



PARLIAMENT
OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS



OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIFTH MEETING OF THE 2025-2026 SESSION

First Sitting

Wednesday
29 April, 2026
(Pages 1-52)

Hon. D. Ezzard Miller
Speaker

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PRESENT WERE:

Hon. D. Ezzard Miller
Speaker

MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

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

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Hon. Franz I. Manderson, MBE, Cert. Hon., JP	<i>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

Ms. Heather D. Boddén, OCl, Cert. Hon., JP, MP	Elected Member for Savannah
Hon. G. Wayne Panton, JP, MP	Elected Member for Newlands

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, JP, 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. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MP	Elected Member for Cayman Brac East
Mr. A. Roy Tatum, Cert. Hon., JP, MP	Elected Member for Red Bay
Mr. Roy M. McTaggart, JP, MP	Elected Member for George Town East

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, CCl, JP, MP	Elected Member for Boddén Town East
Mr. Christopher S. Saunders, JP, MP	Elected Member for Boddén Town West

APOLOGIES

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin, JP, MP	Minister of Finance & Economic Development <i>and</i> Education & Training
Hon. Pearlina L. McGaw-Lumsden, JP, MP	<i>Deputy Speaker</i> , Elected Member for George Town West
Mrs. Julie J. T. Hunter, JP, MP	Elected Member for West Bay West

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WEDNESDAY
29 APRIL, 2026
2:00PM
First Sitting

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

The Speaker: I now invite the Elected Member for Savannah to say prayers.

PRAYERS

Ms. Heather D. Bodden, Elected Member for Savannah: Let us pray.

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

Bless our Sovereign, King Charles III; William, Prince of Wales; and all the Royal Family. Give grace to all who exercise authority in our Commonwealth, that peace and happiness; truth and justice; religion and piety may be established among us. Especially we pray for the Governor of our Islands, the Premier, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Leader of the Opposition, Ministers of the Cabinet, ex officio Members 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 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. Parliament is now called to order.

**ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS
OR AFFIRMATIONS**

The Speaker: None.

**READING BY THE HONOURABLE
SPEAKER OF MESSAGES
AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Speaker: Good afternoon, everyone. I have apologies from the Honourable Rolston Anglin; the Honourable Pearlina McGaw-Lumsden, Deputy Speaker; and Mrs. Julie Hunter, all away on official business.

In keeping with my desire to have Parliament recognise Caymanians who have contributed to the building of this beloved country we enjoy but far too often take for granted, we have present with us today a great cross section of ladies who in their own special way have made outstanding contributions to Cayman's growth and development. This Parliament believes it is important to recognise your contributions and to record your names in the *Hansards* of this honourable House, in particular the moral and ethical compass you have applied to your contributions.

I see many familiar faces who have guided and counselled me over the years, to whom I will always be grateful. I offer my sincere and heartfelt thanks and appreciation for all that each of you have done to make Cayman a place that I am proud to call home and a place where I am comfortable raising my two beautiful daughters.

We have with us this evening — if you are not able to stand up, just raise your left hand — Ms. Darleen Ebanks.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Ms. Cecile Panton.
Ms. Melba Nixon.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Ms. Berna Cummins.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Ms. Marisa Crawford.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Ms. Ruth Ella Rankin.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Ms. Carmen Conolly.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Ms. Agnes McCoy.
Ms. Daphne Orrett.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Ms. Annie Multon.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Ms. Edith Webb-Stewart.
Ms. Bette Jefferson.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Ms. Eleanor Connolly.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: I've also received a number of regretful apologies by ladies who could not be present today for various reasons but who expressed their delight and appreciation for having been invited.

I want to especially thank the Member for Savannah for all her efforts to get each of you here today. Once again, please accept my thanks for your service.

I now invite the Premier, followed by the Leader of the Opposition, followed by the Member for Savannah, and after that any other Member who wishes to make a few remarks to these ladies.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks, Minister of Financial Services & Commerce, Elected Member for West Bay South: Good afternoon and thank you Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Government to echo your sentiments. Your vision to incorporate this type of recognition in Parliament is proving again and again to not only be a worthy endeavour, but a meaningful and touching endeavour. In this case, Mr. Speaker, for all the names called in attendance or who may still be at home or elsewhere, I agree with you; I can look across and see those who've had an impression on my life and I'm sure other Members feel quite the same way.

Thank each and every one of you for your contributions to our fantastic, beloved Cayman Islands. May the Lord bless each and every one of you and help us continue to remember where we came from and where we need to take the Cayman Islands from strength to strength.

Thank you. God bless you.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

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

Mr. Speaker, it is certainly my pleasure to rise to welcome these wonderful ladies, and one gentleman, in the gallery today to be with us. Your presence reminds us that the strength of our Islands was built on your years of service and in particular during the time that our men went to sea. We're happy to have you here and we're especially honoured to recognise a former parliamentarian, Ms. Daphne, here with us today. You're always welcome and it is always great to see you.

[Desk thumping]

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: Your contributions to this Parliament form a part of the foundation upon which we now stand, Ms. Daphne, and we thank you.

On behalf of the Opposition and the entire Parliament, I'd like to welcome you all and hopefully this will not be the last time we see you. Thank you and God bless.

The Speaker: Member for Savannah.

Ms. Heather D. Bodden: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is so beautiful this afternoon to see such joyful smiling faces among us. I'm closely acquainted with each and every one of these ladies and gentlemen here and I wish to thank each one for being here today. You have each made an impact in my life and I want you to understand and realise that I am so grateful for that. I love you all. Today you're being honoured and we wish to see you all back here someday again.

Thank you.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: [Deputy] Leader of the Opposition

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

Let me start off by first echoing the previous comments by the Honourable Premier, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the honourable Member for Savannah; but I really want to highlight you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing this to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I'm young enough to not fully comprehend the many sacrifices these ladies have made so that I, as a young Caymanian, can live in one of the best countries in the world and I thank each and every one of you for your sacrifices. It's examples like this that you have delivered today, recognising them at the highest level of publicity because there are so many unsung heroes in our community. I know I recognise a

couple of the faces and they know who I am, we have a good enough relationship in that respect, but on behalf of George Town Central and on behalf of all members of the People's Progressive Movement, I thank you for what you have done and I promise to continue your hard work to make the Cayman Islands the best place in the world.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Cayman Brac East.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, Elected Member for Cayman Brac East: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, let me just clearly and succinctly place it on the record of this House my utmost appreciation to your good self for your vision in inviting members of our Caymanian community from across the various stratification within this jurisdiction.

However, Mr. Speaker—and I pause purposely to get your attention once you finish your communication, not because what I was saying wasn't important, but for this I want your full attention. I am going to invite you in your visionary outputs, and perhaps input from Cayman Brac East and by extension my colleague from Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman, to have at least one, if not more, parliamentary sessions in Cayman Brac so that we can also recognise our outstanding women in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

[Desk thumping]

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Of course if you want to do that by extension, because a number of these are mature citizens and have difficulty navigating the roundabouts and the traffic from the eastern districts, perhaps North Side, East End and Bodden Town could get together and do a similar exercise as the Cayman Brac and Little Cayman request.

On a more serious note, I also extend my appreciation, Mr. Speaker, to certainly all of the women here whom I recognise and fully appreciate their most valuable contribution, not only to their household but to their communities. Each of them has worked in a very exemplary fashion in their community and in some way or another their modality has been to reach out and touch their neighbour and their neighbour's children.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure you would concur with me, as well as my honourable colleagues within this honourable House, each one of them fully understood the godly principle of "love your neighbours as yourself". You and I are from the era where we went next door and they didn't have to get 9-1-1 or human rights permission, if you were not behaving, they could get out that tamarind switch or any other switch after you, and you fully appreciated that. I think that is what resulted in well-rounded Caymanians and taught us to welcome those to our shores.

On behalf of all of the persons within my constituency and the House in general, we want to mark this day down as yet another special day based on your efforts and the consent of honourable Members, and for the valiant attempt. It's not easy to come to George Town on most days, but for those persons who've retired, who've contributed, who have worked and are still working to take the time to dress up and put on their Sunday best, put on their hats and dress like how Caymanian women used to dress many years ago and come out to be a part of this democratic process really tells me that your whole idealism, Mr. Speaker, for participatory democracy is alive and well; and this is yet another example of that.

