



**SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG**

香港大學公共衛生學院

January 18, 2016

Chairman
Subcommittee on Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance
(Amendment of Schedule 2) Order 2015
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Sirs,

**Written Submission to the Subcommittee on Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance
(Amendment of Schedule 2) Order 2015
Special Meeting on 25 January 2016**

Smoking is an avoidable cause of death and disease, it kills more than 7,000 people prematurely in Hong Kong every year, and of these, about 5,700 die from active smoking and 1,300 die from passive smoking. Smoking causes damage to almost every part of the human body. According to a conservative estimate, it led to an economic loss of about HK\$5.3 billion annually in Hong Kong. Strong tobacco control measures are urgently needed to save more lives and prevent the numerous diseases and reduce the gross health and economic burdens to the smokers, nonsmokers and the community as a whole. Stronger tobacco control measures introduced more quickly will yield greater benefits sooner.

We strongly support the policy of smoking ban at the bus interchanges in the tunnel portal area which is an extension of the smoke-free area. It is a first and practicable but limited step for a more comprehensive smokefree law to protect the public from secondhand smoke exposure.

A recent public survey on tobacco control was done by School of Nursing, HKU from Oct 2015 to Jan 2016. A total of 1,425 participants (current smokers: n=95; ex-smokers: n=202; never smokers: n=1128) were asked about their opinion on “Government should expand the non-smoking area to all queues in public places” and “Government should expand the non-smoking area to all bus stops and public transport terminals”. The results showed that majority (93.1%, 1326/1425) agreed to expand the non-smoking area to all queues in public places, and 93.7% (1335/1425) of participants agreed to expand the non-smoking area to all bus stops and public transport terminals.

We recommend to extend the smoking ban to include all queues in all public places, indoor and outdoor, and outdoor areas of all catering venues and outdoor areas within 10 metres of the entrance of all buildings. Many countries have successfully introduced more comprehensive smokefree laws for better protection of their people than Hong Kong. These include banning smoking in a queue and at an entrance of a building in Singapore, designated smokefree zones in busy walkways in Japan, banning smoking in public transport waiting areas in the US and Australia.

Hong Kong needs to quickly strengthen its tobacco control legislation so as to reduce the smoking prevalence to single digit figure within a few years. This would mean saving thousands of lives and billions of dollars and preventing the tragedies of many families suffering from the loss of their loved ones. Children and young people will be benefited quickly from not smoking and not using e-cigarettes. We strongly support the proposals on tobacco control submitted by the Government to the Panel on Health Services of the Legislative Council and urge the Legislative Council to support and to ensure that these proposals be implemented as soon as possible!

Yours sincerely,



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