

PRESS RELEASE

PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

“All protocols balance witnesses’ well-being with the due process”

During the debate on the Motions on the Committee of Privilege’s (COP) Report on 15 February 2022, Ms Sylvia Lim had shared an anecdotal account of her experience while waiting to give oral evidence to the COP.

2 For clarity, we would like to share the background and context for the standard protocols applied to all witnesses like Ms Lim.

3 To protect them against perceptions of undue influence, all witnesses were advised not to have communication devices and other electronic equipment with them until they have completed their testimonies. They individually waited in assigned rooms where they could be physically reached when it was their turn. They were provided reading materials, meals and drinks for their comfort and convenience. Every witness also had an attending Parliament officer who could immediately respond to any requests or queries.

4 At no time was permission needed for witnesses to use the toilet and they could make their own way there whenever they wanted. On the occasion Ms Lim recounted, she had specifically asked the Parliament officer with her for the nearest handicapped toilet to freshen up with more space and privacy.

5 Before showing Ms Lim the way, the officer had verbally informed a supervisor on their movement in case the COP called upon Ms Lim while she was at the toilet. It was unfortunate that Ms Lim had misunderstood the officer’s routine status update.

6 Any concerns and feedback made known to the COP by witnesses would have been immediately addressed. Including the period she was at Parliament House as a witness for the COP, yesterday (15 February 2022) was the first time she had expressed her concerns. Nevertheless, we welcome this opportunity to affirm that all protocols are carried out to balance witnesses’ well-being with the due process.

**Office of the Clerk of Parliament
16 February 2022**
