



Deputation on Buildings Energy Efficiency Bill

Civic Party supports the Buildings Energy Efficiency Bill. Mandatory conformance of all buildings to energy consumption performance standards is a step in the right direction.

For newly completed buildings, the bill covers all types of buildings including Residential, Industrial, Civic and Commercial. This is logical and practical, since many common areas in newly constructed buildings share common electrical and mechanical installations. The proposed bill would effectively mandate all new buildings to adhere to EMSD performance standards outlined under the Code of Practices.

We believe the next step should be a comprehensive review of all pertinent EMSD Code of Practices, which was first drawn up more than ten years ago. Since 1998, our expectations and values have changed, and these should be reflected in updated standards. They should be made more stringent, in order to balance our energy demands and their impact on the environment.

It should be noted, that new buildings in HK, only constitute a very small percentage of our building stock. Hence in order to see drastic reductions in our city's CO₂ footprint, we should look into reducing energy consumption for our existing buildings, which constitutes more than 90% of our city's building stock.

For our existing buildings, the proposed bill only requires energy audit for commercial buildings and commercial components of composite buildings. Although under Schedule 3, 4 and 5, most commercial buildings will undergo energy auditing and compliance certification in the foreseeable future. The bill mentions no measures or requirements to include other types of buildings, namely residential buildings which constitutes a very significant portion of our building stock. It is understandable, that commercial buildings are usually more likely to share common building services through central air conditioning, hence they consume more energy and should be targeted accordingly. But residential, industrial and civic buildings also share building services in common areas, albeit less energy demanding, usually involving only common-area lighting, elevators and basic fire services. Civic Party believes that these buildings should also be included in this Bill (perhaps with some assistance or



under a less demanding compliance schedule), so that the outlook of the bill would be more effective. We believe it is unfair to require only commercial building occupants to bear the responsibility for reducing our energy consumption. All citizens of Hong Kong should embrace this monumental effort to curb climate change.

We also recommend public disclosure of all energy audited results, and require such results be prominently displayed for the public's information. This practice has been adopted by many developed countries serious about energy reductions, and creates peer pressure among neighborhoods to adhere to the new building energy codes.

Lastly, we hope this bill would serve as a first step for many progressive actions to follow. The government should draw up aggressive policies to ascertain energy consumption compliances from all our buildings, regardless of type or age, and do this within a reasonable timeframe.

Civic Party

Dated 1 February 2010