



PARLIAMENT
OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS



OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

First Meeting of the 2025-2026 Session
Second Sitting

Thursday
26 June, 2025
(Pages 1-24)

Hon. D. Ezzard Miller
Speaker

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PRESENT WERE:

Hon. D. Ezzard Miller
Speaker

MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

Hon. André M. Ebanks, MP	<i>Premier</i> , Minister of Financial Services & Commerce
Hon. Gary B. Ruttly, MP	<i>Deputy Premier</i> , Minister of Tourism & Trade Development
Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks, MP	Minister of Health, Environment & Sustainability
Hon. Rolston M. Anglin, JP, MP	Minister of Finance & Economic Development <i>and</i> Education & Training
Hon. Johany S. Ebanks, MP	Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing & Infrastructure
Hon. Isaac D. Rankine, JP, MP	Minister of Social Development & Innovation <i>and</i> Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage
Hon. Nickolas T. A. DaCosta, JP, MP	Minister of District Administration & Home Affairs
Hon. Michael S. Myles, MP	Minister of Caymanian Employment & Immigration

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Hon. Gloria M. McField-Nixon, JP	<i>Acting Deputy Governor</i> , ex officio Member responsible for the Portfolio of the Civil Service
Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, KC, JP	<i>Attorney General</i> , ex officio Member responsible for the Portfolio of Legal Affairs

ELECTED MEMBERS

GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS

Mrs. Julie J. T. Hunter, JP, MP	Elected Member for West Bay West
Ms. Heather D. Boddén, OCl, Cert. Hon., JP, MP	Elected Member for Savannah
Hon. G. Wayne Panton, JP, MP	Elected Member for Newlands

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, MP	<i>Leader of the Opposition</i> , Elected Member for George Town North
Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, JP, MP	<i>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</i> , Elected Member for George Town Central
Hon. Pearlina L. McGaw-Lumsden, MP	<i>Deputy Speaker</i> , Elected Member for George Town West
Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MP	Elected Member for Cayman Brac East
Mr. A. Roy Tatum, Cert. Hon., MP	Elected Member for Red Bay
Mr. Roy M. McTaggart, JP, MP	Elected Member for George Town East
Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, CCl, JP, MP	Elected Member for Boddén Town East

APOLOGIES

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders, MP	Elected Member for Boddén Town West
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OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
FIRST MEETING OF THE 2025-2026 SESSION
THURSDAY
26 JUNE, 2025
1:59PM
Second Sitting

[Hon. D. Ezzard Miller, Speaker, presiding]

The Speaker: Good morning.

I call on the Leader of the Opposition, elected Member for George Town North to read prayers.

PRAYERS

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition, Elected Member for George Town North: Thank you.

Let us pray:

Almighty God, from whom all wisdom and power are derived: We beseech Thee so to direct and prosper the deliberations of the Parliament now assembled, that all things may be ordered upon the best and surest foundations for the glory of Thy Name and for the safety, honour and welfare of the people of these Islands.

Bless our Sovereign, King Charles III; William, Prince of Wales; and all the Royal Family. Give grace to all who exercise authority in our Commonwealth, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us. Especially we pray for the Governor of our Islands, the Premier, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Leader of the Opposition, Ministers of the Cabinet, ex officio Members, Members of the Parliament, the Chief Justice and Members of the Judiciary that we may be enabled faithfully to perform the responsible duties of our high office. All this we ask for Thy great Name's sake.

Let us say The Lord's Prayer together:

Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

May the Lord bless us and keep us. May the Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us and give us peace, now and always. Amen.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS OR AFFIRMATIONS

The Speaker: None.

READING BY THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Speaker: I have apologies from Mr. Roy Tatum, Member for Red Bay and Mr. Dwayne Seymour, Member for Bodden Town East who will both be arriving late.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Speaker: None.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The Speaker: None.

URGENT QUESTIONS

The Speaker: None.

QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT

QUESTION NO. 7 NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSES BUILT IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS; AND INTENTION TO BUILD AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE DISTRICT OF GEORGE TOWN

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Elected Member for George Town Central: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to ask Question No. 7 standing in my name, to the Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure. Can the Honourable Minister say how many affordable houses have been built in the last four years; and does the Minister intend to build any affordable housing in the district of George Town?

Mr. Speaker, I do recognise that the Minister addressed much of this in his last questioning yesterday, but formally, I have to ask the question, sir.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing & Infrastructure.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks, Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure, Elected Member for North Side: Mr. Speaker, over the past four years, a total of 39 affordable homes have been completed through the National Housing Development Trust (NHDT) under its Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI) and Build on Your Own Property (BYOP) programme.

With respect to George Town, the Government does intend to proceed with the development of affordable housing in the district. The NHDT has been tasked with preparing the necessary procurement documents to support the development of its vacant sites in George Town, ensuring these are utilised to their full potential.

This initiative forms part of the Government's broader national housing strategy, which aims to expand access to affordable housing for Caymanians across all districts of the Cayman Islands.

The Speaker: Are there any supplementaries? *[Pause]*
Next question, Madam Clerk.

QUESTION NO. 8
FINDINGS OR REPORT FROM THE UK'S
DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT TO SUPPORT
PLANS FOR A MODERN PUBLIC
TRANSPORT SYSTEM

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum, Elected Member for Red Bay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to ask the following question in my name: Can the Honourable Minister advise whether the work undertaken in 2023 and/or 2024 by individuals from the UK's Department for Transport to support plans for a modern public transport system has been completed; and if so, when will the findings or report be made public?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, a consultant from the UK Department for Transport is currently supporting the Ministry in preparing a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for a modern public transport system in the Cayman Islands. The SOC will offer a high-level assessment of transport challenges, options, and delivery models — serving as the foundation for future decision-making. It is expected to be completed by the end of summer 2025.

Once finalised, the report will be submitted to Cabinet for review and direction. The Ministry will determine the appropriate timing and format for public release following internal and Cabinet-level consideration.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Nothing further than to say I look forward to getting sight of that at some point. Public transport is a huge issue for us here.

Thanks.

The Speaker: Next question.

QUESTION NO. 9
FORMAL AGREEMENTS IN PLACE BETWEEN THE
NATIONAL ROADS AUTHORITY AND UTILITY
COMPANIES TO ENSURE THE FULL
REINSTATEMENT OF ROADS THAT
HAVE BEEN DAMAGED

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to ask the Honourable Minister: Can the Honourable Minister advise whether there are formal agreements in place - including required timelines - between the National Roads Authority and utility companies, particularly the two water companies, to ensure the full reinstatement of roads that have been damaged because of repair works or other activities carried out beneath or along public roads?

The Speaker: Minister of Planning, [Lands,] Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

There is a formal policy and operating framework in place between the National Roads Authority (NRA) and all utility providers—including both water companies—governing road reinstatement following utility works.

Under section 25 of the Roads Act, the NRA has legal authority to regulate the placement and maintenance of utility infrastructure in public roads. All statutory undertakers must apply for and receive a permit before carrying out any trenching or excavation on public roads, and are fully responsible for the cost and quality of reinstatement.

Standard procedure requires temporary reinstatement immediately after trenching to maintain access and safety. Final asphalt resurfacing is then carried out, typically within a few weeks, depending on contractor availability and coordination timelines. In some cases, works may be grouped to reduce repeated disruption in the same area.

The NRA meets regularly with utility providers to coordinate planned works, align timelines where possible, and minimise impact on road users. This includes reviewing major development projects in advance to anticipate required utility upgrades and integrate them with NRA schedules.

In cases of non-compliance or poor-quality reinstatement, the NRA has the authority to require corrective action or withhold future permits until issues are resolved. This approach ensures accountability without requiring formal penalties under current legislation.

The Ministry is satisfied that the current framework provides a structured and enforceable process for managing road reinstatement following utility activity.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Supplementaries

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I may have missed it, but I did not hear whether there was anyone charged with actually monitoring to make sure the repairs are done in a timely manner; and if there isn't, is that possible?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, that is correct. We do have someone who goes out and makes sure that repairs are done in a timely manner. That all falls with the Director and sometimes I think he would delegate those powers to someone else, but we do go to assess the way that roads are fixed.

We also have looked into coordinating a little bit more with them, so that now, whereas many of the utility companies used to use cold patches before to patch in, we are starting to get to where they have to use Island Paving to come out and do physical patches for them; this way we can make sure that we're maintaining the road standards.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the Minister.

I had a very good meeting with some of the folks in the NRA and they did state their concerns with roads sometimes not being fully reinstated. I was promised to receive some information from them with regard to some roads. Can I ask the Minister please, if I submit a list to him, if he could try to get back to me?

The Speaker: Member, if you are going to refer to a meeting that you had with the NRA, I think that's outside the bounds of the question. I think you need to write the Minister and outline the answers that you want.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: That's fine. I'll skip that part and get to the point I want to make, if that's fine with you, sir.

I wonder if the Honourable Minister would be able to provide me with, from NRA, a listing of the roads within the Red Bay constituency and any timelines that they're aware of in terms of the repairs being done. I can receive that in writing.

Thank you.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, it seems that the Member has already taken up that task with, as he said, someone at NRA, so I would just leave it in his hands and continue that way; but if it does not work out, sir, you can always find me and I will be able to provide that in writing to you.

The Speaker: Next question—

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Can the Minister give any updates in respect to the road between Eastern Avenue and the Waterfront; and the timeline if he has it available? If not, I can have it in writing. That's fine.

The Speaker: Minister, if you want to undertake it in writing, that's fine, because that's a little bit outside of the boundaries of this question.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I don't mind putting it back in writing to the Member, but I can just give him a brief update quickly.

Right to the minute, there are a few homes left to get, to come out to the Eastern Avenue, which we're having to deal with and negotiate some land acquisitions, so as soon as we get those under control then we will be able to complete that. As a time frame, I can't tell you until we are able to acquire the last few pieces of properties at the very end of the road, which is basically from the stop light, coming back. I think it's about three properties that we need to finish purchase.

QUESTION NO. 10 UPDATE ON THE BIMINI DRIVE TO SELKIRK DRIVE CONNECTOR ROAD

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask Question No. 10 [standing] in my name to the Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing & Infrastructure. Can the Honourable Minister provide an update on the Bimini Drive to Selkirk Drive connector road, including any potential timeline for gazettal and paving of the road?

Thank you.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: The Ministry is actively progressing the Bimini Drive to Selkirk Drive Connector Road Project (Boundary Plan 660), which has evolved into a more comprehensive road scheme aimed at significantly improving traffic efficiency in the Grand Harbour area.

Boundary Plan 660 will be gazetted once the following two preconditions are satisfied:

1. Finalisation and agreement of a parking layout feasibility assessment with Grand Harbour merchants; and
2. Selection of a qualified engineering design firm through an open tender process.

Road paving and related works will proceed following gazettal, land acquisition, and completion of detailed engineering designs. The Ministry remains fully committed to delivering this strategic infrastructure project and will continue to provide updates as further progress is made, particularly as key milestones are achieved.

Supplementaries

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Through you] to the Honourable Minister, I appreciate that it seems like there is a fair bit left to be done, but in your head do you have any idea of timelines for this to actually be achieved, in terms of a potential date? Are we talking this year, or are we talking at some point next year?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, at this point I cannot give a timeline on that, but if it's okay with the Member, I may be able to find out and get back to him on it in writing.

