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Good afternoon everyone. Let me thank you for giving us the chance and opportunity to give a talk. I am Leeh Ann, a teacher back in the Philippines and a domestic worker here in Hong Kong

A mattress laid on top of counters or washing machine and dryer, blankets spread on the kitchen floor, living room or the kid's bedroom floor; a space the exact size of a single bed, small unventilated room; the sofa-- these are just some examples of living quarters given to most if not some of the domestic workers here in Hong Kong as part of the live in rule stated in their contract. Do they sound like decent accommodation to you?

With the live in rule, accommodation is just one of the problems that arises from it. Extensive and very long working hours, sleep deprivation as live in domestic workers are in almost 24 hours duty (some are awoken in the middle of the night to do some chores), curfews on their days off, not enough food to last them a whole day of work, privacy issues and most importantly abuse- different kinds of abuses that one has to experience as they don't have their personal space, a space that will separate the work and personal time.

Certain cases of abuses has been discussed publicly and even brought to the court. Abuses that arised in the homes of employers which is also the job site of domestic workers. But haven't we realized that these certain cases of abuses could have been prevented if these workers are not required to stay in their employers' homes? Haven't we realized that with the live in rule for domestic workers, we are putting some of their rights at risk? and instead of protecting them we are exposing them more to situations that will violate their rights not only as workers but as humans as well?

Most of the members of the public will just probably raise an eyebrow and say " so what?" and "who cares?" they are workers and must follow what their employers told them. Have we realized that they are playing a vital role not only in the homes of their employers but to society as a whole? that without them some of us will be like a person with only one arm? Have we realized that it is now time for the society to treat them more humanely? That we should start giving back to them? To their hardwork and contribution by considering to have let them have their own space and consider scrapping the live in rule?

Tonight before going to bed, challenge yourselves. Even just for a single day, put yourselves into your domestic worker's shoes. Sleep in that small area you assigned them to sleep, give yourselves the same amount of household chores you are giving them for a day, set the same curfew to yourself and have your privacy invaded in a way that your helper's are experiencing and most importantly eat the same food that you give to your helper. After doing those things, tell yourself how you really felt being in a domestic worker's shoes.

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