I thank you once again on behalf of this side and the side opposite.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? If not, I will just tell you that originally the group was 50-odd people, so we had to divide it in two. We had 20-plus coming today and 20-plus coming tomorrow, so tomorrow we have another cohort of ladies who have contributed that will come in the morning to attend as well.

Thank you all very much. Feel free to leave whenever you want to go. You don't have to sit here until the House is adjourned; I know that those chairs in the back can be very uncomfortable to sit in, so we will not be insulted, but the longer you stay, the better these people are going to behave, so it makes my job a lot easier.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: Thank you all again and God bless all of you and your families. Thank you.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Speaker: None.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

2025 Cayman Islands Public and Affordable Housing Policy and 10-Year Strategic Plan

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks, Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing & Infrastructure, Elected Member for North Side: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House the Public and Affordable Housing Policy and 10-Year Strategic Plan.

The Speaker: So ordered.

Does the Honourable Minister wish to speak thereto?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Absolutely, sir, and I promise to be on my best behaviour.

The Speaker: Good. *[Laughter]*

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, today is not just a routine day in this honourable House, today is a turning point. Today is about the future of Caymanians across each district of the Cayman Islands. Today is about whether our people can continue to live, to raise families and retire in a land that carries their name. Today, Mr. Speaker, I rise with conviction and pride and a firm sense of purpose because today I table the Cayman Islands' first Public and Affordable Housing Policy and 10-Year Strategic Plan. Its core mission is ensuring that every Caymanian has access to safe, affordable and sustainable housing.

From the outset, my priorities have been to address the evolving housing needs of our people, and this policy and plan provides the robust long-term framework necessary to turn that vision into a lasting reality for our Islands.

Mr. Speaker, Caymanians came to me with real worries. They spoke openly about rising rents, overcrowded homes and the growing fear that homeownership was slipping further and further out of their reach. Their fears were real; their voices were clear.

Mr. Speaker, in 2023 my Ministry acted, we launched this initiative because Caymanians could not wait any longer. It made a commitment then and I stand here today in my second term even more determined that housing would not be treated as a secondary issue. It would be a priority, it would be our responsibility, and it would be our duty.

Mr. Speaker, this policy and this plan are the result of years of focused work led by the exceptional team at the Ministry of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure, a team I have driven with purpose since my first term, determined that Caymanians would not be left behind. This is a Ministry that listens, analyses, engages, and never once stepped back from the challenge put before them.

This work reflects one of the most extensive social consultation exercises ever undertaken in the Cayman Islands. More than 1,000 residents participated, over 120 key informative interviews were conducted and 1,216 survey responses were received. We held town halls in Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac, involving [those] from Little Cayman. Our consultants spent days on the ground listening to real stories, real concerns and real experiences. The message was decisive, the scale of the challenge is real and the urgency is undeniable.

Mr. Speaker, the Cayman Islands is already short by over 3,000 homes. There are many

Caymanian families waiting for an affordable home. Our population demands 5,000 additional units within the next 15 years. To close this gap, we must triple affordable construction for the next decade and double it again after that.

These are not abstract predictions, this is the experience of Caymanian families. Housing determines whether Caymanians remain or leave; housing determines whether families rise or fall; housing determines whether our young people can see a future here in the Cayman Islands. This policy and this plan respond directly to the reality. They deliver a national vision grounded in Caymanian dignity, shaped by Caymanian experience and designed to secure Caymanians' future.

They set out 98 accountable recommendations supported by the clear accountability, measurable indicators and realistic timelines. This is a ministry-driven strategy. This is the blueprint for generational action.

Mr. Speaker, the first priority is immediate action, building more homes, faster. Caymanians have waited long enough. This policy speaks directly to reviewing and implementing a system that makes it quicker, easier and more affordable to develop housing. Our recommendations include streamlining permits, establishing a statutory timeline, increasing the capacity through the pre-approved house plans and fast-tracking affordable housing projects.

Mr. Speaker, we are proposing a framework to reduce development costs and allow for "as-of-right" approvals where they serve the specific needs of Caymanians. Some of these advancements will require legislative amendments and the standard approval process. Our direction is clear. We are committed to removing the unnecessary barriers. The system must change because Caymanians need homes now.

Mr. Speaker, the next priority is affordability. Caymanians must have a fair chance in their own home country. This policy strengthens and coordinates our housing functions through the creation of the housing authority empowered to acquire land, deliver homes and support Caymanians directly. Shared equity pathways, lease-to-own models, mortgage guarantees, down payment supports and energy efficient incentives form a box of tools that finally meets the real conditions faced by our people. Measures addressing vacancies and market distortion provide balance and stability. Mr. Speaker, affordability cannot remain defined by the highest bidder. Affordability must be defined by the everyday Caymanian.

The long-term priority is the futureproofing of our island. Sustainable growth and resilience require strategic planning. This includes updating the National Development Plan, implementing plan areas across the districts, supporting mixed-use communities, increasing density where appropriate and strengthening their resilience, investing in infrastructure and supporting higher paid Caymanian jobs. This is how we build a Cayman that withstands the pressure, embraces the

opportunities and protects its people long into the future.

Mr. Speaker, this policy reflects on every district in our Islands. To North Side, your stories helped shape this work from the beginning; to East End, Bodden Town, George Town and West Bay, your needs guided our solutions; to Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, your uniqueness and your realities were not placed in the appendix, they're woven into the heart of the policy and the plan.

Mr. Speaker, housing must reflect who we are, our culture, our families and our sense of place. Mr. Speaker, let me speak plainly. Housing is not about concrete and paperwork, housing is about people. It is about Caymanian workers who give everything to this economy and still struggle to secure a place to sleep. It is about the apprentice building a multimillion-dollar home he could never dream of living in. It is about the families squeezed into a single bedroom while development rises around them. It is about the frontline workers who serve this country, day after day, yet cannot secure a stable rental. It is about the seniors who spent their lives building Cayman and now feel the ground shifting beneath their feet.

Mr. Speaker, these Caymanians are the heart of this policy and this plan. Real people, real families, real communities.

Mr. Speaker, let me address the criticism directly. Some will say density threatens our way of life. I say that density guided by area plans, protects Caymanian neighbourhoods and keeps families together. Some will say the cost is too high. I say the cost of doing nothing is far higher. The cost is being paid every day by Caymanian families [and] those who call Cayman home. Some would say the Ministry is taking [on] too much. I say Caymanians deserve a leadership that steps forward, not steps aside. Some will say developers will suffer. I say developers gain clarity, predictability, faster approvals and a stronger, more stable environment. Some will say we only need more houses. I say houses alone will not fix the crisis unless we fix the system around them.

Housing sits within infrastructure, access, planning and fairness. Mr. Speaker, the cost of inaction is served. If this House fails to act, more Caymanians will leave, more families will break under pressure, more land will be lost and more opportunities will slip away.

Mr. Speaker, inaction is not an option I will ever accept. The Ministry of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure stands firm in its commitment. We began this work in 2023. We advanced it even stronger and resolved it in 2025. We listened, we engaged, we built this policy, we shaped this plan and we stand ready to deliver. Our mission is clear: Empowering Caymanians for today, tomorrow, and future generations.

Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the Cabinet's approval, I now formally table the Cayman Islands Public and Affordable Housing Policy and 10-Year

Strategic Plan. This has been a journey since assuming this responsibility, but I have carried the hopes and the housing needs of the Caymanian people as one of my highest priorities.

I thank you.

2024 Annual Report Cayman Islands National Attractions Authority - *Safeguarding our National Treasures for future generations*

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier, Minister of Tourism and Trade Development.

Hon. Gary B. Rutty, Deputy Premier, Minister of Tourism & Trade Development, Elected Member for George Town South: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House the 2024 Annual Report of the Cayman Islands National Attractions Authority.

The Speaker: So ordered.

Does the Honourable Minister wish to speak thereto?

Hon. Gary B. Rutty, Deputy Premier: No, thank you Mr. Speaker.

OfReg Annual Report 2024

Hon. Nickolas T. A. DaCosta, Minister of District Administration & Home Affairs, Elected Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House the Annual Report for 2024 for URCO, Utility Regulation and Competition Office.

The Speaker: So ordered.

Does the Honourable Minister wish to speak thereto?

Hon. Nickolas T. A. DaCosta: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Office of the Auditor General issued an unmodified audit opinion on the financial statements of URCO for the year ended 31st December, 2024. The audit opinion confirmed that the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position and performance of URCO in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards. No emphasis of matter was included in the audit report.

