

# Study on Zhuhai Business Environment

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## Abstract

In October 2019, the government issued the regulations on optimizing the business environment, which aims to continuously optimize the business environment, continuously liberate and develop social productivity, accelerate the construction of a modern economic system, and promote high-quality development. This shows that the Chinese government attaches great importance to the business environment. As far as Zhuhai is concerned, its business environment is generally good. In recent years, Zhuhai has taken many positive measures to improve the business environment and achieved remarkable results, but it still has some problems. Based on the practice of Zhuhai in optimizing business environment, this paper studies the reality of Zhuhai's business environment, the existing problems and some main contents that need to be paid attention to further optimize the business environment, so as to provide theoretical reference for the optimization of Zhuhai's business environment.

## Keywords

Zhuhai, Business Environment, Optimization, The Status Quo, Short Board

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## 1. Introduction

Business environment is the productive forces. Optimizing the environment of business is the liberation of productive forces. Economic development needs to constantly optimize the business environment, it has been a consensus. We must build a business environment of legalization, internationalization, and facilitation to stimulate the market vigor, promote employment entrepreneurship and improve people's livelihood (Jiang, 2017). Business environment is very prominent in the further reform of China's opening up. Zhuhai is a prefecture level in Guangdong, it is one of the earliest established special economic zones, and also a central city in the pearl river delta, but also an important node of a large bay area in Guangdong. Under the economic and social development of the current

political situation, Zhuhai pays special attention to the optimization of business environment, it makes outstanding contributions to Zhuhai's economic and social development. Therefore, whether there are some shortcomings of Zhuhai's current business environment in the new era, and how to further optimize the future is the focus of this paper.

## 2. Optimization of Business Environment in Zhuhai

In accordance with the guidance of President Xi Jinping's thought on socialism with Chinese characteristic for a new era, Zhuhai has continuously promoted the reform of regulation and services, and improved the business environment continuously, and made remarkable results.

### 2.1. The Reform of Delegating Control and Services Invigorated Market Entities

The reform of streamlining administration is also called delegating powers, strengthening regulation and improving services, it means transforming government functions, rationalizing the relationship between the government and the market, and stimulating market vitality and creativity. In 2016, Zhuhai municipal government issue the implementation plan for the construction of the government under the rule of law, build basic government under the rule of law in 2018, and make clear an action plan for the rule of law government construction in subsequent years, the construction level of government in the future will use functional science, legal responsibility and power, open and fair and strict enforcement, honesty and high efficiency, law-abiding integrity as the main index and keywords. A fair and just business environment can only be built and improved if the government takes the lead and strictly enforces the law. **Table 1** shows the assessment of the rule of law in some cities in the Greater Bay Area. In terms of overall results, the assessment of the rule of law in Hong Kong and Macau is better than that in the Mainland. Compared with Guangzhou and Shenzhen, Zhuhai urgently needs to improve the quality of legislation and the culture of the rule of law.

Since 2015, Zhuhai has gradually delegated the power of municipal administration, cancelled 244 non-administrative approval items gradually, and reduced

**Table 1.** Rule of law evaluation of some cities in the greater bay area.

Indicators of urban	Hong Kong	Macau	Shenzhen	Guangzhou	Zhuhai	Foshan
The total score	89.13	85.41	76.75	75.94	70.63	70.29
Score ranking	1	2	3	4	5	6
The legislative quality	8.71	8.31	7.69	7.57	6.99	6.86
Law-based government construction	9.01	8.69	7.58	7.53	7.05	7.09
Judicial justice	9.03	8.68	7.79	7.65	7.29	7.25
The rule of law culture	8.91	8.48	7.65	7.64	6.92	6.92

the size of the government one by one, shifted the position of the market and relaxed the restrictions on enterprises through streamlining administration and delegating power, thus stimulating the vitality of the market to the maximum extent. With the establishment of the “one door, one network” government service model, the combination of online and offline magic has greatly improved the efficiency of administrative services. The system of accepting and approving investment projects through one window has reduced the time limit for approval of construction projects to 12 working days. In fact, with the continuous improvement of online and offline service capabilities, some administrative approval items can be completed within one working day.

