

Anger as age laws rejected

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Labour groups attacked a government decision yesterday to reject age discrimination laws.

Officials said the laws could cost businesses too much.

"There's a real risk age discrimination could lead to over-regulation and unnecessary litigation," Secretary for Education and Manpower Joseph Wong Wing-ping said.

The decision comes after a "relatively low response to the consultation exercise", where 68 respondents showed it was not "an issue of pressing concern to the community", Mr Wong said.

But Women Workers' Association coordinator Linda To Kit-lai said: "They didn't count all the members of associations who submitted jointly. The calculation doesn't represent the community."

The submission from the Democratic Party alone contained 5,000 signatures. Almost two-thirds of respondents, 41 - favoured legislation or a combination of public education and laws.

Mr Wong said: "Discrimination on the grounds of age does not appear to be considered internationally as one of the most serious human rights issues."

He said the Government would spend \$2 million on a public education campaign.