



# CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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**Embargoed until 15 May 2016, 3pm**

### **CASE supports proposed amendments to the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act**

CASE strongly supports the Ministry of Trade and Industry's ("MTI") move to review the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act ("CPFTA") and to ensure that consumer protection laws stay relevant and provide consumers with sufficient protection. We believe that the proposed amendments will help to tighten consumer protection laws and specifically target unscrupulous retailers who persistently engage in unfair practices against consumers. Although this is a move in the right direction, more can still be done to enhance consumer protection.

In the past, there were shady businesses which, having been sued, closed down their shop front and set up another company under a different name. CASE was unable to enforce the Voluntary Compliance Agreement ("VCA") or injunction as the owners of such unethical businesses can register a new business entity to continue operations. The owners of the new business could repeat the same unfair practices until CASE asks them to sign a new VCA or take an injunction against them. It is a repetitive cat and mouse game.

With the new amendments, the appointed agency, SPRING Singapore ("SPRING") will be able to investigate thoroughly and take enforcement actions against errant retailers. Furthermore, injunction orders may be publicised openly to warn consumers to be wary of such shops. The owner of the business will also need to comply with the court order if he or she sets up a new business. We are glad SPRING will be coming on board and we will work closely with them to highlight and take necessary actions against errant retailers.

Mr Lim Biow Chuan, President of CASE, said, "Our hands were tied two years ago, when we were unable to take further action against the errant retailers located at Sim Lim Square, who were engaging in rampant unfair practices towards consumers. We are glad that MTI plans to appoint SPRING as the administering agency with investigative and enforcement powers to take errant retailers to task.

"CASE, STB and SPRING will work together to ensure that businesses engaging in unfair practices will be dealt with according to law and that consumers will be able to obtain fair recourse. We will review the proposed amendments to the CPFTA during the public consultation and push for better protection for consumers."

Lim Biow Chuan  
President  
Consumers Association of Singapore