

## NPC deputy: Second child families should enjoy subsidies



Ye Tingfang

Families with a second child should enjoy subsidies, tax free or rebated individual income tax, Sun Xiaomei, professor from China Women's University and a deputy of the National People's Congress (NPC) recently proposed.

Sun submitted the proposition during the ongoing two sessions, namely, the NPC and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) which opened at the beginning of March.

Families with a second child need subsidies and preferential policies to alleviate the economic costs, Sun explained.

She advised the country to prioritize the rights of second-child families by securing their privileged access to low-rent houses or low-costs housing, extra medical reimbursements and insurance, the exemption of children's tuition in universities and preferential maternity leave to relieve the mothers from extra working hours.

Initiated 10 years ago by Ye Tingfang, a translator as well as a former CPPCC member, out of concern for China's diminishing demographic dividends, the right to have a second child won an overwhelming mandate in 2016, putting an end to the decades-long one-child family-planning policy.

The average birth rate in China per couple was 1.2 from 2010 to 2015,

indicating a sharp decline of 36 percent in birth of every generation. The demographic aging draws considerable concern among the deputies and members in the two sessions.

Huang Xihua, a NPC deputy, advised the country to lower the minimum legal marriage age from 21 for females and 22 for males, to 18.

“It is not an advocacy for early marriage, but a move to protect the rights of young people,” Huang said.