



Legco
Attention Panel on Health Services

29th January 2013

Dear members,

Clear the Air is a local NGO and registered Hong Kong Government charity.

The new Chief Executive has admirably allocated funding and shown a proven intent to solve our pollution problems after the last administration's failed debacle. Pollution, according to the Hedley Environmental Index killed **3,117** Hong Kong people last year.

A shocking statistic.

However in the Policy speech the CE failed to address a far larger killer – tobacco;

<http://www.bvsde.paho.org/bvsacd/cd51/hong-kong.pdf>

7,000 people die from smoking and passive smoking annually in Hong Kong at a cost of \$6 billion to our medical system. And moreover, it is completely preventable if Government has the political will to do so.

The WHO, World Bank and world experts agree that tobacco excise taxation, increased at least yearly and adjusted for inflation is the most significant measure Governments can take to stop youth starting smoking and thereby, their addiction, and to persuade adults to stop smoking.

In order to be effective the tobacco taxation must reflect the local costs of living and relative affordability of the products to youth.

In the Mercer 2012 Cost of Living study (attached) Hong Kong was rated the ninth most expensive place in the world whilst Singapore was sixth most expensive.

Yet Hong Kong has the least expensive cigarettes in the attached list of first world countries.

Recently Australia instituted plain packaging of tobacco products and a packet of cigarettes in Brisbane now costs HK\$ 139 versus just HK\$50 here, yet Brisbane is 24th on the Mercer list versus Hong Kong's 9th place. It shows the Australian Government has the political will to prevent the deaths of their citizens.

We must at least match the Singapore retail tobacco prices if we are going to prevent our youth smoking and to save lives as well as the horrendous treatment cost for tobacco related illnesses which cost our society \$ billions per year.

Yours sincerely,

James Middleton

Chairman

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1st WORLD CIGARETTE RETAIL PRICES 2013 (excluding countries like Japan which have major Government Tobacco company ownerships)

Control : pack of Marlboro retail price	Local	Converted	Mercer 2012 Cost of living Rank
CITY	Cost	HK\$	
BRISBANE	AUD 17.11	139.6	24
PERTH Australia	AUD 17	138.7	19
SYDNEY	AUD 16.88	137.7	14
MELBOURNE	AUD 16.82	137.2	15
OSLO	€ 12.39	127.8	18
AUCKLAND	NZ\$ 16.3	106.5	56
NEW YORK	US\$ 12.29	95.87	33
DUBLIN Ireland	€ 9.09	93.75	72
OTTAWA	C\$ 12.11	93.4	115
LONDON	£7.39	90.7	25
SINGAPORE	SGD 12.12	76.5	6 (joint)
PARIS	€ 6.21	64	37
GENEVA	€ 6.17	63.6	5
ZURICH	€ 6.17	63.6	6 (joint)
STOCKHOLM	€ 5.92	61	46
COPENHAGEN	€ 5.40	55.7	21
HONG KONG	HK\$ 50	50	9

Source: <http://www.expatisitan.com/price/cigarretes/> (enter city name)

Other reference site:

<http://www.the-tma.org.uk/tma-publications-research/facts-figures/uk-cigarette-prices/>

<http://www.the-tma.org.uk/tma-publications-research/facts-figures/eu-cigarette-prices/>

Forex used: www.xe.com 24 Jan 2013

Euro rate: 10.314
 NZ\$ rate: 6.524
 AUD rate: 8.157
 £ rate: 12.27
 C\$ rate: 7.753
 S\$ rate: 6.312



Mercer Cost of Living Survey – Worldwide Rankings 2012
 (The Mercer international basket, including rental accommodation costs)