## 2.2. Business System Reform Promotes Innovation and Entrepreneurship

By focusing on prominent problems and strengthening the reform of the grade of whole electronic process and the application of electronic business license, the whole process of electronic service of business subject is realized. Zhuhai introduced an Interim Measures on business subject, a as a yard services interim measures for the entire electronic grade, perfecting related services on business subject level registration, further optimize the investment environment of Zhuhai society, the average time of setting up enterprise only needs 12 working days. Some industries, enterprises need only one working day to get the business license. For example, the business licenses of Zhuhai Jinqin Expressway Co., Ltd., a local enterprise in Zhuhai City, and Luborun International Trade (Zhuhai) Co., Ltd., a foreign company, are all issued within one working day.

As shown in **Table 2**, the number of market entities continued to increase in 2017, with 48,100 newly registered entities of all types, an increase of 16.69% compared with 2016. The total number has increased from 140,000 before the business system reform (that is, before March 2013) to 285,900. With the arrival of the national credit system construction, The Zhuhai branch of the People’s Bank of China set up investment and financing credit platforms in Zhuhai high-tech zone. By integrating corporate non-bank credit information and relying on the credit system to achieve connection between banks and enterprises, Zhuhai has greatly ease the small and medium-sized enterprise’s financing problem, by the end of 2018, the platform has completed 5633 projects, the total amount is up to 28 billion 427 million yuan.

**Table 2.** Results of business system reform.

Project	Number	Note
New subject of registration	48,100 families	Data for new registrations in 2017
Number of business subjects	285,900 families	The data are 2017 statistics
Investment and financing credit	5633 individual	The data is for 2018, involving 28.427 billion yuan

### **2.3. Improving the Credit System and Creating a Fair Business Environment**

The biggest fear in the reform of delegating power to lower-level governments is that they will easily lead to chaos. In order to optimize the business environment, government must start its obligations in accordance with law, exercise the government regulation of the market power, innovate supervision and management system, establish a sound credit system, eliminate the blind area, Zhuhai constantly improve the system of credit legal system, improve the standard of the credit system, establish an external credit information platform, expand the application of credit information in multiple areas, promote joint discipline, and perfect credit system constantly, thus creating conditions for a fair business environment.

Measures for the management of credit information were introduced in June 2018, making it clear that commercial subjects are the main providers of credit information, and improving measures were formulated to control the credit of commercial subjects in key areas. At the same time, Zhuhai took the lead in sorting out 37 memoranda of joint punishment in the whole province of Guangdong, with 53 enforcement departments of joint punishment, and formulated 509 categories of joint punishment measures, including 1513 specific measures of joint punishment. Among the prefecture-level cities in China, the comprehensive credit status of Zhuhai ranked 14th and first in Guangdong province.

### **2.4. Continuing Preferential Policies to Encourage Market Entities to Unleash Innovation**

Tax reduction and fee reduction directly hit the difficulties and pain points of current market entities. The city's 27 responsible departments ensured the implementation of tax reduction and fee reduction in various districts. At the beginning of 2019, the first work plan of tax reduction and fee reduction policy at the municipal level in Guangdong Province was issued, and facilitation measures in commercial registration, construction permit and other fields were launched, formulate the management system of food and drug safety red blacklist, and take the lead in establishing a working group to implement tax reduction and fee reduction throughout the province. The city's 27 responsible departments are gathered to ensure that tax reduction and fee reduction are implemented. According to the plan, the tax department is required to continuously optimize measures to facilitate taxpayers and payers to enjoy tax reduction and fee reduction, and implement inclusive tax reduction and exemption for small and micro enterprises.

### **2.5. The Business Environment in Line with International Standards**

In March 2019, Zhuhai Jinwan 10 + 2 business environment analysis system was officially launched. The system comprehensively compares 10 business envi-

ronment assessment indicators of the World Bank, such as business start-up, construction permit processing and power supply, and sets two characteristic indicators of labor market and transportation and logistics based on the actual situation. By combining relevant data and comparing the 190 economies in the world, the business environment of Zhuhai Jinwan is generally good, with all 10 World Bank indicators scoring high. The enterprise's Kanban score in 2019 was 98.59, ranking the third in the World Bank, and the minority shareholders' equity score was 100, ranking the first in the world. This is inseparable from a key point, namely the rule of law.

