



PARLIAMENT
OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS



OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST MEETING OF THE 2025-2026 SESSION

Third Sitting

Friday
27 June, 2025
(Pages 1-58)

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. Ruddy, 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. Mr. 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 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. Bodden, OCI, 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, CCI, JP, MP	Elected Member for Bodden Town East

APOLOGIES

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders, MP	Elected Member for Bodden Town West
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OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
FIRST MEETING OF THE 2025-2026 SESSION
FRIDAY
27 JUNE, 2025
1:58PM
Third Sitting

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

The Speaker: Good afternoon, everyone. I now call on the Honourable Deputy Premier, Minister of Tourism and Trade Development to offer prayers.

PRAYERS

Hon. Gary B. Rutty, Deputy Premier, Minister of Tourism and Trade Development, Elected Member for George Town South: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. [Let us] bow our heads.

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 Parliament, the Leader of Opposition, Ministers of the Cabinet, ex officio Members and 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 all 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.*

The Lord bless us and keep us. 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 want to take this opportunity to welcome the people sitting in the gallery who I understand are Caymanians aspiring to work in the civil service and are currently interns in the civil service. I welcome you all and hope to be dealing with you in a couple of years and maybe even seeing some of you occupying some of these seats down here. I now invite the Acting Deputy Governor to introduce these wonderful, ambitious Caymanians.

Acknowledgment of the CIG 2025 Interns

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

It is tremendous to have this opportunity to bring in our young interns who are with the civil service over the summer. Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you what this opportunity means. For so many of those young persons whom we see here today, this represents the very first time they've been in this hallowed building—and the excitement that has been shared amongst them at the opportunity to be invited and recognised by their Government. You do not know, sir, what this day means to them, so thank you.

If I may offer some brief remarks about this group of individuals. Mr. Speaker, so much is said about our Caymanian youth, which does them a great disservice. The young men and women who comprise the 2025 cohort of civil service interns, many of whom are still actively pursuing higher education, are, in a word—outstanding. They vary in their areas of academic focus, but each of them has a keen desire to put their knowledge and skills into action, to secure rewarding careers and give back to the country which has given them such a strong head start in life.

Supporting our youth is a major area of focus for the civil service. We participate in many initiatives designed to engage our youth to show them the diversity of careers within our organisation and to encour-

age them to think of learning and development as a lifelong pursuit.

A pinnacle of our youth engagement is the CIG internship Programme which runs each summer. Each year, the civil service aims to hire around 100 interns. This year, Mr. Speaker, with the support of the Government, the civil service is on track to exceed that target and is already positioned to hire 140 interns.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: The 2025 cohort of interns has entered our organisation brimming with enthusiasm and displaying a breadth of skills that is impressing their supervisors and the senior leaders who encounter them. Many of our Chief Officers are here in the Chambers today as well, in support of their interns. As a result of successive governments' investments in scholarship and training, we know that a lack of subject knowledge isn't typically the greatest challenge our youth face; rather, it is the opportunities for them to gain the experience of applying their theoretical knowledge to real-world employment situations. These internships are therefore designed to give our interns opportunities to see what the careers they aspire to look like day-to-day, and what current day challenges persons within that career are tackling.

As the Acting Deputy Governor and someone who also first entered the civil service as an intern back in, I dare say 1999, I am beaming with pride today. When I entered, Mr. Loxley Banks would have been my mentor. I went to *Radio Cayman*. I thought I would pursue my studies in communications and I spent the first week of my internship learning how to queue an LP.

[Laughter]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: For those of you who are sitting in our gallery, I just have to say it was a vinyl piece of instrument that we used to record music on. When I moved to the newsroom, we had a shortwave radio that we accessed the BBC news with and when I wanted to edit the evening news, I had reels of tape, and they gave me a razor blade with which to edit it. I don't think we allow our employees to have razor blades at work anymore.

[Laughter]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: So much has changed. I can tell you that the skills that these interns are coming with are far more modern.

Mr. Speaker, I can announce that so far, we already have 115 Caymanian students who have

chosen the civil service as their preferred employer, who joined our internship programme in Grand Cayman and we have interns in the Sister Islands [as well]. These interns, many of whom are here with us today, represent the first arrivals for the summer; however, I am pleased to report that these ambitious, bright individuals are due to be joined by approximately 25 more young Caymanians, which will bring the total number of interns for the summer to approximately 140.

Mr. Speaker, as you and the Members of this honourable House are likely aware, the civil service operates a well-established internship programme which is guided by our paid student internship policy. Each year, this initiative provides young Caymanians not only with valuable on-the-job training, but for those who are overseas, securing their Bachelor's and Master's degrees, this paid programme provides much needed savings to cover living expenses, which are not always fully funded by scholarships and which for some families can be quite daunting. In this way, the work experience is paying dual dividends to our participants, affording some of them the additional financial security to pursue their qualifications, but also practical experience to bridge them from their classrooms to the workplace.

Under this programme, priority is given to hiring government scholarship recipients and/or students who are undertaking a course of study which is relevant to the core business of the appointing ministry, portfolio or department. This approach is driving greater alignment between the government's investment in education and the government's employment opportunities, allowing our scholars to gain meaningful work experience and build professional relationships that may lead to permanent roles within our civil service, or even beyond.

Mr. Speaker, the 2025 civil service interns exemplified the promise and potential of our young people. These students are in various stages of their studies, ranging from those who are still completing high school to those who are recently returning with their first or second degrees in diverse areas of study. Among these graduates are scholars from the Clifton Hunter High School and John Gray High School who would have received the Deputy Governor's Leadership Award when they graduated. These students receive a guaranteed paid internship and their first choice of departments to join for the summer.

Mr. Speaker, this approach has led to many successful outcomes throughout the life of the programme, with former interns going on to join the Civil Service permanently.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge that our Deputy Governor, the Honourable Franz Manderson, also entered through very humble beginnings like these. We also have a former intern we are particularly proud of, Mr. Jonathan Woods, who first joined our Civil Service College as an intern before

going on to secure a permanent position in the Internal Audit Service where he took over the role of office manager.

While with the civil service, our interns will contribute to, and in many cases have already begun to contribute to the service delivery; as examples:

- Mr. Nathaniel Gonzalez, who is with the eGovernment Unit, has already designed and built online forms for the Department of Health and Regulatory Services, including developing the forms facilitating user acceptance testing and deploying these forms into the production environment.
- In my own portfolio, Bella Alves is currently working diligently to refresh the civil service's employee orientation programme. Just this morning, she led a session to facilitate input on just this topic.
- In our Civil Service College, Ms. Elissa Rankin successfully designed and delivered a comprehensive workbook for the Digital Skills Training Programme; and Ms. Kayjahe Warren is providing much needed support to civil servants accessing their mandatory training on Civil Service College Online.
- In the Commissions Secretariat, Mr. Jonah Sigsworth is capably supporting the annual Register of Interest Declaration process. That thing we all have to complete— there is an intern on the other side of that driving that engine, sir.
- In the Ministry of Education, Ms. Marisa Dunbar supported the Ministry's participation in a job fair where she helped to promote careers in teaching before she herself departs at the end of summer to complete her degree.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few examples of the important work our interns are carrying out and the impact they are having within the civil service already. As you will imagine, programmes such as these require committed employees to coordinate the programme. Accompanying our interns are Ms. Charlene Howell-Litchmore, who runs CIG specialist hiring programmes, including the internship programme; and Ms. Wendy Adam, who joined CIG just a few years ago and, whilst balancing being a mother and a very busy HR professional, has just this year completed her Master's degree in HR. Wendy travels to the UK next month with her daughter, who will witness her mother's graduation [as] her reward for hard work and many late evenings to complete her degree, when her mother not only graduates, but graduates with distinction.

Finally, our newest permanent hire on the Portfolio of the Civil Service's (PoCS) HR Shared Services team is a young lady named Ms. Helen

Rankin, who says she's so passionate about her profession that her actual initials are HR.

[Laughter]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Helen first joined PoCS as an intern in 2016 and is back nine years later, confirmed as an HR assistant and acting as a mentoring guide to other interns.

When she introduces herself and explains that she first worked in the civil service nine years ago, she draws awe from our current interns who marvel at how well she is keeping up. They wonder, you know, what age must she be that she did this nine years ago; and it always gets a bit under Helen's skin, because she has to remind them, *"I was one of the youngest interns. I was just 16. I'm not even 25 yet,"* but as some of them say, *"You were born in 2000? You mean 2-0-0-0?"*

[Laughter]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: However, we all agree Miss Helen is a civil servant OG; and as she likes to correct me, that's outdated lingo— she's *"fam"*.

[Laughter]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Mr. Speaker, the first group of students to have joined CIG thus far this summer has been diligent in tackling many laudable projects and activities.

The Ministry of Financial Services and Commerce welcomed a whopping 29 young Caymanians on 2nd June. They are running a three-month programme that's providing interns with meaningful, immersive, hands-on experience across the Ministry's core agencies. Interns have been placed in groups of 3-4 and assigned to a single agency to put as their focus. Within these teams, they are gaining practical experience in business process reengineering with the ultimate goal of recommending practical improvements to support more effective service delivery across the Ministry's operations. They are our young consultants — we got them at a good price, sir.

Each group will have to deliver a final report and presentation to senior officials that demonstrates valuable insights into the roles and responsibilities of each agency and the broader function of the Ministry within the financial services landscape. They're doing some impressive things.

The Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage has 16 interns and another 3 who are scheduled to start later in the summer. Chief Officer Teresa Echenique, who is with us here today, speaks highly of her Ministry's interns, saying they are brilliant, articulate, creative, and overall an amazing

group of young Caymanians. She says this programme fully aligns with her Ministry's priorities of talent identification and development, enhancement and empowerment of youth, awareness and preservation of culture and heritage, and promoting an active and healthy lifestyle for all.

In short, all of our interns got *rizz*—apparently, Mr. Speaker, that means charisma. They're delivering a dictionary to help me with the language. It is therefore with great pleasure that I introduce them to the Members of this honourable House. I note that not all of our interns can be in the Chamber today, but you will see even so we're filling up the room. Some of them cannot be with us today because they have already proven themselves so invaluable on the front line that they are holding the fort; some of them are in our Sister Islands and were not able to make it over on short notice, but wherever they are, I can guarantee you, sir, they are making a positive difference within our workforce. They are even reverse mentoring many of us established — I'm not going to say older, but the ones who arrived earlier. The earlier versions of you.

[Laughter]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: The reverse mentorship has been tremendous. The energy that you bring, the new skills that you bring, are greatly valued; so it is my honour, sir, to read out to you the names of this year's CIG 2025 cohort of interns:

Within the Department of Agriculture we have Kalie Ebanks, Neron Muschette and Abbegale Seymour.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In our Business Development Centre, Sameera Hemraj. In our Cabinet Office, Ajuay Whittaker. In our Commissions Secretariat, Mr. Jonah Sigsworth. In our Computer Services Department, bringing in our IT skills, Ms. Hannah Kelly, Jaeden Pouchie, Arianna Robinson, Rashawn Robinson and Brandon Trickett.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: If you could stand when your name is called, so we can properly recognise you.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Within our Core Ministry of Education, Abijith Anu, Marisa Dunbar and Amanda McIntosh.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Within the Core Ministry of Financial Services and Commerce, the think tank that often meets within our cafeteria, Jesenia Arch, Ashleigh Brooks, Nicholas Chowtee, Luis Clarke-Velazquez, Mikaeyla Dacres, YaNelli Dawkins, RaMiyah Ebanks, Kayla Jeffers, Antwan McField, Keanuana Millwood, Adriana Parsons, Jada Rankin, Rianna Rankin, Christopher Sanchez, Alma Smith, Victor Thompson and Daniella Watson.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In the Core Ministry of Health, Xairia Robinson-Fernandes. In the Core Ministry of Social Development and Innovation, Brandon Azan and Jori Ebanks. In the Core Ministry of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure, Victoria Azan, Shimarc Fisher, Mikayla O'Connor and Gabriella Watson.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In the Core Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage, Sanaa Archer, A'yjha Ebanks, Aiyana Martin-Ebanks, Abraham Powery, Brianna Smith, Raldayne Thomas and Janae Whittaker.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In the Core Portfolio of the Civil Service, Bella Alves, Tamia McLean, Elissa Rankin and Kayjahe Warren.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In Customs and Border Control, Hannah Bryan, Shantoya Garwood, Courtney Reid Jr., and Nathaniel Scotland.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In the Department of Children and Family Services, Samuel Hydes and Bianca Reid.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In our Department of Communications, Taija McRae. In the Department of Counselling Services, Jhanessa Powery.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In our Department of Education Services, Arya Arun and Synae Fennell. In the Department of Environmental Health, Jaion Whittaker. In the Department of Planning, A'yjha Ebanks and Anaiyah Powery.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In the Department of Sports, Jahiel Henry and Jamie Rankin-Maize.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In the Sister Islands (District Administration), Julius Blackwood, Jaythan Bodden, Celine Christian, McKayla Cupid, Anastacia Dawson, John Doe, Yannique Ebanks, Yesenia Ebanks-Palma, Allison Flores-Hernandez, Twayne Foster, Jia Hydes, Raeann Matute-Scott, Aracely Matute-Trejo, Tajuan McFarlane, Eryn Ritch, Kenny Ryan, Tyrese Scott, Karishma Seeram, Sahadeo Sohan, David Tibbetts-Tatum, Litzy Walton-Varela and Allisson Walton-Varela.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In our eGovernment Unit, Nathaniel Gonzalez, Leslie Laing, Joey Parsons, Ethan Smith and Katriona Williams.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In our Governor's Office, this gentleman has been quite busy working very long hours supporting the recent King's Birthday Tea Party and parade— Mr. Jelani Hanson.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In Lands and Survey Department, Mikayla Brown, Judah Clarke, Alicia Coe, Kaylee Ebanks, Nathaniel Hurlston and Jemaya Walters— well done.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Helping us combat those mosquitoes, particularly with this rain, in our Mosquito Research and Control Unit, Brittney Wright. In the Office of the Auditor General, Aaron Hutchinson. In the Office of the Deputy Governor, Alyssah Whittaker.

In our Passport Office, Madelyn Whittaker. In Poinciana Rehabilitation Centre, Izarah Brown. In our Police Service, with the Commissioner of Police here and beaming on, Jazmin Robinson. In our Portfolio of

Legal Affairs, Attorney General, we've got Danae Prehay—well done.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: In our Postal Department, Matthew Javier. At Sunrise Centre, we have Taylor Bramwell, Stephanie Royston and Nakiiyah Sairsingh. In our Youth Services Unit, Jessie Hurlston-Watler, Kadie McFarlane, Amalae Mendoza-Williams and Omari Powell.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I hope you and this honourable House will agree; our future is bright. Through internship programmes like this, these young people are not waiting in the wings to contribute— they are already contributing to our workforce. The future is now.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: I would like to congratulate you all again, and encourage you to continue.

I started in the civil service a few years ago— September 1st, 1973.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: I had a huge salary, \$237 a month.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: It's good to see you all and I trust that you will continue to work. The future of Cayman is in your hands.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Elected Member for George Town Central: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government will obviously enjoy seeing these young people every single day, but on behalf of the official Opposition we want to say: Congratulations, keep up the good work and may God bless each and every one of you.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Speaker: None.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

**Report of the Standing Business Committee –
Third Meeting of the 2024-2025 Session of the
Cayman Islands Parliament**

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks, Minister for Financial Services and Commerce, Elected Member for West Bay South: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House, the Report of the Standing Business Committee, third meeting of the 2024-2025 session.

The Speaker: So ordered, does the Honourable Premier wish to speak to the report?

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: No, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**Office of the Auditor General Cayman Islands –
Annual Report – 31 December 2024 – *Providing
Value to the People of the Cayman Islands*
(April 2025)**

The Speaker: Honourable Member for George Town East.

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

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament the Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of the Cayman Islands for the year ended the 31st December 2024, entitled *Providing Value to the People of the Cayman Islands*.

The Speaker: So ordered, does the honourable Member wish to speak to the report?

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Very briefly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, once again, as is customary for the office, they received an unqualified opinion. The report was signed off on April 16th, a full two weeks before the actual deadline.

Mr. Speaker, there were two significant events I particularly wanted to mention, one being that we said goodbye to the Auditor General, Ms. Sue Winspear. Many people would know she has not been well; she decided to return home to the UK to be with her family, so we wished her well and saw her off on the 28th of February.

Then, on the 1st of June, sir, the new Auditor General, Mr. Patrick Smith, took up his post. He has been with the Auditor General's Office for many years, but is the first Caymanian to take up that role in our country. I acknowledge him and his accomplishments and, on behalf of us all, I wish him well and much success in his role as he leads that Office.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Public Service Pensions Board 2024 – Annual
Report & Accounts**

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House, the Annual Report for the Public Service Pensions Board for the period ending 31st December, 2024.

The Speaker: So ordered; does the Honourable Deputy Governor wish to speak to the report?

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Yes, very briefly, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to speak briefly to the Public Service Pensions Boards (PSPB) performance during 2024 and to share some key highlights. The PSPB manages three distinct plans—the public service pensions plan, the parliamentary pensions plan and the judicial pensions plan. Additionally, it administers ex gratia pension payments which are directly funded by the government.

For the PSPB during 2024, key pension fund milestones were as follows: The return on the PSPB Fund was a positive 16.4 per cent for the year. This return ranked the PSPB Fund in the top 1 percentile of its peer group for performance in the year. As at 31st December, 2024 the PSPB had KYD\$1.35 billion in assets.

In terms of administrative milestones, the PSPB processed 2,333 plan member files, conducted 3,646 one-on-one meetings with members, and processed 184 new retirements.

Mr. Speaker, it is worth noting that the PSPB administers over 1,000 Ex-Gratia and Ex-Gratia Uplift payments on a monthly basis. Further, this past December, the PSPB was relied upon to deliver a one-time payment to all Cayman pensioners in the amount of \$500. The timely execution of this payment showed the PSPB's ability to support the Government's priority of supporting Caymanian pensioners with inflation protection over the 2024 holidays. The authority has also processed 73 new Ex-Gratia and Ex-Gratia Uplift payments in 2024 to ensure these Caymanians receive the minimum threshold for eligible recipients.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to highlight that in 2024 the PSPB built on positive outcomes from previous years and continues to be well positioned for long term successes. Like any year, unique challenges were presented to the authority, but the board, the leadership and team responded to continued inflation pressures, adapted to plan members' needs in Cayman and ensured their operations transitioned to address new technological demands.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I outline that in 2024 the PSPB had a very strong investing year and it held a diversified portfolio of bonds and

equity securities. It is this approach that provides above-average returns with minimal variability over the long term. This ensured that quarterly returns on member accounts throughout the year were positive. It is worth noting that the PSPB utilises a quarterly credited rate of return which is calculated using the previous three years of returns. This rate is then applied to member accounts with the result smoothing any market volatility and allowing Caymanians to plan for their retirement without major fluctuations.

Mr. Speaker, in 2025 the PSPB is going to enhance its services and support to its plan members, pensioners, and participating employers. This starts with relocation to their new office space where they will build on the centre of excellence approach in providing first-rate in-person member service experiences. Also, this year, the PSPB is looking to launch self-service tools for our employers to improve reporting and administration of the plan.

I want to acknowledge another successful year for the PSPB team who continues to achieve its mission of excellence in member services. The PSPB is routinely relied upon as a statutory authority that provides secure retirement income to so many Caymanians. In addition to the noteworthy accomplishments I've highlighted, the PSPB prepared its financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2024 and submitted them to the Auditor General, who has issued another unqualified opinion.

Mr. Speaker, having provided you with the key highlights, I'm certain you will agree that the PSPB's performance, both operationally and financially, was a success in 2024.

I would like to thank the PSPB's Chief Executive Officer, Mrs. Jewel Evans Lindsey, who works tirelessly on behalf of this fund. At times, she has done this with great personal sacrifice, Mr. Speaker; battling illness, yet always showing up for this plan and her members. She and her team have been a tremendous asset to our public service.

I would like to thank them and the chairperson for the PSPB, Mrs. Sheree Ebanks, who also works tirelessly, and other distinguished members of the board of directors for their ongoing commitment to Caymanians and their sound leadership.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Annual Report 2024 – Portfolio of Legal Affairs

The Speaker: Honourable Attorney General.

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg the leave of this House to lay on the Table the Annual Report for the Portfolio of Legal Affairs for the period ended December 2024.

The Speaker: So ordered, does the Honourable Member wish to speak to the report?

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Mr. Speaker, no. The report is self-explanatory and I certainly commend it to honourable Members of this House and the general public. I would like to use this opportunity, sir, to thank the learned Solicitor General, the Chief Financial Officer and the entire staff of the Portfolio of Legal Affairs for the wonderful work during this reporting period.

I thank you.

Cayman Islands Judiciary - Annual Report & Accounts 2024

The Speaker: Honourable Attorney General.

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, seek leave of this House to lay on the Table the Annual Report for the Judiciary for the period ended December 2024.

The Speaker: So ordered. Does the Honourable Attorney General wish to speak to the report?

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Again, Mr. Speaker, no; the report is self-explanatory. I would like to commend it [both] to honourable members and members of the public, and to congratulate the learned Chief Justice and members of the Judiciary and the Judicial Department for their hard work and dedication throughout the relevant reporting period.

I thank you.

Ministry of Border Control, Labour & Culture – Cayman Islands Government – 2024 Annual Report

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Caymanian Employment and Immigration.

Hon. Michael S. Myles, Minister of Caymanian Employment and Immigration, Elected Member for Prospect: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House the 2024 Annual Report for the Ministry of Border Control, Labour and Culture.

The Speaker: So ordered. Does the Honourable Member wish to speak to the report?

Hon. Michael S. Myles: No, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the report is self-explanatory.

URGENT QUESTIONS

The Speaker: None.

QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT

QUESTION NO. 14 PLANS TO UPGRADE OR REFURBISH THE WINDSOR PARK COMMUNITY PARK IN GEORGE TOWN

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Speaker and Member for George Town West.

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. 14, standing in my name, to the Honourable Minister for Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure. Can the Honourable Minister advise whether the Government has any plans to upgrade or refurbish the Windsor Park Community Park in George Town?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks, Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure, Member for North Side: Mr. Speaker, at present, the Government does not have any scheduled upgrades or refurbishment plans for the Windsor Park Community Park in George Town; however, I would like to recognise and thank the Member for George Town South who purchased and will be donating new basketball equipment for the park, which will be installed in the coming weeks. The Ministry continues to ensure that regular maintenance and safety checks are carried out for all parks, including the Windsor Park Community Park.

Supplementaries

The Speaker: Honourable Member for George Town West and Deputy Speaker.

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

Can the Honourable Minister say whether any consideration will be given to the budget, at least for bathrooms in the Windsor Park?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I cannot commit to that until I talk with the rest of my colleagues and see how the budget looks at the end of the year.

The Speaker: Honourable Member for George Town West and Deputy Speaker.

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

Thank you, Minister, and I implore that you do. Thank you.

QUESTION NO. 15 INTENTIONS TO STRENGTHEN AND ENHANCE THE OPERATIONAL CAPACITY OF THE COMMUNITY POLICING DEPARTMENT

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Red Bay.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask parliamentary question No. 15, standing in my name to the Honourable Deputy Governor and ex officio Member responsible for the Portfolio of the Civil Service. Can the Honourable Deputy Governor confirm whether the Commissioner of Police intends to strengthen and enhance the operational capacity of the Community Policing Department?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the Member for Red Bay for his question.

I can confirm that the Commissioner of Police, in alignment with national priorities and the strategic objectives of the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS), fully intends to strengthen and enhance the operational capacity of the Community Policing Unit. This commitment is balanced against several critical resourcing challenges, including funding constraints that have impacted the ability to scale operations at pace.

While there is strong political and organisational will to grow this capability, the RCIPS continues to operate within a tightly managed budget requiring careful prioritisation of personnel, training and infrastructure investments. Additional key challenges include:

- Recruitment and retention constraints – There is growing competition for skilled officers locally, regionally, and internationally, and the RCIPS is not immune to workforce pressures and attrition;
- Training and capability gaps – Ensuring that community officers are not only present but fully equipped and trained in conflict resolution, youth engagement and culturally sensitive practices remains a strategic priority; and
- Rising demand for visibility and public trust – Public expectation for visible policing and responsiveness continues to grow, particularly in response to recent spikes in anti-social behaviour, drug-related crime and domestic incidents.

