



MSW charging
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to:

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Dear Chairman and members of Environmental Affairs Panel,

I am writing to express my support on the introduction of municipal solid waste (MSW) charges in Hong Kong. While I do not think the currently proposed rate of charge will be effective in changing the waste disposal behaviour of the majority of citizens, the availability of a variable rate MSW charge is an important first step in making the Hong Kong community to be aware of their own waste reduction responsibility. However, owing to the expected small effect in reducing waste for disposal by the charge, I suggest that the rate of charge (by volume and/or by weight) should be reviewed soon after the first year of implementation with a view to gradually raise it to an incentive level.

Second, to maximize the waste reduction effect of a waste charge, a comprehensive and user friendly waste recovery system is necessary. However, it is apparent that the operation of current public waste recovery facilities is not satisfactory. In addition, the waste (and recyclable) collection authority, namely, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) is neither answerable to the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) nor Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene (ACFEH) regarding their performance on recyclable collection. This is not an acceptable situation given the rising public demand on accountability. As a result, I suggest that in the short term, the operation of public waste recycling and recovery facilities should be formally put under the oversight of either ACE or ACFEH. In the long term, the waste and recyclable collection function of FEHD should be combined with other waste policy execution functions of the Environmental Protection Department to allow for more consistent and efficient implementation of waste related measures in Hong Kong.

Yours faithfully,

CHUNG Shan Shan (Dr).

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