Rank as of March		City	Country
2012	2011		
1	2	Tokyo	Japan
2	1	Luanda	Angola
3	6	Osaka	Japan
4	4	Moscow	Russia
5	5	Geneva	Switzerland
6	7	Zurich	Switzerland
6	8	Singapore	Singapore
8	3	N'Djamena	Chad
9	9	Hong Kong	Hong Kong
10	11	Nagoya	Japan
11	14	Sydney	Australia
12	10	São Paulo	Brazil
13	12	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
14	16	Bern	Switzerland
15	21	Melbourne	Australia
16	21	Shanghai	China
17	20	Beijing	China
18	15	Oslo	Norway
19	30	Perth	Australia
20	12	Libreville	Gabon
21	17	Copenhagen	Denmark
22	19	Seoul	South Korea
23	34	Canberra	Australia
24	31	Brisbane	Australia
25	18	London	United Kingdom
26	44	Khartoum	Sudan
27	46	Adelaide	Australia
28	29	St. Petersburg	Russia
29	51	Caracas	Venezuela
30	43	Shenzhen	China
31	24	Tel Aviv	Israel
31	38	Guangzhou	China
33	32	New York City NY	United States
34	23	Niamey	Niger
35	70	Yangon	Myanmar
36	61	Kinshasa	Dem. Rep. of the Congo
37	27	Paris	France

Worldwide Cost of Living Survey 2012 – city ranking

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2012	2011		
38	25	Milan	Italy
39	41	Lagos	Nigeria
39	63	Bamako	Mali
41	67	Abidjan	Côte d'Ivoire
42	34	Rome	Italy
43	55	Brazzaville	Congo
44	39	Djibouti	Djibouti
45	33	Brasilia	Brazil
46	39	Stockholm	Sweden
47	37	Nouméa	New Caledonia
48	36	Vienna	Austria
49	48	Baku	Azerbaijan
50	25	Victoria	Seychelles
50	44	Dakar	Senegal
52	91	Lomé	Togo
53	56	Douala	Cameroun
53	63	Bogota	Colombia
53	155	Conakry	Guinea
56	118	Auckland	New Zealand
57	50	Amsterdam	Netherlands
58	49	Bangui	Central African Rep.
58	52	Taipei	Taiwan
60	83	Yaoundé	Cameroun
61	59	Toronto	Canada
61	69	Jakarta	Indonesia
63	65	Vancouver	Canada
64	82	Abuja	Nigeria
65	42	Helsinki	Finland
66	101	Qingdao	China
67	75	Beirut	Lebanon
68	77	Los Angeles CA	United States
69	47	Prague	Czech Republic
70	74	Cotonou	Benin
71	62	Brussels	Belgium
72	58	Dublin	Ireland
72	104	Tianjin	China
74	75	Santiago	Chile
74	136	Wellington	New Zealand
76	67	Abu Dhabi	United Arab Emirates
77	53	Athens	Greece
78	60	Madrid	Spain
79	57	Bratislava	Slovakia

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79	70	Istanbul	Turkey
81	80	Almaty	Kazakhstan
81	88	Bangkok	Thailand
83	93	Bandar Seri Begawan	Brunei
84	72	Luxembourg	Luxemburg
85	66	Barcelona	Spain
85	122	Shenyang	China
87	79	Montreal	Canada
88	73	Frankfurt	Germany
89	98	Pointe-à-Pitre	Guadeloupe
90	78	Munich	Germany
90	106	San Francisco CA	United States
92	96	Calgary	Canada
93	171	Maputo	Mozambique
94	81	Dubai	United Arab Emirates
94	115	Nanjing	China
94	124	Chengdu	China
97	88	Riga	Latvia
98	99	White Plains NY	United States
99	53	Havana	Cuba
99	86	Accra	Ghana
101	111	Port-au-Prince	Haiti
102	94	Kiev	Ukraine
102	104	Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia
104	91	Düsseldorf	Germany
105	103	Amman	Jordan
106	84	Berlin	Germany
107	108	Washington DC	United States
108	86	Lisbon	Portugal
109	88	Hamburg	Germany
110	108	Chicago IL	United States
110	115	Miami FL	United States
112	120	Lyon	France
113	85	New Delhi	India
114	95	Mumbai	India
115	114	Ottawa	Canada
116	117	Honolulu HI	United States
117	134	Manila	Philippines
118	127	Montevideo	Uruguay
119	97	Stuttgart	Germany
120	139	Lima	Peru
121	159	Buenos Aires	Argentina