Despite these constraints, I wish to assure this honourable House that community policing is central to the Commissioner's long-term operational vision. In fact, steps are already underway to:

- undertake a comprehensive review of community policing deployment across districts to improve alignment with crime patterns and community needs;
- integrate community teams into broader problem-solving partnerships with education, social services, and youth empowerment to address root causes of crime and disorder; and
- expand training in preventative policing, safeguarding, and vulnerable persons' engagement as part of a more intelligence-led and community-empowered model.

To support these aims, the Commissioner has established a small internal project team that is actively engaging with the Portfolio of the Civil Service to explore workforce development pathways, including targeted recruitment, succession planning and better use of community safety officers, interns and volunteers. Ultimately, the goal at RCIPS is to evolve the Community Policing Unit into a resilient, embedded, and proactive presence in every community empowered, not just to respond to crime, but to prevent harm and build public confidence.

The RCIPS remains committed to transparency, accountability and prudent resource management as it delivers on this vital area of public safety.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Supplementaries

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

Thank you for that comprehensive answer. It's much appreciated. I'm glad the Commissioner is here and I want to say that I was hopeful for such an answer, but expected no less. Can you update me please: What's the current staff complement of the Community Policing Department, both the constables and community safety officers; how many of these positions are currently filled and how many are vacant?

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Mr. Speaker, just a moment as I confer. Thank you.

[Pause]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Mr. Speaker, through you. The total number of community officers currently deployed by RCIPS is 19. We have 8 officers in the George Town district; 4 in the West Bay District; 6 across the eastern districts, Bodden Town, North Side and East End; and 1 officer

in the Sister Islands. The desired strength of the Community Policing Unit is 36 officers, which would require a net increase of 17 positions, but at present, 19 community officers are deployed across the Cayman Islands.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

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

Thanks very much for that answer, and I thank the Commissioner as well. Speaking for myself— and I think the rest of the Opposition, if I could— you will have support from us when budget time comes on. I really look forward to seeing that sufficient funding is there within the SPS and the budget, sir. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

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

The Honourable Deputy Governor said in her response that “**the RCIPS continues to operate within a tightly managed budget.**” Can the Deputy Governor say whether the substantial, \$6 or \$7 million I think, which was approved recently in Cabinet by section 11 will be brought to Parliament in order to assist the Police Commissioner in the about 70 new hires that he wants?

[Pause]

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Conferring with the Commissioner, I am able to confirm that the RCIPS received prior approval through section 11(5), the approvals that Cabinet can provide, for funding of \$1.9 million. Additional funding for the hiring of additional officers is proposed to be sought by way of section 12, but that is still an internal process. There has been no determination on that matter.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

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

Can the Deputy Governor say if those additional funds that are in the process of getting to Cabinet are necessary for the new hires the Commissioner needs?

[Pause]

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the Honourable Member for his supplementary question. I can confirm the additional request that will need to make its way through the process is to fund the hiring of additional officers. The community policing officers would be amongst that number and other functional areas of RCIPS.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for your patience. This is my last question: Can the Honourable Deputy Governor give an indication of exactly how much that request will be because, obviously—

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy, I think we're going a bit too far outside; this is about community policing. The substantive question is about community policing only.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker, I do respect your way, but the community policing officers are involved in that request amount. Would I—

The Speaker: If you are asking a supplementary question about community policing officers that is different.

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

Can the Honourable Deputy Governor say how much of the monies they are going to request is allocated to community police officers?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The expansion of the Community Policing Unit to the desired levels I previously described is approximately \$1.5 million investment that we would need to be able to do it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I think the Member for Cayman Brac East wants to ask a question.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, Elected Member for Cayman Brac East: Thank you, Mr. Speaker for allowing this supplementary to the Honourable Deputy Governor. I wonder if she can confirm, either now or in writing, that the last Cabinet approved \$12 million for 77 or 79 policemen, and how much of that is making its way through Cabinet for community policing. Thank you.

[Pause]

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Mr. Speaker, just to elucidate, while they're conferring. I can also confirm—if you want I can convert it to a question; as part of the PREFU, the \$12 million was a consideration thereof so perhaps that could be part of the response, to see where the evaporation has occurred.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the honourable Member for her question. I'm advised, Mr. Speaker, that by way of section 11(5), the approval was given for approximately \$1.9 million, which has been released to the police and is in use. I believe the honourable Member said that within the PREFU forecast there were additional funds factored into the PREFU, but I am advised those additional funds are not a sum that has received any Cabinet approval as yet. It may be part of the forecast that was used, but as I've been advised, it is not a decision that has been recorded and given to the RCIPS as having been approved to date.

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Cayman Brac East.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Though the temptation is great with the multiplicity of questions that flow from that answer, I'll restrict myself to one and thank you for your graciousness: Can the Honourable Deputy Governor confirm, when she refers to 'government', it is not the past Government, but the current Government who has not made the processing possible with the \$12 million, because the last Government approved it and the Cabinet Minutes would reflect it?

Thank you, sir.

[Pause]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Mr. Speaker, through you.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you and I thank the honourable Member for her follow-up question. I've conferred with the Commissioner of Police and he has been able to confirm the funds that have been released to date. He will have to refer to his records to ensure we are not providing information that could be deemed misleading in any way, so I would ask the indulgence of this honourable House to provide that answer in writing, if we may.

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Bodden Town East.

Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, Elected Member for Bodden Town East: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I really appreciate your indulgence in my asking a question to the Acting Deputy Governor in regard to community cameras, due to the recent murders in Bodden Town and other areas. Does the Police Department have any intentions of increasing the number of cameras throughout communities in Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac, and Little Cayman?

[Pause]

The Speaker: Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank the honourable Member for his question.

Mr. Speaker, in conferring with the Commissioner of Police, he has clarified on this point that the police will work with the Department of Public Safety and Communications (what we think of as 9-1-1). They take the lead under Home Affairs for the installation of cameras; however, the police do advise them on so-called black spot areas where they would like to see additional cameras placed in order to enhance public safety. The Commissioner has taken note of the Member's question and confirmed that he is desirous of seeing enhancements in our cameras. It will be part of the normal working relationship to take that forward, but the RCIPS themselves are not responsible for the installation of the cameras.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Next question.

**QUESTION NO. 16
LEGISLATIVE CHANGES TO GIVE EFFECT TO
PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION NO. 14 OF
2023-2024, ENTITLED "MOTION ON HIGHER
STANDARD OF BANK'S DUTY OF FAIRNESS TO
CUSTOMERS".**

The Speaker: Member for George Town East.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask question No. 16, standing in my name to the Honourable Premier and Minister of Financial Services and Commerce. Can the Honourable Premier and Minister for Financial Services and Commerce advise whether the Government intends to introduce legislative changes to give effect to Private Member's Motion No. 14 of 2023-2024 entitled "Motion on Higher Standard of Bank's Duty of Fairness to Customers," which was passed by Parliament in July, 2024?

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, the answer: Private Member's Motion No. 14 of 2023-2024 resolved that the Government consider two legislative changes.

- First, legislation to require retail banks to follow a standard of care to consumers that is similar to that of the UK's Banking Consumer Duty rules should the local banks not implement a mandatory updated Banking Code of Practice based on the UK's Banking Consumer Duty Rules;
- Second, to bring forward an amendment to the Registered Land Act as proposed by the Law Reform Commission, based on their review of useful reforms to deal with the enforcement of mortgage-type security over real estate.

In relation to the Banking Code of Practice, the Ministry of Financial Services and Commerce met with the Cayman Islands Bankers' Association (CIBA) in September 2024, and received a commitment that CIBA would review and update the Banking Code of Conduct for local banks, taking the UK's Banking Consumer Duty rules into consideration. This process is very advanced, and CIBA members will be considering an updated Banking Code of Conduct at its annual general meeting on the 2nd of July.

As housing and access to housing is a key focus area of this administration, this Cabinet approved the drafting of critical amendments to the Registered Land Act (2018 Revision) on the 21st May 2025, to deliver long-overdue reforms to our mortgage and foreclosure framework, as recommended by the Law Reform Commission. These reforms are intended to strengthen protections for Caymanian homeowners, promote fairness and transparency in lending practices, and ensure that no family is left behind due to outdated or imbalanced legislation.

I am advised by the Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing & Infrastructure that a final round of stakeholder consultations—including with the judiciary, financial institutions, and civil society—will begin next month (i.e. July). These consultations will help shape an Amendment Bill that is not only fit for purpose, but firmly aligned with best practices and the aspirations of the Caymanian people.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: For this purpose, we are therefore determined to bring the Registered Land Act Amendment Bill to Parliament for debate in the third quarter, or early fourth quarter of this year, as part of our broader vision to deliver real, meaningful change in the lives of our people.

The Speaker: Member for George Town East.

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Briefly, Mr. Speaker, just to thank the Premier for that very detailed response. I'm delighted to see that the PMM is being acted upon and much progress is being made. I look forward to seeing everything in there come to fruition.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Supplementaries

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, sir, it seems like the Bankers' Association is obviously taking the lead on this. Will Government be reviewing what they produce to ensure that what comes forward actually meets the standard we're expecting?

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: I thank the Member for the additional question. Mr. Speaker, through you, the answer is yes.

The Speaker: Next question.

QUESTION NO. 17 SARGASSUM PLAN; AND WHETHER SPECIALISED EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN PUR- CHASED

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Bodden Town East.

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, question No. 17, can the Honourable Minister for Health, Environment and Sustainability say whether there is a Sargassum plan in place; and if so, can the Minister share this plan and also advise whether specialised equipment has been purchased to combat the same?

The Speaker: Minister for Health, Environment and Sustainability.

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks, Minister of Environment and Sustainability, Elected Member for West Bay Central: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The answer: Based on the briefings I have received since taking over responsibility for the Ministry of Health, Environment and Sustainability, there is no approved Sargassum plan in place. That is concerning because, up until the 31st of October 2024 when I was the responsible Minister, there was a Draft Sargassum plan which evidently was not advanced or approved in the intervening six months.

Now that I am back as Minister with responsibility, this is a priority and the Draft Plan will be reviewed, updated, and submitted to Cabinet in the next few weeks. Once the national Sargassum Response

Plan has been approved by Cabinet, the procurement of any additional necessary equipment or supplies identified can occur.

The Speaker: Member for Bodden Town East.

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Honourable Minister for such an honest response. I know everyone in the room, all 19 Members, suffer the fate of Sargassum at periods of the year. The south side of the island—and I think Bodden Town probably gets it worst—[is] sometimes heaped up in about five feet of Sargassum in some areas.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the Government is interested in putting booms or any kind of mechanism around certain areas of the island where the Sargassum hits heaviest to impede the arrival of Sargassum, which prevents our citizens from utilising the beach.

The Speaker: Minister for Health, Environment and Sustainability.

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks: Mr. Speaker, I can say to the Member that we haven't got to the stage of discussing booms. Perhaps when the plan is brought back to Caucus, we will engage in those discussions; but I, too, have had thoughts around that.

The Speaker: Member for Bodden Town East.

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Honourable Minister. Some years ago, First Baptist School's Year 6 students came to the Administration Building and did a presentation to the Ministry whereby they recommended a Sargassum boat which at the time cost only \$500,000. That was some years ago; I'm sure it's about \$5 million now. Just to say that even the school children are thinking about the way that Sargassum affects the way they can utilise the beach.

The Minister doesn't have to respond to that; I just thank her for the answer.

The Speaker: I would just like to draw to Members' attention that there's only one hour allocated for Question Time and we have a few questions to go, so maybe we need to cut the statements rather short, otherwise we're going to have some questions unanswered.

QUESTION NO. 18 CRUISE PASSENGER NUMBER PROJECTIONS FOR 2026 AND 2027 SINCE THE 2025 GENERAL ELECTION

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to ask question No. 18 standing in my name on the Order Paper to the Honourable Deputy Premier. Can the Honourable Deputy Premier say if there has been any further decline in the cruise passenger number projections for the year 2026 and 2027 since the 2025 General Election?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister for Tourism and Trade Development.

Hon. Gary B. Ratty, Deputy Premier, Minister of Tourism and Trade Development, Elected Member for George Town South: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer: There has been no further decline in cruise passenger number projections for 2026 and 2027 since the General Election. Most of these calls were confirmed prior to 2025 and before the General Election of this year.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Supplementaries

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

I'm a bit concerned now, Mr. Speaker, because the manager of the Port Authority sent me an email up to last week suggesting there has been a reduction in the projections for next year, so there seems to be a communication problem between the Ministry and the Port Authority on the reality of what's happening in the cruise industry.

Mr. Speaker, I don't even know what to do in respect to a follow up.

The Speaker: Do you have a copy of that email that you can Table, because I think you are seriously questioning the veracity of the Minister's answer.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Yes sir, I'd be happy to. Just give me two minutes and I'll ask the staff to print out a copy so I can lay it on the Table of the House.

In the interim, can I ask if the Minister has any intentions of keeping track of any projected loss as a result of the Referendum results?

The Speaker: Minister for Tourism.

Hon. Gary B. Ratty, Deputy Premier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, sir. We will be tracking these results through the FCCA [Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association] and also the Port Authority of the Cayman Islands. Thank you.

The Speaker: Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can I ask whether the Minister, or any person from the Ministry, or anybody from the Department of Tourism attended the recent PAMAC (Platinum Associate Membership Advisory Council) Conference? For those who are listening, it is the executive location where all cruise lines meet to discuss the industry.

Hon. Gary B. Ratty, Deputy Premier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The relevant entity did attend the PAMAC Summit. Cayman Turtle Centre attended PAMAC and it was a very successful meeting yielding two new contracts and the renegotiation of an existing contract. The Ministry will also attend the FCCA (Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association) Cruise Conference in October 2025.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to assume the answer is no. I don't know if the Honourable Deputy Premier heard me correctly. Did the Minister, or anybody from the Ministry or the Department of Tourism, attend the conference — not the Turtle Farm.

The Speaker: Deputy Premier.

Hon. Gary B. Ratty, Deputy Premier: Mr. Speaker, thank you. I personally did not attend. The only person who I know attended was the person from the Cayman Turtle Centre.

The Speaker: Next question.

QUESTION NO. 19 GOVERNMENT'S POLICY POSITION ON CRUISE BERTHING FACILITIES, NATIONAL LOTTERY AND DECRIMINALISATION OF MARIJUANA IN SMALL AMOUNTS

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to ask question No. 19 standing on the Order Paper in my name to the Honourable Premier and the Minister for Financial Services and Commerce.

In light of the Referendum results from the recent General Election in April 2025, can the Honourable Minister say, what is the Government's policy/way forward on:

1. Cruise berthing facilities;
2. National lottery; and

3. Decriminalisation of marijuana in small amounts?

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, the answer:

As background, the voters of these Islands have spoken clearly during the 2025 Referendum—64.15 per cent rejected cruise berthing facilities, while 51.24 per cent approved a national lottery, and 55.64 per cent approved the decriminalisation of marijuana in small amounts. This Government is committed to honouring the will of the Caymanian people as expressed through the democratic process.

Turning specifically to each of the three results:

- a) Given the Cruise Berthing Referendum's result, whereby a clear majority of 64.15 per cent rejected building a cruise berthing facility, this Government shall be guided accordingly.
- b) In relation to the National Lottery Referendum results: with 51.24 per cent of voters expressing support for the introduction of a national lottery, yet being mindful that this result is a slim majority and being aware of voters with continued concerns particularly regarding the manner in which a national lottery would be operated and regulated, the matter will be referred to the Cayman Islands Law Reform Commission. The Commission will be requested to make reform recommendations regarding key matters such as:
 - the appropriate legal framework and licensing regimes;
 - effective mechanisms for oversight and transparency;
 - robust safeguards against problems associated with gambling; and
 - the business model or models that could optimise revenues and costs.
- c) As to the Decriminalisation of Small-Scale Cannabis Possession Referendum results: with 55.64 per cent of voters expressing support, though recognising both the evolving regional and global legal landscape, as well as the social and criminal justice implications, this issue will also be formally referred to the Law Reform Commission. The Commission will be asked to evaluate and make reform recommendations regarding key matters such as:
 - proposed possession thresholds and legal definitions;

- levels of administrative penalties;
- alignment with existing drug enforcement as well as regional and international obligations;
- potential social impacts; and
- safeguarding vulnerable populations.

Once the Government receives and reviews the Commission's reports on the latter two matters above, an update will be provided to Parliament as to next actions.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Supplementaries

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Honourable Premier for that very comprehensive answer; quite what I expected.

Mr. Speaker, can the Honourable Premier give any timelines on the latter two, as per response from the Law Reform Commission; did they give him a timeframe or did they respond with an estimated time for us to know?

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for the additional question. What we have decided is we are going to formally document this on a Cabinet Paper so it is on the record. The first set of steps would be to have the staff of the Commission do initial legal research, review all the results, take account of public concerns, and draft a scoping memo for the Law Reform Commissioners themselves to study. Hopefully we have a matter of full record of the report, and outline of the body of work by October 2025.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg you a little leeway so I can opine further on what the Premier has said. I'm asking for the overall time for this, for us to see an end to these two referendum results, but what I think I understood the Premier to say is that they have to do some preliminary paperwork before they give it to the Law Reform Commission and that paperwork is expected to be done in October. Is it fair to say that we don't have a timeline for when the Law Reform Commission itself will have finished its work to get back to the public and to the Government?

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Just to clarify, the staff that will be given the preliminary work are the staff of the Law Reform Commission. Once they have scoped and provided us advice, I'm happy to then provide and publish a timeline for all the public to see.

The Speaker: Member for Bodden Town East.

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Honourable Premier: Although the result showed what it showed, are there any concerns in terms of the pier and the cruise industry with the dwindling number of cruise passengers? Is a think tank being put together to try to evaluate the state of this industry?

The Speaker: Honourable Member, I think that's a bit outside of the scope of the original question. I think you need to put in a substantial question for that matter, because I think it involves a lot.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence, it is an excellent question. I'm happy to provide a bit of a steer.

Mr. Speaker, through you, it's an excellent question because this is the exact scenario [proposed by] those of us who were not proponents of the Referendum Bill, to not end up here at this moment in time. How would we help our cruise operators, many of which are West Bayers — how would we help them if [the referendum result] was a 'No'?

What we decided is that since we didn't find a body of work to address that eventuality, which is now before us and a reality we face, the Deputy Premier and his staff are compiling a short, medium, and long-term plan to assess the options, which are— now that stayover is quite strong and continuing to grow, how you can transition some of those business owners to that; whether there can be small sets of financial assistance, either through the Development Bank or the Centre for Business Development; and also, whether there could be training programmes to move to other industries. Give us some time to be able to put those strategies forward, because at the end of the day, we have to take care of our people economically.

QUESTION NO. 20 IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW MINIMUM WAGE

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

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

I rise to ask question No. 20 standing in my name on the Order Paper to the Honourable Minister for Caymanian Employment and Immigration. Can the Honourable Minister say whether the Government

intends to implement a new minimum wage, and if so, when and how much?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister responsible for Caymanian Employment and Immigration.

Hon. Michael S. Myles, Minister of Caymanian Employment and Immigration, Elected Member for Prospect: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Yes. Unlike previous administrations who couldn't find consensus to make a decision on this important matter, we, the National Coalition for Caymanians (NCfC), intend to accept and implement the recommendation of the Minimum Wage Advisory Committee Final Report that was submitted in 2023 under the previous Government. We intend to implement the national minimum wage of \$8.75 per hour effective as of January 1, 2026.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Supplementaries

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker, can the Honourable Minister say if his position has changed since his last appearance on the *Compass* when he said the Government will not be implementing a minimum wage. Mr. Speaker, if Parliament would allow me to provide the article, I'm happy to.

The Speaker: No; there was an old seaman who sat in this Parliament many, many years ago and somebody once accused him of changing his mind. He said the only two people he knew couldn't change their minds were a damned fool and a dead person, so I think most of us in here are entitled to change our minds. I think you need a different question, please.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Well, Mr. Speaker, as to that adage or old saying "*either you're a fool or you're a dead man*," I don't know which one the Minister is.

The Speaker: Listen carefully to what I said: I said that only a dead man or a damn fool could *not* change their mind.

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

The Speaker: Member for Bodden Town East.

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: Mr. Speaker, in regard to the Minister's response on the minimum wage, which I think most [people] welcome, and I'm thankful that they were able to get a Caucus to agree. It's not always easy to get a Caucus to agree on these things.

Moving forward, has a team been put together to try to understand the effects of raising the minimum wage to \$8.75? Has the Chamber or anyone been contacted?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister for Employment and Immigration.

Hon. Michael S. Myles: This is the well-documented report from the Minimum Wage Committee. What the Member is asking has already been done. What we are doing now is rolling out the minimum wage. My team — my colleagues here and the Ministry team — will be looking at the rest of the minimum wage and looking at how we roll it out over the next year. There are a number of different recommendations in that law that certainly affect our economy; we understand that because it was in this report.

I ask my gentleman friend over here to read the report, and I'm certainly happy to have this discussion offline on how we can meet in the middle.

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Bodden Town East.

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: Mr. Speaker, the report was presented to me and I remember, after having many meetings with the industry, that there was a certain "sweet spot" number that most of the Ministry was comfortable with.

What I'm trying to say, Mr. Speaker, as I remind the new Minister, is that in 2015, an unintended consequence happened. Most don't like to talk about it, but the minimum wage in 2015 caused quite a disruption in terms of helpers in this country. The amount that Caymanians were paying doubled and no one could afford a helper at that time. I'm asking if this was considered, because the increase is going to happen again and persons' salaries have remained the same.

The Speaker: Minister for Employment and Immigration.

Hon. Michael S. Myles: Mr. Speaker, I think all angles have been discussed in this report. Our team at the Ministry and certainly our Government have also discussed it. Now, we can continue to discuss this or we can put in the minimum wage that we paid for and that has been recommended by a number of professionals.

I understand the unintended consequences, but I also want to make clear that we have people in our country who are living pay cheque to pay cheque, who are struggling to meet their normal bills because they're being paid \$6 per hour. Now, I understand the helper situation, and it's the reason why we are putting an implementation of January 1st, 2026. We're always going to have a rise in the cost of living regardless of whether we have a minimum wage increase or not; the economy is going to do whatever the economy is

going to do. Our responsibility now is to protect our people and to ensure they are at least being paid appropriately.

The Speaker: Member for Bodden Town East.

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: Mr. Speaker, I duly understand the plight the Minister and the team have. It's not an easy situation, that's why it was not done so quickly. Considering that 78 per cent of the people who are going to benefit from the minimum wage are non-Caymanians...

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: Yes, I read the report.

The Speaker: Was there a question?

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: That was a report.

The Speaker: Okay. Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

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

I rise to ask a follow-up question for clarity, because I'm reading the answer which was adequately provided to me by the staff. It just says we intend to implement the national minimum wage of \$8.75 per hour effective January 1st, 2026.

Is the Minister saying it is straight across the board, including the tourism industry without any gratuity contributions involved, because at one point, the 175-page report had some nuances there. I wonder if the Minister can opine whether that's straight across the board or if there is any gratuity included in that for the tourism industry or not?

The Speaker: Minister for Employment and Immigration.

Hon. Michael S. Myles: Mr. Speaker, the \$8.75 is across the board. We will have a press conference next week to include all the information on what we plan to do. As I said, right now we're only implementing the \$8.75, effective as of January 1st, 2026.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, sir. Could the Member advise whether the Government would be willing to consider linking the minimum wage to the CPI (Consumer Price Index)?

The Speaker: Minister for Employment and Immigration.

Hon. Michael S. Myles: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Speaker, the Members will be briefed as we continue to roll out the report's recommendations next year. Right now, we are only rolling out the \$8.75 as of January 1st, 2026; everything else we will consider to release as we put the necessary plans in place, seeing where the economy is going to go.

The Speaker: Member for Bodden Town East. Last question.

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour: Thank you. I'm glad the Minister spoke about the economy. I am asking if the Minister would consider an exact year being next June rather than 1st January. I mean, we have high interest rates and all kinds of different stuff.

For the cost of living to go up again on Caymanians who would be affected by this, who still have to employ persons... I'm not against raising the minimum wage in any way; I encourage it.

The Speaker: Minister for Employment and Immigration.

Hon. Michael S. Myles: Mr. Speaker, I think we've hashed out this point long enough. The minimum wage will be implemented on January 1st, 2026 at \$8.75. I believe at the end of the day the economy is going to do what the economy is going to do; our responsibility is to pay Caymanians a fair wage.

Thank you, sir.

The Speaker: That brings Question Time to close. Next item on the Order Paper.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Speaker: I have given leave to the Honourable Premier responsible for Financial Services and Commerce to make a statement. Honourable Premier.

