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50,000 sign bus fares petition

Another 50,000 people have joined the growing chorus against bus fare increases.

Signatures of these newcomers, with their views on the proposed bus fare increases, were submitted to the Governor in a petition yesterday.

The signatures were collected through 12 Caritas centres in the territory after the anti-fares rise campaign was launched a month ago.

With a firm official view on proposed bus fare increases pending this week, the representatives also urged the public to take part in a "letter-per-person" campaign to stop the rises passing through the Transport Advisory Committee.

The TAC is expected to deliberate on the issue — which has caused the biggest wave of public protest in 15 years in Hongkong — this week.

The bus fare fighters will meet tonight to decide on their next move.

Some 25 representatives, mostly students, petitioned Government House yesterday.

They summed up their views in 10 points in the petition presented to the Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose.

The petition and the signatures — in three massive boxes — were received by Sir Murray's aide-de-camp, Mr Stephen Corrick.

In the petition, the representatives claimed there was an urgent need to set up an independent body to monitor the activities of public utility companies to make sure there is no profiteering.

They also asked Sir Murray to amend existing control legislation on the two bus companies and to make sure the public will be given access to information relating to their accounts and management.

They also urged the Government to consider making bus services a state-owned business if any of the bus companies decide to drop out.