

政府總部
民政事務局

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GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT
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本局檔號 OUR REF. : HAB/CR 1/20/158
來函檔號 YOUR REF. : CB2/BC/4/14
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14 December 2015

Miss Josephine So
Clerk to Bills Committee
Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Miss So,

Chinese Permanent Cemeteries (Amendment) Bill 2015

**Submission on the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries
(Amendment) Bill 2015 from the Civic Party**

Your letter dated 30 November 2015 (ref: CB2/BC/4/14) refers. Regarding the submission on the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries (Amendment) Bill 2015 (the Bill) from the Civic Party (LC Paper No. CB(2)368/15-16(01)), please find our reply below.

2. We thank the Civic Party for supporting in principle various amendments proposed in the Bill. We believe that, upon the passage of the proposed amendments, facilities in the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries (CPC) can be better utilised, rendering the public greater flexibility and addressing public demand for cemetery facilities.
3. Upon enactment of the Bill, the Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries (the Board) will step up its publicity efforts on the relaxation of restrictions regarding the subsequent interment of cremated ashes and regarding the maximum number of sets of cremated ashes that can be interred in the same niche. The publicity will be carried out through different channels, including the website, briefing sessions for the allotment of niches, information provided in application documents, notes to applicants and receipts, etc. These measures aim to encourage burial or deposit of additional cremated ashes in a grave space or a niche for the optimal use of CPC facilities.

4. With regard to subsequent interment of the deceased in close relationship with the first deceased, the Civic Party suggested that the Board should follow the arrangements adopted by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). The proposal is compatible with the objectives and purposes of the Bill. We are now seeking legal advice on the proposal and will actively consider it.

5. Regardless of whether the proposals can be implemented, subsequent interment into a CPC ordinary niche is not subject to the definition of "relative" under the existing legislation. Subsequent interment of cremated ashes of any person into an ordinary niche will be allowed with the consent of the permittee of that niche. That said, the definition of "relative" as proposed in the Bill, which is applicable to family niches, has already provided a much broader definition than that of "kinship" as adopted by the FEHD (please refer to our earlier submission, LC Paper No. CB(2)323/15-16(02)).

6. Regarding the charitable donation of the Board, the Board has been, through its annual donation, providing funding to charitable organisations on improvement works and procurement of equipment so as to enhance the services provided by those organisations. The Board has been providing funding, also through its donation, to charitable organisations for organising activities on "community building" or "life and death education". After the Bill is passed, the Board will further publicise the funding scope of its charitable donation to promote community interests. As in the past, it will consider funding applications having regard to the overall design, content and benefits of the proposed projects, as well as the past performance of the applicants.

7. We hope that the Bill will be passed by the Legislative Council so that the demand for niches in Hong Kong can be addressed through various proposed measures.

Yours faithfully,



(Miss Gloria Lo)
for Secretary for Home Affairs