Honourable Premier Financial Action Task Force and UK Engagement Update

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

Mr. Speaker and honourable Members of Parliament, today I rise to update you and the people of the Cayman Islands about our country's reputation and forward movement on Financial Action Task Force, or FATF matters; and on our discussions with the UK on matters including the environment and beneficial ownership, or so-called BO.

My comments today are based on my visit to France for the MONEYVAL-FATF Plenary, and to the UK for stakeholder engagement, from 12-17 June. More broadly, my comments are based on our coun-

try's progress over the years, and certainly over the past four years, in international arenas.

I begin with FATF which, as the public is aware, is the global standard-setter for AML: anti-money laundering, countering terrorism financing, and countering proliferation financing. I have three updates.

First, Mr. Speaker, the Cayman Islands' attendance at the Joint MONEYVAL- FATF Plenary in Strasbourg, France, from 10-14 June completed our participation in the FATF President's Guest Initiative. This brand-new initiative is specifically for jurisdictions that are supported in achieving FATF's standards through nine FSRBs – or FATF-Style Regional Bodies – established around the globe. MONEYVAL supports European countries, Mr. Speaker, while the body that supports countries in the Caribbean is the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, or CFATF.

I note that around 160 countries have committed to the FATF standard, and conceivably many, if not most of these, could have been chosen to be this initiative's first participants. The rigorous selection process, done via FATF global consultation, required a country to:

1. be actively and constructively engaged, and participating regularly in the work of their FSRB;
2. have the capacity to contribute to FATF work; and
3. have influence in their region to become lighthouses on AML issues.

Therefore, it was a great honour that the FATF asked the Cayman Islands, along with Senegal, to be the first two participants in this initiative.

As a country we should be proud that in October 2024, FATF's President wrote to our Attorney General, the Honourable Samuel Bulgin, KC, to invite our participation; and that he advised the Cayman Islands Government to accept it because, Mr. Speaker, our acceptance literally gave us seats at FATF's table. The purpose of the Guest Initiative includes raising the guest jurisdictions' awareness of and increasing our participation in FATF work by giving them the opportunity to send a delegation to three consecutive FATF Plenary and related working-group meetings. Being a guest member meant the Cayman Islands could express *our* views directly through our delegation, sitting not under CFATF's flag, but our own.

The initiative also enriches FATF policymaking. Cayman's delegation contributed both our national experience and technical perspective through our written comments on FATF papers. We made constructive interventions during the FATF plenaries and meetings of its five working groups. We had direct access to FATF documents; all of which was incredibly beneficial. While guest jurisdictions do not participate in FATF's decision-making processes, I'm confident that we helped to increase FATF's awareness of

regional challenges in implementing the FATF Standards and identifying solutions.

However, Mr. Speaker, one of the most significant benefits was that our participation helped us see the FATF not as a faceless entity. Indeed, we now know that FATF continually strives to improve how it conducts its mandate, much like we constantly strive to improve our financial services regime; and like us, FATF is a body of knowledgeable persons who work to ensure that illicit crime finds no safe haven, but instead runs into strong, sharp and effective deterrents everywhere, including in the Cayman Islands. FATF is rigorous in this goal, and so are we.

This is why during the initiative it was useful for us to participate in the FATF review of a smaller country like us — Latvia. Again, were it not for this initiative, we would not have had this experience. Having seen the process up close, including hearing the interventions and the responses, the Cayman Islands can overlay these learnings on our work plan, which is already in progress, as we prepare for FATF's Fifth Round of Mutual Evaluations. FATF assessors will be on the ground here to evaluate the effectiveness of our regime in meeting the current FATF standard. The date is probably December 2027.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to raise two more points related to FATF, before updating this honourable House and the public about the UK meetings.

First, I was pleased to represent the Cayman Islands as a panellist at FATF's Technical Assistance Peer-Learning Meeting. Here we shared insights on AML capacity building and measuring impact, and it was an opportunity to again highlight our experiences and contributions within the global AML network.

Second — and this is difficult, Mr. Speaker; though our hearts are still badly hurting over the loss of Mrs. Judiann Myles, who we laid to rest Monday, the public should know that as her loss is felt far, far beyond our borders, tributes to Judiann were offered during the FATF Plenary and the care and concern for Judiann's family, her Cayman Islands Monetary Authority (CIMA) family, and the country, was made abundantly clear.

On behalf of our Islands, I thank all the persons who spoke words of comfort, including CFATF Executive Director Dawne Spicer, who highlighted Judiann's warmth, expertise and professionalism; and FATF President Elisa de Anda Madrazo, who highlighted her contribution to FATF's work in the region and through its Global Network Coordination Group. To the family and friends of Mrs. Judiann Myles, be in no doubt, Judiann represented the Cayman Islands exceptionally well and the enhancement of our country's reputation within the FATF network is in no small part due to her outstanding work and conduct.

Mr. Speaker, I now turn to the UK segment of the Government's engagement on the 16th and 17th of June.

I'm pleased that Minister of State for UK Overseas Territories (OT) Stephen Doughty and I had productive discussions on a number of subjects; and I'm particularly pleased that the UK/Overseas Territories partnership on the Blue Belt Programme, which helps our Islands and other OTs to stem biodiversity loss, allow sustainable growth, and be resilient to climate change, is continuing at present.

Minister Doughty and I also spoke about tackling illicit finance and sanctions evasion. He was well versed in our achievements, commitments and reputation as a modern, resilient financial services centre, and he praised our leading regional role in implementing UK sanctions, including freezing more than \$9 billion of Russia-linked assets. Moreover, he recognised our policy and legislative framework for greater corporate transparency, including through our register of beneficial ownership information, which is accessible to accredited journalists, academic researchers, members of certain civil society organisations and such who have legitimate interests in the information.

After our productive meeting in the UK, the UK and Cayman issued a joint statement, announcing that our Islands are considering an annual fee to access our register, rather than the current CI\$30 fee for a single search, and CI\$100 for a multi-search where there are connected legal persons. Mr. Speaker, this consideration is in line with the November 2024 agreement between the OTs and the UK on accessing beneficial ownership registers.

Simply put, it would streamline the process by allowing persons with legitimate interests to submit multiple applications in a one-year period, without having to evidence credentials for application. However, with that said, the applicant would still need to demonstrate legitimate interest for each application submitted. This is, therefore, a practical consideration, not a policy shift, to fine-tune our regime in line with the existing November 2024 commitment between the UK and the OTs on beneficial ownership information access. While the UK and Cayman will continue to discuss this process change in the coming weeks, I note that we are continuing to improve our reciprocal information sharing through our competent authorities, including law enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, as I conclude this update to this honourable House and to the people of the Cayman Islands, I am pleased that Minister Doughty reiterated the UK's firm commitment to the sovereignty, security and defence of the OTs. I also am pleased that Minister Doughty and I continue to work together to further deepen the modern UK-Cayman Islands partnership, as indicated by his visit to the Cayman Islands that is being planned for September this year.

Mr. Speaker, the Government's actions on FATF and UK engagement are dedicated to bolstering our beloved country's reputation. I am heartened to say that our relationships with FATF and the UK are strong in our mutual understanding and, importantly,

our respect of each other's positions. Our shared goal is to move forward in ways that respect the principles that underpin sound financial services globally, while also respecting jurisdictional sovereignty.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and may God continue to bless the Cayman Islands.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: I have given leave for the Honourable Deputy Premier and Minister of Tourism and Trade to make a statement.

**Honourable Minister of
Tourism and Trade Development
Section 11(5) of the Public Management and
Finance Act (2020 Revision) Appropriations for
Central Scranton Park**

Hon. Gary B. Rutty, Deputy Premier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a statement in accordance with section 11(6) of the Public Management and Finance Act, in relation to the section 11(5) appropriations during the 2025 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, appropriation EA 164 – Central Scranton Park was increased in the amount of \$2 million in order to assist with the construction of entrances, landscaping, a Community Centre, a multi-purpose court, a bathroom block, fencing, a roadway, and a parking lot for Central Scranton Park. This increased appropriation was offset by a decrease in EA 159 – Waterfront Tourism Experience by \$1 million, and a decrease in TP 67 – Sports and Cultural Tourism Programmes Assistance by \$1 million.

Mr. Speaker, the appropriation EA 164 – Central Scranton Park and all remaining funds therein was transferred from the Ministry of Tourism and Trade Development to the Ministry of Planning, Land, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure to accommodate the transfer of responsibility for the construction of the Central Scranton Park to that Ministry.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I have given leave for the Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure to make three statements.

**Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands,
Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure
Section 11(5) of the Public Management and
Finance Act (2020 Revision) Appropriations for
EA 9 – Land Purchase – Gazetted Claims**

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, on 25th February 2025, in accordance with section 11(5) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision), Cabinet approved a reallocation of funds within the 2024/2025

Financial Year appropriations. This adjustment reflects an increase of \$800,000 to the former Ministry of District Administration & Lands' EA 9 – Land Purchased – Gazetted Claims appropriation to facilitate compensation claims received from landowners who are dispossessed by the National Roads Authority when constructing public roads.

**Section 11(5) of the Public Management and
Finance Act (2020 Revision) Appropriations for
EA 36 – Miscellaneous Road Surface Upgrades**

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, on 25th February 2025, pursuant to section 11(5) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision), Cabinet approved the reallocation of funds within the 2024/2025 Financial Year's appropriations of the former Ministry of District Administration & Lands. This adjustment reflects an increase of \$800,000 in the Ministry's 2025 appropriation under EA 36 – Miscellaneous Road Surface Upgrades. The additional funding is required to facilitate the completion of the East End Affordable Land Lot Project.

**Section 11(5) of the Public Management and
Finance Act (2020 Revision) Appropriations for
EA 4 – Land Purchase**

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, honourable Members of Parliament, on 3rd March 2025, under section 11(5) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision), Cabinet approved a transfer of funds within the 2024/2025 Financial Year appropriations. This adjustment reflects an increase of \$125,000 to the former Ministry of District Administration & Lands EA 4 – Land Purchase appropriation, funded by a corresponding decrease in the Ministry of Home Affairs' EA 85 – Equity Injection appropriation. This reallocation supports the purchase of property in East End, Block 72C Parcel 169, valued at \$200,000, located across from the cemetery. This acquisition forms part of the same Capital Project (CP).

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I have given leave for the Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage to make a statement.

**Honourable Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture and
Heritage
Exceptional Circumstances for Section 11(5) of
the Public Management and Finance Act
(2020 Revision) Appropriations**

Hon. Isaac D. Rankine, Minister of Social Development & Innovation, and Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage, Elected Member for East End: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a statement in accordance with section 11(6) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision). The Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage sought and received Cabinet's approval for two section 11(5) requests. These urgent requests support the Ministry's four priorities, which form the foundation of our work and guide our initiatives, namely:

1. Talent identification and development;
2. Enhancing and empowering our youth;
3. Awareness and preservation of culture & heritage; and
4. Promoting an active and healthy lifestyle for all

These approvals were directed towards the following initiatives:

East End Dixon Park: The Ministry requested and received Cabinet approval for funding towards the East End Dixon Park. This facility will provide a district-based space aimed at encouraging participation in sporting, recreational, and social activities. Furthermore, it will provide a safe space for community interaction across all ages, support the restructuring of community initiatives under the Department of Sports, and promote mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

Mr. Speaker, additional funding was essential because the development of East End Dixon Park represents a critical investment in the health, safety, and well-being of the community. Without this funding, the Ministry would have been unable to proceed with creating a facility that addresses the longstanding gaps in access to recreational and wellness infrastructure in the district of East End.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, the Ministry requested supplementary funding for TP 107. This was necessary to support anticipated events, activities, and community grants for youth, sports, and heritage in 2025. The need arose due to a shortfall in 2024 linked to the reinstatement of Emancipation Day and the provision of grant funding opportunities for programmes aligned with our subject areas.

Mr. Speaker, the TP 107 supplementary funding was important because it ensures that the Ministry can continue to deliver vital programmes and events that support the development of our youth, promote sports participation, and preserve our culture and heritage. These initiatives are key to strengthening national identity, encouraging healthy lifestyles, and providing opportunities for our young people.

In closing, Mr. Speaker and Members of this honourable House, these are the exceptional circumstances that made it necessary to approve the supplementary appropriations for the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage in the 2025 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my gratitude to this honourable House for its consideration and approval of these necessary requests. Your support enables the Ministry to fulfil its mandate to protect our

heritage, empower our youth, and provide a healthier, stronger future for our people.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I have given leave for the Minister of Social Development and Innovation to make three statements.

Honourable Minister of Social Development and Innovation Request for Section 11(5) and 11(6) Supplementary Funding

Hon. Isaac D. Rankine: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a statement as to the circumstances and reasons why the Ministry for Social Development and Innovation had to request a re-allocation of appropriations in January 2025, under sections 11(5) and 11(6) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision).

Over the course of 2024, there was a need to bring forward \$6 million from TP 41 - Financial Assistance from the Financial Year 2025 to allow the Department to make payments through the remainder of the Financial Year 2024. Supplemental funding was required as the original allocation was estimated by the Department to be insufficient from the outset, but reductions were accepted to conform to overall budgetary constraints at the time. As a result, the funding available for 2025 was insufficient to meet the financial obligations of the Department to provide financial assistance to clients.

Mr. Speaker, the supplementary funding request was at that time necessary and urgent to avoid disruption of essential services to at-risk Caymanian clients of the Department of Financial Assistance. Mr. Speaker, in summary, the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation requested to reallocate appropriations per section 11(5) and 11(6) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision) to increase TP 41 - Financial Assistance by \$6 million.

The aforementioned exceptional circumstance transaction, which was approved by Cabinet for the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation during the 2025 financial period, did not cause any non-compliance with the Principles of Responsible Financial Management.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's the first one.

Request for Section 11(5) Supplementary Funding - Seafarers and Veterans Ex-Gratia Benefit

Hon. Isaac D. Rankine: Mr. Speaker, the second statement from the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation. I wish to make a statement as to the circumstances and reasons why the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation had to request supplementary funding in February 2025, under Section 11(5) of the Public Management and Finance Act

(2020 Revision). The supplementary funding was requested to implement the policy directive given to the Department of Financial Assistance for all those in receipt of long-term financial assistance and the Seafarers and Veterans Ex-Gratia Benefit to receive an additional \$250 retroactive from January 2025.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation requested to:

- Increase TP 41 - Financial Assistance by \$2,978,250; and
- Increase TP 47 - Ex Gratia Benefits to Seafarers and Veterans by \$2,370,500.

Mr. Speaker, the aforementioned exceptional circumstance transaction, which was approved by Cabinet for the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation during the 2025 financial period, did not cause any non-compliance with the Principles of Responsible Financial Management.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Request for Section 11(5) Supplementary Funding - TP 57 - Children and Family Services Support

Hon. Isaac D. Rankine: The third and last statement by the Minister of Social Development.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a statement as to the circumstances and reasons why the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation had to request a re-allocation of appropriations in March 2025, under section 11(5) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision).

Mr. Speaker, TP 57 - Children and Family Services Support was depleted sooner than anticipated due to the increased cost of rent and services for the children in care or in the Aftercare Programme. Additionally, as a response to the high cost of living and Government's responsibility to provide an adequate standard of living for all children (including children in care), there was an increase in stipends for foster parents in 2024 in line with the Consumer Price Index inflation rate, which resulted in the Ministry requesting \$250,000 to be brought forward from the 2025 Financial Year. Consequently, the current appropriation for TP 57 was expected to be depleted in March 2025, which meant the Department of Children and Family Services may not have had the financial resources to care for children in care and youth in aftercare.

Simultaneously, Mr. Speaker, savings were identified in TP 114, which is the appropriation for Cayman Finance, and TP 80, which is the appropriation to support business initiatives. The savings in these appropriations were due to delays in implementation of programmes.

Mister Speaker, the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation requested to:

- Reduce TP 114 - Cayman Finance by \$250,000;

- Reduce TP 80 - Support for Business Initiatives by \$250,000; and
- Increase TP 57 - Children and Family Services Support by \$500,000.

Mr. Speaker, the aforementioned exceptional circumstance transaction, which was approved by Cabinet for the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation during the 2025 financial period, did not cause any non-compliance with the Principles of Responsible Financial Management.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I have given permission for the Minister of District Administration and Home Affairs to make a statement.

Honourable Minister of District Administration and Home Affairs Exceptional Circumstance Appropriation change resulting in the 2025 Supplementary Appropriations of the former Ministry of Home Affairs

Hon. Nickolas T. A. DaCosta, Minister of District Administration and Home Affairs, Elected Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to bring to the attention of this honourable House the exceptional circumstances which resulted in the Supplementary Appropriation previously initiated by the former Ministry of Home Affairs for the 2025 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, while the request for supplementary funding under section 11(5) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision) was considered and approved by the previous Cabinet, I stand today in full support of the critical works being undertaken – particularly those that impact the safety and functionality of essential public services. The approved increase to EI 85, "Equity Injection – Ministry of Home Affairs," in the amount of \$1,400,000, was earmarked for much needed capital upgrades at the Cayman Brac Fire Station. Decades of wear and tear have left portions of the station's infrastructure in a state of disrepair, and I am advised that these funds are to be directed specifically towards improvements to the bay extension and the servicing building, as well as renovations to the living quarters for the male and female officers.

Mr. Speaker, although this initiative pre-dates my appointment as Minister, I have reviewed the project and recognise its importance to the people of Cayman Brac and I assure this honourable House and the constituents I serve that the work will be completed. However, in line with prudent financial management, and in light of the broader fiscal realities we have inherited, I am also undertaking a comprehensive review to ensure that current priorities align with

long-term value and service delivery for our communities.

Let me be clear, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure all in my Ministry can attest to this; I will not simply carry on without careful scrutiny, but where good work has begun, especially when it supports our emergency services and infrastructure resilience, I will see it through responsibly and transparently.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you again for the opportunity to clarify the circumstances surrounding this supplementary appropriation, and I wish to affirm this Government's commitment to sound stewardship, continuity, and improvement.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Next item on the Order Paper.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The Speaker: None.

OBITUARY AND OTHER CEREMONIAL SPEECHES

The Speaker: None.

RAISING OF MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE

The Speaker: None.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS

SECOND READINGS

CHURCHES INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of a Bill entitled Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly moved. Does the mover wish to speak thereto?

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the Bill on behalf of the Government. This Bill seeks to amend the Churches Incorporation Act (2007 Revision) to enact the governance changes for the churches that are registered as non-profit organisations, (so called NPOs), to affirm their non-profit nature by providing that the income and assets of these churches shall be exclusively for a not for profit purpose. This Bill also

includes the internal governance changes included by the churches themselves to reflect their current organisational arrangements.

This Bill seeks to address a gap in the constitutions of churches established under this Act and registered as NPOs under the Non-profit Organisations Act (2020 Revision), so called the NPO Act. The Churches Incorporation Act serves as the Constitution of the following churches:

- the Agape Family Worship Centre,
- the Anglican Church of the Cayman Islands,
- the Cayman Islands Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,
- the Church of God (Universal),
- the New Apostolic Church of the Cayman Islands,
- the New Testament Church of God,
- the Roman Catholic Archbishop Church of the Cayman Islands; and
- the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.

Mr. Speaker, the most recent revision of the principal Act, being in 2007 or approximately 18 years ago, predates the jurisdiction's NPO regime. Historically and to present day, these churches contributed to social development and progress in these Islands in many areas including education and community services.

Mr. Speaker, the NPO Act commenced on 1st August 2017 and is applicable to those organisations engaged in charitable activities for the benefit of the public or sections of the public, soliciting contributions from the public or sections of the public within the Islands or elsewhere. Prior to the NPO Act, these entities, many of which we may know personally, performed good work to improve the lives of people and to benefit our communities, but as a country, we did not have sufficient transparency in the monitoring of this sector. Therefore, the NPO Act was promulgated to address, among other things, the registration of such entities. The requirements that apply for such registrations are set out in subsidiary legislation, the Non-profit Organisation (Registration Application) Regulations (2020 Revision).

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to share that the Cayman Islands has a vibrant and diverse NPO community. As at March 2025, the General Registry's website listed over 670 active NPOs representing various types of organisations, including sporting, professional, educational, charitable and religious organisations.

Mr. Speaker, I underscore and affirm the Cayman Islands' commitment to upholding international standards for financial services. The Bill is part of the country's preparation for the upcoming Caribbean FATF evaluation of our country's AML regime. The NPO sector is specifically assessed under the FATF recommendation 8 — protecting non-profit or-

rganisations from terrorism financing; and immediate outcome 10, which is focused on preventing terrorists and their financiers from raising, moving, and using funds.

This Bill addresses a modest but technical gap in the compliance of the constitution of the churches established under the Act and their registration as NPOs. In bringing forth this Bill, Mr. Speaker, the jurisdiction will be able to demonstrate effective oversight of churches as their constitutions will be made fully compliant with the requirements for registration as NPOs.

Mr. Speaker, finally, this Bill also includes other amendments specific to the governance arrangements of a church to reflect its own current organisational realities. I reassure this honourable House that this Bill was developed after considerable consultation over years with the churches' leadership and associated administrative teams.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill is arranged in 35 clauses.

Clause 1 of the Bill provides a short title and the commencement provision.

Clauses 2 to 6 of the Bill provide for the amendments in respect of Agape Family Worship Centre.

Clauses 7 to 11 provide for the amendments in respect of the Anglican Church of the Cayman Islands.

Clauses 12 to 17 provide for amendments in respect of the Cayman Islands Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Clauses 18 and 19 set out the amendments in respect of the Church of God (Universal).

Clauses 20 to 22 provide for the amendments in respect of the New Testament Church of God.

Clauses 23 to 27 are the amendments in respect of the Roman Catholic Church.

Clauses 28 to 33 are the amendments in respect of the United Church.

Clause 34 provides for the Amendment of section 74 of the principal Act to empower Cabinet, among other things, to amend the principal Act by Order where there is a change in the ownership of the real property listed under sections 9, 21, 32, 37, 42, 47, 51 or 63 in respect of the relevant church.

Clause 35 provides for general amendments to the principal Act to change the use of Roman numerals in the part headings to Arabic numerals. This clause also makes general amendment to the principal Act to amend the word "Seventh-Day" with a capital 'D' to "Seventh-day" with a lower case 'd'.

Mr. Speaker, this concludes my presentation of the Bill. In closing, I wish to thank the leadership and administration of the named churches. I will say them one more time for the record because their collaboration and consultation was efficient, collaborative and insightful. The Agape Family Worship Centre, the Anglican Church of the Cayman Islands, the Cayman

Islands Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the Church of God (Universal), the New Testament Church of God, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of the Cayman Islands and the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands for their commitment and dedication in developing this amendment to the Act and understanding the significance of trying to tick as many boxes as possible as we head into the Fifth Round of FATF evaluation.

I also express my thanks, of course, to the Legislative Drafting Department and the Ministry of Financial Services' policy team for their efforts in respect of the design and preparation of the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore commend the Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to this honourable House for its second reading.

The Speaker: Does any other honourable Member wish to speak? Leader of the Opposition.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to briefly give a contribution to the Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to say that the official Opposition has no issues with the Bill. We have had representation and dialogue with the churches and we are comfortable and thank the Government for proceeding with it so quickly.

Thank you.

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]* It appears no other Member wishes to speak. Does the Premier wish to exercise his right to reply?

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Only very briefly to thank my colleagues in Cabinet and Caucus for supporting and getting the Bill to this stage and to the Members of the Opposition for their support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Members.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a second reading. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was given a second reading.

VIRTUAL ASSET (SERVICE PROVIDERS) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the second reading of a Bill entitled Virtual Asset (Service Providers) (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly moved. Does the mover wish to speak thereto?

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the Bill on behalf of the Government. It is a Bill that seeks to amend the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) Act (2024 Revision), so called VASP Act, to change the definition of “issuance of virtual assets” or “virtual asset issuance”; and for incidental and connected purposes.

Mr. Speaker, the tokenisation of investment funds is a growing trend in the investment fund sector. A tokenised fund is an investment fund in which its shares or units of a traditional investment fund are represented as digital tokens on Blockchain technology. These digital tokens represent a portion of the fund and provide a number of advantages for the investors and the fund administrators over traditional fund structures. These advantages include: real-time transfers, increased transparency, and enhanced investor participation in the management of the fund. Such funds are now commonly referred to in the industry as tokenised funds.

Tokenised funds have been present in the jurisdiction for a number of years, Mr. Speaker. As of this date, Cayman is home to approximately half a dozen of these funds which have adopted this new operational structure, having been tokenised. Based on emerging trends, analysis, and industry feedback, it is clear that the use of this innovative technology will be gradually adopted by an increasing number of investment funds. I'm sure I don't have to mention to this honourable House the importance of the investment funds sector to the financial services industry, and therefore the Cayman Islands economy. Investment funds are the cornerstone of our financial services industry, contributing significantly to our gross domestic product.

