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19 June 2015

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Ms. Louisa YU
Clerk to panel on Health Services
Legislative Council Secretariat

Dear Ms. Yu,

Re: Legislative proposals to strength tobacco control

The CHEST Delegation Hong Kong and Macau fully supports the government's proposal to (a) increase the size of graphical health warnings of tobacco products to at least 85%; (b) implement smoking ban at bus interchanges at tunnel portal areas; and (c) prohibit e-cigarettes.

Graphical health warnings on cigarette products can arouse smokers' awareness on smoking related risks and increase their intentions to quit. It had been adopted by more than 100 countries and more countries (such as Australia, Canada, Nepal, Thailand and Uruguay) are introducing large-size graphic warnings. We support the action to increase the size of graphical warnings and propose that such warnings should include as many smoking related diseases as practical.

Tobacco smoke contains more than 70 types of carcinogenic chemicals and second hand smoke is by no means innocent as it contains over 40 types of carcinogens. It is estimated that over 600,000 people in the world die from second hand smoke related diseases every year. To safeguard their health and lives, every non-smoker should have the right to say "no" to second hand smoke. Our Delegation supports the proposal to further extended the smoking ban to more public places beyond the bus interchange at tunnel portal areas.

Under the strong promotions strategies, e-cigarette is publicized as a trendy product and smokers often mistake it as an aid to quit smoking. The US Food and Drug Administration confirmed that e-cigarette contained toxic and carcinogenic chemicals and the World Health Organization suggests smokers should not use it to assist smoking cessation. As e-cigarette is just starting to gain popularity in Hong Kong, we consider now as the golden time to impose strict regulation to curtail its growth at this very early stage.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. LAM Chi-leung David
President, CHEST Delegation Hong Kong and Macau Limited

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