### **3. Weakness of Zhuhai's Business Environment**

The rule of law is the best business environment, and judicial guarantee is essential to a good business environment. Zhuhai's legal environment and business environment are at a relatively high level in Guangdong province and even in the whole country. However, there is still a large gap between the comprehensive level and the international leading level, such as Singapore, Hong Kong, etc. Through investigation, research and interviews on Zhuhai party and government organs, mass organizations and their institutions, it is found that there are still some typical shortcomings in Zhuhai's legal environment and business environment.

#### **3.1. Clear But Not Intimate Relationship between Government and Business**

In the early days, Guangdong Province issued a document to clarify the relationship boundary between government and enterprises, under the system of socialist market economy with Chinese characteristics, the relationship between the government and enterprises is relatively complex, defining the relationship boundary between the government and the enterprise requires the government to reduce the administrative intervention to the market subject in an orderly way, and the market subject decides how to survive in the market economy independently, but actually it has not yet formed a good new relationship between government and enterprises. On the one hand, because the functional departments doesn't understand the policy deeply enough, there are deviations in the process of policy implementation, and some enterprises that really need help fail to get policy support. On the other hand, in order to avoid suspicion, entrepreneurs and government personnel are afraid to approach, and enterprises and government have formed a state of neither being nor being separated (Wang & Zhao, 2019).

#### **3.2. There Is Still Room for Enterprises to Reduce the Burden**

As China's economic development is still in the new normal, it means that the speed of economic development is decreasing. In this environment, the level of optimizing the business environment in each city is more tested. The current

business environment needs to be strengthened. The burden on companies is still heavy, the government has policies to reduce taxes and fees, but the burden of enterprises still have further decline in space (Zhang, 2017). Specifically speaking, because the tax rules are relatively complex, it is difficult for most small and medium-sized enterprises to reduce their tax burden through tax planning, that is to say, the threshold is high. In the process of replacing business tax with value-added tax, enterprises must reform their own management mode to adapt to it, but for enterprises, how to operate and then reduce their own burden is very important to consider

### **3.3. The Legal Nature of Joint Punishment Is Vague**

There are many joint disciplinary measures, but there will be some deviations in the operation process, mainly because of its vague legal nature. For example, in some controversial cases, the market subject does not recognize the punishment given by the government functional departments, resulting in lawsuits, and the market subject's claims mostly emphasize the illegal disciplinary measures taken by the functional departments. In fact, from the perspective of the construction of the credit system, it is crucial to clarify the legal nature of joint disciplinary measures (Yuan, 2018). However, in the process of taking joint punishment against market subjects, the functional departments tend to ignore the legal nature of joint punishment, which leads to procedural violations, such as failing to give written notice to market subjects as required, etc. Generally speaking, if the market subject has bad behaviors in the operation process, the market subject will recognize the punishment given by the functional departments, but most of them will not recognize the behaviors that the functional departments directly publicize without notice.

### **3.4. The Service Consciousness of Low Administrative Efficiency Needs to Be Strengthened**

From the results of the survey, there are still some weaknesses in the optimization of doing business on the current, it' mainly because of the low administrative efficiency and weak service awareness, the outstanding performance is the deviation in the implementation of joint punishment, which is reflected in the weak administrative awareness according to law and the lack of compliance with the law. There are also some cases where the quality of grass-roots law enforcement personnel is insufficient, the administrative interest is turned, and even some illegal decisions are made, the administrative work efficiency is not high, and the service awareness is not strong and so on (Li, Zhang, Li, & Shan, 2019). In fact, the deepest reason is that each link of the administrative office has not reached the optimization degree, there is a lack of effective coordination between different links, rights and responsibilities are not clear, the establishment of institutions is not scientific, the use of personnel is not scientific, the independent rights of enterprises are not implemented in place.