What I can say is that the NRA is basically looking to complete the connector road by the Caribbean Utilities Company (CUC) and the King's roundabout and connecting that to Edgewater, which then leads on to BP 660. What we want to do is to see if we can finish up all of that within this year. We are also looking to fix the intersection by Hurley's this year. Then, I can tell you that one of the mandates is looking at the East-West after that and where we can fill in. However, as for a timeline right now? No, I cannot give you an answer on it.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for that. I would implore him though, to see if there's any consideration that could be done with making the current connector road more passable.

Thank you.

QUESTION NO. 11 ONGOING WORK RELATED TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE OWEN ROBERTS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT RUNWAY

The Speaker: Member for George Town East.

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart, Elected Member for George Town East: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask Question No. 11 on the Order Paper standing in my name, which reads: Can the Honourable Minister advise whether the Government intends to proceed with the ongoing work related to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed extension of the Owen Roberts International Airport (ORIA) runway?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, yes, the Government intends to proceed with the Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed Owen Roberts International Airport runway extension. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Environmental Impact Assessment were tendered and awarded in 2024.

Supplementaries

The Speaker: Member for George Town East.

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would say whether they have any sort of time frame in mind as to when the assessment will be completed and made available to the public.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, not at the moment, sir.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Can the Minister say—obviously in light of the new formulation of the Government—whether this project for the runway extension is a part of the Government's future proposed strategic policy? Obviously the Strategic Policy Statement isn't coming for now, I just want to know if it's a part of the policy to still continue with this project.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I want to start back by saying, yes, the Government intends to proceed with the Environmental Impact Assessment. All right?

Mr. Speaker, with the challenges that we have now financially, if the Government had no intentions of moving forward and going in that direction, I don't see why we would have been trying to get this Environmental Impact [Assessment] done—there would be significant savings there. Just showing that we are out to do that has to give him some guarantee that the Government is looking to move forward with the airport expansion.

I hope that answers the Member's question.

The Speaker: Next question.

**QUESTION NO. 12
REFORMS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL GOVERNANCE
TO EMPOWER SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND
LEADERSHIP TEAMS AND PROVIDE FOR MORE
DIRECT INVOLVEMENT BY PARENTS AND
BUSINESS LEADERS**

The Speaker: Member for George Town East.

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask Question No. 12 on the Order Paper standing in my name, which reads: Can the Honourable Minister advise whether the Government intends to introduce reforms to public school governance that would both empower school principals and leadership teams with greater management responsibility and provide for more direct involvement by parents and business leaders?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister responsible for Education & Training.

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin, Minister of Finance & Economic Development and Education & Training, Elected Member for West Bay North: Mr. Speaker, the answer: The Ministry of Education & Training is conducting research as a part of a wider review of education reform and improvement.

The Speaker: Next question.

**QUESTION NO. 13
SCHEDULED AND REGULARLY REVIEWED
MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME FOR DRAINS IN
FLOOD-PRONE AREAS WITHIN GEORGE TOWN**

The Speaker: Member for George Town West, Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Pearlina L. McGaw-Lumsden, Deputy Speaker, Elected Member for George Town West: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask Question No. 13 in my name to the Honourable Minister of Planning Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure. Can the Honourable Minister advise whether there is a scheduled and regularly reviewed maintenance programme for drains in flood-prone areas within George Town?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, yes, the National Roads Authority has a scheduled and regularly reviewed maintenance programme for stormwater drainage wells across Grand Cayman—including those located in flood-prone areas of George Town.

At present, the NRA maintains approximately 4,700 public road drains. In areas known to be more susceptible to flooding, maintenance activity is increased, in the weeks leading up to the rainy season.

Supplementaries

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Can the Honourable Minister say if there's any plan to expand the complement of NRA to deal with road drains?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, since taking over as Minister of the NRA we have put together a crew that is dedicated for road drainage in this country. That's all they do. They go around, they measure every well and they pump them out. Then, they measure again to see what was in the well; what was the difference; and if the well has collapsed. If it has collapsed they make a report of it and then go back out and re-drill it. The six-inch wells, they go back and bore those a little bit bigger to make those eight and ten [inches], especially in areas that we know need larger wells. Yes, there is a dedicated crew.

Hopefully, one of these days, with the support of the Opposition for the budget coming up, we can find some money and expand a little bit more onto the well system. Maybe not just about maintaining wells, but even owning our own equipment to be able to drill wells. That way we can get wells done when we need them, on time, on a regular basis, and also go in the direction of getting injection wells done when we want to get them done. I know, even though there are over 4,700 wells throughout the island, there are still areas that need many more wells.

Not only does this crew maintain the wells, but they also look at maintaining the culverts and keeping them clean. That's why in the last couple of years, we have been able to maintain the water flow in Randyke

Gardens and areas like Cumber, Bodden Town, where we were able to keep the water level down to where it's getting close, but it wasn't getting into people's homes. Hopefully we can continue to do the good work that the NRA has been doing, to be able to continue to pump the water fast enough and get that into the locations and out from those areas, so we don't have to put the people in those low lying areas at risk.

Just recently, we cleaned out some of the culverts headed from Washington Boulevard going down towards the Esterley Tibbetts [Highway], cutting across to the dump. I was there months ago and I can tell you, we had one or two culverts that were closed and by opening that it was days and days that water was actually draining out from that area. We are maintaining those areas well and keeping that up. By me doing my job that allows the people not to have to call and harass you all saying that water is coming into their homes, and their roads aren't being flooded as much. The NRA is trying to do the best that they can with what resources they have.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to say that the Minister has my full support in getting any extra budgeting necessary in the upcoming budget so he can expand and we can keep the people dry.

The Speaker: Member for George Town East.

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, I want to say I have noticed a real improvement in the work of the NRA in responding to requests and in taking advanced work in blowing out wells, et cetera before the rains come.

The situation for me is perennially the Randyke area; you know that. The problem I have is that there are many, many wells that have been placed down in Randyke, none of which really work very well because of the lowness of it; however, there are a number of them that have collapsed. They no longer function. I noticed you did say in your response that you go back and—

The Speaker: Can we get a question here?

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: I am asking him if he could have his people go back and look at those to see if they can be re-drilled and provide some additional relief, because that place floods so easily. The work you did last year with those two big pumps worked for a while, but the underground wells fill very quickly. I'm looking for a little bit of help with that.

Thank you, sir.

The Speaker: I don't think there is any question to answer, Minister.

Member for George Town West, Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Pearlina L. McGaw-Lumsden, Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Can the Minister say if this is a set schedule or ad hoc situation?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, to answer the question of whether it's a set schedule or ad hoc, I could not answer that right at the moment. I know the guys have their own iPad that they go out with and they know where the most flood-prone areas are. Those are the areas where they will make sure are cleaned well before we get into the rainy season.

Usually, if they are starting in West Bay they will just hit most of the wells coming [down], or if they're coming from the eastern side they will try to hit all of them on their way out, doing as many as they can; so it is not like they're just running all over the place. They kind of schedule it so that when they're in the eastern side of the island they try to clean all of the wells at one time, working their way back to George Town; meanwhile, [the same for] the other crew that will be coming out from the West Bay side.

The Speaker: Member for George Town West, Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Pearlina L. McGaw-Lumsden, Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Can the Minister say how many persons are actually on the team to address this concern?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, at the moment I think there are two trucks on the road—there may be one that's down right now—but there is a team of two NRA vehicles and that's all we need to go around. It's very simple. It's basically just lifting the manhole cover out, putting a pump down in there, pumping it out, washing it back out, and making sure the well is clean. At one point in time we had one individual doing it, but it was a little bit stringent on the one person, so we added an extra person to the vehicle; also for safety matters, it was easier to have two people at all times. Usually there's a crew of about 6 to 8, somewhere around there, but right now there's one truck that needs some work on it.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I wonder if the Minister would advise whether or not—and I'm asking because I really don't know—the NRA and Planning [Department] consider the possibility of flooding when they're doing road works, and

are looking at the developments that are being built or requesting planning permission to be built.

The Speaker: I think that's a little bit outside of maintenance schedule, so maybe you can write the Minister and ask him about it.

If there are no other supplementaries that concludes question time.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Speaker: I have received notice and approved a statement by the Honourable Minister of Tourism and Trade Development.

Hon. Gary B. Ratty, Deputy Premier, Minister of Tourism and Trade Development, Elected Member for George Town South: Mr. Speaker, at this time I don't have that, sir.

The Speaker: All right. Next item on the agenda.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The Speaker: None.

OBITUARY AND OTHER CEREMONIAL SPEECHES

Mrs. Anita Salmon-Beezer

The Speaker: I would like to do a short obituary on Mrs. Anita Salmon-Beezer, who was a member of staff here and died recently.

I wish to offer condolences to the family of Mrs. Anita Salmon-Beezer. As many of you are aware, Ms. Anita was the housekeeper and messenger of the Parliament for a number of years, up until August of last year when she retired on medical grounds. Unfortunately, Anita passed away on 25th May after about a year and a half of being critically ill.

Ms. Anita was associated with the Parliament for about 30 years. She first started coming to the Legislative Assembly (LA) to assist her Aunt Mary, who was the housekeeper at the time. She stayed on at the LA after her aunt passed and became employed as the housekeeper and messenger. She enjoyed working at the Parliament and developed long-lasting relationships with some of the Members and staff over the many years. She was dedicated to her job and was loved and appreciated by all those with whom she interacted over the years.

I wish to convey our deepest sympathy to her husband of 14 years, Devon; and her son, Peter, on behalf of the Members and staff of the Parliament.

Thank you.

RAISING OF MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE

The Speaker: None.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION NO. 1 OF 2025-2026 MOTION TO DECRIMINALISE SPEEDING IN NO-WAKE ZONES

The Speaker: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Member for George Town Central, Motion No. 1 of 2025-2026 standing in your name.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move the Motion standing in my name, Motion to decriminalise speeding in no-wake zones.

Hon. Pearlina L. McGaw-Lumsden, Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move to second the Motion.

The Speaker: The Motion has been moved and seconded. Does the Mover wish to speak to the Motion?

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present and debate a Motion that, at its core, speaks not only to the fairness in law but to justice, to opportunity, and to our collective responsibility as legislators. The Motion before this honourable House is a simple one, but significant—to decriminalise speeding in no-wake zones.

Mr. Speaker, just recently, throughout the campaign, I had a conversation with a young man from my constituency, a Caymanian with ambitions to live a bright and promising life. He told me that a few years ago when he was barely out of his teens he was ticketed for operating a personal watercraft at more than five knots within 200 yards of the shoreline, in what is designated as a no-wake zone. He paid the fine of \$300, assuming that that would probably be the least of it for him, Mr. Speaker, but he was shocked to find out later on that this seemingly minor infraction had left him with a criminal record.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to lay on the [Table] of this honourable House a copy of the police record, with the redacted name and date of birth of the individual. I've also asked the staff to add a copy of the redacted police record on the ShareFile, but I made a copy for you, Mr. Speaker, so you can see it.

Mr. Speaker, you can see there on the police record, the infraction, and it is a criminal offence. With that record came the crushing realisation that it would be very unlikely that he could get a visa for travel. I want

to expand that when I say visa, I'm encompassing all manners of opportunity to travel to the United States—that being the visa for the USA; a waiver programme that is especially for Cayman Islands; and if you have a British Passport by the notion of being Caymanian or an Overseas Territory Citizen, the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA).