This sector was first built by innovative legislation in 1993, the Mutual Funds Act; and by dedicated professionals over many years, legislatures with foresight, this has now become one of the top vehicles for investment funds in the world. Cayman Islands is second only to the US in the number of registered alternative investment funds. It is imperative that we continue to stay on top of developing trends in this space in order to ensure sustained future growth because—and this is already starting to happen—a number of

our comparable jurisdictions who compete in the space of investment funds have already changed their legislation. It is only a matter of time in which our investment funds say, *Well, I can do it easier there, so I will continue to migrate there.*

Mr. Speaker, the Virtual Assets (Service Providers) Act was brought into scope as a new activity, the issuance of virtual assets, which is defined as **“the sale of newly created virtual assets to the public in or from within the Islands...”** As a tokenised fund may be deemed to be issuing digital tokens to represent its equity interest or investment interests, this current definition of issuance in the VASP Act does not clearly specify whether a tokenised fund issuing newly created tokenised equity interest would be in scope and subject to the requirements of the VASP Act. This ambiguity has caused some confusion within the investment fund sector; ambiguity which this present Bill seeks to address, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Financial Services and Commerce considered whether a tokenised fund should be regulated under the Mutual Funds or Private Funds Act alone, or under the VASP Act as well. The Ministry consulted with industry, with our Monetary Authority and has concluded that a fund which adopts a tokenised equity infrastructure would be best regulated under the Mutual Funds and Private Funds Act and should not be subject to registration under the VASP Act, as long as they do not engage in any other activity that requires registration or licence under the VASP Act, such as cryptocurrencies, because all this is, is a more modern tracking of the equity interest and shares and units of a fund which is already doing this, but is now doing it in a new digital form.

The Bill therefore proposes to revise the VASP Act to clarify that a tokenised fund is not required to seek a licence or registration under that Act as long as it does not engage in any other activity which would cause it to require a licence or registration. The Bill addresses this by excluding equity interest and investment interest from the definition of “virtual asset issuance” in the VASP Act.

Mr. Speaker, it's important that we remain at the forefront of global standards for anti-money laundering and countering illicit finance and that we continue to provide our regulator with sufficient powers to ensure proper supervision of regulated activities. This is why this exclusion of equity and investment interest will be subject to a statement of guidance or rule to be issued by our regulator, further outlining regulatory expectations and thereby allowing for flexibility in the application of the exclusion.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill has already received positive feedback from members of the financial services industry, comfort from the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority, so I am optimistic that this change will ensure the growth and resiliency of our financial services sector for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the Bill amends the definition of the “issuance of virtual assets” or “virtual assets issuance” and for incidental or connected purposes. The Bill is arranged in two clauses.

Clause 1 provides a short title and commencement of the legislation.

Clause 2 amends section 2 of the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) Act (2024 Revision) to change the definition of “issuance of virtual assets” or “virtual assets issuance”. The proposed new definition broadens the scope of “issuance of virtual assets” or “virtual assets issuance” to explicitly exclude, as per a statement of guidance or rule that may be issued by CIMA, the issuance of an equity interest as defined under the Mutual Funds Act and the Security Investment Business Act, as well as an investment interest as defined under the Private Funds Act. Additionally, section 6 of the principal Act is amended to enhance paragraph and alignment provisions in line with modern legislative drafting practices.

Clause 2 also amends section 2 of the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) Act by inserting a new subsection (3) that provides the amendment of the words “issuance of virtual assets” or “virtual assets issuance” has the effect of any tokenisation of an equity interest or investment interest that may have occurred prior to the date of the commencement of this amending act. Mr. Speaker, this concludes my presentation of the Bill.

In closing, I wish to thank my Ministry staff and the Legislative Drafting Department for their efforts with respect to the design and preparation of the Bill. I also wish to thank members of the financial services industry for providing their feedback, understanding that regulation is important, but also keeping us abreast of commercial trends so that our products stay fresh and cutting edge; and of course, our Monetary Authority, our primary financial services regulator for their keen insights, their careful and prudent analysis to ensure that what is done here fits within regulatory rules and we do not expose the country to unnecessary risk.

I therefore, Mr. Speaker, commend the Virtual Asset (Service Provider) (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to this honourable House for its second reading.

The Speaker: Does any other honourable Member wish to speak? Leader of the Opposition.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to give a brief contribution to the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Premier for his presentation on the Bill. We had quite a bit of discussion and debate on this topic in January of this year, where we agreed that once CIMA had an opportunity to review the amendments and ensure that

there were no unintended consequences or no other acts that would need amending to support these changes, we have no objections to it.

We understand the importance of it and how important it is that we keep pace in this space as we do not want to risk reducing our competitiveness in this area, particularly regionally. The official Opposition has no objections to these amendments and I thank the Premier for his presentation.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? [Pause] Does any other Member wish to speak? [Pause] Apparently no other Member wishes to speak. Does the Premier wish to exercise his right of reply?

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly.

I'd like to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his contribution. It is something that we also did not take lightly. We took guidance from the Monetary Authority. As featured in the Bill, it has a commencement clause so that will give the Monetary Authority time to craft its statement of guidance to ensure that industry has clear rules of the road; by the time that process is completed, we then commence the legislation to make sure everybody is on the same page. If there is any other belts and braces approach that needs to be done to make reference to any of the laws, we will do it then; so we're certainly not in a rush, but we do want to ensure that we signal to the market that the train is moving down the track in a positive direction.

I'd like to thank my colleagues in Caucus and Cabinet for their support to bring this so quickly within less than 60 days of the administration, and I would also like to thank the Member and all the Members of the Opposition for studying the Bill and providing that support.

I also want to make a special mention — slightly off topic, Mr. Speaker, but the managing director of the Monetary Authority, her daughter Marika was called to the bar this week. Members from our side were in attendance as well as Members of the Opposition; the Member for Bodden Town East, the Member for George Town Central, the Member for West Bay Central, and the Member for Savannah. The reason I raised this is that it is relevant to the legislation a bit in that Marika's chosen practice will be investment funds. I assured her that she would get no breaks submitting applications on behalf of her client because her mother is the managing director. In fact, she will probably be under harder scrutiny.

With that, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much, and I thank Members for their support on the second reading.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) (Amend-

ment) Bill, 2025, be given a second reading. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Virtual Asset (Service Providers) (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was given a second reading.

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Minister of Finance and Economic Development.

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin, Minister of Finance & Economic Development and Education & Training, Elected Member for West Bay North: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of a Bill that is shortly entitled the Public Management and Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

The Speaker: The Bill has been moved. Does the mover wish to speak thereto?

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this Bill is to seek Parliament's approval to change the date of the presentation of the Strategic Policy (SPS) to Parliament after a general election from the current three months after the date of a general election to six months after the date of the general election. The Bill also seeks to update the principal Act to make reference to Parliament wherever the words "Legislative Assembly" appear in the principal Act.

Mr. Speaker, the SPS is a key component of the budgeting process. This forward-looking document lays the foundation for sound fiscal planning and governance, ensuring that the budgeting decisions are aligned with both the strategic priorities and the fiscal discipline. Pursuant to section 23 of the Public Management and Finance Act, the SPS serves a number of primary purposes, including:

- setting out the Government's priorities which manifest themselves in broad and specific outcomes in the SPS;
- guiding the Government's budget planning and setting out its financial targets during a budget period; and
- ensuring those targets align with the principles of responsible financial management.

Mr. Speaker, in a non-general election year, the Government is required to present the SPS to Parliament no later than 1st May, whilst in a general elec-

tion year, the SPS is required to be presented to Parliament within three months after the date of the general election. The Bill proposes to change the date that the SPS is required to be presented to Parliament after a general election from the current three months to six months. In the year when there is not a general election, the day to present the SPS to Parliament remains 1st May.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of reasons for changing the date of the presentation of the SPS to Parliament after a general election.

Firstly, Mr. Speaker, the recently approved Parliament Standing Orders, 2025 call for Parliament to be in recess from the first week of July until the first week of September each year. In a general election year, such as 2025, the SPS is required to be presented to Parliament within three months after the date of the general election, which is 31st July 2025; therefore, Parliament will be in recess when the SPS is legally due to be presented to Parliament. There is insufficient time between the general election on the 30th of April, 2025 and the last day [before] Parliament recesses on 30th June, 2025 for the Government to prepare a meaningful and robust SPS.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance is currently in the process of modernising the Government's budget and reporting framework with the aim of presenting the Government's first outcome-based budget for the 2028-2029 budget period. As part of the modernisation exercise, the Ministry intends to propose the combination of the strategic priorities and information contained in the SPS with the budget, as it is becoming increasingly evident that a separate SPS document and its required preparation time and processes are no longer fit for purpose. Combining the SPS information with the budget eliminates the need for separate processes, preserves resources, and improves the efficiency and effectiveness of a budget preparation process.

Finally and most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the SPS is typically presented to Parliament many months before the budget [and] consistently, the financial forecast contained in it is not even in approximate alignment with the financial forecast contained in the budget, which follows several months later. This has been demonstrated for the past 12 financial years where there have been significant variances between the financial forecasts contained in the SPS and those contained in the budget.

For example, when the 2024-2026 SPS was presented to Parliament in May 2023, the operating surplus for the 2024 Financial Year was projected to be \$77.4 million; by the time the then Government finalised and presented the 2024-2025 budget to Parliament in November 2023 (around six months after the presentation of the SPS) the projected operating surplus for 2024 was 45 per cent lower. This misalignment raises concerns about the effectiveness of

the SPS process and its utility in informed fiscal planning.

Mr. Speaker, to further demonstrate the point, I have done an analysis in millions comparing the SPS to the final budget for a number of financial years. I will Table this document so all Members can see this snapshot, because it is very important.

Financial Year	Surplus projected at SPS stage	Surplus projected at Budget stage	Variance in million
2011-2014	124.313	93.477	(30.9)
2014-2015	124.463	120.935	(2.52)
2015-2016	124.529	108.438	(16.00)
18 months 2016-2017	44.919	46.104	1.2
2018	81.497	86.627	5.00
2019	54.067	65.066	11.00
2020	94.881	65.300	[29.58]
2021 (election year)	109.211	75.342	(34.00)
2022	25.498	19.430	(6.00)
2023	34.273	27.764	(6.50)
2024	77.377	42.974	(34.00)
2025	98.166	53.157	(45.00)

Mr. Speaker, what has become very evident is that [for] a system that was created almost two decades ago now, we had a great theory of what we needed to do to underpin accrual accounting and create output-based budgeting.

What we have consistently seen is that, due to the fact that we are presenting an SPS so early in the fiscal year, by the time you get 9 or 10 months in—when the real results start to pile in and you actually get down to all the policy decisions kicking in—you see this large variance so that by the time you present the budget around November, you're seeing these types of differences. Let's just go back to the last four years: 31 per cent difference, 24 per cent difference, 19 per cent difference, 44.5 percent difference and a 44.8 per cent difference on the surplus projection between SPS and budget. It is time for us to stop doing the same thing over and over, expecting a different outcome.

The fact is, we are effectively budgeting twice. We're cumbering down the system, the finance team and all the ministries' finance teams, to go through this process and it effectively has become a tick box exercise where everyone makes their submissions and puts them in. We're months out from the end of the fiscal year, so think about this—in a regular year, 1st May, we're presenting an SPS underpinned by budget numbers and these are the wild variances we have seen.

Mr. Speaker, this has nothing to do with the credibility of the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance simply accumulates the numbers fed by CFO'S from all the respective ministries and all the respective Finance Departments of SAGCs (Statutory Authorities and Government Companies).

Mr. Speaker, as this Amendment looks to be the first step in harmonising and bringing a modern, sensible budget and reporting process to this Parliament, we are looking at everything to ensure that what we use as a country fits our needs and is most appropriate and robust for us. We're even looking at how fit-for-purpose IPSAS (International Public Sector Accounting Standards) is for the Cayman Islands versus using the UK standards.

We have to ensure the entire budget and financial reporting system we use is one that is sensible and useful for us as parliamentarians and for the wider country. Why are we doing this? We are coming to the Parliament to present plans and projections and underpin them in a budget to ensure the country understands what the priorities of the budget are, and how we're going to fund those priorities. As part of that process, we have to be cognisant that all the work we're doing [is done] in the most sensible and strategic manner.

I think the evidence is clear that the way in which we conduct the SPS process versus the final budget is broken and needs deep and urgent repair. This Amendment, though, Mr. Speaker, is really targeting this particular financial year and all future years as it relates to an election. As I said, we will be doing much more wholesale research to ensure we bring back to this Parliament the most sensible reporting and budget process; one that I am positive will be satisfactory to all Members of this House once they give it an opportunity being clear in their thought and deliberation and fair in their analysis.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill consists of three principal clauses.

Clause 1 provides the name of the proposed Act.

Clause 2 seeks to make a general amendment to the principal Act to provide that the words "Legislative Assembly" be deleted and replaced by the word "Parliament".

Clause 3 amends section 23 of the principal Act to provide that the Strategic Policy Statement required under that section should be presented to Parliament within six months after the date of the general election and not three months as currently provided in section 23 of the principal Act.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask all Members of this Parliament for their support. Thank you.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to give a short contribution to the Public Management and Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Honourable Minister for his presentation and his explanation of the proposed amendments. The official Opposition at first glance had no issues with it. I did meet and discuss it with the Premier several weeks back and expressed at the time that I had concerns about the six months. I hope to share some perspective from the Opposition on these amendments.

Mr. Speaker, let's start with what the Strategic Policy Statement actually is and why it matters so much. The SPS is the Government's framework for planning the budget. It lays out the main priorities and goals for the upcoming year and gives ministries and departments some direction on where resources should go — it's a roadmap. It is the first real indicator of where a new Government wants to take the country, especially after an election.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we've got a coalition government, two parties and three independents, and I certainly won't dwell on that mix; but I raise it because frankly, we don't know what the policy platform looks like. There's no single manifesto, so the SPS becomes the first and only real opportunity for the public, the private sector, the civil servants and the rest of us here in Parliament to get a clear sense of the Government's direction. I mean, just this week alone, we heard major policy changes in this House.

Mr. Speaker, the clarity is important. Ministries need to prepare their budget submissions, businesses need to plan, and the public wants to understand what's coming. If we don't see the SPS early enough, everyone is simply left guessing. Take something like the subsea cable project. It's a big deal, transformational even, for our telecoms and digital infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, without knowing the Government's plans in the SPS, key players can't prepare. The current providers are watching and waiting, but they can't make informed decisions in the dark. It is not just about clarity, it's also about engagement. If the SPS is released in good time, stakeholders from civil society to statutory bodies can actually weigh in. They can help shape the policies before the budget is finalised. That is a better way to govern, Mr. Speaker.

Here is a concern: how is the civil service supposed to prepare a proper budget without knowing the Government's big picture priorities? How do they align their outcomes with government priorities? The SPS gives ministries the context they need to draft budgets that reflect national priorities; without it, they're flying blind— or worse, Mr. Speaker, will the SPS be shared with only a few behind closed doors?

Mr. Speaker, there is another point that we cannot ignore. If this Amendment passes as is and future elections return to May, let's say May 24th,

2029; six months takes us right up to November 24th which would mean the Government could bring the SPS along with or just days before the budget. Now I'm starting to understand that such might be the intention. As I heard the Minister say earlier, he wants to bring them in line; in fact, on Wednesday, the Governor even mentioned it in her presentation on the Government's plans. If this is the case, Mr. Speaker, then we should just get rid of the SPS altogether.

I listened closely to the Minister's remarks. I can appreciate some of the points and I understand the difference in the numbers, et cetera, but the SPS isn't just an internal planning document, Mr. Speaker; it's also a tool for accountability. It gives Parliament and the public a way to track how well the Government is delivering on its promises. If we only see it a few days before the budget, there's no time for proper review or scrutiny.

Mr. Speaker, what I'm understanding is that the issue seems to be with the quality of the inputs and not the actual SPS itself, or the process. We feel the SPS plays a crucial role in ensuring transparency, better decision-making, public and parliamentary oversight, and a budget that's truly responsive to the country's current needs. It's not just a technical document, it's the foundation of a credible budget process and bringing it forward in advance gives us all, Opposition, civil servants and citizens, the chance to participate meaningfully.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I understand the Government's position laid out by the Honourable Minister that preparing an SPS in twelve weeks is not easy, so I cannot imagine trying to do it before July 1st; but previous Governments have managed to do it in twelve weeks and yes, under the new Standing Orders Parliament will not meet in July and August, but that same section of the Standing Orders, section 15, also allows for extraordinary meetings with notice, so we could have had one at the end of July.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, when I met with the Premier a couple of weeks ago I expressed my concerns about the six months and while I accept the realities of the government's majority and that they may press ahead, I want to once again suggest something constructive. What if we reduce it from up to six months to four months? That would still give the government until the end of August to produce the SPS; it creates space for early planning without leaving it so late that it gets tangled up in the budget and, if elections were to go back to May, it avoids any appearance of trying to sidestep transparency or accountability by presenting the SPS at the very last date in the middle or end of November.

Mr. Speaker, in a democracy, timing matters, process matters, and trust matters because for us, the SPS is not just a bureaucratic requirement but a window into the Government's priorities. In closing, I say, let's make sure the window stays open, and we open it early.

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] Deputy Leader of the Opposition Member for George Town central.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Bill before this House is pretty simple. The only ask is for an administrative amendment rectifying the categorisation of Legislative Assembly to Parliament — rightfully so, it's a clean-up exercise; and to simply change a date from three months to six months. I've never seen such a small Bill that has such a significant effect on the governance model our system is built on.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to try my endeavour best not to repeat my good leader's comments in the interest of time, but I can't help but think about the campaign, when the two predominant parties that make up the administration now spoke about hitting the ground running, having all the answers in the world for everything and then come to Parliament unprepared — and I say unprepared, Mr. Speaker, because ultimately, the arguments that have been put forward seem a bit fishy.

Mr. Speaker, I have read the Minister's press release, I watched his YouTube reasoning for the delay, and I've examined all three points very closely, and I still can't seem to find a reason for justification to allow six months.

Mr. Speaker, this Government was bragging about how quickly they formed the Government, within 24 hours, and in one of their first public appearances after Swearing-In, the good Honourable Premier said— and I am paraphrasing, Mr. Speaker— that the civil service has collected all the manifestos and brought them all together to one document. For me it was a bit of a flashback to 2021, when we had what you called the 'true independents make-up government'. You had many different factions then. I think we had a good solid 8 or 9 different groupings. All the individuals were independent, except the Honourable former Premier Wayne Panton and the good, honourable Member Ms. Heather Bodden, who campaigned together. It was much more difficult for the then government to compile all their positions and added to that, it took us about ten days to form the Government, so you would think we had a late start.

This Government, I would say, had a smaller grouping of factions to come together. You had four and four and then two and one. I know the good men from the East worked together; their manifestos were almost exact. Then the good Member, the Honourable Minister who is bringing the Bill, was independent — but even that I question today. Four groupings, Mr. Speaker. Quite easy to get their alignments and their

policies together quite shortly and it was confirmed by the Premier's comments saying that the Civil Service had them compiled.

Now, Mr. Speaker that reminds me of the time when we had to do the same thing and we were rushed. We had a private place and the good Honourable former Premier Wayne Panton had a specialist group come and sit down with us. We said what we all wanted to do and what we would and wouldn't sacrifice; and I think it is common knowledge today that the current administration has done something of the sort, so I still don't understand how they couldn't get all their policies together in place— unless, Mr. Speaker, they have got them in place and this is solely about the budgeting, which I will get to in my contribution.

It reminds me, Mr. Speaker, you say you are ready to hit the ground running and the number one assignment, the *first* assignment that you have to do legally, you come in and say I'm late, I need extra time. First assignment on the job is to get an SPS and the good Honourable Leader of Opposition highlighted some of the important factors of the SPS.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if this honourable House has heard of the term "pencils down". Pencils down is a term whereby the business community doesn't do anything because they don't know what's going on in the country. That's the importance of a Strategic Policy Statement. Local businesses, chief officers and Ministries, as well as global investors and industries, are watching the Cayman Islands; they're waiting to find out where we are going. The Strategic Policy Statement is the road map to that.

It is a document upon which major decisions are made. Is this Government going to stop the cruise tourism industry? Is it going to stop school lunches? Should parents start saving money now for their children because come September the Government's policy is they're no longer going to be paying for free lunches for children? For a parent with two children paying \$10 per child in school every day is \$100 a week for two children and \$400 a month, should a parent start saving \$400 a month now because the Government doesn't have their Strategic Policy Statement in place? They don't know what's going to happen.

You see, the Strategic Policy Statement is more than just accounting documents. The accounting argument is an excuse, in my humble opinion. Mr. Speaker, you would recall this quite well. You were in Executive Council (EXCO) at the time. When you were elected back in your heyday—and boy, you were a serious politician back then, Mr. Speaker. You got elected in November. Am I correct, Mr. Speaker? Correct. You had to have a budget done by December 31st, at midnight. Correct, Mr. Speaker? That's a month and a half. You did it.

Our good old former [parliamentarians] Truman Bodden, Linford Pierson, Kurt Tibbetts, McKeever Bush— I am trying to think about all the leaders of the

day, but your governments back then did it in a month and a half. We changed the law; we said, okay, that's a bit too much. Too short on the finance team, let us increase it to three months. Now, this Government is saying, no, that's not enough time. Let's increase it to six months. You are saying that you need half a year to tell the people of this country what your plans are after campaigning and saying, *I know all the answers and I'm your saving grace!* You knew everything throughout the campaign, but now you're saying, *"Sorry, Caymanian voters. I need you to give me six months, half a year, to tell you what I goin' do."*

Mr. Speaker, I dare say if this Opposition wasn't as effective as it is, with the number of questions and Motions thus far within this short three-day period, the country probably wouldn't even know where we're going today because it has been pressure from us asking questions about minimum wage, about what they are doing about cruise [tourism], about the Referendum, about major policy statements, about roads, about the East/West Arterial, about schools... If we didn't ask the questions, nobody in the country would know where we're going!

We have a Minister of Labour who got on the local media house *Cayman Compass* twelve days ago and said, *"We're not dealing with minimum wage,"* and then today, thankfully, he came and said the minimum wage is coming in on the 1st January. Nobody knows what's going on, Mr. Speaker! The one assignment they were given to say the country needs to know at this particular time in the law for a reason, they come and say, *"Oh, I need some extra time."* Your first assignment in the job. They should be ashamed of themselves.

Then, to top it off, Mr. Speaker, they're going to use the excuse that this honourable House is in recess. You know what the recess is for? For us to go on vacation. The vacation is more important to this administration's Government Members and Members of this Parliament than giving the country the direction in which we're going for the next four years.

Mr. Speaker, let me bring your attention to one minor thing, because my good leader already highlighted the ability to suspend the Standing Orders, so they could have done that. This Bill, according to the Standing Orders, Mr. Speaker, has to be presented to this honourable House 28 days before we meet; this was published and gazetted on the 13th of June — good Honourable Leader of the Opposition, what's today's date?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: The 27th, Mr. Speaker. I don't think that meets the requirement according to law. Mr. Speaker, I am going to get to the fact of the provisions available to the Member.

Mr. Speaker, I know you are going to appropriately interrupt me to clarify something, and I'm going to get to that point in a minute, sir. I'll get to it eventually, so the audience listening doesn't think that the Government has done anything inappropriate illegally. They've done what they had to do and I'll get to that shortly. They submitted the Bill on the 13th June, so they've used provisions in the Standing Orders to suspend the Standing Orders so this Bill can come late, but they're not willing to suspend the Standing Orders to bring the SPS, which is the road map to the future of this country after campaigning saying, *"I know all the answers!"* Now people have to sit and worry about where the country is going — and God forbid, we never asked questions in this House; nobody would know.

My good leader asked yesterday, Mr. Speaker, with the numbers down, is the Honourable Deputy Premier going to start thinking about some stipends for the good people who work in tourism. We don't know what they're doing about tourism. We don't know anything about what this administration is doing, unless we ask questions.

There is a reason the law was created citing three months after an election, Mr. Speaker. It didn't just arbitrarily end up there; there has to be a reasonable period of time when a new administration comes into power before you ask them what direction you're going in, and I'm telling you, the business community is already concerned and good Members on that side know what I'm talking about because they are in their circle, if I can say that.

You need clear directions before you spend money. You know some people don't invest under certain administrations? Think about the United States, between Trump and Biden — different types of investments, different types of environment. That is what the SPS is about, but this administration wants to come to us and say, *"You have to wait half a year before I tell you what I'm going to do."* That's 1/8 of the whole administration of governance they want to wait to tell the people, but okay, I have belaboured that point.

