

LC: Speech by SCMA for debate on Motion of Thanks to CE's 2018 Policy Address (Session 5)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, at the Legislative Council meeting today (November 9) for the debate on the Motion of Thanks (Session 5: Reinforcing Strengths, Enhancing Governance) in respect of the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address:

Mr President, the Honourable Dennis Kwok raised the nomination matter of Legislative Council (LegCo) elections. I would like to reiterate that, in accordance with the LegCo Ordinance and Electoral Affairs Commission regulations, the Returning Officer is required to decide whether a candidate of a LegCo election is validly nominated. The Government supports the Returning Officer to exercise their statutory power to discharge his/her duties under the law, so as to decide whether a nomination is valid. In accordance with the requirement under the law, the Returning Officer must endorse his/her decision on the nomination form. Copy of the nomination form is available for public inspection.

Decisions made by the Returning Officer aim to ensure that the LegCo election is held in strict accordance with the Basic Law and other applicable laws in an open, fair and honest manner. There is no question of any political censorship, restriction of the freedom of speech or deprivation of the right to stand for elections as alleged by some LegCo Members. Hong Kong has a well-established judicial system. In fact, the existing electoral law has provided for the mechanism of election petitions to handle possible disputes arising from public elections.

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