

To: Chairman of the Subcommittee on Smoking (Public Health) (Notices)  
(Amendment) Order 2017

Dear Dr Hon Kwok,

Further to my preceding email to the Chairman of the Panel on Health Services in March 2017, I am writing to express my strong support to the Administration's legislative proposals for enlarging the graphic health warnings on tobacco product packets from the existing 50% to 85% and replacing the current six forms of health warnings to 12 new forms of health warnings.

I understand that some members were doubtful on the effectiveness of the proposal. It should be stressed that graphic health warnings on tobacco packets have been well-supported by empirical evidence as more effective for motivating smokers to quit, convincing youth not to start, and informing the public of the dangers of smoking (1). The World Health Organisation (WHO) considers it as "a cost-effective to increase public awareness of the health effects of tobacco use and to be effective in reducing tobacco consumption" (2). To maintain saliency and enhance impact, health warnings and messages should be rotated, and layouts and designs should be changed every 12 to 36 months (3). Yet, our existing six forms of health warnings have been in place since 2007. If some members still remain unconvinced by the effectiveness, this may be due to the wear-out effect experienced by smokers' and the public's overexposure to the same set of graphic warnings in the past decade. This in fact calls for action to introduce the 12 new forms of health warnings, thereby bringing about the novelty effect, and thus further increasing effectiveness.

**Diseases and deaths associated with cigarette smoking are preventable. With our rising healthcare costs along with ageing population, it is critical for us to act today and further our efforts in reducing the smoking population, particularly to ensure our youth staying tobacco-free and remain healthy -- as they will make up the labour force for supporting the aged population in the next 20 and 30 years.**

**Any delay in legislation is a denial to public health. For the health and well-being of our society, I call for Members' support to the amendments.**

Thank you.

Regards,

Mimi Chau  
Student, Master of Public Health  
School of Public Health  
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References:

- (1) <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/87/8/09-069575/en/>
- (2) <http://www.who.int/tobacco/healthwarningsdatabase/en/>
- (3) [http://www.who.int/fctc/treaty\\_instruments/adopted/Guidelines\\_Article\\_11\\_English.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/fctc/treaty_instruments/adopted/Guidelines_Article_11_English.pdf?ua=1)