Mr. Speaker, the second point that the good Honourable Minister highlighted was the fact that the finance team is currently modernising the Government's budget and reporting framework to present the first outcome-based budget for 2028 and 2029. Now, that is good. I support that. Modernisation of any kind of framework for finances is always good.

I see my good leader touched on the second point, but I really hope the Minister can explain to me how they are going to avoid the SPS delivery in the law if they're not going to change the law altogether. In the next two-year budget, they still have to come in May to deliver the SPS because the law is only changing it for the election period. The next point says the Ministry intends to combine the SPS with the budget period. If you're not changing the law in its en-

tirety, it means you're obligated to come in the year 2027 in May, so the problems he's talking about with this delay of monies and the projections are still going to be a problem.

I don't know if the Minister has thought about that, because the law says in non-election years, you're obligated to bring the SPS on May 31st [sic]. Well, I'm going to give him the benefit of the doubt to say that by then he would have solved all the delay problems and the projection problems. Okay, let's talk about that.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to read from a publicly Tabled document from the Auditor General's office entitled, *Improving Financial Accountability and Transparency: Long-Term Financial Sustainability*. Before our last Auditor General left, the very last thing she asked the good people of the Cayman Islands and the good governance model was recommendation No. 6. In that recommendation, she said, **"The Government [of the Cayman Islands] should create an independent mechanism for fiscal review and forecasting to provide assurance of its long-term financial sustainability."**

In the report, Mr. Speaker, she criticises how bad the projections are with Government reporting. On page 52, point 129, she says: **"Planning for and reporting on long-term financial sustainability is important, as it helps to inform citizens of what the Government is doing to ensure sustainable government programmes. However, the Cayman Islands Government does not do this. I have recommended that the government starts to do it."**

Mr. Speaker, you know what the interesting response was from the Department of Finance after it was recommended that there should be an independent body to help them with their projections, the same projections that the Honourable Minister listed year by year, to say that the projections are off? I agree that we have to make sure we budget on good projections, but I think he's missing the point on what the fundamental problem is. What you're saying is, we have a problem with projections. They're off all the time, year after year so what we're going to do is just push up the SPS closer to the budget so that there's no difference in view of the variances. The problem with the projections is that something is going wrong within the civil service, either in the Department of Finance or with the mechanism [via which] they're getting information from each ministry.

Talk about a Band-Aid approach. I heard him accuse us that *"this is a Band-Aid approach to the NiCE programme"*. Mr. Speaker, if I know what a Band-Aid approach is, it is this, because you're not addressing the fundamental problem at hand which is why are the projections so off in such a short period of time? If you are obligated by law to do a set of projections by July 31st, you are then obligated to do a budget by the end of December 31st and you are so concerned that they're off, that you won't even rely on

it for a budget— but you are not dealing with the projections itself? Where are the projections coming from and who is responsible for them?

Mr. Speaker, I will not go down the road of the PREFU because I'm still doing some digging on that. It is the same problem I brought up just last evening about the projections being off, so I don't know if the good Minister threw the Department of Finance or the reporting mechanisms of each ministry and each Chief Officer under the bus to say they're not reporting properly. I don't know which one he's doing, but you mean to tell me that our country's finance projections are so bad that we can't rely on them just within a six-month variance? Six months!

Yet, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Wayne Panton did it. His Finance Minister was the Honourable Christopher Saunders. They did it. The Honourable Roy McTaggart as Minister of Finance did it with Sir Alden McLaughlin as leader. The same Honourable Rolston Anglin was Finance Minister to the Honourable McKeever Bush. All of them were able to do it within this period of time and all of them did a re-budgeting afterwards.

Now Mr. Speaker, it may be good that we do an extra budget period again in six months because other countries actually do them, I think, every quarter because the global situation changes so rapidly. Projections could be off, spending can be off, policy can change. What did other governments do when there were those variations? The Minister didn't touch on that. He didn't say what they did with the SPS when they were off. What did they do with the SPS when the numbers came back and they were projecting the budgets — the one he says is a duplication?

The good Honourable Minister said it was a 'tick the box' exercise because they're just doing all the procedures of a budget during the SPS and have to do them again six months later at budget time so technically, it is as he called it, a 'tick-the-box' exercise. Is it that they're just trying to get out of doing the work, because to me, Mr. Speaker, it's not a tick-the-box exercise. It's an appropriate time to let the country know where you are financially at that moment, as well as where you're going with the country's direction. You don't circumvent the importance of a Strategic Policy Statement which tells the world where you're going, just to say, *"Oh, the Department of Finance shouldn't do another budget again,"* when all indications by auditors are that in good governance you should do it more often! What you're saying is I don't want to do as much.

Maybe the department is not staffed enough. Maybe that's the problem, because he still hasn't said how he is going to solve the problem of these projections being so off, so let me ask you this now, Mr. Speaker, and that's hypothetically speaking, because they have the numbers— we can't stop them, they can change it. They do the budget. They bring a budget in November; hypothetically speaking, in November,

they can come late, maybe December, as long as they pass it by December the 31st at midnight, according to law. If they have not addressed the problem of bad projections and bad management of their financing concepts on how you deliver projections, then six months from then the numbers could be off again.

This narrative that they're selling that we want to make sure that we're doing the budget appropriately to the right numbers, if you're not fundamentally solving the problem of bad projections or information getting to the Ministry of Finance appropriately, then you're still not solving the problem and the truth is, Mr. Speaker, you may hear me and say that I'm beating up on the Department of Finance— it is not them. That's the truth.

The good Auditor General said, and this one unfortunately is going to fall on the good Honourable Premier to address in his management of his Ministers and his team, because she speaks about how there's only so much the Department of Finance can do according to law. They can't force them to give them certain information, and they can't force them to keep within certain parameters of the data that they offer; they can only go by what they are given. I think that is why the PREFU was messed up in the first place, because they can't force them otherwise.

Ultimately, Mr. Speaker, the better management of the expenses and revenue projections is dependent upon the information they get from each ministry's finance team and their chief officers, obviously with the guidance of each Minister, so you fundamentally haven't addressed the problem — talk about a Band-Aid approach.

Mr. Speaker, in his comments on the changes I expected the good Minister to at the very least speak about the disadvantages of depriving all voters, our local business community, and international investors of what an SPS actually does. Going back to that 'pencils down' approach. You cannot say that you are okay with laying out a road map for a brand-new administration half a year later since you've been elected, because that's what they're asking for. He didn't respond to that. It wasn't a priority.

To be honest with you, Mr. Speaker, with the delay that you see in the gazetting of the Bill, did I address that part, Mr. Speaker, seeing that they have the right to address it. Let me just clarify it, because I don't remember clarifying it. The Bill did not meet the 28-day requirement according to law for it to come to Parliament, but there is a Standing Order that allows the Premier to write to the Honourable Speaker for urgent matters and get approval, and I know that was done. Is that fair to say, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: As Speaker, I need to state that all the constitutional requirements to present this Bill today have been met by the Government. There was no suspension of any Standing Orders.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I am confused then because the document...

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the good Honourable Minister— I don't want to belabour it because I have to take your direction, good sir, but I am a bit confused because I know I can count. This says supplement number one published with Legislation Gazette No. 26, dated the 13th June, 2025 and we are obligated to 28 days' notice on all Bills.

If you say he met the requirement, I'll drop it and leave it there. Hopefully the Minister can opine further to explain if no Standing Order needed to be suspended for that.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the only body that can suspend Standing Orders is this honourable House when it is in session. There has been no suspension of Standing Orders because it would have to be moved and the Parliament would have to vote on it. The Speaker has no authority to suspend any Standing Order. No such Standing Order was suspended.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker, I'll figure that one out after because I think it goes a bit away from the foundation of it. I'll seek clarity, but thank you for your contribution. Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to proceed with my debate.

I was hoping the good Minister could have spoken to the lack of a policy statement and how it affects the country. I think the Government said they would eventually release a document of some sort [which] was supposed to be published — and I'm paraphrasing here, Mr. Speaker — that brought all of their agreed policies together. At least that would have given some sentiment as to the direction things are going. We are currently addressing many things by way of policy, without a policy document.

There are many changes already and there's a reason it says to do it right after the election. We're changing policy as to immigration; as to minimum wage; in respect to the environment; by way of the NCC [National Conservation Council] — in that case we pulled back but it was a government policy decision, so it is a policy change. There are so many things. Everything you do in government has to be steered by the general principles of outcome. It's a road map, and the 'pencil down' approach is a real thing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at the risk of continuing to—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, good Minister, for highlighting that. We repeat for the point of emphasis, right?

Mr. Speaker, I hope when wrapping up the Honourable Minister addresses the argument they have put forward to say the SPS will be in tangent with the budget when the current law says the next time around, they would have to do it on May 1st. In May of 2027, there will have to be another SPS. Do they intend to bring another amendment to the law later on? I don't know. If they're changing the approach on how we govern and are held accountable, then they should say so from now, because I don't think most people are aware that was the intention. I think it's happening within the administration without them even realising what they're doing.

I'm not sure if all other Members of the Government quite understand what the Minister is actually doing. Of course, you're going to take guidance from your Minister of Finance and trust him on that; but maybe I should ask you, good Members who don't really pay attention to the finance part of things, go out and ask the business community, *"Is it a good idea that we do an SPS at the same time as the budget?"* Ask them, and see what they will tell you. I've spoken to a number of ministers of finance, including the one on this side, how severe it is to not give a country an SPS so far out. The words I have heard, I don't think I can repeat in here because it wouldn't be parliamentary.

The law was created with the sentiment of it being three months after an election for a reason. It doesn't say bring your Strategic Policy Statement whenever you're ready. That's not what it says. You don't just change the law. I mean, how do you feel telling the country, after elected, *"I'm gonna tell you what I'm going to do about all the problems you have, but I need half a year?"* Mr. Speaker, they're starting off well.

Mr. Speaker, I want to wrap up; I'm just re-viewing my last points, but I want to say that I will not be supporting these amendments. Every other government for the last five terms has been able to compile it and deal with the differences and amend the variances at budget time. What it sounds like to me, Mr. Speaker, is that they don't want to fix the actual problem.

Mr. Speaker, since the good Minister is changing the whole system, maybe it's time for the good Minister to actually review what the Auditor General suggested, because she highlighted that we obviously have some problems with our projections. I would ask him to go back and look at the Auditor General's Report because it suggested that we need an independent body to help us with our forecasting and fiscal review because, whether it's the Department of Finance projections in a PREFU or the data that is put in to the Ministry of Finance at SPS time or

budget time [yielding] such a variance off, either way, how we are reporting isn't right.

Outside of that, maybe he should dwell a bit more on what he said about outcome-based reporting. Maybe then I can understand how he plans to fix this, and it is a one-time problem. Will the outcome-based reporting that will start in 2028-2029 solve these projection and variances problems? Is the Government going to have to change the law again for 2027 because they are only dealing with the election years are some questions I have.

What are the risks associated with doing an SPS and a budget at the same time, and will the Opposition have appropriate time to be able to analyse the Strategic Policy Statement before it's approved. That's what every other administration has had the opportunity to do; before you put your budget together, we look at your policies and the broad outcomes you're going to do. Now you're gonna circumvent that opportunity? Talk about transparency and accountability. Where is that, unless you don't want us to get the time to scrutinise you, which is a high possibility.

Mr. Speaker, I really think the Government should reconsider. Even if they are saying that in 2028 they're going to go to an outcome-based budgeting process and this will no longer be the situation, and you're going to have budget and SPS at the same time, deal with that in 2028 not the first thing on the job, you're going to come back and tell the people, *I need half a year to tell you what I'm going to do*. Every other Government has been able to do it. I guess this Government can't; I guess this Government needs more time after telling everybody they had all the answers.

Mr. Speaker, I hope I can get more information. Initially, if the good Minister would remember, the good Member for Red Bay and I were on the radio and we were quite open-minded to giving as much leeway as possible, until I started to rationalise the justification for winning an election and telling your people you need half a year to tell them what you are going to do?

I still can't get past it. Not suspending the Standing Orders so you can go on vacation, take your break from Parliament so everybody can travel and do all that, is not an excuse — because that's how it's coming off. Suspend the Standing Orders. The people need to know what they're doing. *"I'm sorry, the Parliament is in recess. We can't do the most important thing we need to do the very first time we get in because we're in recess. It is time for us to go on vacation."* That's what you're saying. That's the first assignment you are telling in the country.

You guys have the numbers. I would suggest to those who are in the circles of people who make business decisions, [ask] whether the 'pencil down' approach is happening. Good Deputy Premier, you know what I'm talking about. You need to check because people don't know where the Government is

going or what to expect. Within a 13-day period, a policy was announced and today, we have a different policy. Can't hold you accountable for anything because you're all over the place. That's what the SPS is for. You're supposed to have it done as soon as possible. Rather than increasing it to six months, you're supposed to be able to say, "*We are so efficient, we can get it done in two months!*" That's what you should be saying.

Mr. Speaker, those are my contributions. I hope the Honourable Minister can opine further and give some clarity, because I am truly lost as to the justification for this. I hope that *unna* don't throw my good Chief Officers in the civil service under the bus, because I know that's the first thing they're going to say [of] those good Chief Officers who work so hard trying to deliver the policies of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The House is suspended until 7:15pm.

Proceedings suspended at 5:37pm.

Proceedings resumed at 6:29pm.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

The House is now resumed. I need to apologise to Members, I meant to take a 45-minute break, not an hour and 45 minutes break.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: I called the hour incorrectly and I appreciate Members agreeing to come back at this time. Thank you very much.

Does any other Member wish to speak? Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know the hour is late, so I will try not to be long at all.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start by saying that when my colleague, the Member for George Town Central, was closing, he mentioned that he and I were on a radio show together and we were opining on understanding the possible necessity of this; I would just correct him with one thing— he may have opined, but I didn't. It gave me pause when I heard the announcement and the rationale for it, some of which have been discussed here so I won't go over them, but I didn't buy them, sir.

When I looked at when the gazettal was done, I realised that to bring it, the Premier would have to have written to you stating this was an urgent matter. I've heard nothing here tonight as to why it was urgent. If I missed it, I missed it, but I heard nothing as to why it was urgent or, if it was urgent, why it could not have been done prior.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill that proposes to amend the Public Management and Finance Act by extending the deadline for a newly elected government to bring a

Strategic Policy Statement in election years from three months to six months is one that, as I mentioned, gave me pause. As you all may know, I had the good fortune of having worked with two previous governments. I was not elected, but I worked within the government structure, so I've seen several SPS and budget processes. I've lived through them. I was not working with the finance area, but I had a feeling and an understanding as to what they had to go through. I've lived it and I've seen it happen. I've seen the usefulness of it.

The first term, there were Members of the Government who did not run with the party I was a part of, but were part of the Government. It was obvious to me that the exercise we went through to come up with that first SPS was extremely useful because it helped minds and thoughts to coalesce. You had an agreement on something to work towards and the time to get things right as you headed toward the budget.

The second term, there was even more of a coalition than the first, and therefore it was even more important and involved more of a meeting of the minds. That was also extremely useful for all the reasons I said. Those two occasions allowed the new Government to present the direction of travel they were heading pretty quickly to the public.

At first glance, some may believe this Bill seems like a harmless administrative adjustment, but Mr. Speaker, I think the implications of this Amendment are a bit more serious. Serious for democratic transparency, for public accountability, and for the economic confidence of our people and the business community. I should have recorded the many times I heard the word transparency over the course of this week. It's a very good word and a laudable aim. I don't believe this Bill is helping transparency.

Mr. Speaker, as we heard earlier, the Strategic Policy Statement, in my view, is not just a financial planning tool but a promise to the people of what a new Government intends to do. The law sets out that such promise should come three months after the election, and I believe for good reason. It is important for the people to understand "quick o'clock" the direction of travel for the government; and for the civil service to then be able to prepare and move forward with it. Delaying that message by six months is not just a shift in timing. It's a delay in accountability, in transparency, and in certainty for every Caymanian household and business trying to plan for the future.

Mr. Speaker, in that six-month period after the election, that certainty might not be there, but certainly we know Cabinet meets weekly, the Caucus meets weekly, Ministers are issuing directives, civil servants are executing orders, and public money is still being spent under the old budget cycle, yes. However, I suspect there are changes possibly happening within Ministries as new Ministers try to put their stamp on

[things], but there's no public policy document guiding any of that. That gives me pause.

Again, during all of this the voters remain unsure. If they voted for change, they are unsure of what change they actually voted for because they're not being told. Yes, in sound bites on things about immigration and so on, but [not] in broader terms about other things. As was said today, we are hearing about some of these things because we asked questions. I'm hearing there's going to be press conferences, so I guess we'll hear some more. In my view, Mr. Speaker, that's not the correct way to go about doing things.

I mentioned average people, but for businesses, investors, and entrepreneurs, six months of uncertainty is six months of hesitation, of postponed investments, and possibly delayed hiring of Caymanians. In short, delayed certainty carries a cost. As we heard today and as I have experienced, past governments have met the deadline. I have not heard why it is so urgent, but hopefully we'll hear it in the wind up. Let's be honest, Mr. Speaker, this is not a new challenge. Governments have faced it in the past.

There was a recommendation earlier that we should look at four months rather than six months. I could live with that. I'm hoping the Government is willing to consider that. We will see.

As was noted, the record might show that three months is not perfection in terms of getting the numbers right between the SPS and the budget time. Life is not perfect, but three months or four months are practical; it has precedence, others have done it, and most importantly, it is publicly valuable, Mr. Speaker. I will skip some of this in the interest of time, but I will say, Mr. Speaker, let's not pretend that the calendar is a problem. It really isn't. If we go to four months, there's a way to get it done.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned in my previous experience working with two other governments that involved coalitions how useful it was for us, not only in terms of being able to pretty quickly set out the government's policies so the country knew, but also for the different parts of those governments to be on one page, together. We're dealing with a similar thing today. We're dealing with a coalition made up of two parties and several independents, none of whom ran on a unified platform. The people were not presented with a shared plan at the polls, so how can we now ask them to wait six months to find out what this coalition actually stands for?

The Minister pointed to the Ministry's intention to modernise the budget framework and shift to outcome-based budgeting by 2028 to 2029, suggesting it justifies merging or delaying the SPS process. I'm not convinced, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, I haven't heard any updates as to how far along that process is. What's the likelihood of success? Perhaps in the wind up we will hear something of that. We heard that there is a process ongoing. Let me be clear, Mr. Speaker, I do support reforms that bring results-based accounta-

bility to government spending. The country deserves a smarter, more transparent system that focuses on what outcomes are being delivered, not just what funds are being allocated. I'm hoping to hear today how close we are to that objective.

If the Government truly believes that three months is too tight in certain cases, there's a suggestion on the table that we could consider four months. This would provide and maintain the ability for the public to know the direction of the Government. It would maintain transparency and would still give the Minister time for deeper planning and technical refinement.

Final thoughts, Mr. Speaker, this Bill may appear to be a technical amendment, but at its heart, it's about trust. Trust that the newly elected Government will not hide behind process, trust that the public will be told what to expect sooner rather than later, and trust that we will uphold the culture of openness, not opacity.

I urge this honourable House: do not normalise delay. Do not weaken a mechanism that has worked fairly well under the administrations of all stripes. Let us defend that transparency that we've been talking about for the last several days. Let us uphold accountability and respect the right of our people to know the direction the country is going, where the Government plans to take us. Six months is too long for that to happen, sir.

Thank you for your time.

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]* If not, I will ask the Mover if he wants to exercise his right of reply.

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This evening reminds me of an old saying, *"Oh, how loud the thunder, but how little it rains."*

[Laughter]

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: If I have not heard it all, I have heard it today.

Let me first point out, Mr. Speaker, that there was no suspension of Standing Orders. Under the Constitution, the Premier has the right to deem any piece of legislation urgent. The fact of the matter is we had to make a call between continuing to do what the Opposition has called a 'useful process', or having the guts to tell the people it's not working, it's broken, it needs to be fixed.

Let me remind the public of what we are talking about, and then I want to test this 'pencil down' theory the Deputy Leader of the Opposition so eloquently spoke about. I suggest that his pencil has been down for the last four years —

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: —because if his pencil were up, he would have looked at the numbers, seen the great variance and said to his Government, *"This is broken. Let's fix it."* Asleep at the wheel.

Let me go to the Five Broad Outcomes that his coalition was governing this country under, and you tell me how business owners were to make massive investment decisions on this:

1. **"Improve the quality of life for Caymanians and residents;**
2. **Enhance competitiveness while meeting international standards;**
3. **Future-proof to increase resiliency;**
4. **modernise government to improve public sector performance;**
5. **Protect and promote a Caymanian culture, heritage and identity."**

Then under these, there was a shared big, broad vision statement.

I don't think he owned too many businesses. I don't think he has managed or operated too many businesses, because if him and the Opposition bench are going to come to this House and suggest that the business community is out there with their pencils down to wait for these Five Broad Outcomes that they produced to make investment decisions, he's *really* kidding himself; but you see, that's the reality many politicians live under. Even when our own systems have become archaic, they don't realise it. They don't even look at the numbers. If he thinks there aren't business people out there who have looked at the SPS, looked at the final budget, realised it was nothing but hog wash and said, *"We don't need to listen to this. We make our decisions based on what we see in the economy. This is not an economic projection."*

Mr. Speaker, let me thank the Leader of the Opposition because I must say his presentation called for one simple diversion: six months to four months. Whilst I don't agree with some of the assertions he made, he did not get into this big rigmarole. Now, let us deal with the arguments at hand.

Firstly, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition says — and I hope it was a slip of the tongue — that we suspended Standing Orders in order for us to go on vacation. His Government brought these new Standing Orders in February 2025; didn't even bother to look at the Public Management and Finance Law to see that the very summer recess they brought into law was going to cause an issue. That's how deep and analytical they are.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: They are the ones the private sector was looking at and saying, *"Yes! Let's wait until Mr. Bryan brings his Strategic Policy Statement. Let's put the pencil down, ladies and gentlemen, be-*

cause when he speaks, we're going to invest." If I have ever heard more delusions of grandeur... I've never heard them since the days my daddy told me about the story book called Alan Asker [sic], who dreamt of building castles in the sky.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: That's a storybook from a way before our time. My dad is 81 years old and the book they learnt to read on was about Alan Asker [sic], a young man who stayed alert and awake but daydreamed about building castles in the sky, as the previous administration dreamt of building castles in the sky and that these five broad outcomes were going to somehow magically inform the business community about how they should invest...

Mr. Speaker, let me make it abundantly clear, when it comes to hitting the ground running, yes, we have hit the ground running on specific policies that we campaigned on. To come down to this Parliament and reproduce a broken system is not what I call hitting the ground running.

Let me ensure that the Member for Red Bay actually understands how this process works, because he just said we are going to spend and make policy without a document. Member for Red Bay, the SPS would not come into effect until the 1st of January, 2026. Let me repeat to the Parliament: The SPS that we are talking about does not come into effect until 1 January 2026. Every Government gets stuck with the remnants of the preceding government's budget. We have to ride out the predecessor government until December 31st.

Mr. Speaker, knowing that we have to ride out the budget they have in place, how can we now come to this House and try to come up with this *Anancy story* that this SPS is going to cause all manner of evil and economic havoc?

Let's deal with transparency. Isn't it more transparent to come to the Parliament and the House and admit that the system is broken? This is the first step to fix it. I said this in the opening. I made reference to May 1st and I said that we are going to be looking holistically at how we go about constructing a budget and forecasts, because I agree with the point that the Member for Red Bay made, we ought to be coming here with a degree of accuracy.

The budgets that he spoke to, which he would have been involved tangentially with—for example 2017, 9 per cent off. Last time I checked, that is a material variance. Next year, it was 7 per cent off; another material variance. We're simply not getting it right. If we're not getting it right, why do we continue to bang our heads against the wall because we're slaves to the system, instead of saying let's fix it. "Let's fix it" means [that] I and the finance team have to come to colleagues, get approval, take drafting instructions and come to this entire Parliament, so that all of us

can collectively create a better budget system that is more meaningful. We are supposed to be here to do the people's work. Let us do the people's work efficiently.

There is no one out there. Look at the results that we produced that I spoke to in a parliamentary question just a few days ago. Whilst the deficit is worrying, and has grown \$11 million each year, the country is still making significant amounts of revenue. It's the expenditure that's grown. We've actually outperformed last year in revenue; that isn't people with pencils down, that's people making economic decisions, business decisions, every day and this economy is ticking along.

