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cc

bcc

Subject Consultation on Legislative Amendments to Import and Export (General) Regulations

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When the Hong Kong SAR government first proposed the 1.8KG limit for infant milk formula I was horrified. Never in the history of Hong Kong has an item been restricted to export. Not only does this go against free market principles, it gives a black eye to Hong Kong as a free market, trading, reexport and shipping hub.

The obvious solution to the shortage of baby milk formula is to have suppliers increase supply to meet demand. This is the sensible free market solution and should have been the first approach to the problem, however the government seems to be rushing to drastic measures to stop the problem of shortage and parallel trading.

If this legislative amendment is allowed to pass, it will set a precedent for the government to intervene in other areas of the market as well. It is milk powder today, it might be another item such cookies, toilet paper, cooking oil, etc. in the future.

Milk formula is NOT an essential item. Due to excessive advertising and marketing by milk formula companies (many with questionable claims), parents believe that milk formula is superior to mother's breast milk. It is important for the health department to emphasize that high sugar and corn syrup loaded infant milk formula (http://www.naturalnews.com/033926_infant_formula_corn_syrup.html) is not a serious replacement for mother's breast milk, and should only be used as a last resort when mother's breast milk cannot be supplied for their baby.

Finally, to criminalize export of a consumer product is similar to laws in the former Soviet Union or current North Korea. The government has no business interfering in the buying and selling of an "over the counter" product.

I hope that the government will take this letter seriously and not propose this amendment to the legislative council.

Yours faithfully,
Harminder Singh