During the 2024 Financial Year, URCO continued to discharge its statutory mandate as the independent multi-sector regulator for the energy, fuels, information and communications technology and water sectors, with a strong focus on consumer protection, regulatory compliance, market transparency, and institutional strengthening.

Operationally, 2024 was a year of significant regulatory delivery and organisational transition for

URCO. Following a change in executive leadership in June 2024, URCO maintained continuity of operations while advancing a broad regulatory agenda across all sectors. Key achievements in the energy sector included approval of the Caribbean Utilities Company (CUC) 2024–2028 Capital Investment Plan, approval of a 20 megawatt utility scale Battery Energy Storage System, issuance of a request for proposals for a 23 megawatt dispatchable solar and battery project, completion of the draft Value of Solar study, and the rejection of proposed electricity rate increases that were assessed as not being in the best interests of consumers. URCO also provided technical and policy support to government in advancing the objectives of the National Energy Policy.

In the fuel sector, URCO finalised and published the national standard for Ethanol Blended Gasoline, otherwise known as E85; expanded fuel sampling and quality testing through the use of in-house analysers; completed multiple consultations on national fuel quality standards; and commenced regular reporting of retail prices to enhance consumer transparency. A pilot initiative with an industry wholesaler was also undertaken to strengthen oversight of fuel pricing and market behaviour.

In the ICT sector, URCO significantly strengthened compliance and enforcement activity. This included—

- audits of maritime radio licences resulting in the recovery of approximately US\$54,000 in outstanding fees;
- enforcement action in respect of expired spectrum licences, generating approximately CI\$22,000 in back fees;
- modernisation of spectrum management frameworks;
- issuance of draft determinations on infrastructure sharing; and
- public consultation on a framework for licensing satellite-based telecommunications providers.

URCO also represented the Cayman Islands internationally on internet governance matters and was recognised regionally for leadership in spectrum management.

Progress was also made in the water sector with continued work alongside government to finalise the concession and licensing framework for Cayman Water Company, aimed at establishing appropriate rate mechanisms and service standards to safeguard consumer interests.

URCO undertook a focused restructuring exercise during the year, resulting in the recruitment of key executive and technical roles to strengthen regulatory capacity. As at 31st December, 2024 the office employed 25 staff members.

Financially, URCO recorded total income of \$6.47 million in 2024, which was derived primarily from

regulatory and licensing fees and services provided to government. Operating expenditure totalled \$5.6 million resulting in a surplus of \$782,000 for the year. The total assets increased to \$12.75 million, net worth rose to \$7.49 million and cash and cash equivalents increased materially, supported by positive operating cash flows of \$3.67 million.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the substantive Minister for Finance and Economic Development and myself personally, I would like to thank the staff and management of URCO for their hard work during the 2024 Financial Year, and I look forward to future successes in the years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Office of the Ombudsman – Own-Motion Investigation – Cayman Islands Detention Centre

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

Honourable Minister, there are a number of reports relating to this same subject, if you want to table them at once, just make sure you read out the title for them. I think that would be expedient for the work of the House.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Thank you for that, sir.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House, the Office of the Ombudsman – Own-Motion Investigation – Cayman Island Detention Centre.

The Speaker: So ordered.

Office of the Ombudsman – Special Report to Parliament made under section 18(3) of the Complaints (Maladministration) Act (2018 Revision)

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House, Office of the Ombudsman – Special Report to Parliament made under section 18(3) of the Complaints (Maladministration) Act (2018 Revision).

The Speaker: So ordered.

2024-2025 Annual Report of the Standing Select Committee to Oversee the Performance of the Office of the Ombudsman

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House, the [Annual] Report of the Standing Select Committee to Oversee the Performance of the Office of the Ombudsman, 2024-2025.

The Speaker: So ordered.

2025-2026 Annual Report of the Standing Select Committee to Oversee the Performance of the Office of the Ombudsman

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House, the 2025-2026 Annual Report of the Standing Select Committee to Oversee the Performance of the Office of the Ombudsman.

The Speaker: So ordered.

Does the Honourable Minister wish to speak to any of the reports?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, all of those reports are self-explanatory, sir.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Development and Planning (Amendment) Regulations, 2026

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House, the Development and Planning (Amendment) Regulations, 2026.

The Speaker: So ordered.

Does the Honourable Minister wish to speak to them or are you going to wait on the debate?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Briefly, sir.

The Speaker: Okay.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, these regulations represent a focus on necessary updates to the development and planning framework. They are targeted, they are deliberate and they address specific gaps that have become evident in the system.

First, the regulations remove the discretion to grant variances from the prescribed coastal setback requirements based on the high-water mark. This brings greater consistency and clarity, and it ensures that coastal development is assessed against the clear established standards. Mr. Speaker, what I want to be very, very clear on this point is that the amendments do not weaken the protection, they strengthen the consistency and remove the ambiguity to ensure that the decisions are made against clear, established standards rather than variable discretion.

Mr. Speaker, our coastline is one of our most important and treasured national assets. These regulations support its protection through clarity, not uncertainty.

Second, the regulations introduce minimum road width requirements for subdivisions and

developments, where the creation of six or more lots and new roads must meet a defined minimum standard. This is about access, this is about safety, and this is about ensuring that infrastructure keeps pace with development.

Mr. Speaker, these changes are grounded in three principles: consistency, public safety and orderly development. They provide certainty to developers, they support better decision making and they ensure that the system operates in a fair and transparent way, aligning with national priorities. This is also about strengthening the alignment between planning and infrastructure. Development cannot happen in isolation; road access and connectivity must be considered at the outset. The regulations ensure that this happens.

Importantly, transitional provisions are included, and applications already in process will continue to be assessed under this existing framework to ensure fairness and avoid disruption.

Mr. Speaker, these are practical changes. They're grounded in experience, they're reflecting the government's commitment on strengthening the system that supports sustainable national development. Real people, real communities and real outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, I commend these regulations and table this in this honourable House, sir.

URGENT QUESTIONS

The Speaker: None.

PREMIER'S QUESTIONS

The Speaker: None.

QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT

QUESTION NO. 102 WHETHER ANY FLOOD-RISK OR DRAINAGE CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN FOR THE RED BAY AND PROSPECT AREAS

The Speaker: Honourable elected Member for Red Bay.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask the Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure question No. 102: Can the Honourable Minister advise whether any flood risk or drainage capacity assessments have been undertaken for the Red Bay and our sister Prospect areas, and what measures, if any, the Government is considering or planning to mitigate flooding risks affecting residents in those areas?

Thank you.

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, flood-risk and drainage capacity assessments have been undertaken for the Red Bay and Prospect areas through ongoing monitoring of flood patterns and site-specific drainage conditions. These areas are low-lying, and the Ministry, through the National Roads Authority, continues to assess system performance as part of its infrastructure management programme.

To mitigate flooding risks, works have been implemented between 2024 and 2026, including the installation of 21 drainage wells across the Red Bay and Prospect areas, along with culvert systems to support controlled stormwater outflow during periods of heavy rainfall. These interventions form part of ongoing infrastructure improvements to strengthen drainage capacity and reduce flood impacts for residents in these communities.

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Red Bay.

Supplementaries

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Just one follow up, sir. I thank the Member for that.

Is the government considering anything other than these measures with regard to flooding in what is, as you've said, a very low-lying area? There are other areas of Grand Cayman that have this risk, but is there anything else ongoing with regard to consideration for controlling the risks of flooding? I'm thinking of possibly when government does road building, [if they've looked at] the impacts of that, or through what happens with Planning when new properties are built and the impact that that has on the surrounding areas.

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I started off by promising I'm going to be good, so I'm going to keep on that. I know Member Bryan is watching me.

Mr. Speaker, we understand that flooding is not just in the Red Bay and Prospect area. We know we have areas like [the] Randyke area, we know about the Cumber and Belford areas in Bodden Town. We know we have other locations, but we continue to try to do as many little improvements as we can and continue to monitor many of these areas, especially the low-lying areas. We know the area, Washington Boulevard — I think that's its proper name — that's an area where we recently cleared the culverts and down along the Esterley Tibbetts Highway to allow that water to be able to get out directly.