Mr. Speaker, this is not an isolated story. This is a flaw in our system of justice, in my humble opinion. I say this because this young man's experience is disturbingly similar to what led to the recent Referendum on the decriminalisation of the possession of small quantities of marijuana. That Referendum was held because too many of our young people—and old, I dare say—bright, young Caymanians with talent, drive and potential were being denied visas; going further than that, denied job opportunities; denied educational opportunities; and even denied a chance to receive medical treatment overseas, particularly those within the US market, for mistakes made.

The people of this country recognised that injustice and in their wisdom, Mr. Speaker, voted in favour of the Referendum for decriminalisation of small amounts of marijuana, one which many Members of this honourable House supported in the previous administration. They understood that the punishment must fit the offence and that a youthful error should not carry a lifelong sentence.

Mr. Speaker, today we find ourselves facing the same issue under a different heading. The question is: Should speeding on the water carry criminal penalties, while speeding on land does not?

Mr. Speaker, consider this, if that same young man had been caught driving 65 miles per hour in a 25 miles per hour zone on the public roads, he would have been issued a ticket, summons to court and fined. He would not, under the current traffic laws, have received a criminal record, but because he committed the equivalent act on water, he now carries a lifelong burden of a criminal conviction. I say lifelong because well after the expungement legislation comes into effect for such a criminal offence, which I think is five years, the opportunities which he will be limited to still factor in. When applying for a visa application, as I've said in this honourable House before, they ask you "Have you ever been...?" regardless of if your record is clean or not.

There is a general, well-established principle in law, Mr. Speaker, which speaks to the concept of proportionality, equality and consistency in sentencing, suggesting that similar offences should attract similar penalties. What resulted with this young man was not proportionate, equal or consistent. At least not in many minds in the public. I dare say it is not justice.

We must ask ourselves, why the disparity? Is speeding in a no-wake zone more dangerous than speeding on a busy road? Mr. Speaker, I think there's a high chance of more damage simply on the basis that there's more traffic and human beings at any given time on the roads. If there is an increased risk associated

with marine violations, by all means, let the penalties reflect that; perhaps through graduated fines or mandatory education, but not criminalisation for a first-time non-reckless offence.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. I am not advocating for lawlessness on the water, far from it. I support the continued enforcement of speed limits in no-wake zones, but what I am saying, and what I'm urging this honourable House to consider is that such offences be treated administratively, not criminally, just as we do with land-based traffic infractions. Under the Traffic Act (2021 Revision) ordinary speeding offences are handled as a misdemeanour, not as a criminal conviction unless they are involved in reckless and dangerous driving, or such serious offences. Yet, our Port Authority Regulations (2026 Revision) (*sic*) have remained out of step, placing undue burdens not only on young Caymanians but any aged Caymanians for minor infractions, like going over five knots in a 200 yard zone.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, under section 19 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009, the principles of lawfulness, rationality and proportionality are enshrined in our governance model. These principles demand that all of our laws be applied fairly and without excess or arbitrary penalties. The current legal treatment of minor speeding within the designated area of 200 yards of our shore fails that test, in my humble opinion, Mr. Speaker.

How many of us in this honourable House have children, nieces, nephews, friends who enjoy our waters on the weekend, the beautiful crystal waters of the Cayman Islands, every Sunday, every Saturday, every holiday? [Imagine] you just said, "*You know what, let me buy my 15 year old daughter or son, a jet ski because they've been working so hard in school,*" and they just so happen to go seven knots within 200 yards of the shoreline. Now, Mr. Speaker, that example I just gave you for a 14-15 year old, luckily, would be a minor, so it wouldn't be reflected on their record; but let's just say the child was 17 years old, just graduated high school with honours and distinction, and just so happened to touch the idle (*sic*) a little bit more than normal. Should that child be now burdened with the lack of an opportunity to go to university because they now have a criminal record, upon which they can't get a US visa? I don't think that's what we want.

Mr. Speaker, jet skis, small boats and family outings are a part of our heritage and our lifestyle here in the Cayman Islands. We are surrounded by water and as our Coat of Arms says, "He hath founded it upon the seas". It's a part of our heritage. Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, we just had a ceremony creating a library for the seamen and their history. How fitting that just one day after, we are trying to protect that cultural component from the damaging effects that, I am certain, when the creation of this legislation was done, was not thought about.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should all think about the consequences if that could have been one of our

own and the ill effects that could have happened to them. To those who would ask *"How many people are affected by this, Mr. Speaker,"* to be honest with you, the answer is simple—one is too many. I don't know how many people are affected because I don't have the list of criminal records in this country, but the Government can certainly do so via Cabinet if they seek that information. If even one Caymanian has been deprived of the opportunity of jobs, scholarship, access to medical care overseas, or even just simple old leisure—I just want to go to Florida—should I be stopped from the opportunity to jump to Miami to watch a basketball game because I went seven knots over the speed limit? Come on.

Mr. Speaker, all of us Members in this House may be at odds sometimes with respect to policy, but I can surely stand and say that every Member of this House loves Cayman, loves our people and would share with me that this has to be addressed. As legislators of this honourable Parliament we have a responsibility to craft laws that are just, equitable and proportionate. Where we find injustice in the application of existing laws we are duty bound, Mr. Speaker, morally and constitutionally, to correct it. By the power of our vote and by the power of the vote of the public in the Referendum on marijuana, Caymanians did the right thing and stood for fairness, and I hope that that too will demonstrate that this Parliament is equally willing to do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, as I wrap up, I call on every Member of this honourable House to support this Motion. Not to excuse unlawful behaviour, but to ensure that the consequences of minor infractions do not ruin lives and instead gives our young people, and anyone of any age who operate watercraft, a fair chance to learn, to travel and contribute as productive citizens of these beloved Islands. I do look forward to the contributions of the Government Members in respect of this Motion.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, firstly, let me thank the Member for George Town Central for bringing this Private Member's Motion here today. I had the opportunity last week to actually have a deep dive down into this and look into the Port Regulations—I did not know it actually was a criminal offence. Taking from that along with having a conversation, hearing exactly what the Member outlined and seeing that this young individual himself did not know that it was a criminal offence and thought that, yes, it was wrong, he paid the fine, but not knowing that it would have been on his record. That could have probably happened to pretty much any of us that owns a boat, I would say.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say that the Government is in full support of this Motion. Where it talks about "speeding in a no-wake zone of a marine park is considered to be a criminal offence", I know there are other zoned areas too, and I was just wondering if we should expand it further to those areas and fix pretty much all of them to be ticketable offences. I agree with the Member, we have to start looking at some of these laws that are affecting the livelihood of our kids and [acknowledge] how much it affects them, where our children cannot get the chance to go overseas because they made one simple mistake at that time in the day. I can guarantee you, sometimes when you're doing certain speeds, that adrenaline that is running through you... It may have been a real, simple mistake and he may not even have realised it. Some areas [are] not even marked properly and you do not even realise it.

I have noticed, Mr. Speaker, the Coast Guard has taken [on] a larger role with our marines, especially on the weekends. You [may] have seen where the Coast Guard has been out there doing their job to protect the areas, telling the boaters and those who are operating jet skis whether they are in the wrong zones and whether they are in a no-wake zone. Especially, as the Member for North Side, I've seen it happen too much in Cayman Kai, Rum Point and especially in the Kaibo area. I look at the Kaibo area, simply as in the Kaibo area it could have been a very harmless thing because the area is not identified properly. I've seen marine officers stop vessels to warn them and tell them that they were in the area, not knowing that there isn't a buoy out there to tell them that they were in a no-wake zone.

Mr. Speaker, I do support this Motion. The Government supports this Motion. We want to help out. We don't want to see our children carry this type of burden on top of them, especially those who are going away for school or traveling. It is something that will affect their lives. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, one day they may want to apply for a job in one of the marine departments and then they look at the police record and say, *"Look, a couple of years ago you were speeding in a marine zone and now you want to be a marine officer?"* As I said, it could have been a simple mistake.

I think for this Motion, there is no need to have a long argument over it. I think we can simply pass this on and say that the Government fully supports it.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Does the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition want to reply?

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Let me start by saying, I thank the Honourable Minister for his contribution and his indication of support by Members when we get to the vote. It does show partnership and that when we find issues, we can work together to support and make the necessary changes

in the best interests of our people. I want to thank the Minister for that.

I also want to thank my seconder, the Honourable Member for Bodden Town East, Dwayne Seymour, who is quite similar. He always used to say, *"I fight for the face of the faceless."* He is a fighter for the small man, and when I drafted this Motion, I thought of him right away and I knew he would second it—even though unfortunately, he's given apologies not to be here, but I thank him for seconding it. Moreover, I want to thank the Honourable Deputy Speaker for taking his place to be the seconder on the Floor when it was time to address the matter.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also thank the Minister for expanding the parameters of this. Obviously, the Government has in its full remit to do as it wishes, but just acknowledging the fact that there may be other areas that should be considered to be misdemeanours... Maybe this is an objective that the Law Reform Commission should take up [so] as to consider whether or not we should take a review of all of our legislation and find and create maybe a misdemeanour programme, things that we don't think should levy a criminal offence. There could be some other things that I am missing that the Government could be willing to address. We do recognise that with us being a heavy dependent on the US market, with their Visa restrictions by way of immigration, the fact that we depend heavily on educational opportunities for our children and medical care, we should probably review that.

By all means, I don't want to send a message of, *Oh, you should break the law because it would be no criminal offence*, but we have to be realistic in some of the things that are seeming to be rather archaic.

With that being said, I want to again thank the Minister and the Government for their intended support and I hope to see this Motion successfully passed when it is time for a vote.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I think I need to read the Motion into the records because the Mover did not read the Motion when he moved it. Just so that the records remain complete, I'll take the opportunity to read the whole Motion.

WHEREAS speeding in a no-wake zone of a marine park is considered a criminal offence;

AND WHEREAS criminal records continue to create job opportunity hurdles for many Caymanians;

AND WHEREAS speeding on the road way is NOT considered a criminal offence;

AND WHEREAS section 19 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order requires that "All decisions and acts of public officials must be lawful, rational, proportionate and procedurally fair."

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Government considers amending the relevant legislation to remove the criminality of the offence to make it equal to that of a traffic offence;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers this as an urgent matter due to the unintended negative effect on Caymanian employment and travel opportunities.

The question is, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that Government considers amending the relevant legislation to remove the criminality of the offence to make it equal to that of a traffic offence;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers this as an urgent matter due to the unintended negative effect on Caymanian employment and travel opportunities.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Private Member's Motion No. 1 of 2025-2026 passed.

[Desk thumping]

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION NO. 2 OF 2025-2026
IMPLEMENTING A YEAR-ROUND NiCE
PROGRAMME IN GRAND CAYMAN**

The Speaker: Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Member for George Town Central, Private Member's Motion No. 2 of 2025-2026.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to move [Private Member's] Motion No. 2 of 2025-2026, standing in my name on the Order Paper, entitled: Implementing a year-round NiCE Programme in Grand Cayman. The Motion reads as such, Mr. Speaker:

WHEREAS unemployment amongst Caymanians is still high;

AND WHEREAS all Members of the Government and Parliament campaigned on reducing Caymanian unemployment;

AND WHEREAS a template structure is already in place with the Brac National Community Enhancement Programme.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Government considers implementing a year-round National Community Enhancement (NiCE) programme in Grand Cayman;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers allocating the necessary funds to the Ministry responsible for the current National Community Enhancement (NiCE) Programme for it to start by the 1st January, 2026.

The Speaker: Is there a seconder?

Deputy Speaker and Member for George Town West.

Hon. Pearlina L. McGaw-Lumsden, Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move to second the Motion.