From the time I was here twelve years ago, I tried to get Members to understand— other than fees, other than threats by the UK or US, and legislation they need to help boost their business, you all actually really, really believe financial services tunes in and listens to this? I was there and I can tell you it didn't happen. The financial services industry is driven by global conditions of investors who need a safe place to do business. There will be nothing that comes forward that's going to compromise that. That is our golden goose.

Now let us deal with another reckless comment made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. He talked about, are we going to stop cruise tourism? Are we going to stop school lunches come September? The fact of the matter is, if we had produced an SPS, it would not drill down into that level of minutiae. That would have been hidden in the SPS anyway. The SPS is *broad*, very high-level specific outcomes that we want to achieve. The SPS does not drill down to that level of minutiae. We all know that.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also spoke to the fact that this SPS is the direction of the country for the next four years. No, it's not. It is 24 months that the SPS governs — two budget cycles, not four years. He then, in a very circuitous way, brought in stipends for tourism. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Member for George Town Central wants the NiCE programme to run every year, which will cost close to an additional \$20 million as costed by the relevant Ministry; now we want stipends for tourism. What about when a construction firm is out of a contract? What happens then?

My friends, it is wonderful to come into this Parliament and tell the public, *"Yup, we are gonna tax the international sector of our economy so we can give everything to you,"* because that's what we're hearing. Let's cut to the chase. If you talk about something fishy, there's nothing fishy about what I've heard from the Opposition bench; it is tax and give away. Let's give away everything that we have because that's how we can buy votes. We buy votes by promising our people that we are going to give them instead of lifting them up, instead of ensuring we're educating our people, training our people, so that we can recre-

ate a middle class that has been decimated in this country. I have not heard one policy position come from the Opposition that speaks to that critically important issue. That's the hard work that we're doing.

He then tried to analogise Trump versus Biden. In case we haven't figured it out yet, there's no such discrete divide in this country. We don't have a discreetly conservative party versus a discreetly liberal party. What we have is shades that the public is dying to see what the real difference is. I can say that in the first sitting of the Meeting of this House, a clear difference is emanating. The Government wants to empower Caymanians, wants to put Caymanians in control of their lives; the Opposition wants to feed Caymanians, keep them under their thumb so you can give government money away because that's how you control people.

You control them with the next promise that you dangle out there. Let's dangle free lunches. Let's dangle NiCE all year. Every one of them knows there have been hundreds of people who went on vacation and then took up the opportunity to work at NiCE. They can't tell me they don't know that, because if you don't know it you weren't living in Cayman. Let me repeat: many participants in that same NiCE programme they were arguing for were employed Caymanians who took a week vacation and went and signed up and got the money from government but you see, when it's not your money, when it's the people's money, you can do anything you want to.

Mr. Speaker, pencils down? I dare say that the Member for George Town Central and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has had his pencil down for four years. That's why tourism is in a mess. That's why we recklessly took an ill-conceived referendum to the people that had no publicity behind it, nothing that would have led to a 'Yes' vote, and the people said 'No' — because they didn't trust him. That's what the no was about. The 'No' vote was a lack of confidence in the then Minister of Tourism.

I said clearly, we are looking at the entire system and when I say we're looking at the system, we are looking at the system. We are not going to continue to play politics in this House and just go about doing business as usual. We must change to make Parliament effective. Parliament must be truly accountable. Tell me the last time you've seen a debate in this House where any Member got up after the budget was passed and consistently referenced the SPS and held the Government to account. *"Oh, how loud the thunder, but how little it rained,"* in this Parliament today.

Mr. Speaker, the Cayman Islands just received its Moody's Aa3 rating. Those are the types of information the international community looks at because that's a big, macro picture that shows there is still confidence, by an independent rating agency, of our country. That is one of the few true markers of our economy and the strength of our public purse.

Mr. Speaker, I understand the politics of trying to divide us. What I can say is, yes, I ran as an independent and I had my own manifesto. Yes, the civil service has taken the manifestos and continues to do the good work of ensuring that we consolidate them and we come forward with a harmonised, truly authentic and relevant Strategic Policy Statement. It is not lost on me as Minister of Finance that when we move the system forward — and I never said they were going to be one; I said we're going to have the SPS nearer to the budget.

Let me ask another question, since the Opposition seems to have the ear of business people. I want the Opposition to tell this House today which businessperson they know set their 2026 budget from May 1st. Let me repeat. I want the Opposition to tell this House which businessperson has set their 2026 budget from May 1st of the prior year. Tell me which business has conducted all the strategic work in the first half of the year for the following year. If you all can find me a business that does that, I'm *gonna*... Well, I won't say what I am going to do, but it doesn't exist.

[Laughter]

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: Businesses plan throughout, and when you get to Q4 that is when you turn your mind and cement your budget. Your budget for the next year is cemented in Q4. Our system calls for you to concretely set where you're heading from May 1st. Four months into the year we magically come out and say here's what we are going to do, and that is a big part of the reason why the exercise has proven fruitless. It is because we're going so early that we're not even well into the year. We need to work smarter; we need to be more transparent.

The system this Government is going to propose to this Parliament in this term is going to enhance transparency. It's going to give the Member for Red Bay a greater opportunity to hold me accountable, and I want that. I want it because iron sharpens iron. That's how this system is supposed to work, not with us continuing to do what has been done decade after decade.

Now, let me make sure to remind the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that I came in under that old system, because he went back in history and talked of Truman Bodden and Linford Pierson, et cetera. Of course, under the old system you could produce a budget in a month and a half. You looked at last year, you added 4 or 5 per cent if you thought you could make more revenue, and that was it. That was the budget. There were no Strategic Policy Statements when I got elected in 2000, Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Of course, you could produce a budget much quicker than you could today because the actual cash based accounting system that we had lent itself to simply having incremental budgeting. Unless you

were creating something new, unless there was a new department or a new area, it was incremental budgeting. Who can't take last year, add a few percentage points, project for some growth if you think such is going to happen and that's your budget? Let us not try to mislead the public.

Mr. Speaker, we are not doing something that is going to compromise the business community or compromise the service delivery in Cayman. We have budgetary constraints that we inherit and every government goes through this. Let me repeat. The Parliament needs to understand, the listening public needs to understand. When an election is called and you win an election and the Government is formed (in this instance it was April 30th), and you get sworn in seven days later, you inherit a budget. You don't change the budget right then and there. What you have, you have to ride it out until December 31st.

We are going to ensure that we get out a meaningful Strategic Policy Statement that the Opposition is going to have more than enough time to vet, more than enough time to be able to debate meaningfully, and that's the essence of democracy. The business community is going to have more than enough time to see the direction of the Government. I think it's clear to say, just from our name and our actions, we are a Government that is going to ensure we put Caymanians first. Caymanians are going to be back to work. Caymanians are placed at the apex of our economy, the apex of every decision we make. We cannot continue to have a country where Caymanians ask, "*Who are we developing for?*" One of the most dangerous questions that could ever be asked in a small community. That is the hard work we are going through.

Mr. Speaker, I see before us a Bill that is not going to compromise transparency nor the budget process. Is it the start? Yes, it's the start. Is it a fair question by the Opposition to say "*fine, we can argue, but in four or six months, let's see what the system will look like when you come with a more meaningful piece of legislation to pull it all together*"— that's fair. I can't debate it right now because it's not before us, so it is a fair criticism that we're not there yet. What I can promise the House is that we're truly going to put the draft document out for consultation and I'm going to ensure that we listen to all Members of the House.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill ought to be supported by the Members of the Opposition. I will end by reminding us of the wide gaps. Let's just stick with the last four years; it's very useful.

In 2021, SPS projected surplus was \$109,211,000. By the time you got to the budget, it was \$75,342,000. That's a decrease of \$33,869,000 or 31 per cent. I don't believe anyone purposely did that. I'm never going to accuse anyone of purposely doing that, but when you continue to feed a flawed system, you get flawed results.

In 2022, there was a projected surplus of \$25 million, and you wound up on \$19 million — \$6 million or 24 per cent less. How can that be meaningful to the business community? How can that level of variance be meaningful to the business community?

In 2023, there was a projected surplus of \$34 million, but you wound up with \$27.7 million, so call it a \$6 million or 19 per cent [negative] variance.

In 2024, there was a \$77,377,000 SPS surplus versus \$42,974,000 — again, a negative variance of \$34,403,000 or a 44.5 per cent difference. All of these are negative variances. These are staggering differences.

There's nothing fishy going on here. We have a broken system and we have to admit it. We have to put in the work now to fix the system. Let's make the system meaningful. Let's ensure that what we do here is of meaning to the business community and our people who can actually hold us accountable and say, *"Aha, this is real work. Look at what they're doing. They're improving the work; they're being more accurate."*

Then finally, in 2025, a projected SPS surplus of \$98,166,000. The final outcome, \$53,157,000. That should be the end of the argument. We are going to improve our system. We're going to improve transparency to ensure that what we get as a result is much more vigorous, can stand up to scrutiny and that the Opposition and the public can hold the Government accountable. We are a Government that's built on transparency, on honesty, on integrity, and we are built on accountability. I implore the Members of the Opposition, I beg the Members of the Opposition: change your minds.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: It's a Friday. It's late.

[Laughter]

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: Work with the Government. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Public Management and Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a second reading. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES and NOES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Public Management and Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was given a second reading.

PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT (AMENDMENT), BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of a Bill the long title of which is a Bill for an Act to amend the Public Service Management Act (2018 Revision) (PSMA) to enhance information sharing in the civil service; to enable additional regulations to be made to govern the employment of non-Caymanians in the civil service; and for incidental and connected purposes.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly moved. Does the Mover wish to speak thereto?

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Public Service Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to the Members of this honourable House. The Bill seeks to amend the PSMA in order to enhance information sharing in the civil service and enable additional regulations to be made under the Personnel Regulations to govern the employment of non-Caymanians in the civil service. Very importantly, the Bill we are considering today is a provision enabling term limits to be introduced within the civil service.

This is achieved by seeking to amend section 67 of the principal Act to empower the Cabinet on the advice of the Head of the Civil Service to make regulations to provide for term limits in respect of the employment of non-Caymanian civil servants; to provide for limitations, prohibitions, exemptions, conditions of employment and any other matters relating to the appointment and reappointment of non-Caymanians as civil servants; and to provide for information sharing between the Portfolio of the Civil Service and the Work Opportunities and Residency Cayman (WORC) department.

The Bill widens the scope of the power of the Portfolio of the Civil Service as it relates to requesting certain information from civil service entities for the purposes of undertaking the Portfolio's duties under the principal Act. It will give the PoCS the power to request information concerning human resource matters from civil service entities, such as we believe will be necessary to implement and enforce term limits, and the civil service entities will be required to accede to those requests. It also sets out clear provisions for information to be seamlessly shared with the Department of WORC to enforce the provisions of the Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill comes following a clear call to action for the civil service to introduce measures to limit the duration of time that non-Caymanian employees can remain employed in our

civil service. It was understood that the call for term limits within the civil service was underpinned by a desire to achieve greater parity with the private sector, a need to address perceived irregularities arising from the current law, and a desire to create more employment opportunities for Caymanians. The civil service promptly engaged by establishing a working group to conduct an impact assessment and develop recommendations as to the best way to deliver the Government's priority while minimising negative impacts to service delivery, particularly in essential services, and by extension, the negative impacts to the people we serve.

Mr. Speaker, the matters of employment, career advancement, job security, and immigration are not trivial matters. They can be quite emotive, especially for those who are directly impacted. Given this, it is important for the Members of this honourable House and the public we serve to hear the process undertaken to ensure we arrive at a well-informed policy. One that carefully balances the government's policy priorities and our dual duties to maximise career opportunities for Caymanians within our workforce, but also to demonstrate in our deeds that we are an employer that cares and is fair to all our dedicated employees who serve this country and the civil services ability to provide uninterrupted essential services to the public.

In June last year, the Portfolio of the Civil Service delivered an impact assessment report which outlined the implications of introducing term limits within the civil service. Based on a large volume of data, consultation with employees and heads of department across the civil service and in-depth analysis from the Economics and Statistics Office (ESO), proposals have been designed to ensure that we are able to achieve the Government's intended purpose of introducing term limits within the civil service while reducing the unintended consequences which could be severe and highly disruptive.

We have sought to understand the risk posed by the civil service having been excluded from the term limit policy historically, so that these could be addressed. Specifically, Mr. Speaker, we sought to understand the extent to which non-Caymanians within the civil service contributed to the total number of non-Caymanian workers within these Islands, as well as the extent to which non-Caymanian civil servants are driving up permanent residency numbers. Through the team's work, aided by the ESO, we confirm that non-Caymanian civil servants make up 4 per cent of the total non-Caymanian workforce in the Cayman Islands.

We further confirmed that as of March 2024 non-Caymanian civil servants made a negligible contribution to the total number of permanent residents in the Cayman Islands, accounting for only 173 of all permanent residency (PR) recipients. Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note that half (86 of those) ac-

quired their permanent residency through marriage versus long service, so they were entitled to this in any course. That then represents, sir, just 1.3 per cent of PR holders coming from our civil service through long tenure.

We understand the increases in the number of non-Caymanians within our civil service over the years have drawn public attention; however, this growth has been driven by our high-volume roles, most significantly in education. Mr. Speaker, it is worth noting that the average tenure of a non-Caymanian civil servant is 5.8 years, which indicates that the majority of non-Caymanians within the civil service exit the organisation long before they meet the current nine-year requirement to be eligible for consideration to receive permanent residency.

The next phase of our analysis was to assess the risk associated with the introduction of term limits, with a focus on identifying an implementation strategy that both fulfils the Government's mandate while minimising the risk to the organisation and the public by extension. The data indicates that the introduction of term limits would impact a large number of public service entities when it comes to the employment of non-Caymanians, especially if the policy were imposed retroactively, which would have swift and significant impacts on multiple workforces, including what we refer to as 'the big four', namely the Department of Education, the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service, the Prison Service, and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS); primarily in caregiving roles.

Retroactive implementation of term limits for existing civil servants could give rise to the following impacts on the public purse within a compressed timeframe of 2 to 3 years of implementation:

- steep repatriation and recruitment cost;
- withdrawals of tens of millions from the Public Service Pensions Fund;
- unquantifiable costs arising from the need to ensure business continuity; and
- unquantifiable costs associated with the sudden loss of institutional knowledge.

The most concerning aspect of these things was really around the impact of this happening within a compressed time frame if this were to be applied retroactively, so instead the proposals have been developed and recommended to mitigate such risk. Said mitigating measures were recommended in light of the significant operational, strategic, and financial risk at an organisational and national level that would likely materialise due to the implementation of immigration term limits if applied retroactively. The retroactive implementation of term limits with no mitigating measures would have had a severe negative impact on the delivery of critical services, staff welfare, and morale. Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the analysis reaffirms that term limits in isolation would not improve

employment opportunities for Caymanians, which was one of the primary objectives.

Mr. Speaker, I've stated this before, but it bears repeating. The departments most heavily impacted by the introduction of term limits based on the volume of non-Caymanian civil servants they employ, were those tasked with national security, education and the provision of social services.

If applied retroactively, the Department of Education and the RCIPS would suffer catastrophic operational failures, losing 126 and 89 staff members respectively within the first year of implementation. To expand upon just how calamitous these losses would be had term limits been applied retroactively, the 89 departures from RCIPS, as an example, would have resulted in the entity losing 100 per cent of the following essential sections:

- The Bureau of Financial Investigation;
- Digital Forensics;
- Scenes of Crime;
- Ballistics;
- Major crime investigations; and
- Analyst and cold case unit.

Some in the team have described that as a good day to commit a crime. They would also have lost between 70 to 85 per cent of their Security and Intelligence Unit, the Financial Crimes Unit, the Training and Development Unit and the Firearms Unit.

Mr. Speaker and honourable Members of this House, I trust it is plain to see that the imposition of term limits with retrospective effect, and the consequences to these Islands would have been immediate and disastrous. With retroactive implementation ruled out as being unviable, two additional options were then considered by the team. The first option was to impose no restrictions on existing non-Caymanian civil servants and apply term limits only to new hires. The second option was to impose restrictions on all non-Caymanian civil servants, with existing civil servants subject to term limits beginning on the day the legislation is implemented.

Given the concerns that had been expressed about the civil service being a part of the solution, the second of the two options was deemed as the most suitable to ensure the Government's mandate was honoured, while simultaneously ensuring the risk to service delivery and employee morale were reduced. The first step to achieving the monumental step of implementing term limits within the civil service was to make the provisions enabling the shift within the Public Service Management Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill before this honourable House today will introduce amendments to section 67 of the PSMA to empower the Cabinet on the advice of the Head of the Civil Service to make regulations allowing for term limits in respect of the employment of non-Caymanian civil servants; and to provide for limitations, prohibitions, exemptions, conditions of employment and any other matters relating to the ap-

pointment and reappointment of Non-Caymanians as civil servants. Using these expanded powers, the civil service will be able to respond to the call to action for term limits to be introduced in the civil service — this is that first step.

Following approval of this Bill in this honourable House, the Civil Service will work diligently to draft amendments to the Personnel Regulations in order to limit the employment of non-Caymanians within the civil service to the same length of time as is applicable to private sector workers in the Cayman Islands private sector as per the Immigration (Transition) Act, which is currently nine years.

Our recommendations will also seek not to meet, but to double their prohibition period on reemployment within our civil service, taking the rollover period from one year, as applicable within the private sector, to two years. Additionally, the amendments will give statutory protections to avoid persons who might join the civil service being able to evade the term limit stated that was already applicable to them, so we will have statutory protections to prevent that happening; and vice versa, if a non-Caymanian civil servant leaves the civil service to join the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, these policy intentions have been extensively publicised by the Deputy Governor, the Honourable Franz Manderson, who upon receiving the support of the incoming Government immediately undertook multiple media appearances to be transparent about the Government's proposed policy. This included a joint appearance by himself and the Honourable Premier to announce the Cabinet's decision within hours of such a decision being formalised.

Mr. Speaker, the target date for the legislation to come into effect is 1st January 2026, with the actual effective date to be fixed by Cabinet order upon confirmation that appropriate systems and policies are in place to bring about compliance with the new legislation and proposed amendments to regulations. On the date the legislation commences, the term limit period or clock for existing non-Caymanian civil servants will begin. Even with the decision to move forward on the basis that the term limit clock will begin for existing non-Caymanian civil servants on January 1st, 2026, there remains a residual risk to the continuity of public services that these measures will negatively impact morale within the civil service or give rise to the early departure of highly skilled non-Caymanian civil servants.

Now that it has been confirmed that term limits will be introduced, the civil service will need to continue to monitor the staff sentiment and put measures in place that manage morale as best possible. These efforts have also already commenced with full and frank discussions in the form of town hall meetings internally with key stakeholders, including our chief officers; our heads of department, including 'the big four' that will have big impacts; and very importantly,

Mr. Speaker, a town hall meeting with all civil servants where questions were answered frankly and openly, as they were the persons directly impacted by this policy decision. This communication will continue in the coming months and will expand to more focused engagements with teams within departments most directly impacted.

Mr. Speaker, it is known that term limits in isolation will not increase job opportunities for Caymanians. Term limits have not achieved this in the private sector and will not in and of itself achieve this in the civil service. In the twenty years since term limits were introduced, the representation of Caymanians in the national workforce has significantly decreased. I have the numbers, I'll leave it at that. More is needed to achieve the full objectives of our Government and the civil service is committed to delivering against those full objectives.

In light of this, in addition to introducing term limits within the civil service, our proposed amendments to the regulations will very importantly seek to introduce mechanisms to enable certain civil service positions to be designated for Caymanians only. Our proposals will also enable the civil service to require non-Caymanian civil servants, through contractual terms, to participate in the training of their Caymanian successor.

In conjunction, an enhanced framework for succession planning will be released shortly to drive accountability and transparency of succession planning within our civil service. A new component of this framework is the establishment of steering committees centrally and within individual ministries that will be chaired by our Deputy Governor and individual chief officers, respectively. This will work in tandem with pre-existing talent development initiatives, including the introduction last year of a scholarship programme for Caymanians within the civil service to complete qualifications which support their career progression and CIGs succession planning. In this way, Mr. Speaker, the civil service is introducing enhanced mechanisms to drive the full desired outcomes of increasing the representation of Caymanians within our workforce, particularly in key roles.

Mr. Speaker, while our proposed amendments to the Personnel Regulations would introduce term limits within the civil service and provide mechanisms for the prioritisation of Caymanian training, employment and advancement, it would not be prudent for the civil service to ignore the possibility that temporary exemptions may be needed from time to time or in special circumstances in order to ensure continuity of essential services to the community or special project assignments that are in progress. In recognition of this possibility, we intend to propose in these amendments to the regulations the ability for the Governor and Deputy Governor to approve temporary exemptions from term limit restrictions based upon their respective reporting lines. However, even in these cases, the

temporary exemptions that can be approved by the Governor or Deputy Governor unilaterally would have a maximum duration and could not exceed two years.

Additionally, our proposed amendments would include general exemptions for positions which are governed by legislation that specifies tenure, for example, our judiciary or other designated groups of employees approved in Cabinet. Where exemptions are approved, the Personnel Regulations will require an annual publication of statistics relating to temporary exemptions to ensure transparency and accountability.

It should also be noted that the responsibility for monitoring compliance with immigration legislation to ensure that persons do not remain in these Islands beyond their period of lawful residence will remain with those who handle immigration enforcement and amendments. Today's amendments to our Public Service Management Act will ensure that necessary information sharing occurs between the PoCS and WORC so that they can carefully fulfil their mandate.

Mr. Speaker, this evening I've spoken at length about the Bill, the civil service's proposals for how we could bring amendments to the Personnel Regulations, and what those amendments would seek to introduce. While the amendments to the Personnel Regulations will further bolster efforts to safeguard Caymanian employment, for example, by red circling certain positions as Caymanian-only and allowing for the contracts of non-Caymanians to contain clauses that obligate them to train Caymanian successors, these measures in and of themselves will not create more employment opportunities for Caymanians. This is why the civil service is adopting additional measures above and beyond those currently in place. However, it is worth noting the progress which is already being made in the civil service in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, as you and the Members of this honourable House are aware, the civil service through the provision of the Public Service Management Act is required to give preference to Caymanians, where Caymanians rank broadly the same as a non-Caymanian applicant during a recruitment process. Additionally, our existing regulations allow for returning graduates to be appointed to roles within the civil service without open competition, a provision that's increasingly being used.

Mr. Speaker, succession planning within our organisation has resulted in several senior positions being filled by Caymanian successors. Included in the list of successful Caymanian succession outcomes is the Chief Fire Officer, Director of Prisons, Director of Computer Services, The Commissioner of Police, the Director of Public Safety Communications, the Director of the Department of Communications, the Director of Lands and Survey, and the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services.

The changing face of leadership within our uniformed service has been most pronounced over a

very short period of time. Today, Caymanians lead five of our major uniformed branches:

- Police;
- Fire service;
- Prisons;
- Coast Guard; and
- Customs and Border Control.

This was not the case just four short years ago when I believe the number of these departments being led by Caymanians was only about two. I'm saying this to say, sir, that even before these measures, our civil service was making significant strides forward. Today, all of these teams are led by highly capable Caymanian leaders; additionally, as at the 31st December, 2024, 84 per cent of our Chief Officers are Caymanian; 100 per cent of our Deputy Chief Officers are Caymanian; and 83 per cent of our Department Heads are Caymanian.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the percentage of Caymanian Chief Officers, I feel it is worth highlighting that where Chief Officers have responsibility solely for a Ministry — what we used to refer to as our permanent secretaries — they all are 100 per cent Caymanian. The 84 per cent I mentioned refers to those Chief Officers who have dual designations [meaning] their primary function is not Chief Officer but a technical role such as Auditor General, Director of Public Prosecutions, et cetera, and even in these areas, many Caymanians hold such dual function roles.

Even with the number of succession planning successes achieved by ministries and portfolios across CIG, the PoCS continues a significant stream of work to enhance and expand succession planning to allow for increased numbers of succession pathways and, ultimately, an increased number of Caymanians who accede to higher positions within their organisation.

Mr. Speaker, the civil service also boasts a mature internship programme, as we witnessed today, which on an annual basis receives and provides on-the-job training for approximately 100 young Caymanians — this year is set to exceed that number.

Another programme introduced last year in the civil service is the scholarship programme which provides eligible Caymanian civil servants with financial support and internal guidance to pursue education up to the Master's degree level. In the first year of the programme, seven Caymanian civil servants were granted scholarships allowing them to complete studies ranging from early degrees at an Associate's level to postgraduate programmes at the Master's degree level.