There are ongoing measures every year. What we do — we wait and see how it's been improved and how we can continue to assist. We were just talking again about putting in a lift station and trying them in some of the worst [affected] low lying areas to be able to move the water much faster. Those are projects that we'll be looking at in the future, not just for Red Bay and Prospect, but Randyke and other locations too.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: I just want to thank the Member for that. I have some other concerns, but I'll address them to him personally. Thank you.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Member for George Town Central.

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

Just a quick notification to the Honourable Minister in question. First, I want to start off by saying thank you to the Honourable Minister for assisting with some flood adjustments in the Central Scranton area. He and his team have been working really hard down there so I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank him.

My question now is to whether the Minister has considered, I think they're called gullies. It is quite like a little bit of a valley on the edge of the road so that when water comes off of properties they go to this gully which leads to where drains are, because you can't have drains all the way. You may see some of this infrastructure strategy at the Camana Bay location, which helps with the flow of water because you can put a drain only so many times. I'm wondering if the Minister can say whether that's something the National Roads Authority is considering in their floodwater management solution.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, what I can say is the swales that Member Bryan is asking about, we do a lot of them now. Much of the roadworks that NRA is doing, all of our highways, you'll see the swales and how water is actually able to run from one drain to the other drain, so if it doesn't catch in the first one it's able to pass over to the other one. This is something that we've been doing for quite some time. The bigger problem is, to be able to implement what you're talking about requires areas where we use sidewalks, where we can add the drain in the sidewalk and the curbing alongside that to allow that.

When Island Paving is actually building our roads, they put a pitch on most of the roads to be able to carry that water to the next location where they need to get it as best as they can. Now do we get it right all the time? No, but what we do is we try our best to make

sure that we do get it right, and where we do feel that we don't get it right, we usually come and put a drain back in that one location. What happens sometimes is we'll put a drain in a certain location, but the water table will be so high there that we need to move it down a little bit further to be able to help assist that one.

Thus, the system that you're asking is something that we've been doing for years on the main highways and anywhere we put sidewalks to be able to move the flow of water.

The Speaker: Member for George Town Central.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank the Honourable Minister for that comprehensive answer. Thank you for identifying the infrastructure I was speaking about, they're called swales.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Minister say that they do it on highways and where there are sidewalks. Can the Honourable Minister say whether that is something that is being considered for neighbourhoods where residential homes are and also, is that a policy for when new roads are being implemented and when upgrades to roads are being done; and if not, would he consider to do so?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, that is a policy that NRA takes when they're building roads, but it's not a policy for small developments to be able to do this design. Usually you'll see this design actually work if small developments are putting sidewalks in their development; that particular type of style that you're asking about works for that kind of location.

What I will say, if it's something that you think that we should be looking at... What we're trying to do is reduce the costs on developments for affordable housing, but again, I'm happy for the Member to bring a motion to the House. If he thinks that's something that Planning needs to look at in the future and be able to address that into the planning needs, we can have a healthy debate on that and see whether it's something that we should consider.

The Speaker: Member for Bodden Town East.

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

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Honourable Minister if the NRA department has ordered any more vacuum trucks or suction trucks.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I just want to clarify, you're talking about the vacuum trucks to be able to clean the wells or the ones that pick up the litter?

[Inaudible response]

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: The drain wells? What I can say is that we're looking at placing some orders now for some trucks because there are some older fleets that we need to replace and a couple more that they want to get, so we are looking into that for this year.

The Speaker: Next question.

**QUESTION NO. 103
PLANNING APPROVALS GRANTED FOR
COMMERCIAL OR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS
WITHIN AREAS ZONED LOW DENSITY
RESIDENTIAL IN THE RED BAY CONSTITUENCY
SINCE 2020**

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask the Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure question No. 3 *[sic]*: Can the Honourable Minister advise how many planning approvals granted by the Central Planning Authority within areas zoned Low Density Residential in the Red Bay constituency since 2020, by year, have been for commercial or mixed-use developments?

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr Speaker, a total of five planning approvals have been granted by the Central Planning Authority since 2020 for commercial or mixed-use development within areas zoned Low Density Residential in the Red Bay constituency.

By year, these approvals are as follows:

- 2020 – 0;
- 2021 – 2;
- 2022 – 2;
- 2023 – 0;
- 2024 – 0;
- 2025 – 1; and
- 2026 (First Quarter) – 0.

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Red Bay.

Supplementary

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, sir. Through you, sir, can I ask the Honourable Minister if he has the locations of those? If he doesn't, then I would be happy to get them in writing from him.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, at the moment I do not have the locations of those mixed-use developments but I'm happy to give it to him in writing.

QUESTION NO. 104
PLANNING APPROVALS GRANTED FOR
DEVELOPMENTS CONTAINING MORE THAN TWO
RESIDENTIAL UNITS ON A SINGLE PARCEL
WITHIN AREAS ZONED LOW DENSITY
RESIDENTIAL IN THE RED BAY CONSTITUENCY
SINCE 2020

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Red Bay.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask the Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure question No. 104: Can the Honourable Minister advise how many planning approvals granted by the Central Planning Authority, specifically within areas zoned Low Density Residential in the Red Bay constituency, by year since 2020, have been developments containing more than two residential units on a single parcel?

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

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

Mr Speaker, a total of 22 planning approvals have been granted by the Central Planning Authority since 2020 for developments containing more than two residential units on a single parcel within areas zoned Low Density Residential in the Red Bay constituency.

By year, these approvals are as follows:

- 2020 – 3;
- 2021 – 9;
- 2022 – 3;
- 2023 – 1;
- 2024 – 2;
- 2025 – 4; and
- 2026 (First Quarter) – 0.

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Supplementaries

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

Mr. Speaker, as before, if the Member has the locations of these developments; if not, could he give his commitment to give it to me in writing?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Yes, sir. [Mr. Speaker, I'll put it in writing back to him.](#)

The Speaker: It is really outside of the bounds of the question, but it's up to you. Okay.

Honourable Member for Red Bay.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Thank you, sir, just one final [question]. If you don't have this, I'll accept it in writing as well

if you're able to. In terms of any permissions that are still pending or were refused, if you have that available, if you could give it to me as well. Thank you.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: [Mr. Speaker, I'll happily do so, sir.](#)

QUESTION NO. 105
TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTUAL RESIDENTIAL
UNITS APPROVED THROUGH MULTI-UNIT
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE RED
BAY CONSTITUENCY SINCE 2020

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

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

I rise to ask the Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture and Housing question No. 105: Can the Honourable Minister advise how many planning applications for multi-unit residential developments (including townhouses and apartments) have been approved within the Red Bay constituency since 2020, by year, and the total number of actual residential units approved through those applications?

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, when I put this back in writing to the Member for Red Bay, I'll make sure to add that FOI (freedom of information) email address to that so he can actually do some of this research himself.

Mr Speaker, a total of 44 planning applications for multi-unit residential developments have been approved within the Red Bay constituency since 2020, representing a total of 216 residential units.

By year, these approvals are as follows:

- 2020 – 7 approvals (21 units);
- 2021 – 12 approvals (65 units);
- 2022 – 9 approvals (34 units);
- 2023 – 5 approvals (11 units);
- 2024 – 5 approvals (26 units);
- 2025 – 6 approvals (59 units); and
- 2026 (First Quarter) – 0 approvals (0 units).

The Speaker: Member for Red Bay.

Supplementary

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for that. I could do an FOI, sir, but this is far, far faster. Thank you.

As before, sir, if the Member would be willing to provide me with the locations and as I also asked previously, any applications that may be pending or that were refused. Thank you.

The Speaker: Honourable Member, in fairness to the Minister, if you want that kind of information, you should put it in the original question. I think to add it [as a supplementary] puts the Minister at a disadvantage of not being able to answer it. In the future, include the information that you want in the questions that you're asking.

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

The Speaker: Next question.

**QUESTION NO. 106
THE AVERAGE TIME FOR A RESIDENTIAL HOME
APPLICATION TO BE PROGRESSED THROUGH
THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask question No. 106 in my name to the Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure. Can the Honourable Minister provide data on the average time for a residential home application to be progressed through the Department of Planning, from initial submission to final approval?

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I am reliably informed that, based on data from Q1 2024 to Q1 2026, the average time for a residential planning application to progress from submission to planning approval is 154 days (approximately 5.1 months). Applications approved administratively take an average of 121 days (approximately 4.0 months).

I am further informed that the average time for a permit application to progress to permit issuance is 157 days (approximately 5.2 months).

