

Transcript of remarks by SEN

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, after attending the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development today (December 10):

Reporter: Secretary, what do you think of the tariff increase this time, and can you also comment on whether the Government will look for ways to reduce the tariff increase in the future? Because once the subsidy is used up, people will be paying even more for their tariffs and there will be a greater backlash.

Secretary for the Environment: In response to your last point, what you said might not be most accurate. For instance, for the residential units, we anticipated that there would be an incremental increase. But we announced the electricity charges relief last year. Even there would be an incremental increase over the five years but the material impact on the residential units would be minimal as we have a relief of \$50 on average each month. But for the non-residential units, I think the major issue is more about on how to restore the economic situation and social order. But for this particular year, due to special circumstances, that as Government, we provide subsidy and also urge the power companies to do more to support the non-residential units, so it is done for this particular year. As mentioned, we would like to support the environmental transformation by the power companies. So we have offered both the relief and subsidies to tackle the situation. Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)