## 4. Thinking on the Optimization of Business Environment in Zhuhai

### 4.1. The Direction of Improving the Business Environment

In order to optimize the business environment of Zhuhai, we still need to follow the general direction arranged by the provincial government. According to the situation of Guangdong province, we still need to make efforts in delegating administration and service. By lowering the market access threshold and reducing the difficulty of administrative affairs of the masses, we can stimulate the vitality of the market and accelerate the optimization of the main structure of the market. In fact, from the perspective of releasing management services, releasing means simplifying administration and delegating power. At present, what is outstanding is to reduce the administrative examination and approval, reduce the access threshold, and make it easier for the people to handle affairs. Management is to regulate the market, which is manifested in the reduction of government intervention in microeconomic affairs and the strengthening of market supervision with innovative ideas and technical means. Service is a reconstruction of the relationship between the government and market subjects. From the perspective of comprehensively deepening the reform, releasing the management service is not only the general starting point of the reform, but also an important measure to promote the supply side reform and an important way to release the vitality of the market economy.

At present, the business environment has basically formed a pattern of wide access and strict exit. Wide access is to facilitate the masses to set up enterprises, individual businesses or professional cooperatives by simplifying administration and delegating power. At the same time, it is necessary to compress the process of handling affairs and improve the efficiency of handling affairs. The matching is to standardize and improve the examination and approval behavior through the overall administrative examination and approval reform, such as relaxing the access threshold and simplifying the operation Certification procedures, reduce the process, reduce the materials and so on.

From the above analysis, we have found out the efforts made by the government to improve the business environment, and we will continue to do so for some time in the future, to streamline administration and delegate more powers to improve efficiency.

If there is wide access, it must be strictly controlled. There is a contradiction between the release and the management in the release service. Sometimes when the release is disordered, the release will die. The release must be able, the management must be well managed, if the administrative approval was relaxed, and the access threshold was lowered, without a strengthen supervision, the market would be confused due to various factors such as interests, etc., so how to manage it is a problem that needs special attention, which may become the main direction of business environment optimization in the future. According to the current development trend, intelligent supervision will be the main way. The in-

frastructure of intelligent supervision has been initially established in Guangdong Province. According to the introduction of the market supervision bureau, with the help of the remote monitoring system, the supervision efficiency has been significantly improved. In fact, the current market supervision method mainly adopts the APCD working method, which divides the market inspection into four parts: analysis, planning, inspection and handling. The analysis requires the market managers to obtain valuable information of the retail market from various channels, analyze it, find out the abnormal problems of the market subjects, and then make an investigation with a focused goal into the market. In terms of planning, the inspection objects, inspection methods and inspection actions are generally determined according to the abnormalities in the analysis link or the key tasks arranged by the superior. Inspection is mainly based on the plan to the field to check, find out the cause of the problem, judge whether the market subject has illegal behavior. Handling is to properly handle the problem and feedback the information according to the results of the inspection.

The essence of delegating and managing is to achieve a purpose that is serving the people. In order to further deepen the administration, taking the road of “Internet+” road will further enhance the efficiency of the tube laying service, whether it is supervision or decentralization, let the data run away, so the masses will run fewer errands (Cheng, 2017).

#### **4.2. Addressing Areas of Weakness and Promoting Development**

To address the shortcomings in improving the business environment, we must first continue to improve the building of a law-based government, adhere to the socialist spirit of the rule of law, build a law-based government with the concept of good law and good governance, and achieve synergy among all parties. The legislative branch should improve the quality and level of legislation through comprehensive democratic, fair and scientific legislation, and make every effort to produce more applicable good laws, the functional departments must abide by the principle of administration according to law, enforce the law seriously, especially the administrative matters, such as joint punishment, the enforcement of each disciplinary measure should have corresponding legal basis, and each case of enforcement must meet the requirements of legal procedures

Secondly, as one of the earliest special economic zone, Zhuhai is independent of legislative power, relying on the advantage of this, we should focus on improving legislation on intellectual property protection, market order construction, credit system construction, labor relations and administrative efficiency improvement (Ma & Zhu, 2017) based on relevant laws and regulations of the state and Guangdong Province, To build a perfect legal and regulatory system involving the business environment, especially to strengthen the construction of procedural laws and regulations, the release of regulatory services is a reshaping of government power, and the emergence of new administrative matters must be regulated by corresponding procedural laws, for example, the main legal basis of

