

Minister of Youth, Sports & Heritage
The Hon. Minister Isaac Rankine

Statement for the House of Parliament

Supplementary Appropriations for the
2024 Financial Year

Mister Speaker, I rise to provide further details on the Youth, Sports & Heritage Request for the Supplementary Transfer of Funds for the 2024 financial year, in accordance with Sections 11(5) and 9(5) of the Public Management and Finance Law (2020 Revision).

Mister Speaker, in the 2024 financial year, Cabinet was asked to consider two transfers of funds. The first was to cover the 5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and honorarium for one of our entities, specifically the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands (NGCI). The second was the transfer of funds from the 2025 financial budget to 2024, due to the unanticipated expenditure needs incurred during the Emancipation Day Celebrations, as well as the increased interest in community grants for youth, sports, and heritage activities.

REALLOCATION OF FUNDS FROM HOME AFFAIRS TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY CAYMAN ISLANDS:

Now, regarding the 5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and honorarium for the National Gallery, Mister Speaker, you may recall that in October 2024, a statement was given by the Acting Deputy Governor in this House regarding the 5% COLA, which is scheduled to take effect from January 1, 2025. Additionally, in November 2024, the Hon. Premier announced a one-time honorarium payment for the civil service and the broader public service.

As part of this extension, it was expected that Statutory Authorities and Government Companies would also receive the same benefits. However, the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands informed us that, following the announcement, they did not have the available funding to implement the honorarium for 2024 or the COLA for 2025.

The Board of Directors for the NGCI wished to award the 2024 Honorarium and 2025 COLA increase to its staff in alignment with CIG but were unable to find these funds within the existing budget

or allocations without impacting programmes through a reduction in personnel such as the:

- 1) School Tour programme (free cross-curricular and heritage-based learning tours for all local schools)
- 2) Afterschool Art Clubs (which support 100 children per week for free arts programming)
- 3) Sister Islands programming (due to reductions in travel budgets and personnel)
- 4) Travelling exhibition programme (due to reductions in travel budgets and personnel)

The Ministry of Youth, Sports & Heritage was unable to find the funding within the current allocations for 2024. As a result, Mister Speaker, the Ministry of Youth, Sports & Heritage sought support from our sister Ministry of Home Affairs. Through the funding available in HAF 1, approval was given to re-allocate \$56,000 from HAF 1 to the NGCI in accordance to Section 11 (5) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision), thereby assisting in funding.

Mister Speaker, it was crucial for this Government to honour its commitment to the wider public service and supporting entities that

contribute to the preservation and awareness of our Arts and Culture. As the country's leading public visual arts organisation, dedicated to collecting and exhibiting works of our local artisans, it was important to acknowledge the invaluable work of the National Gallery and its staff. This honorarium and COLA extension were in line with the benefits afforded to other Statutory Authorities and Government Companies.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank this Government for considering and approving this transfer of funds, ensuring that the National Gallery receives the recognition and support it deserves.

TRANSFER FUNDS WITHIN THE 2 YEAR BUDGET PERIOD FROM 2025 TO 2024

Mister Speaker, the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Heritage had also requested Cabinet for the transfer of funds from the 2025 Budget to the 2024 Budget in accordance with Section 9(5) of the Public Management and Finance Act, (2020 Revision).

Mister Speaker, The Ministry of Youth, Sports & Heritage plays a key role in shaping the future of the nation by investing in youth,

developing athletes, and preserving Caymanian heritage. As we approached the end of 2024, we anticipated a projected shortfall of \$350,000 due to vital and unanticipated expenditures that reflect the dynamic nature of the Ministry's work and our responsive approach to the community's needs.

Notably, two key initiatives have contributed to these additional costs: the successful reinstatement of Emancipation Day events in both Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac, after 62 years, and the launch of the Ministry's grants process. These initiatives have brought immense value by fostering national pride, reconnecting the community with its history, and supporting essential projects in youth development, sports, and heritage preservation. The outcomes of these efforts will continue to benefit the Caymanian community for years to come.

For this reason, the Ministry sought a transfer of funds from the 2025 financial year to 2024 to meet all obligations for the remainder of the 2024 year.

Conclusion

In closing, Mr. Speaker and Members of this Honourable House, I have explained the exceptional circumstances that made it necessary to approve the supplementary appropriations for the Ministry of Youth, Sports & Heritage in the 2024 financial year.

With the approval of these transfers, the Government was able to effectively address unforeseen expenditures and ensure the successful continuation of key initiatives for these important subject areas.

Mister Speaker, I would like to express my gratitude to this Honourable House for considering and approving these necessary transfers, and for supporting the Ministry in fulfilling its mandate to shape a brighter future for our people, protect our heritage, and nurture the potential of our youth. I thank you for your indulgence as the Ministry continues to work with its agencies to deliver essential services to the people of the Cayman Islands, as we remain dedicated to improving the lives of those we serve.

Thank you, and God Bless.