



**Statement by the
Deputy Premier and Minister for Tourism and Ports
on the
New Year's Eve Event in George Town
2024 December Session of Parliament**

Mister Speaker, I rise before this honorable House to share exciting news about an event that is being hosted by the Ministry of Tourism to celebrate the incoming New Year, 2025.

For the very first time, the Ministry and Department of Tourism are sponsoring a New Year's Eve Celebration on Seafarers Way, in the heart of George Town. It is an event that promises to unite residents and visitors in a vibrant and inclusive showcase of Caymanian culture, while celebrating the start of the New Year.

Mister Speaker, this event represents a milestone as until now, celebrations on December 31st have largely been driven by the private sector. While we appreciate the efforts of private organizers, these events are often cost-prohibitive for many families.

Tickets to dinner dances or similar styled events can cost hundreds of dollars per person, not to mention the added expense of childcare, as these types of activities rarely accommodate children.

The reality, Mister Speaker, is that many families simply cannot afford to participate in those celebrations - yet, they too deserve a chance to come together, celebrate the New Year, and create lasting memories.

This is why the Ministry of Tourism has stepped in to provide a free, accessible, and family-friendly alternative, ensuring that no one is excluded from the joy of the season, and everyone—regardless of their economic situation—can ring in the New Year with joy, laughter and a sense of fellowship and community.

The event hosted by the Ministry and Department of Tourism is designed so that families can enjoy a range of activities suitable for all ages; including games and face painting; interactive arts and crafts and a mini firework show offering a safe and spectacular fireworks display.

Adding to the festivities will be food trucks and stalls offering a range of tasty Caymanian foods and performances by local DJ's and musicians, blending authentic Caymanian culture with lively energy to welcome 2025 in style. This will truly be a night for the entire family to enjoy, side by side, in a safe and welcoming environment.

This initiative is not only a celebration, but also an opportunity to showcase local businesses and Caymanian cuisine.

Mister Speaker, 2024 has been a difficult year for many in this country. Economic pressures, global uncertainties, and the demands of modern life have left many Caymanians facing all kinds of challenges.

This event represents a gesture of goodwill from the Ministry of Tourism, by offering an evening where everyone can come together, set aside their worries, and look forward together to the promise of a new year.

But it is not just about celebration—it is also about stimulating economic activity. By involving local vendors, food suppliers, and entertainers, we are creating opportunities for small businesses to thrive during one of the busiest times of the year. This aligns with the Government's broader commitment to supporting entrepreneurship and fostering a resilient economy.

Moreover, as one of the busiest periods for tourism, this event will serve as an additional attraction for our visitors, showcasing the warmth, creativity, and vibrancy of our Caymanian culture. It is our way of saying to the world, "This is who we are—come and celebrate with us!"

Mister Speaker, the fact that this year's New Year's Eve falls on a Tuesday evening works perfectly, as no amendments to liquor licensing regulations are required, and the event will be able to continue beyond midnight - until 2 a.m. Additionally, the vendor areas, stage and entertainment zones have been strategically positioned to the southern end of Seafarers Way to avoid interference with port activities and service at the Elmslie Memorial Church.

My intention is for this to be more than just a one-time event. I regard it as the beginning of what I hope will become a long-standing tradition—an annual celebration that brings people together, showcases our culture, and reminds us of the values that make our country strong.

Mister Speaker, I urge my colleagues in this House, as well as the wider community, to support this initiative and help to spread the word.

I also encourage the public to attend and bring the children out to enjoy the activities, as this will be a time for all of us to come together, celebrate responsibly, and welcome in the New Year as one united community.

Thank you, Mister Speaker.