The Speaker: The Motion has been moved and seconded. Does the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition wish to speak to the Motion?

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to beg your forgiveness for my rookie mistake earlier by not reading the Motion. I think it's been a while since I've moved a Motion independently in the Opposition, hence the reason.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring the Motion that this honourable House should implement the National Community Enhancement Programme, more commonly referred to as the NiCE Programme, as a year round initiative in Grand Cayman, with it hopefully being in effect by the 1st January. I say that because I recall having to make an amendment [based on the] good advice of strong advisors to say "by the 1st"; because normally we would do the NiCE Programme around Christmas time and if we're going to do it then, maybe we can start the year-round programme starting from whenever we start the Christmas clean up.

It is a Motion that speaks to our values as a country, Mr. Speaker, and to the dignity and the well-being of our people. The NiCE Programme was started as a national effort in 2015 under the PPM-led administration to fulfil a simple, yet powerful objective to beautify our Islands and provide economic opportunities for Caymanians.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that I highlight here that although the NiCE Programme was started in 2015, there was an equivalent programme that was started by the United Democratic Party (UDP) Government under the leadership of the Honourable McKeever Bush. The People's Progressive Movement-led administration 2015 made amendments to its operations and how it was applied and renamed it, so I think both administrations should be given much credit for something that continued up until this day.

It is a programme that reflects who we are as a people—industrious, proud and committed to keeping our communities clean, safe and attractive, and not just for ourselves, Mr. Speaker, but for all who come to our shores. We have all seen the crews throughout our districts and know the impact the NiCE Programme has had. Whether it is cleaning our roadsides, clearing beach access paths, painting the curbs or removing Sargassum from our coastline under the guidance of the Department of Environment, the programme has become an essential service to our society. It enhances our public spaces and offers meaningful employment to

Caymanians who are otherwise unemployed, or sometimes underemployed.

Mr. Speaker, the benefits of this initiative are plain to see and they go far beyond the random three weeks of work currently offered. Each time this programme is announced, hundreds and hundreds of Caymanians line up for the chance to participate, not for a handout, but for a chance to earn an honest day's pay at \$10 per hour and contribute to the improvement of our island and its decor. The participants work hard and we are very thankful for all that they do to make Cayman a cleaner and more beautiful place for us to enjoy. When their final shift is over, they leave with a reference from a supervisor, practical work experience and often-times the confidence that they need to take the next step in their employment journey, even if it's only temporary. It is for those Caymanians that I am bringing this Motion and asking the Government to take this good programme and make it better by expanding it to year-round just as it currently operates in Cayman Brac, Mr. Speaker.

The Honourable Minister responsible for the NiCE Programme—or, used to be responsible for the NiCE Programme, I'm not sure if he still is—the Honourable Minister Jay Ebanks was quoted in a press release issued by his Ministry last November by saying and I quote, **"The NiCE Project is more than an employment opportunity: 'It is a call to action for Caymanians to come together and make a positive impact on our communities. This initiative allows participants to gain valuable work experience while fostering a sense of pride and ownership in the beautiful Cayman Islands. I encourage all eligible individuals to join us in this worthwhile effort to improve and maintain our public spaces.'"** Well, I couldn't agree more. If we recognise that this is more than an employment opportunity, then we must also recognise that it should not be limited to seasonal three-week work windows.

Mr. Speaker, in light of all of the benefits, it was our intention and one of the pledges of the People's Progressive Movement manifesto that we would extend the NiCE Programme to year-round. The work that needs to be done on our beaches, along our roadsides and throughout our districts is not seasonal, Mr. Speaker, and neither is the need for work amongst our people.

Mr. Speaker, our country has built a reputation on being clean, well-kept, safe and visually appealing. Those attributes are a part of our national brand. A brand that brings tourists to our shores, foreign investors to our industries and pride to our people. Keeping our Islands clean is a part of the Caymanian way. Growing up, we were always made to clean our surroundings. Our yards were tidy and well-groomed. No matter how much or how little you had, we recognised the importance of making sure that our little space on island was well kept. In most cases, we'd be embarrassed, Mr. Speaker, if our yards or our homes were

dirty. God forbid the neighbours were to see your yard next door and say, "*Well look, he yard nah clean.*"

When you go to any one of the hotels on the island, Mr. Speaker, or to places like Camana Bay, you see that their lawns are well manicured, their landscaping is on point and the trees are well trimmed and groomed. You don't see dead brushes or dead palm tree leaves, bunches of dead leaves on the ground. Everything is well kept, nicely groomed and visually appealing, and there's a reason for that, Mr. Speaker. When something looks nice and well maintained, it increases its value. That's why these resorts spend much money every week, every month and have gardeners on shift to keep their properties up to par. They pay heavily to maintain the presentation and the look of their properties because it is a reflection of their brand. Similarly, Mr. Speaker, our public, our communities, our spaces, our roadsides, our roundabouts and our beaches are a reflection of the Cayman Islands brand, a brand that says that we are safe, well-kept, well-disciplined and a very caring society.

I'm happy to see that the Minister is a supporter of this programme. I hope that by bringing this Motion now, Mr. Speaker, it would allow the Government sufficient time to plan to extend the programme and appropriately budget for it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind this honourable House of something that we already know, that in every society there will be those who are low-skilled, semi-skilled or otherwise overlooked by your traditional job market. What we do with these people is the question. Do we just forget them; do we push them to the side; or do we, as leaders, create opportunities that meet them where they are, building their confidence and teaching them to become self-sufficient? Mr. Speaker, the NiCE programme is that opportunity.

This programme has the potential to become a pipeline for self-employment and small business development. A well-designed, year-round NiCE Programme could provide real training on things like how to identify native plants and trim trees appropriately. Believe it or not, Mr. Speaker, many people don't know there's a science to how you trim trees, you can't just cut any particular branch otherwise you can kill the tree—I learned that from my mom by the way. How to shape hedging, how to maintain lawns, there is nothing unskilled about that; you learn.

We can use the NiCE Programme, Mr. Speaker, as an opportunity to create an industry where Caymanians are not just cleaning our roadsides, but are also taught to be skilled gardeners and landscapers. I can only imagine how many work permits we have in this area. If we teach them the skill components of it, there will always be jobs available for them in a country that takes pride in its outdoor presentation. Why should we continue securing these services from imported workers when we could be training and employing our own? After a while, our own Caymanians can start their own gardening and landscaping businesses.

So many others come here and in two twos they have a weed whacker, a leaf blower, a lawn mower and they're not just working for themselves, but they have one or two other workers with them too. You mean to tell me now, so and so from George Town Central can't do that job? You mean to tell me now, I couldn't put a little \$3,000-\$5,000 programme in place to give them the equipment for them to go out and never have to come to the Department of Financial Assistance (DFA) again? Come on. Why shouldn't Caymanians have the opportunity to do the same in their own country?

The Minister of Immigration now in place is cracking down on persons who are here without permits. I commend him, I support him and I wish him the best in his endeavours, not only as a Minister, but as a whole Government and for the best interests of our country, that we secure job opportunities for our country, for our people. He is going to crack down on those permits, hustling and operating their little business on the side. As he ramps up his enforcement, there will be opportunities for Caymanians to step into those roles and provide those types of grooming services.

I dare say, Mr. Speaker, some people underestimate the value of those grooming services. You present yourself in the appropriate way with the right clientele—oh, you can get a *whole lot of money* off of those services. One thing is for sure, it doesn't matter if you live in a house, a condo or a gated community, the grass around you will continue to grow and the trees and the hedges will need cutting every couple of weeks. Some people will push it to a month because they can only afford that much, but if we create the culture of expectation of proper presentation when it comes to cleaning, there will be more work opportunities for our people.

Grooming our surroundings is something that we cannot get away from, so there is no downside to operating this programme year-round, Mr. Speaker. Every day, we hear Government talking about improving education and scholarships and job opportunities for Caymanians, but we all have to remember that it's not just jobs in offices, in law, in accounting or teaching that they have to support, and the current Minister of Immigration knows this quite well. He's made his mark for his hard work in creating other kinds of jobs for Caymanians and he should be commended for that.

There's also a need to create job opportunities for lower skilled workers as well. There are plenty of Caymanians who enjoy working outdoors and who would love the opportunity to learn about grooming our surroundings and being a part of a viable industry where they can make a dollar. Just because it's lower skilled doesn't mean it's not important. Just because it's lower skilled, that means it's going to be lower paid.

Let me also say, Mr. Speaker, it is not a coincidence that when the NiCE Programme is active, the police report a noticeable reduction in petty crime. To

be clear I am not saying that the persons on the programme are committing crimes when the programme is not on; what I am saying though, is that people with dignity, direction and income have less reasons to fall into desperation. We have never really qualified on a holistic level, the economic and social value of safety in our country, but that doesn't mean we should underestimate it either. Being known as a low crime destination is worth far more than we imagine and I can say that as the former Minister of Tourism. We must protect that status by every means necessary.

Now, I expect that some Members will raise questions about the cost, especially since there are those on the Government benches who will never miss an opportunity to claim that our country is in dire financial straits, despite the first quarter earnings, as we heard just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, but I won't go down that path.

I will say to anyone who believes that the cost of this year-round programme is too high, is that the alternative is far more expensive. We currently pay out millions of dollars annually through the Department of Financial Assistance to help those who are unemployed or underemployed, Mr. Speaker. Would it not be better to pay those same individuals who are physically able—now not all of those on DFA are physically able, but those who are—to work and gain useful skill sets, rather than simply giving them financial support with no opportunity attached.

Now, based on my observation of the current Minister for Employment, I think he is intending to address that in the Government's new policy approach to labour and immigration, and based on what he has said so far, if all goes well, I think the future is bright. This could be one component that assists him in those endeavours. Remember now, this would not be increasing the civil service headcount because just like in Cayman Brac, this would be a fixed-term contract operating on a rotating basis, three weeks on one week off, like they do in the Brac.

When I was in office, Mr. Speaker, as Minister, I recall the cost for a three-week programme being around \$800,000. Now, I could be off a little bit, Mr. Speaker, for three weeks of the NiCE Programme here in Grand Cayman with the estimates of 500 to 600 people coming out. I don't know the full details, but I'm certain that the Minister who was in charge of the NiCE Programme can elaborate and opine on that if the Government responds to the estimated costing. If my estimates are on point, we're talking about approximately \$10 million or so per year to keep this programme running continuously. Now \$10 million is no small amount of money, but a \$10 million investment in reducing crime, keeping the country's brand at a high value proposition from a tourism investment and cultural perspective, as well as reducing the potential cost on DFA, I think \$10 million would be rather cheap.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that we can find that to invest in our people, considering we would be giving

them monies through DFA anyway, if they don't have work or an income. Why not use the funds in a way that will keep and help to reduce crime, improve our national brand recognition, help to keep the country clean and give Caymanians a job. When our visitors drive past well-maintained roundabouts, trimmed hedges, clean beaches and roadways free of litter, they form an impression of our society, that it's disciplined, that it's caring and proud. When those same spaces are overgrown and neglected it reflects poorly on us.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share an experience. I went to a Caribbean island (I won't say which island it was) and I remember my first stint as Minister, people used to ask, *"What makes Cayman different from the rest of the Caribbean?"* I tried not to be too much of a cliché so I always used to say *"because we grade well across the average."* What I mean is, there are some key points that visitors think about when they are visiting a country: safety, cleanliness, cost, infrastructure, accessibility, and the infrastructure of [their accommodation], whether it's condo, villas or hotel.

