

Bills Committee on Dutiable Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2017

Committee Stage Amendments proposed by Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

The Government's response to the Committee Stage Amendments ("CSAs") proposed by Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki is set out as follows.

Proposed amendment to the prescribed notice: inclusion of a health warning in the signage

2. Dr Hon Kwok has proposed to include the revised health warning statement "[u]nderage drinking poses serious health hazards" in the prescribed notice with the purpose of serving as a warning to consumers about the harm of alcohol to minors. The prescribed notice proposed would have to be displayed at a face-to-face distribution point in order to remind frontline staff of the legal requirement about the age of customers. If any dispute arises, customers' attention may also be drawn to the notice.

3. The objective of the Bill is to prohibit, in the course of business, the sale or supply of intoxicating liquor for the overall well-being of minors and to plug the loophole in the sale of intoxicating liquor to minors. The statutory control aims to impose requirements only on the sale or supply of intoxicating liquor, rather than to add any health warning. The purpose of the prescribed notice is **not** related to a health warning. Thus while we have no objection to the contents of the health warning itself, we consider the proposed amendment out of scope and **not relevant** to the subject matter of the Bill and to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates.

4. The Department of Health (DH) has been educating the public about alcohol-related harm, in particular among young people, by working with youth and parent groups, schools, healthcare professionals and relevant government bureaux/departments through various channels. DH will step up efforts to combat underage drinking and a series of public education and publicity activities will be implemented. After the enactment of the Bill, DH will continue to strengthen public literacy about the harmful effects of drinking, especially on youth, and about making alcohol-free choices as part of healthy living by enabling and facilitating partnerships among stakeholders.