With the full backing of successive governments, the civil service also adopted our Emerging Talent Programme, which provides opportunities for Caymanians who recently graduated to gain practical experience for a permanent appointment within their field of study, and facilitates talent mobility within the civil service for Caymanians who have undertaken

additional qualifications to retool their careers. In 2024, this programme allowed five Caymanians to be recruited or seconded to gain experience in their respective fields:

- Three joined the Public Works Department permanently, having recently graduated from its TVET apprenticeship programme; and
- The remaining two joined the Cayman Islands National Archive and the Mosquito Research Unit respectively.

Also, part of our existing legal framework and internal HR policies is the requirement to advertise posts before appointing or renewing any non-Caymanian employee's fixed term contract.

Mr. Speaker, despite the civil service's existing successes with attracting and retaining Caymanians, which, I hasten to add, has resulted in the civil service being the single largest employer of Caymanians — 15 per cent of all employed Caymanians work within our civil service, which is even more significant considering the civil service is only responsible for the employment of 8 per cent of all persons within our workforce — the civil service is punching above our relative size in the job market to ensure career opportunities for Caymanians. This is how it should be and, moreover, we accept that we can and must do more.

To this end, the Portfolio of the Civil Service is developing a proposal to expand our Emerging Talent Programme for Caymanians to provide more opportunities for entry-level positions and avenues to convert these positions into full-time roles by career mapping. This proposal will form part of our budget submission in the upcoming cycle. We are proud to have been invited by the Honourable Minister of Employment to join the Ministry in efforts to create a national workforce plan drawing upon the private sector, but also creating room at the table for the Portfolio of the Civil Service and the Ministry of Education. Thank you, Minister.

We believe that working cooperatively we can build on the solid foundations of past and present governments who have invested in scholarships that allow young Caymanians to have access to tertiary education. Through programmes that the current administration is developing, we can create more defined bridges from the universities and trade programmes to places of employment, allowing these highly qualified Caymanian graduates' tremendous talent to be put to work in the civil service and, indeed, the entire Cayman Islands workforce.

I add this point, Mr. Speaker, because the truth is, even as we are hiring in excess of 140 young Caymanians this summer, this represents only 50 per cent of those who sought an internship with us this year. We also need to see increased pathways into the private sector where term limits have been applied for the past twenty years, so that our returning gradu-

ates are represented in fair proportion in all areas of our economy.

To address pay concerns and keep civil service salaries competitive, PoCS will seek to implement a cost of living adjustment policy with the aim of reducing the pay gap between the public and private sectors and retention, thus improving recruitment and retention of Caymanian talent, particularly as it relates to being more competitive with highly skilled professionals.

Mr. Speaker, as we look at the places where we tend to see the highest reliance upon augmenting our workforce with persons hired from overseas, these jobs fall into broad categories. The first category is those high-volume roles where demand, which is driven by population growth, exceeds the overall growth rate of our Caymanian population. These roles deliver essential services as we've described — our teachers, police officers, prison officers, and caregivers.

Heads of professions in these areas are making strides to bring greater awareness of these roles and to increase the hiring of Caymanians, particularly in policing where recruitment campaigns are resulting in higher Caymanian recruits. Strides are also being made in teaching through bold moves taken by present and past elected leaders, to reflect the value of such roles. I am proud to say that, relatively speaking, these roles offer competitive pay.

Our full-time teachers, for example, are not paid below \$5,000 per month in their net take-home pay. I think that's a stark difference from where you started, Mr. Speaker. When benefits such as health and pension and any other applicable allowances are added to this, the gross pay places civil service teachers in a competitive position locally, regionally, and often, internationally. Still, like countries much larger than us and those close to home within the region and across the Overseas Territories, Cayman struggles to fill the volume of roles needed in the teaching profession. To meet this risk, Cayman must develop more home-grown talent while preserving our ability to fill any gaps with high performing talent from elsewhere.

This week, Mr. Speaker, even before our children actually depart schools for their summer breaks, educators are feverishly finalising plans for the reopening of schools because we know that when the school bell rings, we must have qualified staff in place to welcome thousands of children into our classrooms. Therefore, we will work with these leaders who require a high volume of roles to deliver essential services to our community, to promote greater awareness of job opportunities locally, and to preserve our reputation so as to attract top talent from abroad when necessary. For the foreseeable future, this is our reality. Our reputation has attracted top talent at home and abroad, and has supported the delivery of essential services.

Another category of roles where the need to hire staff from overseas is typically great is not so much in our high-volume roles, but roles which involve high skilled specialisations — think legal, audit, cyber, AI, other-technology roles, and other specialisms particularly where they are in equally high demand within the private sector. In this category, the bar to attracting more Caymanians into the civil service is our challenge in enticing them away from the private sector. Here we have done our best to leverage our beliefs.

We speak very much about our common purpose. We exist to make lives better and do our best to attract persons into public professions with that call; but, as the Honourable Attorney General who is responsible for the legal profession can tell you, sometimes people tell us they can't take that to Foster's. Hence, there is more work to be done in this space so we can attract our top Caymanian talent in these specialised fields, and we are looking at market forces as a part of the way that we would address pay for specialised posts.

Mr. Speaker, these streams have worked to bolster opportunities for Caymanians, plus the new work streams arising from the need to ensure compliance with the new legislative changes were required that the civil service build the necessary systems to ensure the smooth enforcement of the new rules on term limits.

The implementation of the proposed legislation will also require the introduction of new procedural measures to ensure compliance. Most notably, systems will need to be developed for information sharing between appointing officers, the PoCS and WORC; and clear policy will need to be developed to ensure that all recruitment exercises for both new appointments and reappointments are in line with the new legislation. A detailed communication plan will also be required to help mitigate the risk of employee engagement erosion or loss of high performing non-Caymanian civil servants as a result of the challenges which would be brought about by these proposals.

Mr. Speaker, it is easy enough to discuss the legislative changes; the logistics and processes needed to make this proposal work are something else. It is a somewhat different conversation again if we introduce the human elements surrounding this topic.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in my remarks I mentioned that the topics of immigration and employment and job security are emotive. I say with deep sincerity that this has not been an easy statement to deliver because as a career civil servant, I have worked with highly talented Caymanian and non-Caymanian civil servants; each has a keen interest in today's amendments and has expressed concerns regarding the rhetoric which has been displayed in some forums that seek to divide and stereotype who they are.

We are one civil service. In 2024, 85 per cent of civil servants took our engagement survey and a resounding 90 per cent of us said we are proud to be

civil servants. We are proud of the privilege of serving this Parliament and serving our people. Countries around the world would be envious of this level of commitment from their public service. This commitment is not accidental.

Mr. Speaker, all the men and women of our civil service have openly pledged to live by our civil service values, the chief of which is passion. We care intensely about the success of the Cayman Islands and its people. We are committed to teamwork and the achievement of results. This is a core value and it's the price of admission for every employee and the requirement to be met annually for any to stay. For the 1,400 non-Caymanians providing essential services in Education, RCIPS, Prisons, the DCFS and other agencies, they too are not isolated from pain and frustration born of recent rhetoric.

These men and women committed, upon joining the civil service, to live by our values. During times of threat, they rush into danger alongside their Caymanian counterparts. Our teachers stood shoulder-to-shoulder to provide continuous education during COVID. While our borders were closed for more than a year and COVID ravaged the rest of the world, these men and women held their roles to deliver essential services even when that meant that they missed the opportunity to be with their loved ones during times of peril. For some, this meant saying a painful goodbye via a video call when travel restrictions would not allow them to make it home in time to see their loved ones draw their last breath. For some, it means serving for years without seeing their families.

Mr. Speaker, this past week at a farewell reception I had the privilege of speaking with Auxiliary Constable Mr. Johnson, a long-serving police officer who is among the minority of persons working for decades rather than a few short years. It was the first time I'd ever seen him out of uniform. I almost didn't recognise him. He was beaming as he explained that after 31 years, he was retiring and his son was coming to visit the Cayman Islands for the first time in order to accompany his dad home. Mr. Johnson was beaming with pride as he explained how excited he was to show his son what his father had been doing all these years, the country he'd been helping to secure, and the colleagues he had worked with. He was proud of his contributions to these Islands, and he was proud to show his son where his dad had served, because it would be the first time his son had ever visited the Cayman Islands.

As he prepared to leave, he expressed his thanks for the opportunity to have worked in these islands and said it was the privilege of his life. I assured him that his service meant so much to all of us. As if sensing the conversation from across the area, his boss, the Commissioner of Police, offered a warm and encouraging smile and a nod of acknowledgement. That one gesture had Auxiliary Constable Johnson beaming all over again. His shift was over, you

see, but the acknowledgement of his contributions and the respect for his service would always remain.

These men and women within the civil service will come to terms with what these provisions mean and, as amendments are taken to Personnel Regulations, we will bring these aforementioned provisions into force in less than six months. We have a clear mandate and we will deliver; however, in the way we do so, we can and will respect all the men and women who serve. Similarly, all civil servants remain committed to giving our best to see the Government deliver on its promises to make lives better.

Immigration is a subject these Islands must come to terms with. It will require difficult decisions. As we take these decisions, it is my prayer that, like generations before us, we will lean on reason rather than rhetoric and understand that being firm does not have to come at the expense of being fair because, Mr. Speaker, when such service is met by harmful rhetoric and stereotypes, it dehumanises these civil servants and ignores their sacrifice. It compromises our ability to attract top talent when we have shortages of those particular skill sets at home. The civil service understands this is a priority for our Government and a matter our people are crying out to be addressed. We will not shy away from this challenge; we will do our part and lead from the front.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is coming at the very first Meeting of this new administration. The civil service hires 4 per cent of all non-Caymanians working in the Cayman Islands. The average length of service for non-Caymanians is 5.8 years. The majority of non-Caymanians in the civil service work in education, police, prisons, and social care. They work hard and their efforts, joined with their Caymanian counterparts, are paving our path to being a world-class civil service. As we embrace the changes that are needed to our hiring practices, we will do so in a way that respects all of our people and honours their efforts and sacrifices. We will take decisions that are evidence-based and we will be open and transparent in our communications.

Most of all, Mr. Speaker, the Bill signals that the Government was pushing against an open door. We know that the civil service must not only be a part of the solution, but must also be *seen* to be a part of the solution; therefore, Mr. Speaker, the civil service in this Bill signals it is prepared to implement term limits within our civil service.

Mr. Speaker, as always, the civil service will work diligently to enact these changes and will do so in a manner that honours the wishes of the elected Government while continuing to demonstrate to our employees that we are a caring employer — all whilst ensuring the needs of our customers are consistently and capably met, particularly as they relate to our essential services.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I commend this Bill to the consideration of this honourable House.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

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

I want to first say thank you so much to the Honourable Acting Deputy Governor for her very, very detailed, balanced, compassionate analysis while putting the relevant seriousness of this topic in its tone. I think it was very detailed and thank her for her delivery on behalf of the new Government. I also want to say thank you to the current Government for taking the bold steps to continue on the path which I'm proud to say the past administration started the first steps.

See, Mr. Speaker, many people may not have been aware of the journey that we started — and I say “we” meaning those who were there when we started the conversation before, including the Honourable Premier, three of the current Ministers, some back-bench Members and three Members on this side. Unfortunately, we were not successful for a number of reasons coming close to the election; but I am very happy that the Government continued on the path with the spirit of what the rollover in the civil service was meant to accomplish.

Mr. Speaker, before I continue, I want to say to all the hard-working civil servants: Thank you for all you do to keep this country functioning as a world class civil service; and when I say that I speak to the Caymanian ones and the non-Caymanian ones alike. They all allow us to be a first-world island; a country that is loved by so many, and causes jealousy within our region because of how successful we have been. We have much to be grateful for.

Mr. Speaker, I am sensitive to the notion that many persons who are not yet Caymanian who work for the civil service may feel a level of anxiety, concern, worry — and unappreciated, as these discussions continue. I want to assure you that this has never ever been about excluding, but more so taking the necessary steps, which I am certain you understand, to protect our people and even protect you, that the day you may join this family, you will understand the necessary steps to do so. We are on a path to transition as smoothly as possible, while at the same time growing our great nation.

With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, as you may suspect, I have full intentions to support the Bill, but I would like to highlight some of the things that draw concern for myself as well as other Members on the Opposition side, one of them being the exemptions.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Deputy Governor did a very detailed job of explaining the process through which exemptions would be allowed on the advice of the Deputy Governor to Cabinet. The issue I

and others have is that in this sensitive topic, exemptions should not be done *in camera*, Mr. Speaker.

The topic of immigration, as you heard the Honourable Acting Deputy Governor say, is a very sensitive, emotive one. We shall not fall for the gossip and rumours. We have to do this right, because it could have severe consequences; but Mr. Speaker, she also highlighted that the civil service has been under the microscope for some time in respect to ensuring that appropriate opportunities are given to each and every Caymanian, as well as succession planning for Caymanians within the service. With that heightened sensitivity—

The Speaker: Sorry to interrupt you, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but I need to invite the Premier to move the suspension of Standing Order 14(1) to allow the House to continue beyond the hour of 8 o'clock to complete the business of the day.

Suspension of Standing Order 14(1)

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Standing Order 14(1) be suspended to allow the business of the House to continue until the conclusion of all of the business on the Order Paper.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 14(1) be suspended to allow the House to continue to meet beyond the hour of 8 o'clock and to complete the business on the Order Paper.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing Order 14(1) suspended.

The Speaker: Continue, Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

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

Before we took the suspension, I was speaking about the concern for the proposed exemptions that will eventually come after this Bill seeks safe passage, and the sensitivities around the topic of immigration. Whether it would not be more prudent and transparent — and give clarity to those who we represent, that it be given the appropriate scrutiny as other Bills that would come to the Floor of this House, whereby they would have to come to Parliament to get positive ratification.

Mr. Speaker, by no means am I suggesting to undermine the importance of Cabinet having the flexibility to make decisions in a timely manner, but one

would think that there would not be a time sensitivity in some of these exemptions because they would be planned out appropriately. An allowance for it to come to Parliament so the public can see who we would be willing to allow to be exempt from this ever-so-sensitive but necessary process and policy.

If left alone, the current policy process will be done through Cabinet on the advice of the Deputy Governor. If the Cabinet were minded to not allow it to be on the weekly release of Cabinet decisions, which they have the right to do, no one would know exactly who is exempted and why. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Government to consider whether that is in the best interest of the country, understanding the sensitivities of this topic.

Mr. Speaker, the other concern we examined is the notion of not doing it retroactively. The Honourable Deputy Governor has very adequately explained the dangers of such a decision, one upon which I agree. Now, though I do not have the solution to the problem, maybe the Honourable Acting Deputy Governor can further opine in her closing remarks; but if it is not retroactive, which I would not suggest, I can only draw the conclusion that everybody starts over fresh as the law comes into play. Then, thinking logically, it would assume that nine years from the day of the implementation of the legislation all those persons will come to the same ending, ultimately kicking the can down the road.

Mr. Speaker, I can fairly conclude that maybe some of those persons would have had time to make a decision on whether they're going to stay or wait the nine years. Some may have become Caymanian — there are various reasons why it may not be exactly the same number of non-Caymanians working today. It would also have been nine years of the civil service and the current Government working very hard to ensure that Caymanians are moving up the ranks within those jobs, so I still believe the number would not be as large; but it's fair to think that you would have some sort of concern of mass persons not being able to work in the Cayman Islands at that day. Ultimately, we would still see the concern that was highlighted by the Acting Deputy Governor.

Mr. Speaker, I have to take a personal position today and say that I am truly honoured to be in this Honourable Parliament now that we have finally started to take this topic of immigration seriously. I congratulate the current Government for being strong and bold in coming out of the first round with the topic of immigration. Though the Minister may not believe me, I truly do support and hope for him to have every success in this area.

Mr. Speaker, it takes me back to 2019 when I brought a Private Member's Motion to this honourable House asking for a very similar policy direction as what is in planning now. When the Honourable Acting Deputy Governor spoke about jobs for Caymanians only within the service, it took me back to my first term

in 2019, when I was trying to do exactly that. I'm happy to see that support for such decisions has changed.

I want to highlight, Mr. Speaker, that the Government should be mindful that there was much sweat and tears and arguments and fights and convincing of the necessary steps to be done, and the current Government is taking the last baton of a relay race, if I would dare categorise it as such.

[Laughter]

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker, I know we all remember my infamous billboard saying "Immigration Reform Now". I would like to think that it was one of the catalysts for us to start taking this matter seriously, so I am happy we are here.

In my last two points, I know that the Honourable Acting Deputy Governor suggested this will not create jobs for Caymanians and I think I understand where she was coming from in that analysis, to not believe this is the 'end all, be all' for Caymanian opportunities; but Mr. Speaker, I believe that this, along with other steps like government policy, succession planning, and training, *will* create opportunities within the service. Without policies such as this, even when the Government takes its necessary steps from a labour and education perspective, if the glass ceiling were not broken, they would not get the opportunity. I hope that analogy is not too extreme, Mr. Speaker, but I do think this will eventually create more opportunities for hopefully, one day, having a civil service of 100 per cent Caymanian men and women.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage the Honourable Minister for Employment and Labour in respect to the findings of the report that was created in the last administration — and I am very pleased to hear of the strong relationship between PoCS and his Ministry; which he can use as Minister of Employment and Immigration in tandem with the Honourable Minister of Education.

As I listened to the Honourable Acting Deputy Governor in respect to the list of major areas that would be affected negatively if this were implemented immediately after the passage of this legislation, I could not help but think that, obviously, that is where we need to start. She suggested there were some areas where there would be nobody available to service them, like financial crimes. Maybe now it's time that we target that from a scholarship, education, and labour perspective; that we hyper focus to go out and find those young men and women [to fill] those exemption areas so hopefully one day we will no longer need them.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to wrap up the way I started by again saying thank you to all the strong men and women within the civil service. I was proud to work for the last four years with them, Caymanian

and non-Caymanian alike. I want to thank them for everything they have done to allow our country to be as amazing as it is and again, for those who find themselves in the line of discussion in respect to this policy, for those of you who want to become Caymanian one day, I hope you do, because our family will continue to grow as our society grows. However, I know those of you who are here as a part of the amazing civil service understand why it's necessary for us to proceed with such policy direction in the effort to not only protect our Caymanians, but also ensure that we have proper succession planning in place. If you do join the family one day, maybe your children, your loved ones, will be the beneficiaries of those necessary protections.

I wish the Government continued success in respect to this policy area. It is a very difficult balancing act. It is very sensitive. It involves families, spouses, loved ones, friends, relationships, and we have to be ever so delicate while we deal with it. Though I know I gave the Honourable Acting Deputy Governor some headaches while we were discussing it, I want her to know that I do understand; and to every one of those civil servants who are working hard for Cayman, I thank you and I hope that we all can work together to make Cayman a better place, but particularly for those who are "of the land".

Mr. Speaker, that's my contribution. Thank you.

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]* Minister for Employment and Immigration.

Hon. Michael S. Myles: Mr. Speaker, colleagues, I would like to start by thanking the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition for agreeing with what we're doing. I think we have one great thing in common between our government and the Opposition: we care desperately about our people. I don't think we'd be here if we did not. I'm hoping, anyways.

Mr. Speaker, today marks a historic and defining moment for our country. I rise in full support of the amendments to the Public Service Management Act, which for the first time will establish formal term limits for foreign employees within the civil service, accompanied by a rollover clause. This landmark legislation represents a fundamental shift in how we manage our public sector workforce. I want to begin by sincerely applauding the Deputy Governor, the Governor, the Chief Officer Mrs. McField-Nixon, and their respective teams for all their leadership and commitment to follow through on this amendment.

When we got into Government, Mr. Speaker, it was refreshing that the Acting Deputy Governor and her team presented it to us, and in those presentations they rolled out that they had been watching what

we were doing on stages over the last five months during the election. I was excited to know that we didn't have to regurgitate all of our political stances. They knew what we wanted and met us at the table. We didn't have to wring their hands or convince them. They came to the table prepared to ensure that we did right by our people.

Mr. Speaker, this political consensus that emerged first started in 2024 and was reaffirmed during the many political platforms in the 2025 election period. This is a clear reflection of a civil service that listens, acts, and is prepared to make meaningful changes for the benefit of our Caymanian people. These amendments are not happening in isolation and as the Honourable Deputy Leader of Opposition mentioned, my Ministry has been heavily involved in moving this into the private sector. They are directly aligned with our Government's broader reform agenda, which prioritises the employment and development of Caymanians.

Mr. Speaker, you heard my address yesterday about the NiCE programme and, while I don't want to go back over that, I respect the Opposition and their stances. When I listen to what Honourable Acting Deputy Governor McField-Nixon outlined, it is why I fight so hard to state that we don't need NiCE for 12 months a year when we have phenomenal programmes within the civil service like those we are going to be investing in.

The PSMA amendments bring much-needed parity between the public and private sectors, ensuring that immigration pathways are managed equitably across the board. Mr. Speaker, the civil service will also be aligned with the private sector reform Immigration law being rolled out in September 2025, where persons leaving the civil service or private sector after meeting their term limit will not be eligible to return to the island on a work permit for at least two years — it's currently one year in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will create real and tangible employment and promotional opportunities for Caymanians, as Honourable McField-Nixon, Acting Deputy Governor, stated. Our responsibility is to ensure that the private sector and public sector reflect the true colours of our people. This legislation will also include provisions to restrict private sector employees from bypassing these term limits by transitioning directly into the civil service without checks. We all know the game that's being played. Person comes here on a work permit, works for a couple of years in the private sector, then all of a sudden, their term limit comes near and they jump into the public sector or the civil service and they're almost fast-tracked to a permanent residence.

Mr. Speaker, our responsibility is to protect Caymanians going forward. I will not apologise for being pro Caymanian, along with my colleagues. We came here to do a job, and several months ago I made it very clear that my only responsibility is to pro-

tect Caymanians in the Cayman way, and that's what I will be doing for the next four years. It gives the civil service the ability to formally designate certain jobs as Caymanian only and mandates the implementation of succession planning and knowledge transfer, ensuring that Caymanians are trained and prepared to step into leadership roles.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand here, I got multiple emails from young and middle-aged people who cannot find jobs in the Cayman Islands, who consistently struggle to break into the civil service or private sector with the degrees and training certifications they got; we have to ensure that changes — and quickly.

Mr. Speaker, our Government continues to invest heavily. The Minister of Education has informed us that his Ministry spends upwards of almost \$80 million between primary and secondary education, and an additional \$30 million in tertiary education. It is therefore absolutely unacceptable that when our young people graduate from high school, technical programmes and universities, both here and abroad, they return home only to face barriers to employment in our own country.

The PSMA Amendment supports our commitment to ensuring Caymanians are not only prioritised for employment, but are also given opportunities to continue to receive training, upskilling, and upward mobility within the civil service and public service. This directly aligns with our broader goal of establishing a comprehensive national workforce development strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned this yesterday as we debated the NiCE programme. I cannot tell you enough how many years, probably the last decade, I have watched briefings like this on CIGTV or YouTube and was disappointed that people were not talking about how we serve Caymanians. We were always talking about things that Caymanians didn't want. We talked and we invested in buildings and everything else besides investing in people. When our coalition formed, Mr. Speaker, I made it clear that I was not here to build a building. I don't need a legacy. I am here to build people. I am here to invest in people, and as I have taken over Caymanian Employment and Immigration, that's what we are going to be doing for the next four years — unapologetically.

Mr. Speaker, in the last decade or more, successive governments have promised to establish a human capital plan for Caymanians. As I said yesterday, I read at least three reports. No one from the public or private sector has taken responsibility for ensuring that those reports end up in someone's hands who can actually implement them. I have made it clear to my colleagues that I am here to implement things.

Notably, I am happy that the Honourable Deputy Leader of Opposition asked whether we were going to move on to the minimum wage. Yes, we've kept it under wraps. Yes, we've discussed it; we've

discussed it since I took office. I came here with an agenda. I want to ensure that we do everything they haven't done in the last decade to ensure it benefits our people; so when the Honourable Leader of the Opposition talked about handing us the baton, I'm not sure what it means, but I can tell you my agenda. From the moment I got on a political stage and announced that I was going to be contesting a seat, I had already made up my mind on what I needed to do. I just needed a team, and I got one who actually wanted to do some work.

The national workforce database will include a National Apprenticeship Programme. The Acting Deputy Governor currently runs a programme; we are going to expand it. We have over 600 young people in some form of high school or tertiary education who want jobs. Our responsibility is to take her apprenticeship programme and make it into a living, breathing piece we can consistently invest in. That's why we need every piece of money we can put our hands on to ensure that our people can be developed, trained in the proper way, and upskilled so they can be promoted. This Government refuses to continue to make promises and not deliver.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, in the last decade, we talked much about human capital development plans for Caymanians. If we are honest, very few of those, if any, were delivered. I've sat in many committee meetings, I've been invited to the Chamber of Commerce, Cayman Finance, I've sat with banks and other financial organisations that sat me down for hours and talked around in circles about ways they don't want to hire our people. My last meeting was a week ago when I sat with some folks from the Grand Hyatt who also talked around about not hiring our people.