joint punishment in the construction of credit system is administrative punishment law and local procedural law. Functional departments must rely on corresponding laws and regulations to perform the responsibility of joint punishment. At present, there is a problem that, from the perspective of the administrative punishment law, many of the 1513 joint disciplinary measures obviously exceed the scope of punishment stipulated in the administrative punishment law. From the perspective of administrative compulsory law, administrative compulsory measures should be strictly bound by legal principles, and the enforcement can only be set by law. If the joint punishment for dishonesty is to promote the performance of administrative punishment, it must be regulated by administrative compulsory law. If the joint punishment for dishonesty is not an administrative punishment or a compulsory means, it is generally the management Law, then the binding force of the principle of legal reservation will be very low, leading to the effect of punishment is not prominent. There are controversies on the principle of legal reservation on the measures of restricting high consumption and restricting exit in the joint disciplinary measures, because these measures involve the restriction on the property right, employment right and management right of the person who is dishonest and is a typical administrative act of burden, which should be restricted by the principle of legal reservation. From the perspective of legislation, the compulsory measures such as restriction or deprivation of rights and restriction of personal freedom are absolute legal reservation. Therefore, we must adhere to the innovation of the legislative mechanism, aiming at the existing loopholes in the law to continue improving, so we should adhere to the people-oriented, legislation for the people, starting from the fundamental interests of the masses, in order to facilitate the commercial subject to reduce the operating cost, and pay attention to the fairness of legislation. We should adhere to democratic legislation, expand the scope of citizens' participation in legislative work, widely collect opinions from all walks of life, and ensure the perfection of legislation.

Thirdly, the release service is the key to optimize the business environment. In order to serve the people better, we should build a government service hall, fully realize a window hand, completely cancel the proof materials without clear laws and regulations, simplify the application materials, simplify the whole government service process, and stick to the immediate operation, online, nearby and once. Only one door and one window are needed for offline acceptance, one-time notification, time limited completion and personalized delivery. A unified online platform for administrative examination and approval shall be established online to realize online appointment, online acceptance, online processing, online progress inquiry and consultation, online supervision and evaluation. The masses can handle administrative examination and approval directly at home without running at one time, so as to facilitate the masses' work and enhance the transparency of the work. Functional departments should establish a digital evaluation system of administrative efficiency with the core of mass satisfaction and completion rate,

and create a transparent and efficient government environment. We can learn from the experience of Singapore, Hong Kong and other places, improve the channels of complaints, strictly implement punishment measures, and form a trinity supervision mechanism system of the masses, media and organizations.

Finally, the construction of credit system must be continuous deepened, credit information center should be established, credit information system should be improved, the focus should be on the integration and application of non-bank credit information, relying on big data technology for advanced prediction, and to realize the credit system to promote the high-quality development of market supervision. Further, it is necessary to establish and improve the local credit laws and regulations or department rules corresponding to the construction of credit system, and standardize the collection, preservation, processing and sharing of credit information. It is especially emphasized that we must abide by the law in the construction of credit system, especially in the joint punishment, it must meet the requirements of the law, at this stage, because the credit system has not been fully established, local joint disciplinary measures are beyond the disciplinary measures stipulated in the law, At present, China's joint punishment for dishonesty is formed by a series of systems composed of multiple policy documents. Its legal nature is ambiguous, which affects the impartiality of the joint punishment and the authority of law.

Therefore, it is urgent to solve the legal problems of joint punishment in the construction of credit system, in terms of optimization of business environment, As an important part of the construction of credit system, if the implemented punishment measures do not conform to the legal norms or policy provisions, then it actually do not conform to the spirit of the construction of the rule of law government, to a certain extent, it can be said that the joint punishment of dishonesty has become a means of government intervention in the market, rather than a means of regulating market behavior.

### **4.3. Business Environment in Special Periods**

The first line of development is also the first line of the "war epidemic". Affected by the new coronavirus pneumonia, China's economic development is facing a huge challenge. The urgent task now is to take effective measures to enable enterprises to survive the epidemic, to let customers stay and to secure orders. In the face of the epidemic situation, it is a big test for the party and government departments at all levels and the leading cadres in Zhuhai City to optimize the business environment and actively serve the enterprises.

