

# Students propose changes to Maintenance of Parents Act

**SINGAPORE** – Make guardians, rather than just parents, who have been abandoned by the children they have raised, eligible to seek maintenance.

This was one of the proposed legislative changes Singapore Management University law students have made to the Maintenance of Parents Act in the inaugural law reform essay competition organised by the university and the Attorney-General's Chambers.

The Act, which enforces maintenance from children who abandon their needy parents, currently applies to four types of claimants. They are: Biological and step-parents, as well as parents of illegitimate and adopted children.

The suggestion was to widen the pool of potential claimants to include those who have “treated and raised another person as his or her own child”.

Other suggestions included peg-

ging the minimum age of an applicant seeking maintenance to the statutory retirement age.

The current Maintenance of Parents Act allows those who have hit age 60 to apply for maintenance. But the statutory retirement age has since been raised to 62, and will be further raised to 67 eventually.

Speaking at the prize presentation ceremony yesterday, Attorney-General Steven Chong highlighted these as among a number of “interesting and significant proposals” among the entries.

He added that a list of “the more feasible proposals” would be sent to the relevant Government ministries for consideration.

Loy Zhi Hao and Priscilla Soh Yu Xian claimed the first prize, while Dierdre Grace Morgan, and Foo Shi Hao and Koh Wei Lun took home the second and third prizes, respectively.

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