The average time from application submission to permit issuance is therefore 311 days (approximately 10.4 months). These timelines reflect the full statutory planning process, including technical review, inter-agency consultation, and compliance requirements applied to each application.

The Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Supplementary

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for the response. I don't think there were many surprises in his response, but I accept where he said he was reliably informed.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: That's right!

[Laughter]

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, can I ask the Honourable Minister, if the department has any service standards or target timelines, and if they do, what are those?

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, just so that I don't speak out of turn, [I would prefer to put that back in writing to the Member for George Town North.](#)

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition is that acceptable to you, in writing?

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for that.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would undertake to get us that response sometime between now and Friday. I think it's important for us to compare the numbers he's given us today to what their target timelines are, so I would appreciate that, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, my man from the North, I can't give no guarantee on that. I got a lot of work here, but I will try my best.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Member for George Town Central.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker, conflict has already started, unfortunately. There's a procedure by way of supplementaries and you know supplementaries are going to come. I think what the Honourable Leader has requested is something within reason, particularly because we have another Bill that will be debated on Friday, and if we can't get the relevant information to have a conscious contribution to the discussion about the Bill, I think the Official Opposition would be at a disadvantage.

The Speaker: Honourable Member, you have a question?

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

The Speaker: Please ask the question.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Can the Honourable Minister give a concerted effort to get us the information? I know he has a really strong team that he talks about, which I support, who can get us that information by Friday morning.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister, I think you answered that question a minute ago.

Any other questions?

Member for Cayman Brac East.

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

Supplementary to the Honourable Minister of Planning, I wish to go on the record to thank the Honourable Minister for giving us the badly needed inspector to expedite the process on the Brac, but I wonder if you could now give an undertaking to see what has now plugged up that process by the new requirement of having to come back to Cayman for that inspector to get the green light. Thank you.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, when your teacher speaks to you, you do as you're told. *I promise to get that figured out and [back] to her by tomorrow morning.*

The Speaker: Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Member for George Town Central.

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

The Honourable Minister has mentioned in previous sittings of the honourable House where there are intentions to make some upgrades and improvements within the Planning Department that may help in the timeline component. Is the Minister able to give us any updates on those plans to improve the efficiency of the Planning Department?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, can I just tell the Member for George Town Central to just sit and stay tuned. It will soon be here.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since we're in class, I don't mind if the Honourable Minister gives us a definition of the word "soon". Does that mean two months, a year, a week, this sitting? Mr. Speaker, I'm just trying to ask for a timeline, sir.

The Speaker: I think you're travelling outside the bounds of the question.

Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One final question from me.

Can I ask the Honourable Minister if he is satisfied with the timelines that it's taking from the submission of an application to final planning approval?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, after I answer that can I put back a question sir?

[Laughter]

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I am pretty sure there's no one in this House who agrees with that timeline, and would love to improve on it. Every one of us in here wants to improve that timeline.

Earlier, in the 10-year strategic plan that we had for housing, we spoke about how we're trying to improve that, how we want to bring up that timeline. We don't want people to have to wait. I would love to get it to where you don't have to wait any longer than three months; but we have entities that we have to work with, so we need to figure out what we need to do to allow this to work, to cut down that 10 months that I've been reliably informed of.

However, I'm always happy for the Member for George Town North, as the previous Minister of Planning, to help us out in any [way] that he feels fit whereby we can work to be able to cut that time frame down in any direction. I'm happy to bring you on, sir.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: If you want to come over, you can come over.

The Speaker: Next item of business, Madam Clerk.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Speaker: None.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The Speaker: None.

OBITUARY AND OTHER CEREMONIAL SPEECHES

The Speaker: I have received a request by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Member for George Town Central to mention a couple of his constituents.

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

Mr. Speaker, it's with great sadness that I offer on behalf of the Official Opposition our sympathies to the family of John Franklin McField. Most of us in this honourable House and in the public will remember him as Frankie. He worked at AL Thompson's for many decades and was a familiar face with the Thompson family. On behalf of the Official Opposition, we send out our

sympathies to his mother, Ms. Cootsie and his many children.

Also, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Official Opposition, and I'm certain we can say on behalf of all Members of this honourable House, our sympathies to [the family of] Mr. Stanley Peter Wight. A well-known, strong Caymanian individual who could light up any room, make anybody laugh even if you didn't know him. Unfortunately, he passed on April 18th and as you are familiar, he's a family member of one of our past legislators and I do think he may have some family connections to some of the current ones. On behalf of the Official Opposition to the Wight family, our hearts, our prayers and our sympathies are with you, and may God give you the strength to understand the decisions that the good Lord has made.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to end my contributions under this section of the Order Paper with something more positive. Today is my Aunt Madge's birthday. I dare not say how old she is because I would get a proper behind whooping. Just to say, Aunt Madge, I love you. Happy birthday to you today; also, to highlight the mother of Frankie who just passed, Ms. Cootsie who just celebrated 90 wonderful years on God's green earth.

The Bible speaks about three score and ten, to serve another double 10 on top of that, I know she's very grateful. The Honourable Leader and I had an opportunity to go sit with her and enjoy some quality time and the Lord is blessing her to keep her strong, to understand the blessings of having another year on earth but at the same time, mourning the passing of her son. Happy 90th birthday to Ms. Cootsie. Thank you.

The Speaker: Member for Savannah.

Ms. Heather D. Bodden: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to add to the list of the families who have lost loved ones; Mr. Peter Wight, who resided in the community of Savannah; Mr. Benji Bodden, my cousin; Mr. Philippe Bush; Ms. Lorene Ryan; Mr. Oscar DaCosta, a family Member; Mr. Hedley Robinson; and Mrs. Fay Whittaker. We send heartfelt condolences to each of their families.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government, we have other condolences, but we'll save that for Friday.

RAISING OF MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE

The Speaker: None.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS

FIRST READINGS

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: The Bill is deemed to have been read a first time and is set down for a second reading.

AUDITORS OVERSIGHT (AMENDMENT, VALIDATION AND REPEAL) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: The Bill is deemed to have been read a first time and is set down for a second reading.

HEALTH PRACTICE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: The Bill is deemed to have been read a first time and is set down for a second reading.

PARLIAMENT (MANAGEMENT) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: The Bill is deemed to have been read a first time and is set down for a second reading.

PROCEEDS OF CRIME (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: The Bill is deemed to have been read a first time and is set down for a second reading.

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: The Bill is deemed to have been read a first time and is set down for a second reading.

SECOND READINGS

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the Second Reading of the Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026.

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Absolutely, sir.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking God, my family, the people of North Side and all of the Caymanian people who are now my supporters, helping me make this first year in a new term, a productive one. Today is almost a week from the day we convened this honourable House for the first time after being sworn in on May 6th.

Back then, Mr. Speaker, I promised to be a vessel for the people. I promised to listen, consult and deliver on results that matter. Today's contribution serves as further proof that I have kept my word, and I will continue to do so.

Mr. Speaker, given how successful the Ministry has been this year, many would say there is no need to reset, but Mr. Speaker, I've asked my hardworking staff to join me in using this upcoming milestone to reflect, reimagine and refocus. While it is commonly said that this journey is a marathon, I want us to view it like a relay race. This baton hand over to the second leg is in touching distance and we must take it seriously.

In that spirit of refocusing and ensuring our foundations are solid, we turn to our borders. Mr. Speaker, the Cayman Islands does not have a land border with the rest of the world. It has no railways, no road to Miami, and no primary way in and out of this country for tourists, for Caymanians and for vital cargo. It's through the air. In January alone our total inbound seat capacity from the United States, Canada and UK was just over 90,000 seats; nearly 20,000 more than last year. Every one of those movements depends on air navigation services and controllers guiding aircrafts safely through our airspace.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill addresses a specific legal gap identified during our ongoing audit and legal review process. While the Airports Authority has provided air navigation services and collected fees in line with international standards for years, the 2005 Act did not openly list these fees as a formal head of revenue. In a well governed jurisdiction like ours, the gap matters. The course correction does not call anyone's conduct into question; rather, it provides a legal certainty that is the foundation of aviation and finance.

The Bill closes the gap through three decisive actions.

First, through formal empowerment. It clearly inserts the air navigation service fees into the functions of the Authority and recognises them as a head of revenue. This means that every controller, every radar system, every instrument approach procedure that keeps aircraft and passengers safe in the Cayman skies is now backed by clear statutory authority.