Mr. Speaker, I found that while some other jurisdictions had much culture, the crime was really bad; or if the crime and safety were good, the infrastructure was terrible, the roads looked terrible, dry and with potholes everywhere. The landscaping was terrible, so you'd be driving like five miles, the place looks like garbage and then you get to this this well-manicured hotel.

My point is, Cayman has always done well across all major points. We are safe; our culture is not as strong as some others, but we have our own special culture; our quality deliverable in our service is amazing; safety; and cleanliness and all of those are well. What it led me to understand, Mr. Speaker, is that for the visitor and our guests, cleanliness was probably one of the number one things, next to safety, that made them say, *"Boy, I like Cayman."* The place is clean, our people are nice—as long as we stay nice and don't start fighting in Parliament all the time. People are nice, we are clean and it's safe. We have a job that we can do to make sure that all those things are well.

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, when visitors drive past well-maintained roundabouts, trimmed hedges, clean beaches and roadways free of litter, they form an impression of a society that is disciplined, caring and proud. I remember when I went to that Caribbean Island, Mr. Speaker, I didn't feel like those people were caring or proud or disciplined, because the way the island was presented was horrid. That's just my opinion, but if I felt that way, I suspect many others did too. When those same spaces that I just talked about are overgrown and neglected, it reflects badly on all of us.

Mr. Speaker, Cayman National Bank (CNB), CUC and the Butterfield roundabouts all look pristine because private companies are maintaining them, but our public roundabouts and/or unsponsored spaces are often left in despair. That shouldn't be the case.

Mr. Speaker, when I served as Minister of Tourism, I reinstated the beautification task force initially to deal with the issue of derelict vehicles. Remember Ms. Heather? That soon expanded to including beautification and anti-littering across all three Islands. I appointed the now Member for Savannah to spearhead that effort and she has always been a champion for a cleaner Cayman, and I know she will forever be; and I hope that she will support this [Motion] for the intention. I hope that she supports this Motion, because this year-round NiCE Programme has so many links to beautification and it's a natural extension of the work that she is so passionate about. In fact, if the Government is so minded, perhaps she could be the person who oversees the programme as a part of the Beautification Initiative. I know one thing, she'll keep them moving.

Mr. Speaker, the programme already runs in Cayman Brac year round, so there's an established model already there to follow that is flexible, efficient and well tested. The positive effects from operating at three weeks on and one week off are evident and I'm certain that the Minister and Member for Cayman Brac West can attest to that.

Let me make it clear that I'm not advocating for anyone to be permanently placed on this programme because this is not about finding a specific career in cleaning, this is not about lifelong government dependency, Mr. Speaker, this is about providing a stepping stone for persons in transition who may be looking for a job, or waiting to learn a marketable skill set, or are just trying to get back on their feet because they left the job, lost the job, or are coming out of school to go into a job. They deserve a hand up, rather than a handout. This Motion, I believe, Mr. Speaker, will give them that opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, we are here, elected to serve all Caymanians, not just the white collar, not just the highly educated, but all Caymanians, especially those who want nothing more than a chance to earn their keep and contribute to society. This Motion gives them that chance. As the Minister of Planning and Infrastructure correctly said previously, this programme is more than an employment opportunity. I therefore hope we will support the Motion and I urge every Member of this honourable House to likewise do.

I look forward to hearing the Government's contribution and hopefully their vote in favour.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Minister of Immigration.

Hon. Michael S. Myles, Minister of Caymanian Employment and Immigration, Elected Member for Prospect: Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to respond to the Motion. I thank the Member for George Town Central for his contribution.

Mr. Speaker, I have worked in education for the past 15 years and I have also worked in social development, focusing on at-risk youth and their families for the past 35 years. I want to be clear where the Government stands on this particular programme, but also this Motion. The Motion is not proposing a laudable objective of implementing a comprehensive training programme that will prepare Caymanians to assume the almost 40,000 jobs created in our economy that's performed by work permit holders; instead, Mr. Speaker, the Motion is proposing that many of our currently unemployed people should be relegated to being employed through the NiCE Programme, which is not equivalent to a full time job with normal employment benefits, health insurance and a pension plan.

Mr. Speaker, I want to examine this for a second. The Member alluded to the Cayman Brac model. Let's talk about that model. We have folks that have been in that programme, some of them a decade, and they still haven't gotten full time employment. They have no healthcare benefits, so in the event that they are sick, the Department of Financial Assistance still has to help them. Many of these people are getting older, nearing retirement and they have no retirement plan. Their retirement plan currently, and I am hoping that the Member will agree to this, is the Cayman Islands Government. This is not our plan going forward.

The NiCE Programme is nothing more than a Band-Aid, Mr. Speaker. Expanding it represents an insult to the Caymanian people and a failure on our part to have a programme that supports employment and a transition into the normal workforce.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure that our Members in this honourable House understand. I've worked in training and development for the last 8 years, where I ran my own company, and I've had the privilege of working in training with a number of people who were in the NiCE Programme. They were handicapped by this programme. The moment an employer saw NiCE on their resumes, they could not get employment. We had to help them clean up their resumes, give them the required skills in order to ensure that they were employable. Creating this programme in Grand Cayman is not what our Government will be supporting.

In my view, it has been a missed opportunity for the past 15 years of its existence to invest in something more meaningful to our country. What this Motion intends to do is kick the can of Caymanian training and employment opportunities further down the road. Our Government is saying absolutely not.

Mr. Speaker, many of us may be familiar with the faces of people who have traditionally participated in the NiCE Programme and these have often been people who find the normal workforce challenging or have, unfortunately, abused themselves in certain ways. The really concerning thing for me, Mr. Speaker, is that now—upon observing as I drive around and take the time to view the folks who are in the NiCE Programme—the participants in this programme are

younger. Many of them 17 and 18 years old and will be handicapped by this programme if we pour more money in it.

The programme, Mr. Speaker, based on what the Member says, is not designed to train up anyone. It is simply that, a programme that pays people \$10 to pick up garbage on the road. There is no Caymanian parent in our country—and I challenge anyone in this humble House to ask any of them—who will say that their child is aspiring to be trained or work in the NiCE Programme. I'm also confident that any Member of this honourable House can go to any school in this country and ask any child if they aspire to be part of the NiCE Programme and that answer will be, *hell no*. The NiCE Programme has not and will never address the root causes that prevent Caymanians from pursuing the required upskilling and reskilling that leads to full-time employment.

Mr. Speaker, what this Motion proposes is that our people don't deserve full-time employment with healthcare benefits, pension plan, vacation and sick benefits, and that they deserve to be unemployed for long periods of time. I ask the question to the Mover and the supporters of this Motion, are they saying that the best jobs our people deserve are sweeping the streets, painting sidewalks and cleaning up graveyards?

Mr. Speaker, I believe in working hard because I have done that all my life, but I also believe that the NiCE Programme is nothing more than a vote-buying programme. However, if this Motion is proposing that our people be designated to sweeping the streets, painting sidewalks and cleaning up graveyards, then we are aiming wide of the mark that we should be focused on. Our people must be prioritised for upskilling and reskilling to work in some of the better jobs that are occupied by work permit holders which come with employment benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I would have been more impressed by a Motion that encouraged the training of Caymanians to take the 650 plus jobs that will be created by the Grand Hyatt, which will be coming online in January 2026. The previous Government approved 100 per cent waiver duties up to an aggregate sum of \$8,715,000 to Pageant Beach Hotel, also known as Grand Hyatt, and its designated subcontractors, yet after meeting with the organisation, not one plan has been put in place to employ Caymanians. It is concerning.

Mr. Speaker, our Government will be investing in upskilling and reskilling our people to be employed in the civil service, which has many departments; the health care industry which is booming in our country; the construction industry, because if they can paint sidewalks they can certainly do construction; the landscaping industry, which is what the Member just provided that a caption of the NiCE Programme could be made to do—our people can certainly do landscaping,

why not have benefits attached to it—and the restaurant business, in which we are by far experiencing some of the best restaurants in the world.

Mr. Speaker, Caymanians will not qualify for a mortgage working in the NiCE Programme. It doesn't matter how much we pretty this programme up, they will not get a mortgage. What this Motion is saying is that our people don't deserve to qualify to purchase a home and properly provide for their families.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be honest. What the NiCE Programme is, is a social welfare programme that will cost our country millions of dollars every year and will not address the root causes of unemployment by our most vulnerable people.

Mr. Speaker, for the investment we have already made to this programme in the past 15 plus years, we could have established several different world-class Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes that would have been the envy of the Caribbean and the world. We could have upskilled our people and provided meaningful long-term employment with benefits, where they can retire with dignity.

Mr. Speaker, our Government currently invests millions in the following training programmes:

- Public Works Department (PWD) TVET training programme;
- University College of The Cayman Islands (UCCI) TVET training programme;
- UCCI hospitality training programme,
- WORC Ready2Work training programme;
- Superior Auto training programme; and
- Cayman Career Academy training programme.

Our Government's commitment is to strengthen these programmes with more investment. We will be investing in holistic wraparound services that address barriers to employment, such as addiction, mental health, child care, transportation, food insecurity, housing insecurity, clothing, et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, I want to let you and our honourable Members have a clear understanding. We have real issues and those issues don't include skills. Our people can work. I have never found a young person, middle-aged person or older person that didn't have a skill. Our people are ambitious, they're intelligent, they're enthusiastic about working, but there are barriers. Unless we address the barriers to employment, it doesn't matter how many NiCE Programmes we invest in, they are never going to get employment.

In my experience in the last eight years of supporting Caymanians transitioning to the workforce, it was never about skill set. Mr. Speaker, I have personally met with over 200 employers in the last eight years, they've never said Caymanians couldn't work. They've all said Caymanians have way too many barriers to get

into the workforce and keep a job. In my time at Inspire with the support that we were provided from the private sector, we hired a therapist and we reduced barriers in all of the areas of addiction, mental health and child-care. Things as simple as transportation rules out our people from working in the industry.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague Hon. Ruddy and I met with several hotels on West Bay Road. The biggest challenge they're seeing is young people coming from as far as East End, they cannot get to work on time because there's no proper transportation system. Let's fix the barrier. We don't need a NiCE Programme to prop up that we are doing something. We don't need something like the NiCE Programme to say that Cayman is clean. Our responsibility is to clean the country. We have kicked these issues of mental health and transportation and food insecurity down the road for a decade. It's time that we stop and address them. We must now ensure that our people are competitive and employable.

Mr. Speaker, Cayman isn't the country that time has forgotten; we are now on a global platform. Our responsibility is to ensure that our people are trained properly, and the only way to do that is to provide them the necessary responsibilities, programmes, course outlines, and support systems to help them do that.

My colleague, the Minister of Finance has just informed me that this programme would cost us a whopping \$20 million. Now, let's talk about this figure for a second because if we can pay \$20 million for this programme that provides no training, no employment, no health care benefits, no pension benefits, and no vacation benefits, and if a person gets sick, they still need to go to DFA to claim some sort of welfare. What are we paying for? We are paying for a programme to just say that the Government is doing something that all of us in this room could say to one of our constituents, go work for a welfare programme. Not on our watch, Mr. Speaker.

