

LC: Speech by SHA in moving resolution on Legal Aid Ordinance

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, in moving the resolution on the Legal Aid Ordinance (Cap.91) in the Legislative Council today (December 12):

Madam President,

I move the Resolution standing in my name on the agenda.

In accordance with section 5 and 5A of the Legal Aid Ordinance, a person whose disposable financial resources do not exceed \$162,300 is financially eligible for legal aid under the Ordinary Legal Aid Scheme. The corresponding limit for the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme is \$450,800. The above-mentioned limit for the Ordinary Scheme also applies to criminal legal aid. The Administration reviews the limits annually to take into account movements in consumer prices, so as to maintain the real value of the limits.

We last increased the limits by 2.5% early this year to reflect the change in Consumer Price Index (C) recorded during the reference period of the 2006 annual review.

We have recently completed the 2007 annual review. The increase in Consumer Price Index (C) between July 2006 and July 2007 is 2.1%. We now propose the Resolution to adjust upward the limit for the Ordinary Scheme from \$162,300 to \$165,700, which will also apply to criminal legal aid and that for the Supplementary Scheme from \$450,800 to \$460,300, in accordance with the 2.1% increase in consumer price index.

I invite Members to support the Resolution.

Ends/Wednesday, December 12, 2007