Second - regulatory framework. It empowers the Authority to make regulations covering the currency and timing of payments, waivers and recovering the process. Operators will know exactly what they owe and when.

Third, the validation of the past. It confirms that all fees collected in good faith prior to this Act are taken to and have been lawfully charged without disturbing

any existing court orders. Mr. Speaker, this Bill does not automatically set new fee levels. Any future adjustments will be done through a transparent process and subject to the scrutiny of this House. The Ministry and the Airports Authority continue to look for the opportunities to support redevelopment. It is only right that the investment must sit on solid legal ground and with no stone left unturned.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026 to this honourable House.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?

Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Member for George Town Central.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer the Opposition's contribution to the debate on the Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026. To ensure that we're all clear on the matters before us, Mr. Speaker, this Bill seeks to amend the Airports Authority Act (2005 Revision) to formalise how we handle our air navigation services.

Primarily, this Bill does three things: It empowers the Authority to collect fees from aircraft operators for the use of our air navigation services; it provides a legal framework for the Authority to create regulations regarding the collection and recovery of those fees, including payments, deadlines and security deposits; crucially though, Mr. Speaker, it includes the validation clauses that retroactively legalise fees and penalties already collected by the Authority prior to the commencement of this Act—one which I am very happy to see that the government is dealing with as Bills come forward, based on advice from me.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition recognises the vital role the Airports Authority plays in our national infrastructure. We have no intention of jeopardising the brand or the operational integrity of the Authority because we understand that for our airports to remain safe and compliant with international standards, the Authority must have a solid, lawful financial foundation. To that end, we support the Government's move to formalise these fees. It is a necessary step to ensure that the Authority can continue to work on behalf of the people of the Cayman Islands without a cloud of legal uncertainty.

Mr. Speaker, that's exactly where the Opposition finds a significant problem. By the language used in the Bill "**on a case-by-case basis**", without further qualification, the Government is creating a legal transparency trap. Mr. Speaker, allow me to take all Members to clause 4 of the Bill under the heading "Amendment of section 44 [*sic*] - regulations". It reads, Mr. Speaker:

“The principal Act is amended in section 44(1) [sic] by inserting after paragraph (k) the following paragraphs —
(kc) provide for —

(iii) waivers on a case-by-case basis where the Authority determines that it is appropriate;”

Mr. Speaker, very subjective language. [There is] a lack of specificity, there is no mention of the criteria that the Authority must use to determine what is appropriate. Now, Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Minister say just now in his contribution that those persons who use these services will know exactly what they owe and when they owe it. I challenge the Honourable Minister to say that the wording in this Bill has a level of ambiguity and therefore will not result in knowing exactly what they owe.

Mr. Speaker, there's a risk to the public fee structure because without a standardised structure we move away from predictable public fee schedules towards a system of absolute discretion. Equity for operators is necessary, and we must ensure that all aircraft operators are treated with the same level of fairness. A case-by-case approach by its very nature opens the door for inconsistency, Mr. Speaker.

Now while we in the Opposition support the Government in making these necessary changes to protect the Authority, we cannot ignore the risk posed by this specific subclause. We urge the Government to ensure that any regulations born from this Bill replace the ambiguity of the clause “on a case-by-case [basis]” with a better, clearer, transparent framework that the public and the aviation industry can trust and rely [on] with dependability.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, our airport is an essential pillar to our tourism and financial services industry, but more importantly, Mr. Speaker, it is a lifeline to our residents whether they are traveling for their well-earned leisure or in the darkest of hours under circumstances such as emergency medical travel or hurricane evacuation. Therefore, we in the Opposition will do everything we can to support the Authority in improving its standards.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the present and the past boards as well as the amazing staff at the Airports Authority for their hard work in keeping this vital component of our island's operation to the highest of standards. On behalf of the Official Opposition, I want to use this opportunity to recognise you, those amazing staff and heads of the Authority for your commitment and your hard work. We appreciate you, we're proud of you and we thank you for everything that you do.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Official Opposition that is our contribution.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
Member for Bodden Town West.

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders, Elected Member for Bodden Town West: Mr. Speaker, one of the most popular Bible verses is John 3:16. **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”** Mr. Speaker, what most people may not realise is that bible verse came about from a conversation that Jesus was having with a Pharisee named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. It is believed, Mr. Speaker, that Nicodemus didn't want others to see him speaking to Jesus publicly, so he visited Jesus at night. At another part of that conversation, Mr. Speaker, Jesus told Nicodemus, he must be born again.

Mr. Speaker, I know you're probably wondering by now where I'm going with this story, and to quote our good friend Arden McLean, “in the fullness of time”.

Mr. Speaker, the Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026 that is before this Parliament is asking us to amend the legislation that governs the Airports Authority, to authorise them to collect fees for air navigation services that they provide, and also to validate the fees that they have collected in the past.

Mr. Speaker, I know that you're a lover of aviation and would know what air navigation services entail but for the listening public, it includes things such as air traffic control, navigational services, radar, meteorological services, to name a few. I know that you know that many of these services have been provided for several decades; there's no denying that. Every Caymanian and visitor to our island would have seen that big air traffic control tower and there's no doubt that the service and many other services were provided by the Airports Authority. Matter of fact, international aviation rules require that they be provided.

Mr. Speaker, in the past, when these validation Bills came before Parliament, I didn't put much energy into them. I just saw them as a clean-up exercise, where we as current legislators were addressing some of the issues that missed previous legislators; and I'm sure that future legislators may have to address some of the issues that we as current legislators may have also missed. In essence, Mr. Speaker, I saw this as a non-political exercise because the issues that we're fixing today weren't done by current legislators, but we have a constitutional duty to fix them when they come to our attention.

However, Mr. Speaker, after that meeting, that fateful meeting that we had in that large committee room on Thursday, 11th December, 2025 and the subsequent changes that we made to the ICTA [Information and Communications Technology Act] on Friday, 12th December, 2025, I now take these validation Bills seriously. Why? That was the first time I had an idea of how Nicodemus felt when he had to go visit Jesus at night.

Mr. Speaker, we gazetted that amendment to that Bill on a Thursday night and suspended all

Standing Orders to pass those amendments on the following Friday night without debate. I will admit that Friday, 12th December, 2025 was probably one of my most conflicted and uncomfortable days, where I, as a legislator, had to bite my tongue in the best interest of our country because then, without a shadow of a doubt, I know that there were people in our society who were hell-bent and determined to take as much as they can, whenever they can, from whoever they can by taking advantage of loopholes and oversight in our legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is about monies that were collected by the Cayman Islands Airports Authority for providing services to commercial airlines, private jets, and private planes that landed at our airports. As I said before, there's absolutely no doubt that these services were provided in the past as international aviation rules mandate that they do. Mr. Speaker, the last thing we want is another rich multimillionaire who has landed his private jet to come and tell us he shouldn't pay these fees because the previous legislators did not use the language that said that they should pay.

Mr. Speaker, prior to December 11th, 2025, I would have dismissed such possibilities, but after feeling how Nicodemus felt, I can now say that politically, I have been born again.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, I support this Bill and I thank my good friend, the Honourable Minister from North Side, and his team for bringing this important piece of legislation before this Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, at its heart, this Bill is about doing things properly. It is about ensuring that the legal framework governing our Airports Authority reflects the operational reality that has existed for decades, and it is about giving our Airports Authority the clear, no room for misunderstanding, statutory footing it deserves.

Mr. Speaker, again, let me be clear, the Cayman Islands Airports Authority has been providing air navigation services to aircraft operators who use our airspace and our airports, and it has been collecting fees for those services. Some of those fees that were collected were used to maintain and improve the airport infrastructure and keep our Islands connected to the world and our visitors and residents happy when they travel. Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, in the past, some of those excess fees were paid to government as dividend to help government pay for our children's education, healthcare for seniors and other assistance to many Caymanians. No one in this House and no one in the aviation industry disputes that those services were rendered or that it was entirely reasonable and proper for fees to be charged in return.

The sole issue (and it is a technical issue) is that the legislation did not specifically mention air navigation service fees among the Authority's statutory functions and revenue streams. That is a gap that this Bill is closing, Mr. Speaker, and closing this gap is not just a housekeeping exercise, but also good governance because it provides legal certainty and cements

the operations of the Cayman Islands Airports Authority.

In passing this Bill, we're also sending a message to everyone who receives services on the Airports Authority that the fees that they pay are lawfully imposed, properly accounted for, and governed by a transparent framework. This Bill delivers exactly that.

