

The Alliance

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Hon Secretary

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Submission for 2025 Policy Address Public Consultation

Alcohol Tax Cut Harming Population Health and Wellness

The Hong Kong Alliance for Advocacy Against Alcohol expressed concern and disappointment over the 2024 Policy Address introducing tax reduction from 100 to 10 percent on strong liquor with an import price of over HK\$200.

The Alliance considers the policy decision did not undergo a due process of public consultation and engagement based on comprehensive and detailed assessment of public health implications, effect on family, social and economic wellbeing.

Since the policy change, many promotional and marketing activities have nudged people to consume more alcohol, whether they are high-end or ordinary drinkers.

The Administration should not ignore the harmful health and socioeconomic consequences attributable to the tax cut and should not consider further tax reduction.

The Alliance calls upon the Administration to-

(a) Implement the five most cost-effective measures recommended by the World Health Organization to reduce alcohol harm, namely raising alcohol tax and prices, regulating supply of alcohol, restricting alcohol marketing and promotion, enforcing drink driving laws and screening/treating alcohol use disorders.

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(b) Enhance public education regarding alcohol harm and refrain from leading or taking part in promotional efforts that encourage alcohol drinking.

(c) Strengthen surveillance systems to track alcohol consumption patterns, alcohol-related harm to health and society to monitor the negative impact of tax cut in order to inform policy making.

(d) Engage the community and public health sector on matters relating to alcohol policy change.