I'm happy to report that our Government has already started the process of protecting Caymanian people by reforming the immigration system and the labour laws. Mr. Speaker, we have kicked this can down the road for many years and within my first two months of being on the job, I made it very clear I came to work. I stood in this great House on my very first day and I said, *"I've come here to work."*

Within two weeks we had already made significant progress in immigration reform and this moves in to Caymanian employment. We have to fix our immigration issues in order to protect our people. We've established a national workforce task force of private and public sector professionals to develop a national workforce plan. Mr. Speaker, I will say to you, I am extremely exhausted of hearing government officials, private sector officials like the Chamber of Commerce, and other organisations consistently pay for reports that we don't actually follow. I have three reports that we've paid for

or at least consulted on in the last year that have gone nowhere, and it all comes down to putting the national workforce plan in place that no one from the government or private sector has put in place. I say, Mr. Speaker, the NiCE Programme isn't going to fix that. We actually have to get serious about this and we cannot continue to pay lip service to this on an ongoing basis.

We are in the process of establishing our national workforce database in which we'll house data from all high school seniors. Mr. Speaker, here's what happens when a youngster leaves high school, maybe 15 to 20 per cent move on to tertiary education. We are graduating at times 400-500 students between public and private sector. No one tracks any of those students so all of a sudden they stay unemployed for years. We know what happens, after a couple of years, they bounce around, they submit a resume to someplace and because of the gaps in their resume no one wants to hire them. We have to start keeping track of these young people.

The database will also hold students who are currently attending overseas and on-island tertiary education schools. Let me tell you what is happening now in our system, Mr. Speaker. We have one system which houses all of our scholarship students which doesn't share that information with another system like employment and immigration, so when a work permit holder comes before one of our boards, because those people don't have this information we can't make decisions since we don't know who's in the system. The NiCE Programme isn't going to solve that problem.

We have to start to commit to fixing the problem with real solutions and spending \$20 million on a programme that is going to lead to more social welfare than we've ever seen isn't going to be our plan going forward.

This database will also hold students who are attending TVET and professional development centres. We have a massive programme at PWD. This programme should be one of the most heavily recruited programmes from our construction industry, yet we kicked that down the road. It's not. Why? They're not in any database, so when a company who owns a construction firm is looking for an individual, where could they find them? Nowhere. We have to make our people more accessible to the private sector, the largest employment entity right now in our country. Persons who are unemployed and underemployed have to also be in this database and our responsibility is to make sure that this happens. The database will feed into a national workforce apprenticeship programme that will be shared with the civil service and the private sector.

Over the last month, Mr. Speaker, over 400 plus young people applied to perhaps 160 internships within the Cayman Islands Civil Service. Where do the rest of them go? We only hired 160. Over 200 plus young people did not get an internship because there's not a national apprenticeship training programme. We

have been talking about this for 30 years. I have been a civil servant for at least 12 in four different entities in the civil service, all to do with protecting children. I've gone into multiple meetings, committees, task force and everything else and we sit down and we continue to talk about a human capital plan, a national workforce development plan and all of this sort; and every four years, we do very little.

We must start sharing information of our most talented and ambitious people with our employers. We must stop expecting employers to go looking for our talent in a world that has 8 billion people and everyone is connected to the World Wide Web and social media. Mr. Speaker, we have over 15 recruitment agencies. They are not designed for our people, and yet, if we do not ensure that our people have the skills to compete, they're going to be left out of the employment market. That is what I have found. This isn't new information. The Government has always had this information.

Mr. Speaker, the NiCE Programme is not a win for Caymanians. It will only increase dependency on already overwhelmed social welfare systems. Anyone in this Chamber who thinks otherwise has not been reviewing our national budget and expenses. Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks ago we came to Finance Committee because the Department of Financial Assistance had run out of money. We also had my colleague who is in charge of health discuss that our indigent insurance is also running out of money. We have many folks that we can train up to potentially take the hundreds, thousands of jobs that we're creating, and yet we're in this room still discussing the NiCE Programme. I am almost embarrassed for us that we are discussing a programme that leads to absolutely nothing and we're not discussing a national TVET centre. We're not discussing a national hospitality school. We could have built a hospitality school in the last 15 years.

We are saying that we pride ourselves on hospitality, on restaurants, we have world-class hotels, and yet when you go to the front lines of those hotels, it's not our people. We're sitting in this great House and we're discussing spending \$20 million on the NiCE Programme and we're not embarrassed as a country, when we have major hotels in our country that are saying, *we would love to hire Caymanians, can you help us with that?* Why aren't we talking about that? Why aren't we bringing a Motion to put in a national hospitality school or a national TVET centre? This is what I want to ask the folks who are bringing this Motion.

I'm certainly a first time MP, but I can tell you I've been watching this for years and every four years this discussion comes up about the NiCE Programme. People share many sentiments about how great this programme is. I know my colleague across the aisle, talked about how my colleague, Minister Ebanks, lauded this programme, and he and I can agree to disagree that this programme is not a good programme, and our Government will not be supporting this programme.

I get calls on a regular basis from young people who have a Master's degree and Bachelor's degree and they're not asking me to go into the NiCE Programme. They want credible jobs. They want to take their rightful place in our country. Not one parent who has contacted me in fear of their children being left out of the Cayman miracle that we've created in this country has said, *Sir, can you place my child in the NiCE Programme?* That has never happened and I've been doing this a very long time. Not one person has contacted me to say, *I'm aspiring for a position in the NiCE Programme.*

I challenge my colleagues across the aisle, Mr. Speaker, to start listening to the people of our country. Let's stop talking about the NiCE Programme and join hands with us in putting in a national workforce development programme so we can put people in the front lines of our hospitality, our restaurants, our construction, landscaping, IT, and financial services. I'd like to have those discussions. The discussion that we're having here is a waste of our time, so I would like for us to start to have real discussions about employment in the country as my colleagues and I fix immigration and labour.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your time. Thank you for honouring me.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
[Pause]

Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Where to start. A very impassioned debate, contribution, dream—not sure how else to describe it—by the Minister. What I heard from that is that in four years' time, there will be no unemployed Caymanians and every Caymanian will not have any social, mental or other challenges, including just getting out of prison, perhaps a terrible home environment, or maybe some other stresses that we in this hallowed hall do not experience.

With all the talk over the campaign about [Chevy] Tahoes, last night I saw a whole line of beautiful, brand new, black ones. When we're driving in the back seat of that with our window up, oh we can come in here and preach all we want, but when you start to spend time in your constituency office, and they get to know you, and they find out where it is, and what days you're going to be there, and they start lining up outside of it—I see some of the Members who have been here before putting their head down because they know how it is. You tell that person, you sit in their house, you sit in your office with them and tell them you're going to put them in a database and that's going to solve their problems. An embarrassment to our people.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the Minister is right. I support him 100 per cent if within the next couple of years there will not be an unemployed Caymanian. There will

not be a Caymanian with issues. I would be so happy if I could go to my constituency office and sit down and work on Bills or Motions and plans for the country without being interrupted every two minutes by someone who comes in with real issues, issues that I sometimes don't even know where to turn.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken in this House before and I have cried out about the need for an agency that has the ability to work between the Police [Service], Customs and Border Control (CBC), Department of Financial Assistance, and Children and Family Services. I heard the Minister talk about how he drives around and he sees nothing but 22 year olds in the programme, the programme has only happened about two times in the last four years, so I don't know when that time was. I know when I drive around my constituency—and this is why I hope that he is correct and I hope that this Government can deliver on the promise he made that we will not have a single untrained, unemployed Caymanian within these four years. When I drive through Rock Hole and I find someone sleeping in their car, or sleeping at the back of Uncle Clem's, or sleeping in cardboard boxes on the government property in Rock Hole, I don't know if that database is going to help that person.

I don't even know who to call. [Do I] call Children and Family Services, is there a child there? I don't even know. The child could be dead, could be in the bush or could be home by himself. [Do I call] Immigration, CBC? Is it Caymanian? I don't know. [Call] DFA, have them come in and fill out a form. Call the police? They didn't break any laws. These are the issues we have, Honourable Minister.

The persons who go to your business want help, have guidance, have parenting, or perhaps trying to stay out of jail and I'm happy for that, but there is another world out there. There's another Cayman. We have to take our blinders off, drive around and really look at that Cayman.

I hear the Minister of Finance before he left the room saying, "*Yeah, it's rubbish! It's rubbish!*" He represents where I come from in West Bay, and I know he campaigned hard so he must have seen it. I want him to go tell his people that a database can help them.

[Laughter]

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: The first database you must do, Honourable Minister, is all of those people who got one cruise ship this week.

An Hon. Member: Mm-hmm.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: That's the first database, Honourable Minister of Tourism, because you have plenty more weeks coming this

summer. Honourable Minister of Tourism, I'm telling you, I'm giving out your number like free cake—

An Hon. Member: Don't give 'em mine.

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: — because I can't handle them all myself.

I had a whole pile of notes here, I don't even know, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when I brought the National [Community] Enhancement programme back we did it in the summer when things were slow. We then added a second one before Christmas which kind of then coincided with the Sargassum clean-up. We saw numbers drop from 800 in 2014-2015 down to the 300-400 region, but even at the \$10 that's \$21,600 per person per year. That would mean that, according to the Minister of Finance, it would be 926 Caymanians or participants to get to that \$20 million. Maybe he was calculating insurance and pension, which I don't have a problem with either.

We have one small team of people to clean up at Department of Environmental Health (DEH). The last government bought a bunch of waterfront properties. I see they're building a beautiful beachfront park up at Frank Sound. I asked them who's going to clean it. Relevant to this conversation, I said the only thing that beach is going to do is take some of the pressure off of Smith Cove where people are sleeping and showering in the morning, sleeping in their cars at night and showering in the morning. That's the only thing that park is going to do. Who is going to clean those parks? Who is going to maintain all the beachfront properties that we've bought?

Who is going to [help] the 55 year old water sports operator, tour bus driver, taxi driver who's going to be without a job as the cruise numbers fall? Which one of you in here who owns a company is going to hire them, take on that liability? When I ran the programme and I walked the room as we identified those young people, the 21 year old, the 18 year old just out of school, or the 19 year old, we had persons on hand to interview them to get a better understanding of what their problems were. How can we help them? Why are they there? However, the vast majority of the people at the Lion Centre would be those who retired at 60 and can't live off of the \$400-\$500 per month pension they're getting, and no one else will hire them.

Some Hon. Members: Yup.

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: Those who have some problems that they cannot work consistently, whether it's a substance abuse problem—and by the way, they don't get to show up and leave when they want to when you run the programme, but they managed to pull off the two weeks or the three weeks. They may even be able to pull off three or four

months, but the thing is that when you have them there, you can work with them.

How are you going to identify the issues that these folks are facing to put them in this national database to help them with those issues? Is it going to be the Department of Financial Assistance? Are you going to add to their job now, to evaluate the person's issues? Which one of the agencies is going to deal with them? Who is going to miraculously fix all of those issues this year? Who is going to fix those issues before Christmas so they can buy their child a toy? Who is going to fix their issues this summer so they can pay the electricity bill when the heat goes through the roof and the possibility still lingers of oil prices going sky high? Who is going to do that?

Let me ask another question. God forbid that we don't have any hurricanes, but if we have a little storm and trees are down and roads are blocked and communities are in a mess, I guess you're not going to pay anyone to clean that up either.

I don't understand the mentality. I appreciate the plan that the Minister has laid out, but to be disregarding and calling the programme an insult to the Caymanian people, an insult to the hundreds of people who have participated in it over the years; I don't understand that, Mr. Speaker.