Amendments to section 41 give the Authority the necessary regulation-making powers covering everything from fee currency and payment deadlines to waivers, deposits, discounts, and exemptions. Mr. Speaker, as I said before, we're not to deal with that Nicodemus legislation in the night. I have no issue with the validation portion of this Bill, as it is an already established tool used by many governments around the world where a public entity has acted in good faith, provided good services, collected good fees, but the necessary legislation and regulation didn't keep pace with the operational realities.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased to see that clause 7 ensures that this validation does not affect any court orders already made, which is a fair and balanced approach, and reflects well on the Minister, his team and the legislative drafters.

Mr. Speaker, the Cayman Islands Airports Authority operates both the Owen Roberts International Airport and the Charles Kirkconnell International Airport, and both are the lifeline of our Islands. Those airports are not merely transit points, they're economic engines, gateways for tourism and essential connectors for our people to the rest of the world. The Airports Authority that manages them must be empowered with clear, modern and fit-for-purpose legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I know that no legislation is ever perfect and not every time we go down the field, we will score a goal, but our objective here as legislators is to keep the ball moving forward and this Bill is a step in the right direction. Minister, my good friend from North Side, I'll be voting to support your Bill, sir.

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] If not, does the Mover of the Bill want to exercise his right of reply?

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

Mr. Speaker, let me first thank the Member for Bodden Town West for his contributions and his scripture reading, John 3:16 and his talk about his Nicodemus visits. I can promise him when I come to see him it won't be in the night, it will be in broad daylight.

Mr. Speaker, exactly what the Member for Bodden Town West mentioned. One of the things that we took on within our Ministry is to make sure that all of our fees should be validated.

Mr. Speaker, as we talked about it, clause 1 provided just a short title.

Clause 2 provided the amendment of section 5 of the principal Act to include the collection of fees for air navigation services in the functions of the Authority.

Clause 3 provides for the amendment of section 20 of the principal Act to include, as a head of receipt, fees for the air navigation services received pursuant to the Airports Act.

Clause 5 provides for the validation of fees for air navigation services paid by aircraft operators and collected by the Airports Authority prior to the commencement of this legislation.

Clause 6 provides for the validation of any penalties for the non-payment of fees for air navigation services that may have been imposed by the Authority prior to the commencement of this legislation.

Clause 7 provides that this amending and validating legislation does not affect any order or determination made by a court with respect to the fees...

Mr. Speaker, I turn to the Member for George Town Central, Deputy Leader of the Opposition. At first, I didn't know where the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was headed. Now, see, Mr. Speaker my Premier is saying *easy*, he said *calm down*.

Mr. Speaker, he went on— I still don't know whether he supports the Bill or not. Did you say you support it? He took a direction that made me think that he's not supporting it at least, but then he turned around and he complimented everybody for all of the hard work that they were doing, so then I had to rethink and say well maybe he is going to support the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is bigger than all of us. As the Member for Bodden Town West always talks about, there's a time to play politics and times not to play politics. Maybe I need to say that to myself too. I ain't *gonna* play politics with it; I'll go *easy* because the Premier said *come, reverse back*.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues, the hardworking staff in the Ministry and the hardworking staff at the airport who worked tirelessly to help make sure we get everything that we need when it comes to the Airports Authority. We continue to bring legislation to this House where we see fit to continue to make sure that we are protecting our airport, and we are making sure that anything that we do down there is in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, with that said, I just want to thank the whole House for their support, even my friend from George Town Central who I know will support this.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I was just getting ready to end and then he said I didn't touch the part that he highlighted.

Mr. Speaker, if the part that he highlighted was so important to him, I would have hoped to have seen an amendment to the Bill somewhere. They sit down and talk and say what they want to say, and now, they are going to come out and say all of this? You're *gonna*

come back and talk about— show your contributions, man! Put things in your name. Let's not hide behind nowhere. If you want to do something, come out. I know you like the mic, so you'll come out all the time and say what you got to say. I know it's not like you to hide, but there's got to be some reason why. Mr. Speaker, he's a good friend, I'm not going to beat him up today.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the House for their support on this Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill. Thank you.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026 be given a second reading.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026 was given a second reading.

AUDITORS OVERSIGHT (AMENDMENT, VALIDATION AND REPEAL) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

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

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the Second Reading of a Bill entitled the Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the Bill on behalf of the Government. It is a Bill that seeks to amend the Auditors Oversight Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill has three principal objectives. First, to ensure alignment with the Public Authorities Act; second, to provide legal certainty through validation provisions; and third, to facilitate the orderly wind down and eventual repeal of the Auditors Oversight Authority [sic] Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill provides the manner of doing this through the combination of amendments, validation provisions and a repeal provision. Before turning to the specifics of the Bill, it may be helpful to provide a bit of background.

The Auditors Oversight Authority was established in 2012 as an independent body to support international regulatory objectives. At that time, the establishment of the Authority was considered important to the country's efforts to achieve recognition of audit

equivalency under the European Commission's 8th Company Law Directive back in 2026 [sic].

The Authority was therefore given a defined and relatively narrow remit of regulating and supervising the country's auditors of market-traded entities whose securities are traded on regulated stock exchanges or designated companies which are entities specified by the Auditors Authority Act [sic]. Mr. Speaker, since that time the global audit regulatory landscape has evolved significantly. At the same time, the Authority has overseen a relatively small number of in-scope auditors and market-traded entities. Together, these factors have reduced the practical relevance of the Authority's original mandate.

The Cayman Islands no doubt remains committed to fostering an environment that supports innovation, aligns with international standards and reflects fiscal responsibility. In this context, maintaining a standalone Authority with a limited and declining remit is no longer proportionate to the needs of the country. The orderly wind down of the Authority enables the consolidation of the audit oversight within the Cayman Islands and well regarded regulatory bodies, including the Monetary Authority and the Cayman Islands Institute of Public Accountants.

From the perspective of regulating the accountancy profession, Mr. Speaker, the enhanced mandate of the Cayman Islands Institute of Public Accountants, known as CIIPA, ensures the appropriate oversight continues across all the auditors including adherence to ethical standards and professional development.

Importantly, Mr. Speaker, the changes proposed in this Bill do not reduce the level of regulatory oversight of the audit profession. Quite the opposite, we aim to ensure that oversight is delivered through the most effective and appropriate institutional framework. This decision was based on extensive discussions between the Authority, other regulators and industry stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore turn to the key provisions of the Bill. First, the Bill provides for amendments to the Act to align it with the Public Authorities Act. This ensures consistency with the statutory framework governing public entities regarding governance, transparency and accountability. The Bill clarifies the appointment of the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson by Cabinet, the terms of board members and the circumstances of their removal.

The Bill also regularises the composition of the board by ensuring compliance with the requirement that no more than 40 per cent of members may be civil or public servants. This of course ensures that the majority of the board members are independent, supporting strong governance and diverse oversight.

The Bill further amends the process for appointing the managing director, placing responsibility with the board in consultation with the responsible

Minister and the relevant official member in line with the Public Authorities Act.

Mr. Speaker, someone might ask, well why do this now? Belts and braces. We want to ensure that as this entity is winding down, if there were any prior procedural gaps or inconsistency with the statute book, we put it to bed with a clean bill of health. Accordingly, we've included a validation provision to confirm that such actions can remain legally effective.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the Bill is arranged in nine clauses.

Clause 1, of course, provides the short title and commencement.

Clause 2 amends section 2 of the principal Act to ensure the method of appointing the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the board of directors is in alignment with the Public Authorities Act.

Clause 3 repeals section 6 of the principal Act and substitutes a new section 6 to provide the requirements for the composition of the membership of the board of the Auditors Oversight Authority, including clarifying the members of the board, the Chair, and the Deputy Chair appointed by Cabinet. The proposed new section 6 would also ensure that the number of board members and method of appointing them is in alignment with the Public Authorities Act.

Clause 4 amends section 7 of the principal Act to provide that the directors, other than the Chief Officer in the Ministry responsible for financial services or the Chief Officer's designate, would be appointed for a term specified by Cabinet and may be paid such remuneration as may be determined by the Cabinet.

Clause 5 amends section 8 of the principal Act enabling the board of directors, after consultation with the responsible Minister or relevant official member, to appoint the Managing Director, thereby bringing the method of appointment into alignment with the Public Authorities Act. The Managing Director is of course a non-voting member of the board.