At this point I am ill from sitting with folks who do not respect this country and the people we serve. I will not rest. I will turn over every rock in this country and I will turn this country upside down to help our people achieve, because it's just who we are and it's who I am. When I tell you that the human capital plan, along with PoCS, is going to be a living, breathing document, this is where we're going.

Mr. Speaker, our young people have been systematically disenfranchised. I hear it in their voices every single day. I have parents, grandparents, and young people from every walk of life, from 16 years old to 60 calling me, trying to understand why they cannot get employment here. When I look at our laws, from our legislation for immigration to our labour laws, they are outdated, antiquated, and do not protect our people.

Now, the Opposition, many of them have been here for a number of years, some a decade, some going on a decade, and yet, simple laws they could have put in place a decade ago, even four years ago, they did not. Many of them sit in this Chamber and talk about wanting to serve this country with digni-

ty — well, Mr. Speaker, the goal for me isn't to talk about this anymore, but about getting stuff done.

Mr. Speaker, the addiction to work permits, revenue, and huge surpluses has created an unhealthy and unfair level of employment competition which has led to the reality where qualified Caymanians are overlooked, underemployed, or outright discriminated against in our own country. This Government says enough is enough. We will no longer tolerate this, not from the private sector nor the public sector, and not from an employer in our country.

The National Coalition for Caymanians Government celebrates this renewed partnership with the civil service. We are committed to ensuring that collaboration, transparency and good governance become not just ideals, but the standard practice of the day. I also take this opportunity to thank the civil service for employing 140 students this summer. It was so refreshing, Mr. Speaker, to look up and see the gallery filled with so many young people, all Caymanians.

[Desk thumping]

Hon. Michael S. Myles: The Acting Deputy Governor informed me that 400-plus young people applied for these internships this year. She and I had a conversation about where the rest of them are. I understand the limitations of the civil service, because we can't take them all on; however, this gives me sleepless nights on where these kids go.

We have to do a better job of ensuring that every child, every person in this country who wants a job, has one, and we intend to do that over the next year or two by creating this apprenticeship programme and employment training programme. Let me be clear, we will be challenging the private sector that employs approximately 37,000 people on work permits. They now need to step up. It's time for the private sector to step up.

Mr. Speaker, I was on the radio this morning with the Chairman of the Business Staffing Plan Board and the Chairman of the Work Permit Board, because there are going to be many changes in immigration and labour. We're starting with immigration, and I wanted to warn the private sector. Over the last two months, the things that I have heard we are doing to ourselves just rub me raw, where we create industry, but we don't want to employ our own people. We create companies and bring people into our country from the Philippines and all over the world to do jobs that we know our people can do; and then we don't want to pay those same folks that we bring from all over the world; and then they stay here and live in squalor and reduce our living standards.

Again, Mr. Speaker, our Government says enough is enough. The PSMA is not just a legislative change; it's a contract with our people that the civil service must honour, and we are going to be holding

them accountable to honour it over the next four years. As I said, the Government is here to work. While I understand the Opposition has a duty to oppose, object, politicise, sensationalise, yell, and scream, we will not be deterred.

As I sit in this honourable Parliament, I'm often reminded of the great men and women who came before me and certainly my colleagues. I intend to honour all the things they have started and I am hoping that as we agree to disagree, we can agree more than we disagree, because I do believe that we have many more things in common than we have things that are different — or, we can spend the next four years opposing each other on good policy, good legislation, and good ideas. For what? To be a spectacle? To ramp up votes? To perform for our bases? Who are we actually here for, if all this becomes a spectacle whereby we oppose just for the sake of opposing?

The Ministry of Employment and Immigration will continue to prioritise Caymanians, because for far too long we have talked about this, on stages, on radio stations, on TVs. I intend to put in the work. I always have and I always will. Under my leadership and the new management of the NCfC, we will be breaking barriers and ushering new hope. That started on April 30th when we were all elected.

Our people have desperately lacked hope for over a decade. They're hungry for just a glimpse that someone's got their back. I hear the cries. I've worked in the system for 35 years. I know what hopelessness looks like, and over the last 35 years, it has gotten worse. I know my colleagues across the aisle have heard the same. This is not going to be solved by us arguing here on good legislation, good policy. It is going to be solved by us moving the agenda forward.

Yes, if you want an SPS document that says absolutely nothing, we could have given you that. That was easy. We even contemplated giving you that because at least it would, somewhere down the line, satisfy this urge of having a piece of paper in your hand. We decided not to. It irked me that we went through this exercise for over a decade. That we would put good civil servants, whom we say we love dearly, through an exercise that, once we do it, the civil service throws that document in the garbage. Why?

We have to do more and we cannot waste good time from civil servants who should be doing better things like creating a national apprenticeship programme to place young people, who we are spending over \$30 million in tertiary education and training programmes on, [in jobs]. Why are we putting them through that?

Mr. Speaker, I make no apology for the nonsense approach. I don't know how to politic. I'm going to be the first one in line to say that. I don't know how to come in here and say things that don't make sense for the sake of saying it. I don't know how to write stuff on a piece of paper that I don't actually mean. That's just not who I am. Everything that I write,

everything that I say, I am going to do. I have a track record of outcomes. I did not run for election to come into this honourable House to simply tell Caymanians what we think they want to hear. We have to start telling them the truth.

My colleague, Minister Anglin, has graciously outlined what our financial position is. The Financial Secretary has also outlined what our financial position is. Numbers don't lie, so why are we trying to make numbers lie? We need all the money that we can get to do the good work that the Opposition says that they want us to do. We have to start to prioritise Caymanian people and stop arguing over pittance.

Mr. Speaker, my accomplishments and my team's accomplishments in the last two months have been ground-breaking. We passed major legislation here today. This will pass. We should be beating our chests and saying yes, we've done this! In the next couple of months we are going to be passing major legislation in immigration. It's coming. It is going to protect our people. It will help us govern better. The people that we say that we are going to protect, in all communities—I'm not just here for folks in Prospect, I'm Caymanian. I want every Caymanian to do well, not [just] folks in Prospect.

Regardless of what people think about me, at the end of the day, they know that my no-nonsense attitude and behaviour come down to outcomes. I don't care about the noise. I have people in here making a lot of noise about many things that I just don't get; maybe I'll never get it. I am driven by change. I am driven by outcomes. I am driven by integrity. I am driven by service.

What we've passed today, these PSMA Amendments, is ground-breaking legislation. It's unheard of by any Government and I want to make sure that we celebrate that with the Honourable Deputy Governor and her team and we acknowledge that the civil service has been a major part of what we have done in less than two months.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate you giving me this opportunity to contribute to the debate and I appreciate all my colleagues for helping us push this legislation through.

Thank you.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I really wasn't going to speak, but I have to say that I want to express to my neighbour and my colleague, the Honourable Member for Prospect; he has no bigger Caymanian heart than I do. He might love this place and our people as much, but he doesn't love them more than I do.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: I wish you had mentioned that to him, Mr. Speaker, but that's fine. I will debate the Bill, but I just had to state that, sir. I just heard some belittling and talking about the SPS and all that. He wasn't talking about the Bill; but that's fine. I wish he would change his tone, but I'm sure we'll get better as we go forward. He and I have only been here for five minutes. We're both learning.

I'm a little annoyed, so if I shake a little bit, that's the reason why. I really am annoyed, but I will be fine. I want to say that from the beginning when term limits were introduced I was of the belief and feeling that it should apply to the civil service; therefore, I will be supporting this Bill this evening. Perhaps if we had done it way back when, it would be less painful now.

As the Member just said, and as we all know, this is ground-breaking. This has never been done before. I appreciate how much has been said by the Honourable Minister with regard to what is intended, but I also wish, because of how ground-breaking it is, some of the finer details would have been presented to the House. There is a Sitting in September — even in the form of a statement, if not for debate, just so we would have a far better idea as to what we're voting for. I know broadly what I'm voting for and I will support it, but I will ask the Government to consider at the September sitting to provide some more meat so the wider country can understand where exactly we're moving towards, because of the importance of this.

I will close with this. Honourable Acting Deputy Governor, I wrote down words that you said because I really think it's important for all of us, including us in here, to remember the words you said; being firm does not mean we can't be fair.

The story you told made me reflect on a funeral I attended recently. The Honourable Speaker was there too, as well as others in here. There was a lady who came here from elsewhere, who lived amongst us and did much good work for this country, but when someone read on behalf of her son what his thoughts were for his mother who had gone, he mentioned how he was at home in Jamaica while she was here and he rarely saw her. You mentioned a similar story. These folks come here, and yes, they earn funds, they send money back, but they contribute. There is a sacrifice as well for them.

Also, during this period of graduations, I have been to government schools and I've seen people react to teachers who are here from someplace else. Many of them have been here for many, many years teaching our children. I've seen the love and attention. They are probably not very well paid, but they stay and they serve our people.

Thank you for reminding us at the end of your debate that being firm does not mean we can't be fair;

that we need to mind our tone and temperament, and remember we are dealing with people.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Gary B. Rutty, Deputy Premier: Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I promise I won't be long this evening, but I could not let the evening go further without saying a few words and thanking the Acting Deputy Governor for that lovely contribution and my colleague, Minister Myles, for his as well.

I'm proud to be part of this Government. This Government is not my Government or the Premier's Government; it is the Cayman Islands' Government — even to the Opposition who have given some good contribution here today.

An Hon. Member: Thank you.

Hon. Gary B. Rutty, Deputy Premier: It's in the healthy debate for the betterment of this country. We're all good friends. It was good to be in the lunchroom about an hour ago—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Gary B. Rutty, Deputy Premier: —Getting over the time confusion and connecting as Caymanians. As we debate for the future of our children and this country, we still respect each other across the Floor and away from this building.

The biggest investment that a parent will make other than a loving, safe home, hopefully, with both parents, is an education for their children. We've all spent a lot of money. I look at my good dear friend, the Leader of the Opposition, his kids and mine and the relationship that we have. We sent our kids overseas to get educated to come back to this country, but lately, they have not been given the opportunities each one of us in this room right now has. I know that's why the 19 of us who are in this room, on the Government side and opposing side, are here today. It is because we want to ensure that what we're doing is for the betterment of our children.

There are times I think this was an 'everybody else island' because I saw so many people coming here and enjoying opportunities that our children are not getting, but we're going to put the Cayman back in the Cayman Islands and we will do it together, because I know they'll keep us in check; and the group we have here, I know what our mission is — we campaigned on immigration and better opportunities for our children.

I also want to let the people know... the Deputy Leader of the Opposition talked about [passing] the baton forth — it has to start, but I feel finishing the race is what counts. We've gone out on a limb, but we're blessed in this country because each of us has never had to enlist in a service at 18 years old to go

fight for the country; but we've got to fight for it today. We are making some hard decisions, but they are the right decisions.

I ask and implore each Caymanian: the doors we open for them with what we're putting in place for immigration, that they go through those doors and strive to be their very best. We can create it, but we cannot make them do it. We're affording the opportunities and I welcome them all to take full advantage of it, because many people have come to this country and they have taken full advantage of the opportunities that are here. We are here to restore the protection for Cayman and Caymanians, and I know wholeheartedly that together, we will make that difference.

Like I said, I just couldn't let tonight go without saying a few words. I promise I'll sit down and be good for the rest of the night. I just thank you again for all your support in keeping us straight, and also for the Opposition. God bless you all, and have a good weekend.

[Desk thumping]

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]* If not, I'll invite the Mover, the Deputy Governor, to utilise her right to reply if she so chooses.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Tonight I've heard the expression, 'this is a historic moment' and I couldn't agree more. I am so grateful for Members of this honourable House's support for this Bill. Both to the Government bench, which upon coming into office were very quick to give their support to this proposal, and to Members of the Opposition who have given their support as well and recognise the sensitivity of dealing with this matter within our workforce.

There were some questions and comments raised that I think are worthy of clarifying on behalf of the listening public and, indeed, for Members of this honourable House. One matter that was raised by the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition related to concerns that the proposed provision for exemptions could be exercised by Cabinet. I think there were concerns about such decisions being taken in camera. I'd just like to say for the benefit of Members and the public that similar provisions exist now where the Cabinet can also take decisions regarding exemptions under the Immigration (Transition) Act, specifically under section 53 of that Act. This is something that is done today through Cabinet on the advice brought by the Minister responsible for Immigration, so this would be a similar type of provision for our civil service.

We understood the need for transparency, and so, the provisions that I have discussed tonight

have emphasised that the current policy proposals call for the publication of information on the use of exemptions, particularly annual statistics, to ensure that we are transparent about all the times that such exemptions are being used.

Another concern that has come up, and again, I thank the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition for voicing this, and it has come up in our consultations as well, is a concern that we won't be any better prepared at the end of this period if everyone who is employed with us now as a non-Caymanian has the same date that would become their term limit date.

Our teams have given very close consideration to this and there are a number of safeguards that we feel will allow us the ability to address this; the first of which, of course, is time. If we had this as a retroactive application, we'd have simply had no time to respond to the numbers of positions that would become vacant; however, with this future date, we have the ability to leverage our provisions, the first of which is the realisation that right now the average duration is 5.8 years.

The reason it is the average is because our civil service contracts are not nine-year contracts. By law, these contracts are only available up to a maximum of three years at a time. In practice, we issue those contracts for the majority of our non-Caymanian employees up to a maximum of two years at a time, even where there's a maximum available of up to three [years]. At every one of these contract renewals, there is the opportunity to take decisions and do workforce planning, a good part of which will be to assess both the availability of Caymanians to take up that position; and, if we decide to find other persons to take up those positions, the time to do so as well, so that we don't have all of those term limits coming due at the same time.

This is going to be a very significant risk that's going to require very active workforce planning and I can tell you that it is something that we are very much mindful of and developing our programmes for, chief of which is to prepare persons to take up those leadership positions, particularly where they are key managerial or technical positions.

The Honourable Member also recalled wanting to get to this day sooner and past debates, which I remember well—

[Laughter]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: —About the requirement to have certain positions designated as Caymanians only. If I recall the specifics, it named certain positions that would be designated that way. The simple truth is, sir, we were not ready at that time. I've shared with this honourable House, and for the benefit of the public, the significant headway that we have made in recent years in putting Caymanians into positions to take up leadership posi-

tions and the significant investments that have been made in training and development.

Through this project, as we were looking at where we were, we were quite pleased to find that in addition to the roles I shared, that are already held exclusively by Caymanians, there are over 130 roles held almost, or exclusively, by Caymanians, at 90 to 100 per cent. We are now in a much stronger position to be able to go forward with those types of provisions, having invested in training and development and created the pipelines to be able to fill those roles. As we look to positions such as our latest helicopter pilot, Captain Darren McLean, what we've seen is that sometimes, filling these positions take more than a decade of training — yet when Captain Darren McLean walks into a room, everyone stands at attention.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: The dedication he demonstrated in preparing himself for that role at a time when, frankly, we weren't sure how one prepared to be a helicopter pilot... His diligence has given us the blueprint so much so that the Commissioner of Police shared with me that there is now another young Caymanian — a woman, I would hasten to add — who has committed to set off on this journey.

[Desk thumping]

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Because of the diligence and perseverance of our Captain McLean, she will have a shorter path to getting there.

I'd also like to say, Mr. Speaker, that we recognise there are high-risk positions that we have to monitor very closely. Specifically within our police force, over the past couple of years there has been much focused attention when looking at our senior positions and our technical positions to ensure that we have a strategy and oversight for how those roles are being filled. The Police Service Commission, chaired by Her Excellency the Governor, to which the PoCS provides strategic HR support, has made significant strides.

We've been planning for this day, resulting in the promotion of our very capable Caymanian Commissioner and I think he realises, as all of us in this room do, that we do not own the seats that we have; we do not own the positions we have; we occupy them but for a brief time. If we are to truly celebrate tonight's success and all the promise it holds, we need to ensure that the persons who are holding these positions are onward training their Caymanian successors.

With that said, I can say the Commissioner of Police has been supporting the continued develop-

ment of senior Caymanian officers within the police who've been recently promoted to the ranks of both Chief Superintendent and Superintendent. Those men — and a woman, I would hasten to add again — are continuing to be developed and are given opportunities and exposure, including acting in senior roles, sometimes commissioned in other small territories. They are going overseas and undertaking months-long training in executive policing, and are also preparing by taking on significant projects and tasks within RCIPS to demonstrate that they are ready for their next step when that opportunity arises.

This work is already underway. It takes time. Sometimes there's a lag, but I would ask you that the successes that have been realised by the hard-working men and women across our civil service, Caymanians who've been stepping up to the call, that we will realise that we are making strides forward and they will continue to be more focused.

As I've said, it is our strong belief that term limits in and of themselves do not provide more jobs for Caymanians, but with the other measures we have mentioned today, those that are also going to be set out in the Regulations that will be coming before our Government and this Parliament to support in terms of human capital development within our civil service; and working in tandem with the Ministry responsible for Immigration, we will deliver on the promise that is held in the Bill we bring tonight.

I thank you all for your support and I thank the men and women across the civil service for their faithfulness in making sure that we make strides towards being a world class civil service, because our country deserves nothing less.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled Public Service Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025, be given a second reading. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Public Service Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was given a second reading.

COMMITTEE ON BILLS

The Speaker: The House will now go into committee.

House in Committee at 9:08 p.m.

The Chairman: The House is now in committee.

With the leave of the House, may I assume that as usual we should authorise the Honourable At-

torney General to correct minor errors and such in these Bills. Would the Clerk please state the Bill and read the clauses.

CHURCHES INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Clerk:

Clause 1	Short title and commencement
Clause 2	Repeal and substitution of section 4 - constitution of corporation
Clause 3	Repeal of section 5 - corporate seal
Clause 4	Amendment of section 8 - power of corporation
Clause 5	Amendment of section 9 - church property vested in corporation
Clause 6	Insertion of section 12A - assets and income of the Agape Family Worship Centre
Clause 7	Amendment of section 13 - definitions and interpretation in this Part
Clause 8	Amendment of section 15 - constitution of body corporate
Clause 9	Amendment of section 21 - vesting of property
Clause 10	Insertion of section 22A - assets and income of the Anglican Church of the Cayman Islands

The Chairman: Are there any questions on the clauses? *[Pause]* If not, I will put the question. The question is that clauses 1 to 10, do stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clauses 1 to 10 passed.

The Clerk:

Clause 11	Amendment of section 23 - trust upon which property held
Clause 12	Amendment of section 29 - definitions in this Part
Clause 13	Amendment of section 30 - creation of corporation and officers thereof
Clause 14	insertion of section 31A and 31B - bye-laws; liability
Clause 15	Amendment of section 32 - vesting of property
Clause 16	Amendment of section 33 - powers of corporation
Clause 17	Insertion of section 33A - assets and income of the Cayman Islands Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Clause 18	Amendment of section 37 - vesting property

- Clause 19 Amendment of section 38 - powers of corporation
- Clause 20 Amendment of section 45 - creation of corporation and officers thereof

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 11 through to 20? *[Pause]* If not, I will put the question. The question is that Clauses 11 to 20 do stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clauses 11 to 20 passed.

The Clerk:

- Clause 21 Repeal and substitution of section 46 - signing officers of corporation
- Clause 22 Amendment of section 47 - vesting of property
- Clause 23 Amendment of section 49 - definitions in this Part
- Clause 24 Amendment of section 50 - creation of corporation
- Clause 25 Insertion of section 50A - application of assets and income
- Clause 26 Amendment of section 51 - vesting a property
- Clause 27 Amendment of section 53 - appointment of officer
- Clause 28 Amendment of section 55 - definitions in this Part
- Clause 29 Amendment of section 63 - church property vested in corporation
- Clause 30 Amendment of section 65 - trusts upon which property held
- Clause 31 Amendment to section 70 - execution of deeds
- Clause 32 Amendment to section 72 - Evidence of acts
- Clause 33 Insertion of section 72A - assets and income
- Clause 34 Repeal and substitution of section 74 - Governor in Cabinet may amend by Order
- Clause 35 General amendments to the principal Act

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 21 to 35? *[Pause]* If there are no questions, I will put the question that clauses 21 to 35 do stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clauses 21 to 35 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Churches Incorporation Act (2007 Revision) to effect changes to the governance arrangement of the respective churches; to provide that income and assets of each church shall be applied exclusively for the furtherance of the church's purposes; and for incidental and connected purposes.

The Chairman: The question is that the title do stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Title passed.

The Chairman: The question is that the Bill be reported to the House. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Act, 2025 to be reported to the House.

VIRTUAL ASSET (SERVICE PROVIDERS) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Clerk:

- Clause 1 Short title and commencement
- Clause 2 Amendment of section 2 of the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) Act (2024 Revision) - interpretation

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 1 and 2? *[Pause]* If not, I will put the question. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 do stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) Act (2024 Revision) to change the definition of "issuance of virtual assets" or "virtual asset issuance"; and for incidental and connected purposes.

The Chairman: The question is that the title do stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Title passed.

The Chairman: The question is that the Bill be reported to the House. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Virtual Asset (Service Providers) (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to be reported to the House.

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Clerk:

Clause 1	Short title
Clause 2	Amendment of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision) - general amendment
Clause 3	Amendment of section 23 of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision) - strategic policy statement

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 1, 2 or 3? *[Pause]* If there are no questions, I will put the question. The question is that clauses 1, 2 and 3 do stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clauses 1, 2 and 3 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision); and for incidental and connected purposes.

The Chairman: The question is that the title do stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Title passed.

The Chairman: The question is that the Bill be reported to the House. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Public Management and Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to be reported to the House.

PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Clerk:

Clause 1	Short title and commencement
Clause 2	Amendment of section 2 of the Public Service Management Act (2018 Revision) - definitions and interpretation
Clause 3	Repeal and substitution of section 25 - powers of Portfolio of Civil Service
Clause 4	Amendment of section 67 - power to make regulations

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 1, 2, 3 or 4 on the Bill? *[Pause]* If not, I will put the question. The question is that clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4, stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Public Service Management Act (2018 Revision) to enhance information sharing in the civil service; to enable additional regulations to be made to govern the employment of non-Caymanians in the civil service; and for incidental and connected purposes.

The Chairman: The question is that the title do stand part of the Bill. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The title passed.

The Chairman: The question is that the Bill be reported to the House. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Public Service Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to be reported to the House.

The Chairman: That concludes the business in Committee.

House resumed at 9:22pm

The Speaker: The House will now resume.

REPORT ON BILLS

CHURCHES INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to report that a Bill shortly entitled the Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was considered by a committee of the whole House and passed without amendments.

VIRTUAL ASSET (SERVICE PROVIDERS) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to report that a Bill shortly entitled the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was considered by a committee of the whole House and passed without amendments.

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Finance.

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: Mr. Speaker, I have to report that the Public Management and Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was considered by a committee of the whole House and the Bill was passed without amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to report that a Bill entitled the Public Service Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was considered by a committee of the whole House and passed without amendment.

[Pause]

The Speaker: The bills have been reported and are now sat down for the third reading.

THIRD READINGS

CHURCHES INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

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

I beg to move that a Bill shortly entitled the Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a third reading and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a third reading and passed. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Churches Incorporation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was given a third reading and passed.

VIRTUAL ASSET (SERVICE PROVIDERS) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that a Bill shortly entitled the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a third reading and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Virtual Asset (Service Providers) (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a third reading and passed. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Virtual Asset (Service Providers) (Amendment) Bill 2025 was given a third reading and passed.

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Finance.

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Public Management and Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a third reading and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Public Management and Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a third reading and passed. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Public Management and Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was given a third reading and passed.

PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Governor.

Acting Deputy Governor, Hon. Gloria McField-Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that a Bill shortly entitled the Public Service Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a third reading and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Public Service Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be given a third reading and passed. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Public Service Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was given a third reading and passed.

The Speaker: That concludes the business on the Order Paper. I invite the Honourable Premier to move the Motion for adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

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

I thank all Members for the completion of the first Meeting. Thank you again, Mr. Speaker, for your vision to acknowledge young Caymanians — that was a special touch; and for allowing us to arrange this first Meeting, so the country could see all Members of Parliament working before the summer recess. Thank you, colleagues.

I now move that this House stand adjourned sine die.

The Speaker: The question is that this honourable House stands adjourned sine die. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

The House stands adjourned accordingly.

At 9:31pm the House stood adjourned sine die.