I've been representing my people for 12 years. I wish I could snap my finger and fix their problems for them. It would take much stress off of me. I can't even get Government to put a roof over an 85 year old woman's house where water is falling on her head. I have a lady whom I submitted twice, down in the swamp, that I had to buy the materials to block up around her house because when it rained, she walked around in ankle high water for days. The Minister says that helping these people is an insult, an embarrassment to our country. I guess even more embarrassing than going by 7-11 and Reflections and seeing the six or seven people sitting there with nothing to do. I invite the Minister to come with me at 3 o'clock in the morning down at the back of Rock Hole. We have to take off the blinders, Mr. Speaker.

The one thing he said that was true is that our people have real issues and every time we do this programme, they have proven just what he said, they are willing to work. They just have challenges, but they are happy for the opportunity to make a living.

Now we can expand on the programme. There was a proposal in the last administration that anyone coming to DFA needed to go and volunteer, or go do a job. They needed to go and volunteer somewhere to show that they could work. This would be an excellent programme, Mr. Speaker. Persons who walk in and say, *I am unemployed*, and DFA looks at them and says, *"But you are a hard, young, fit, able-bodied man or woman, you can go out there and work."* This would be a great programme to put them in.

It's not just picking up garbage. I can tell the Minister something else, I visited every team each time

I ran the programme and the people who did it were beaming with pride, the retirees, those who had issues, and persons who were just in between jobs with construction—construction is an industry where it's feast then famine—and they were all very proud of the job they were doing. Many saw it as giving back to their community, but it also gave many of them hope.

Mr. Speaker, I brought a Motion in 2023 similar to this. Mr. Tatum sent it to me and I was like, oh wow. I had much detail and I'm happy to share that Motion. In fact, I remember the now Minister calling me after that Motion to say he disagreed with it, so it probably makes no sense to send him my debate on that Motion.

The idea of running the programme year round has much opportunity for expansion of the programme. There's much opportunity there to do many of the things that the Minister talked about, and we used to do that. The Minister spoke that the people who are coming to him have Master's and all sorts of degrees, I don't have those people, Mr. Speaker. Every now and then. Those aren't the people we're talking about, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, he said that no parent aspires to have their children in the programme. It is the parents who have to call me to get their children in the programme when we run it. The wonderful thing about that is that the parents or the mother forces the child to come to the programme and now we have the child there so that we can work with the child. Now we can get him in to see how we can help him break those barriers that the Minister loves to talk about. How do we break those barriers for him, to find that confidence to get over whatever that hurdle is that he is experiencing to go out and find gainful, full-time employment? Whilst perhaps the parent did not aspire for their child to be a part of the NiCE Programme, it is the parents who call us to help them fill out the registration forms for their children.

Mr. Speaker, far too often we here in the Cayman Islands drive around and look at people and cast all sort of assertions, make all sorts of accusations and comments towards them. *"Oh, you can see the ambition falling out of him,"* and blah, blah, blah. We don't know what they went through. We don't know what they're going through. Many of our Caymanian people—and this is where I agree with him on working to ensure that those who are in the workforce as well are upskilled—many of us are one event away from entering hardship. Maybe some of us have been there. Maybe some of us have fought evils before that have kept us down. No one knows our stories, in the same way we don't know their story. However, as a Government, we have a responsibility, where we can, to help our people, to help those who need it most, the most vulnerable, the forgotten Caymanians, the ones that we don't know their story.

Yesterday was a wonderful day, Mr. Speaker, thank you. Celebrating all of the wonderful stories and victories, celebrating our Caymanian people, but today

we're talking about the ones who we ignore. Today, we are talking about the ones who we drive by with our blinders on. Today, we are talking about the ones who don't have a voice. Today, we are talking about the ones who we all drive by and say, "Look at them." That's who we're talking about today, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know which one of us doesn't have people in our constituencies who don't need that help, that can't use that little boost this summer. Again, what are those who work out on that Port going to do this summer? You're going to put them in a database or just give them a stipend? Or give them an opportunity to work and to beautify their community, maybe deal with the Sargassum? Still playing a role in stayover tourism by keeping our beaches beautiful.

Do me a favour, get out of the car sometimes, walk our streets and see how dirty they are. Do me a favour, walk Seven Mile Beach and see what our tourists are seeing. Maybe when the Ministers visited the hotels they should have walked on the road. We're all talking about health and wellness, it's only 2.5 miles down the public beach, and back up is five miles total, or a 10K if you go to the wharf.

[Laughter]

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: I run it all the time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, take a look on Esterley Tibbetts Highway, half of the landfill is over on the other side of the road. Every time a truck tips up on the top of that mountain, the gusts of breeze come and you see the plastic and the cardboard flying across the road. Walk through our communities.

If you don't want to do the NiCE Programme, expand the DEH road cleaning programme. Hire them all, because we need them. NRA cannot do bush cutting at the schedule that they need to do it, and when they do it, we scream at them. You know why? Because after they bush cut all you see is garbage on the side of the road. Might as well have left the bush. They do leave it until it starts to go out in the road and becomes a hazard.

Sometimes when you're driving through and you see something run cross the road, you don't know if it's an agouti or a rat. I think we have two people in the rodent control programme.

Hire them. Put them there then, give them pension and insurance, but don't turn around and say it's an embarrassment to Caymanians. Don't turn around and just dismiss it. Say that you have a better idea or something. To be so passionate in the way that you dismiss it because a Member is bringing something to the House to help people and you say it's vote-buying. I don't give them the job. If you ever see what you have to go through to fill out those applications to get into that programme.

You know what is vote-buying? When they're at my office crying; when they come and they have children and the refrigerator *nuh* working because the power cut off, and their child is walking to the nearest place that they can get internet to do their homework on their laptop because there's no Wi Fi; when they want food cards. If, Honourable Minister, you think that running a programme, however you want to run it, to help our unemployed Caymanians, our most vulnerable, our retirees who are trying to live off of \$600-\$700 per month pension is vote buying; you're wrong.

Leave them. Let them come to our offices because they need the help and I don't have any department to send them to. I can fill out the DFA form on the computer and send it in. That's going to take weeks or months. You know what I *gon'* tell 'em, Mr. Speaker? *I gon' put you in a database, bro. I gon' put you in a database, ma'am. Yes ma'am, when I put you in that database, your baby gonna get milk. When I put you in that database, your power gonna come back on automatically. When I put you in that database, you don't have to sleep in your car at Smith Cove anymore.*

Mr. Speaker, I truly wish I could be more supportive. I truly wish I could be more subjective in my debate, but my head feels like Spiderman when he gets spider senses, and my stomach is boiling. I am sorry for my people if, as the Minister said, this Government is not going to do anything to help anyone, but to do a database! I hear a Minister laughing, but that's what I heard.

I heard the Minister speak about a tourism school. Are we going to build that this month, next month, next year? In fact, I don't know what the Government is going to do, Mr. Speaker, because we don't have a manifesto, we're not going to get a Strategic Policy Statement (SPS). I think the Governor delivered a preview to the SPS yesterday. Don't insult us when we bring a Motion to try and help our people and tell us all these things that you're going to do, like we are supposed to know. *How we gonna know?* How does the country know? We are going to wait until November (*sic*), six months from elections to find out what you're going to do?

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the Minister has only been in office for two months and I admire his passion, but I hope someone from the Government gets up and says that whilst they are supportive of their Minister, the Government will still be there to help its people in the short term. Truthfully, I can't handle anymore at my door. The new ones will soon find out when they find your door.

Mr. Speaker, if anyone on the other side is willing or interested, I can send them my debate from 2023 where I was much more, should I say, constructive in my debate. I had to rise to say something today because, again, the Deputy Leader brought a Motion for something that he feels passionate about, something that he feels would help the people of this country, those who need it the most, the most vulnerable. We

are not talking about those with Bachelor degrees and Master's degrees that the Minister spoke about. That's not who we are talking about. Expand the programme. Take them on full time in the areas I spoke about, rodent control, DEH clean-up crew, wherever you want, but don't just dismiss it.

Mr. Speaker, I plead with the Government, come back and tell us something that will give us peace of mind that there will be help for our people through this upcoming summer, as the two cruise numbers drop, as the heat increases, as the prices of food and everything else around the world continues to go up. Please, someone, get up and show some empathy. Someone on the other side, get up and give us an idea, because we don't know. Don't just get up and insult us.

Forgive me for saying what I thought I heard, but that's what I thought I heard. If I am wrong, Mr. Speaker, someone get up and tell us something else, because I did not hear it in the Governor's presentation of the Government's plans yesterday. Someone on the other side, get up and give me peace of mind that our people, our most vulnerable are going to get some support from the Government.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
[Pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?
[Pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?
[Pause]

Does the Mover of the Motion wish to wind up the debate?

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I was really hoping, Mr. Speaker, that after the Leader of Opposition kindly called for another Member of Government to stand up and speak that someone would give a little bit more clarity to what was said, maybe it wasn't intentional. However, no one got up, so I'm assuming that the position the Minister delivered is the position of all Members of Government. I am not very surprised by the contribution.

Mr. Speaker, I thought about the formulation of this administration and the various Members who make it up. This is me, personally speaking from my heart, genuinely hoping that the good Minister with responsibility for labour and immigration is successful. Putting politics aside, if he is not successful, that means my people are still in trouble. I have to say that I'm even more concerned now with his response, because it tells me that I'm not sure his perspective on all elements of Cayman are on point.

I am fighting the urge inside, Mr. Speaker, to respond to him in an opposition type of way. I want to assume that it's because he hasn't been exposed to some of the communities and areas that I have been exposed to, some of the people whose struggle is hard. I just don't know what would cause the viewpoints that he has to be what they are.

I think the Leader of the Opposition did a good job highlighting the fact that this programme wasn't expected to be a be-all and end-all, and this programme wasn't expected to be done in isolation of other programmes which the Minister highlighted that the Government intends to do. I have to concur with my leader in respect of saying that we're not going to get an SPS for a whole half a year, so we have to assume that this is where we're going.

The Minister must have [known] and many of the Members of the Government know the different categories of persons who come to the NiCE Programme are not limited to just young people, and it is unfair for him to suggest that we are going around telling parents to come and make your goal be the NiCE Programme. It was wrong, Minister. Wrong in so many senses and you know that that was not the intention.

Mr. Speaker, since he wants to play the game of politics we shall do so, because I can also say that maybe he thinks that all the people who were part of the NiCE Programme need therapy. According to him, our people have so many issues that he needed to call them a therapist, and that's what we're supposed to be doing for our people, rather than giving them an opportunity to provide for themselves. Mr. Speaker, based on the number of messages I've seen come in since his contribution, trust me, his message was sent quite clear.

The last thing that the Minister said in his contribution was that this discussion was a waste of our time. Imagine that. He highlighted that the DFA had to come back for more money and about how we're creating a welfare state. I'll tell you why we had to come back for more money, because the Minister who was responsible for it didn't budget it properly when we created the budget. Honourable Minister, that's why we had to come back for more money, but you weren't around so you wouldn't know that.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if all Members of this Government are in support of the Minister's position, because the Minister basically said—I am almost certain and I stand to be corrected—there would be no more NiCE Programme. I wonder if the Member for Cayman Brac West, the good Minister, is in support of that, and shall the people of Cayman Brac who are currently on the programme be concerned that they will no longer have work as of tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I will be calling for a division and we are going to find out who's in support and who isn't. This will be the first test for the Honourable Premier with his Government; I wish him well.