In fact, Zhuhai's actions to optimize its business environment have entered a new stage, and various initiatives launched in recent years have achieved positive results, but the key is whether the actual combat effect is good or not. During the "war epidemic", whether the government can help the market subjects sincerely and actively when the enterprise is in the most difficult time will not only affect the future and destiny of some enterprises, but also greatly affect the level of

business environment

Zhuhai has made many active explorations in optimizing the business environment and achieved positive results. However, whether the business environment is good or not depends on the feelings of market subjects and the actual combat effect. This is a special period for the whole country to overcome the difficulties, and of course it is also a good time for safe and stable business. It's a window period for governments at all levels to win the trust of market subjects and better build the image of service market subjects. It's also a special opportunity period for improving the image of cities and enhancing their competitiveness. Zhuhai City has taken measures to promote the resumption of production of enterprises in an orderly manner. From the perspective of the whole country, the strength of guiding enterprises to resume production in some areas is extraordinary, which has caused great repercussions. For Zhuhai City, it is actually a competition of business environment which means that on the one hand, we should earnestly urge enterprises to take effective prevention and control measures to ensure the safe resumption of production; on the other hand, we should help enterprises that are really in difficulties and guide enterprises to resume production smoothly and scientifically.

Good business environment is often "run" out, especially during the outbreak of war, leading cadres at all levels should go to more enterprises, go deep into the market subject to listen to the voice of market players, find problems and study countermeasures. A friend in need is a friend indeed. The positive effect of timely help on enterprise operation may be far beyond the ordinary time. Therefore, the key is to see whether the market subject is sincerely, actively and pertinently served. Running more is to better solve the problem, and researching various applicable policies and measures is also to better solve the problem. All work needs to focus on the problem, directly attack the problem, and seize the pain points of market subjects. Formalism must be firmly put an end to.

Zhuhai introduced various measures to novel coronavirus pneumonia during the epidemic period to support enterprise to return to work. The novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic situation was introduced in Zhuhai during the epidemic period to support the resumption and resumption of production. It is pointed out that the government will receive and store the key prevention and control materials in a unified way. For the enterprises that produce the materials in urgent need of prevention and control during the epidemic, according to the principle of "one thing, one discussion", will be supported by the material support group of the epidemic prevention and control headquarters. For the materials produced during the epidemic, the government will purchase and store the materials in a unified way after the epidemic.

On February 5, 2020, Zhuhai City issued "Several Opinions of the People's Government of Zhuhai on Supporting Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises to Cope with the Pneumonia Epidemic of New Coronavirus Infection". The total number of policy opinions was 10. According to the new policy, during the epi-

demetic prevention and control period, Zhuhai enterprises will delay the recruitment of Hubei employees or employees who are still in Hubei to return to their corporate positions in accordance with the notification spirit of the provincial epidemic prevention and control headquarters. During the period of returning to work, enterprises that are inconvenienced due to insufficient staff in this category may apply to the government for delayed resumption subsidies. Specific policies shall be studied and formulated by government departments. Within three months from the date when the policy opinion is issued and within three months after the epidemic is resolved, if the company recruits new employees and pays social insurance premiums, the company will be given a subsidy of 500 yuan per person for employment, and each person can enjoy it once. The maximum subsidy for each enterprise is 1 million yuan. Corporate banks will need to refinance loans when they are due. Enterprises that use Zhuhai sub-loan funds to cross the bridge within the prescribed period will receive a reduction of 80%, which is 4/10,000 per day. Reductions and exemptions for small and medium-sized enterprises renting state-owned asset-type operating houses are exempt from rent for two months and 50% for one month. Zhuhai City has taken practical action to help companies affected by the epidemic to weather the crisis.

## **5. Conclusion**

To sum up, the overall business environment of Zhuhai is relatively good, ranking 20th in the national business environment index of Zhuhai, which is a better position than others, indicating that there is still room for further optimization of the business environment of Zhuhai. In the face of the historical foundation of the One Belt and One Road and Hengqin free trade zones and the construction of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao bridge, we must continue to delegate administration and service, and strive to create a law-based, market-oriented and international business environment.

A good business environment depends not only on the action and execution of the government, but also on the timeliness, effectiveness, accuracy and practicality of institutional supply. Therefore, in order to optimize the business environment, we should adhere to the principle of deregulation, the rule of law government construction, and take the initiative to help market subjects solve their problems, and genuinely serve them.

This article studies the reality of Zhuhai's business environment, existing problems, and some of the main issues that need to be addressed to further optimize the business environment. It may not be comprehensive enough in the discussion, and it lacks necessary and detailed data support. It will be further studied in the next research to solve these problems.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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