

STATEMENT BY
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AWARD OF \$250 CHRISTMAS PAYMENT TO

PUBLIC SERVICE PENSIONERS

15 DECEMBER 2023

Mr. Speaker, this year has been a challenging time on so many fronts. Just one week ago today, I rose in this Honourable Parliament to deliver the Government's Budget for 2024-25. Today, after a hearty budget debate and finance committee, we will consider the resulting Appropriation Bill and conclude the budget process for the upcoming fiscal period.

This has been a tremendous outcome. In recognition of this outcome, Mr. Speaker, I have to give thanks to almighty God for seeing this country through a challenging time and for the many blessings He graciously bestows. I thank my colleagues, the Ministers and Official Members in Cabinet, for their stellar leadership in their respective areas of responsibility. I thank the Civil Service for their

continued diligence in delivering the Government's priorities and in particular the teams within the Ministry of Finance and the Parliament, for supporting this process. Finally, Mr. Speaker, I thank you as immediately upon assuming your seat, you so effectively presided over this process and I thank the Leader and other Members of the Opposition, for demonstrating through their actions their commitment to putting the best interest of the People of the Cayman Islands first. It is this collaboration among all elected members of this Parliament, that has made today's outcome possible.

Mr. Speaker, this collaboration has also benefitted many vulnerable persons across our community. The latest example of swift action taken by the Government, and which based upon the sentiments raised in this Parliament, one which I believe is fully supported by all Members of Parliament, is to provide a one-time Christmas payment to all existing public service pensioners.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Deputy Governor mentioned it very briefly during his debate on the Budget, but the announcement may have been lost during the

debate. I would therefore like to offer further details at this time.

The Government has approved a one-off Christmas payment in the amount of \$250, which will be paid to all persons receiving a Public Service Pension, regardless of their duration of service. I know that this token of appreciation will be welcomed, particularly for those pensioners who may not have benefited from other programmes announced this year.

The Public Service Pensions Board has confirmed receipt of the funds and is currently processing this payment. As a result, all existing public service pensioners, just over 2,300 retirees, will receive this payment within their bank accounts before Christmas.

I wish to record my thanks to Ms. Jewel Evans-Lindsey and her team within the Public Service Pensions Board and to the Honourable Deputy Governor and his Chief Office and team within the Portfolio of the Civil Service.

To all public service retirees, I thank you for your historic contributions which have helped shape these Islands and I hope that this one-off Christmas payment of \$250, will provide some respite over the holiday period.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.