Mr. Speaker, to call this programme a welfare state programme is really insulting, but I wonder if the Minister is aware that six Members of his Government were in support of this "welfare state programme" that he talks about. I found it rather interesting that he talked about his own company and the sponsors he used to get from private sector, but failed to mention that he got

sponsors from the Government as well. Is there a conflict of interest here that he doesn't want to create a different programme other than the one that he's involved in? I'll leave that there for the public to ponder, because I'm waiting to see how you're going to manage that relationship with him being in Cabinet. Don't worry, we have much time to assess that.

Mr. Speaker, it is our responsibility to keep this country clean, he's right about that, but I'm not sure if he's aware that the Ministries and Departments responsible for keeping the country clean have been asking for years to get more support. The Minister of Tourism throughout his campaign spoke about particular areas being nasty and filthy, and he's right, but there are not enough people around to keep it going. You can pay for it through the NiCE Programme or you can hire more people, but as the population grows, as we bring in different people with different cultures who don't do it themselves—they will litter. You've seen the many videos on social media, you go clean up an area and within five hours, the whole place is filthy again. You will pay to clean it up one way or the other.

To think that you're talking about a welfare state, I don't understand that. I think I was quite clear in my contributions to say that this is a hand up rather than a handout. People at DFA now who are called "able-bodied persons", who are justifiably in transition from one job to the other, or are trying to get a job for the first time, creating a programme like this—which may not have pension benefits because it's not full time—while you are constantly looking for work that you can jump into and get a couple of dollars so the Government doesn't have to give you \$1,500 or \$1,200 or \$600—that's not good?

No one said that you shouldn't create a database, continuously trying to populate it to get different persons leaving school, or off to university, or transitioning jobs, into other jobs. No one said you couldn't do that, but to downgrade this like it is some scum of the earth programme? Believe it or not, it has been going on for quite some time now, from 2015—matter of fact, the administration before that which the Minister of Finance was a part of when this was first established. It was his administration! When he was in Government this started, but yet still he's sitting here laughing at my leader when he was speaking.

The *Hansard* is going to be brought up though. We're going to bring those *Hansards* up and remember what the good Minister, the now Minister of Finance, said back then when they started the programme. We can play this political game. Not a problem.

All we wanted to do was simply give an opportunity for those who may not be ready for all the permanent job opportunities to be able to go make a couple of dollars, rather than being tempted to do other things. You're right. I heard you say that all of those workers need therapy. I hope you know that plenty of them were from Prospect too. I hope you're ready to tell those who were on the NiCE Programme from Prospect that they

should get therapy and sign up to a database to get a job.

Matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, is the Government's position—because again, like my good leader said, we don't know when the SPS is coming. This is the only Government that I am aware of that wants to take six months before they tell the country what direction they're going in with the SPS. A half a year. The first thing you need to do in your job assignment is to tell the country your plans and this Government wants to take a half a year to tell them. Maybe he is telling us now. Is there going to be no NiCE Programme for this year? Yes or no. Speak!

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Oh, yeah, none of them contributed other than him.

Mr. Speaker, I prayed yesterday. I prayed last night after Parliament, I said, Ken, calm down, man, calm down. I know you're fiery. Members say your passion has to be under control. Then I came here today and I said, you know what, *low that*, man. The Deputy Premier and I had to leave a good little conversation outside. You know what? The good Minister Jay Ebanks, positive; we always have good conversations about these things and try to figure it out, working together. The Minister wouldn't even have the decency to say, *let me call the Member and see what the intent is here. Member, we planning to do this and do you think that still makes sense there?*

Come inside here and insult us about welfare programme—*yuh facety*. Welfare programme, boy I tell you... I'm going to put it down to rookie, you know? Rookie mistakes in Parliament, but who am I to judge? You act on behalf of your Government. I'm assuming that the good Premier would have sat with his team. If I know the Premier well, I know he did that to collectively decide what they were going to do moving forward, but to deliver in that right to undermine this programme...

It is going to take time for the efforts which the Minister highlighted to be implemented, to reform the immigration system, reform the labour system, and reform the educational opportunities and training upskill systems that you won't have to have this programme in existence, but I can tell you this: no matter which country you go to, there will always be a small pocket of people who would need this type of programme to have the opportunity for an income. When they don't have that opportunity, they're left to other measures to have an income, and it's either something of illegal behaviour or the welfare state; neither one of them are good.

It's not our intention to have hundreds and hundreds of people on this "welfare programme" that the good Minister called it. Even everyone called it the NiCE Programme, he called it the "welfare programme". If you started something like that today while

working in tandem with the efforts of the administration, maybe by the end of this administration the Government can get up and say, *we started this programme with 500 people per year on the programme. By the time we were finished, there were only 50 people working on it.* That's what you should have gotten up and said, not call it a welfare state.

I'll tell you what, I hope the 600 people who were last on it heard what he said. *They need therapy*, Mr. Speaker, is what he said. Yes, we have problems. Many of our people have gone through the struggles.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Many of our people have gone through many struggles and depression and we have failed, all of us have failed to create the best place for Caymanians, to be perfect for each and every one. We all failed in it together, but while we try to solve it, to undermine them, that is disappointing.

Mr. Speaker, you know which part was the most insulting? The vote buying part. The good Minister, the Hon. Jay Ebanks was in charge of it; was he suggesting that the good Member for North Side was vote buying when he implemented it the last time? Did he suggest that the administration with the Hon. Wayne Panton, the Hon. André Ebanks, the Hon. Katherine Wilks, the Hon. Isaac Rankine, and the Hon. Heather Bodden were vote buying when we did in the last administration? Is that what he's suggesting? Or maybe there's a division in policy over there?

You see Mr. Speaker, I recognise one thing. He wasn't a part of the ones who came here before, you know? He's a part of the new crew, the purple people eaters. They're going to learn a little lesson of politics and society and realities, because more and more knocks are going to be heard on his door. Maybe he doesn't care. I don't know. I heard this rumour that he only wants to do one term, so maybe he doesn't care either way. I don't know.

Mr. Speaker, more importantly, because it seems as if this Motion is not going to succeed and it will not get the support by Members, I want to know which one of the Members agree with the words of the Honourable Minister of Caymanian Employment and Immigration. Do they support his position? I am going to tie each and every one of you to what he said. Does the Deputy Premier believe that our people need therapy? Does the Minister of Culture and Heritage believe that this discussion is a waste of our time? Does the good Minister and Member for Cayman Brac West believe this programme should be done away with? I wonder if the Cayman Brac people are listening.

Mr. Speaker, I want to let this honourable House know that I do have every intention to call a division on this.

Mr. Speaker, the interesting part is that he said that this Motion was "a waste of [our] time" and not under [our] Government; and that's why I attach it to every Member. He said "[our] Government". He spoke in the collective. The other part—and this is where I can see the brick and the foundation starting to crack, he said, *I'm not sure what the good Minister Jay Ebanks said, but we're going to have to agree to disagree.* What does that mean? What does he mean by that? Does the Minister Ebanks agree with you or doesn't agree with you, or you don't agree with the Minister? Which one is it?

Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I have to focus my attention on you.

Mr. Speaker, the part I was going to just now before I highlighted that part about his disagreement with the Honourable Minister Ebanks—good start my friend, going down the right road. You said you didn't like this plan? We offered one. What is yours? Your SPS isn't coming now; you get elected and you're going to take a half a year to tell me what you're going to do, but we present a potential solution to something—maybe not much, not solving all the employment problems—for those people who may need a little help. Like you heard the good leader say, cruise numbers are down.

What is your plan? Why didn't you respond by saying, *No, we don't want that programme, this is the programme that we're going to implement*, but no, we have to wait a half a year to hear what that is. Half a year, can you imagine? You're running a society as large as this—but you know what, let me not pre-empt Bills. I remember the Standing Orders said that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I could feel you in my ear, that's why I said, hold on, Kenneth, remember the Standing Orders. You can't be pre-emptive or anticipate, but that debate should be fun tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, this programme has been in place for 16 years, but all that time it has been a waste of time. It was Pride, that's what the name was—which the Minister of Finance was a part of.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to go on anymore. I just want to say I am very disappointed. I kind of anticipated that they probably wouldn't support it, that they would have gone with the argument of the finances that are connected to it and that they can't afford it, but to throw it underneath the bus with such disdain. Wow. Wow! I hope every Member and their constituents heard what the Government's position is, because I am almost certain there were NiCE workers from every constituency in this country.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to talk about the money. I forgot about that. I think there was a suggestion... You see, sometimes I like to trick them, you know. You see how I ran outside the Chamber? I make them think that I'm not listening—I'm giving away my secret—but I turn on YouTube real quick, shove this in my ear and go outside to the back so I can listen to every word they say. I was listening quite closely. I couldn't quite hear

who it was that suggested the \$20 million because the camera was on the Minister, but I have a good idea who it was.

If the \$20 million is full time that would mean that they have no intention to try getting anyone off the programme; you see, that wasn't our plan. Our plan was a transition until you sort out the rest of things. I genuinely believe that the Government shares our viewpoint on much of the labour and immigration matters, even though we're waiting for the details, so we're going to give you support on that. I can understand if you said, well boy, we're going to do this for two years, because this is not the way you do it and then you continue on from there.

I'll tell you what, every word you said is going to be in the *Hansards* of this House and I'm going to check you back in two years, you better hope the unemployment numbers are down because I will hold you to account.

Mr. Speaker, with those unsettling responses, I come to a close on this Motion which I sadly believe may fail. We'll see when we call a division.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The question is BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Government considers implementing a year-round National Community Enhancement (NiCE) programme in Grand Cayman;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers allocating the necessary funds to the Ministry responsible for the current National Community Enhancement Programme for it to start by 1st January, 2026.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES and NOES.

The Speaker: I think the Noes have it.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker, I call for a division.

The Speaker: Deputy Leader of the Opposition has called for a division. I need to ask the Serjeant to ring the bell and anyone who is not in their seats within three minutes will not be allowed to vote.

[Bell rings]

[Three-minute pause per Standing Order 61(2)]

The Speaker: The three minutes has expired and I now invite the Clerk to call the division.

Division No. 1 of 2025-2026

AYES: 7

Hon. Joseph X. Hew

NOES: 9

Hon. André M. Ebanks

Parliament of the Cayman Islands

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan
Hon. Pearlina L. McGaw-Lumsden
Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly
Mr. A. Roy Tatum
Mr. Roy M. McTaggart

Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour

Hon. Gary B. Ruttly
Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks
Hon. Rolston M. Anglin

Hon. Isaac D. Rankine
Hon. Nickolas T. A. DaCosta
Hon. G. Wayne Panton
Ms. Heather D. Bodden
Hon. Michael S. Myles

ABSENT: 3

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks
Mrs. Julie J. T. Hunter
Mr. Christopher S. Saunders

The Speaker: The result of the division: 7 Ayes, 9 Noes [and 3 Absentees]. The Motion has failed.

Agreed: Private Member's Motion No. 2 of 2025-2026 – Implementing a year-round NiCE Programme in Grand Cayman has failed.

The Speaker: That concludes the business on today's Order Paper. I now invite the Premier to move the Motion for adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks, Minister of Financial Services and Commerce, Elected Member for West Bay South: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think the advocacy has begun.

[Laughter]

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I now move that this honourable House do now adjourn until tomorrow, 27th June at 2pm.

The Speaker: The question is that this honourable House now adjourn until Friday, 27th June at 2pm.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

The House stands adjourned.

At 5:04pm the House stood adjourned until 2pm Friday, 27th June, 2025.