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122	108	Nairobi	Kenya
123	135	Riyadh	Saudi Arabia
124	132	Algiers	Algeria
125	126	Port of Spain	Trinidad & Tobago
125	129	Boston MA	United States
127	120	Casablanca	Morocco
128	119	Limassol	Cyprus
129	128	Cairo	Egypt
130	100	Zagreb	Croatia
131	124	Tallinn	Estonia
132	147	Dallas TX	United States
133	150	Birmingham	United Kingdom
134	159	Kuwait City	Kuwait City
134	182	Blantyre	Malawi
136	136	Hanoi	Vietnam
136	156	Kigali	Rwanda
138	165	San José	Costa Rica
138*	190	Tripoli*	Libya
140	28	Ouagadougou	Burkina Faso
141	141	Ho Chi Minh City	Vietnam
142	113	Budapest	Hungary
142	141	Panama City	Panama
144	111	Lusaka	Zambia
144	143	Houston TX	United States
146	130	Tehran	Iran
146	146	San Juan	Puerto Rico
148	133	Vilnius	Lithuania
148	138	Leipzig	Germany
148	144	Aberdeen	United Kingdom
151	140	Ljubljana	Slovenia
152	150	Atlanta GA	United States
153	102	Warsaw	Poland
154	131	Johannesburg	South Africa
154	149	Mexico City	Mexico
156	157	Manama	Bahrain
157	107	Port Louis	Mauritius
157	162	Santo Domingo	Dominican Rep.
159	163	Seattle WA	United States
159	173	Harare	Zimbabwe
161	148	Glasgow	United Kingdom
161	161	Morristown NJ	United States
163	145	Nurnberg	Germany

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164	169	Minneapolis MN	United States
165	178	Belfast	United Kingdom
166	123	Damascus	Syria
166	154	Colombo	Sri Lanka
168	178	Detroit MI	United States
169	153	Kingston	Jamaica
169	164	Doha	Qatar
171	195	Gaborone	Botswana
172	168	Guatemala City	Guatemala
173	172	St. Louis MO	United States
174	181	Pittsburgh PA	United States
175	175	Cleveland OH	United States
176	152	Bucharest	Romania
177	166	Rabat	Morocco
178	186	Portland OR	United States
179	158	Cape Town	South Africa
179	184	Muscat	Oman
181	169	Sofia	Bulgaria
182	167	Yerevan	Armenia
183	188	Phnom Penh	Cambodia
184	174	Dhaka	Bangladesh
184	183	Monterrey	Mexico
186	185	Jeddah	Saudi Arabia
187	180	Bangalore	India
188	191	Tbilisi	Georgia
189	204	Asunción	Paraguay
190	194	Chennai	India
191	176	Banjul	Gambia
192	176	Tashkent	Uzbekistan
193	187	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania
194	211	Addis Ababa	Ethiopia
195	197	Winston Salem NC	United States
196	193	Minsk	Belarus
197	189	Belgrade	Serbia
198	196	Quito	Ecuador
199	199	San Salvador	El Salvador
200	202	Kampala	Uganda
201	192	Sarajevo	Bosnia-Herzegovina
202	198	Windhoek	Namibia
203	205	Nouakchott	Mauritania
204	206	Ashkhabad	Turkmenistan
205	200	Tirana	Albania

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205	208	Tegucigalpa	Honduras
207	200	Skopje	Macedonia
208	203	Kolkata	India
209	207	Tunis	Tunisia
210	212	La Paz	Bolivia
211	210	Bishkek	Kyrgyzstan
212	213	Managua	Nicaragua
213	209	Islamabad	Pakistan
214	214	Karachi	Pakistan

* For Tripoli, it was not possible to conduct an accurate cost-of-living survey in March 2012. For this report's purposes, Tripoli's prices are based on the September 2010 survey (the next-most-recent one), adjusted according to exchange rates between the Libyan dinar (LYD) and the US dollar (USD) in effect in March 2012.