statistics Department has computed the Gini Coefficient based on household incomes for reflecting the disparity between the rich and the poor in Hong Kong; the Gini Coefficient announced in June this year reached 0.537, which hit a new record high in 40 years, indicating a worsening trend in the disparity between the rich and the poor, and reflecting the failure of the Government's poverty alleviation measures to achieve their effectiveness in the past; the current-term Government has decided to establish the Commission on Poverty, demonstrating its intention of alleviating the poverty situation in Hong Kong, but the authorities must also conduct studies on opening up new resources for poverty alleviation; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to:

- (a) request the Commission on Poverty to commence work as early as possible and report regularly to the Legislative Council on its work progress;
- (b) expeditiously establish a poverty line, so that the Government and the society may compile statistics on the number of people in poverty and assess the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures by means of objective and open criteria;
- (c) introduce new poverty alleviation measures, including the provision of employment living allowance, to assist the working poor;
- (d) comprehensively review the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance system, including the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices and the amount of rent allowance, etc.; and
- (e) improve the tax regime ~~by, for example, exploring the introduction of a capital gains tax, and implementing a progressive profits tax system under which higher rates of tax apply to organizations reaping huge profits, with a view to increasing tax revenue and meeting new expenditure for poverty alleviation,~~ ***conduct studies on various ways to broaden the tax base, and submit the study report to the Legislative Council.***

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