

Bills Committee
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
Email: yspang@legco.gov.hk

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Submission to Bills Committee on Promotion of Recycling and Proper Disposal
(Product Container) (Amendment) Bill 2015

The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM) has a history of working in environmental management dating back to 1895 in the UK. The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management Hong Kong (CIWEM HK) with members of CIWEM residing in Hong Kong has been operating autonomously since 1987 providing a platform for engineers and scientists working in air quality, noise, water quality, waste management, energy, and natural conservation that concerns the people of the territory and the surrounding regions. We have provided delegation teams to study waste management practices in region (including Taiwan, Japan, Seoul and PRC) and have organized technical seminars and visits on the subject. On behalf of CIWEM HK, we would like to provide our views on Bill Amendment as follows:

CIWEM HK supports the policy directions to take multiple concurrent actions to prevent and reduce waste, mobilize the community participation and fill missing gaps in Hong Kong's waste-related infrastructure. We agree that waste charging is indispensable and we support, in principle, a mandatory producer responsibility scheme on product containers starting with glass beverage containers. We support the proposed amendments to the Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance on charging of recycling levies and exemption as well as the amendment to the Waste Disposal Ordinance on proper treatment of waste glass containers through licensed contractors.

However, the proposed levy appears to be a penalty for discouraging the use of glass container. It does not offer alternative to glass and it only provides little incentive for avoidance as consumers will not be charged directly (unlike the plastic shopping bag levy). CIWEM HK would suggest that the proposed legislation be strengthened on the arrangements for segregation by end-users (e.g. mandatory segregation or charging for improper disposal) and be more transparent on how the levy can provide incentive for end-user recycling. Proper enforcement measures should be in place with regard to tracking of business record and evaluation of the genuine levy.

Yours Sustainably,

CIWEM HK Committee 2015/16

cc Mr K.S. Wong – Secretary for the Environment, HKSAR Government
Ms Christine Loh – Under Secretary for the Environment
Ir Dr Hon Wai-kyok Lo - Legislative Council Member, Engineering Functional Constituency