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Subject: Support for Charging for Municipal Solid Waste

Support for Charging for Municipal Solid Waste

To: Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP,

Designs on Life fully supports the Legislative Council's efforts to pass the Waste Disposal (Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill (MSW bill) before the end of the 2020/21 Legislative year. The implementation of municipal solid waste pricing, following the 'Polluter-Pays Principle', will be an important cornerstone for substantial improvement of Hong Kong's waste management system. It will bring appreciable benefits for the environment, considerable savings in terms of government expenditure and is fully supported by the public.

Though the HKSAR Government set an ambitious goal in 2013 of "reducing the volume of daily disposal of garbage per capita to 0.8 kg in 2022", the city has failed to reach this target. In fact, disposed waste per capita hit a record high of 1.53 kg per person in 2018, an increase of 15% from 2013's 1.33 kg per capita.

Without implementing a "polluter-pays" waste management policy, the city will need to seek alternative waste management that likely includes further cutting into country parks to extend or develop landfill sites, and/or building additional incinerators to compliment the first, which has taken more than a decade. Both approaches are expensive, unsustainable, and undesirable for Hong Kong and its residents. The MSW bill is thus urgently needed to abate waste generation and improve waste management. It will also be an excellent reinforcement of EPD's various complementary waste initiatives, offering citizens more waste management options and a convenient recyclables collection network.

As part of the infrastructure supporting the MSW bill's adoption, Designs on Life supports the introduction of a grace period of no more than 18 months to allow adequate time for adoption across the society before full implementation.

Given its critical benefits and strong public support, Designs on Life hopes to see the MSW bill receive sufficient backing in the Legislative Council. Failing to pass the bill within this session would be a tremendous setback for Hong Kong's waste management strategy, further delaying a much needed measure by another 3-5 years as the bill goes through a new cycle.

Designs on Life believes the MSW bill marks a milestone in making Hong Kong a more sustainable city, and look forward to its implementation.

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