Clause 6 amends section 9(2) of the principal Act which sets out the circumstances in which a director's services may be terminated. The clause makes it clear that section 9(2) refers only to the services of a director who is not a public servant or a civil servant.

Clause 7 deals with the validation of acts carried out, without statutory authority, should there have been any, by the board of directors and the Managing Director. Where those acts were carried out after the date of the commencement of the Public Authorities Act, 2017, clause 7 provides that the acts shall not be regarded as invalid by reason only that the board of directors was not properly constituted or the Managing Director was not properly appointed, as the case may be.

Clause 8 provides that this amending, validating and repealing legislation does not affect the court order or determination relating to acts carried out without statutory authority, by the board of directors or the

Managing Director before the commencement of this amending, validating and repealing legislation.

Clause 9 repeals the Auditors Oversight Act.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, this Bill reflects the government's commitment to maintain a modern, proportionate and internationally aligned regulatory framework, one that supports market confidence, fosters innovation and ensures the efficient use of public resources.

I wish to thank the Ministry staff, and of course legislative drafting for all their efforts in respect to the design and preparation of this Bill. I therefore commend the Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026, to this honourable House for its second reading.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
Member for George Town East.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to make this very short contribution to the debate on the Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026 on behalf of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, like the Bill that we debated just previously on this, we see much of the language here that is very similar. This Bill in effect, from my perspective, really is a bit of a belt and braces, and clean-up exercise for the Bill.

The Honourable Premier did a very excellent job of laying out clearly just what the objectives were and the areas in which they were seeking to validate, give circumstance and take care of some deficiencies with regard to compliance with the Public Authorities Act. Particularly, Mr. Speaker, in relation to the following matters, as he mentioned — the method of appointing the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, appointment of members of the board of directors and the method of appointing them and removing them, and again the method of appointing the Managing Director of the Authority. Then, Mr. Speaker, the Bill deals with the validation of acts taken by the board of directors and the Managing Director since the date of commencement of the Act without statutory authority. Then finally, Mr. Speaker, this Bill seeks to repeal the Auditors Oversight Act (2020 Revision).

Mr. Speaker, the reason for the Auditors Oversight Act was to demonstrate that the Cayman Islands publicly-owned companies audited by Cayman-based auditors were subject to a very robust auditor oversight regime. Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge, in the time that the Authority was in existence, there was only one audit firm that was ever subject to this oversight regime because there was only one entity listed on our stock exchange that had to demonstrate this. It doesn't require very much thinking to understand who that was, but I won't call names here this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, that entity delisted from the stock exchange maybe two to three years ago; or last year?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: In 2019? Okay. It's been a much longer time than I thought, but the entity is no longer listed on the Cayman Islands Stock Exchange.

The Authority has existed and they have no business and no prospects for any business in the future, so it is perfectly natural and I commend the Minister for bringing the legislation to repeal the Auditors Oversight regime.

On behalf of the Opposition, I say we support it wholeheartedly and we look forward to voting in favour of its passing at the appropriate time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
Member for Bodden Town West.

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Don't worry Mr. Speaker, I don't have a bible verse for this one.

[Laughter]

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders: Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my voice to the debate of the Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026.

In preparing for this Bill, I went on the Parliament website and read every single annual report by the Auditors Oversight Authority (AOA). It should be noted that the annual reports for 2015 and 2021 are missing from the website. I'm not sure if one was done for 2021, but the report for 2016 indicated that there was a report for 2015. For those who manage the website, they may want to go look for those reports.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, those missing reports are immaterial to my contributions today. As you read each of the annual reports, you'll see that there was little to no activity each year. However, Mr. Speaker, one report did jump out to me that in essence summed up the operations of the Auditors Oversight Committee. Mr. Speaker, in the 2019 report, the then Acting Managing Director Paul Anderton wrote in the Managing Director's Report:

"When the AOA was formed, one of its principal strategic aims was to be recognized as "equivalent" by the European Commission (EC) as a "third country" regulator. Prior to his retirement, Donald Cockburn invested a significant effort in the EC equivalency assessment process. As explained in more detail in the annual board report, the EC decided not to grant equivalency and not to extend the transitional status of the AOA.

Arguably, the strategic importance of having equivalency has waned whilst developments around the world have suggested that other

strategic objectives should be given more thought. Recognising this, the AOA has been reconsidering and debating its remit for some time. In this context, on behalf of the AOA, I participated in various meetings with the Cayman Islands Institute of Professional Accountants and Government to discuss the future role of the AOA in the oversight of the audit profession in the Cayman Islands. Those meetings resulted in the establishment of a working group on which I represent the AOA."

Mr. Speaker, the same 2019 report had a section that dealt with EU equivalency and that report read: "The AOA had previously applied to the relevant body within the European Commission (EC) for equivalency status. An EC decision dated 25 July 2016 extended our transitional status pending the collection by the EU of additional information from us. During 2018 and 2019 we complied with EC requests to provide specified information to allow them to update their assessment. In June 2019, the Directorate-General for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union (also known as DG-FISMA) advised the AOA that equivalency status would not be granted and that there would be no extension of the transitional period. The reasons given included:

- Low economic relevance and impact of such a decision on Member States;
- The absence of bilateral agreements already signed by Member States with the Cayman Islands and the possibility that Member States could assess equivalence at a national level.

The AOA remains committed to co-operating with independent audit regulators in EU member states in accordance with its remit as set out in the Auditors Oversight Law."

Mr. Speaker, the report also included a section that spoke about the future of the AOA and it reads: "We continued our assessment of the desirability of expanding the scope of our activities and broadened the process to include a more in depth review of the future role of the AOA in the oversight of the audit profession in the Cayman Islands. Consultations were held with the Cayman Islands Institute of Professional Accountants and Government. The AOA and CIIPA have set up a working group to consider the future of the AOA; it met twice in the fall of 2019 and further meetings are planned for early 2020 with wider participation from stakeholders. We anticipate that the working group will be finalising deliberations and produce a formal strategy paper by mid-2020."

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, in that same report, it was also noted that there were only two firms on the register as of December 31, 2019. Mr. Speaker, it is also worth highlighting from the 2017 annual report that there were only four audit firms registered with the AOA. From my research they were KPMG, PWC, BDO

and Grant Thornton. It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker that Grant Thornton left in June 2018, BDO in January 2019, and PWC in May 2019. I understand that EY was registered in 2019. I am now curious as to the number of firms that are registered, and I hope that the Premier can probably include that number in his wrap up.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill before us looks to achieve three things:

1. Fix past legal errors in how the AOA was governed, namely the AOA legislation conflicted with the Public Authorities Law. The Managing Director was improperly appointed by Cabinet versus the board and there were too many public servants on the board.
2. It looks to validate the actions taken during the time of when it was improperly constituted.
3. To wind up the AOA.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this is a housekeeping and closure Bill. It cleans up our governance gap, protects past actions from legal challenges and lays the groundwork for shutting the Authority down.

Mr. Speaker, supporting this Bill wasn't a difficult decision. If anything, the decision was overdue and the writing was on the wall when all those other firms pulled out. As my colleague from George Town East mentioned, I think when PWC left in 2019 that was a result of when CNB was basically sold to the bank in Trinidad. At that point, PWC just didn't need to stay there anymore because I think that was their client, but I could be wrong. The Premier can probably confirm.

Mr. Speaker, from reading the annual reports and based on research and feedback received, this entity started out in good faith, their actions were done in good faith, but it just did not achieve its objective. I'm not sure when the winding down will happen, but Mr. Speaker, for the record, I'd like to thank the board members, past and present, and the staff at the AOA for their efforts during that time, regardless of the outcome. While it didn't get the outcome that we desired, public service is still a noble cause and the failure of the AOA in not achieving its objective wasn't with the board or with the staff, but with those socialists over in Europe.

With that Mr. Speaker. I'll be supporting this Bill and my colleague from Bodden Town East will also be supporting this Bill after I discussed it with him also. 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] In that case, would the Mover like to exercise his right of reply?

Honourable Premier.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to sincerely thank the Member for George Town East for rising on behalf of the Official Opposition in support of the Bill. He very accurately summarised the purpose of the Bill and the regulatory aspect of why it totally has lost its purpose because the one remaining entity that would have been regulated delisted from the stock exchange, so there's absolutely no purpose. Thank you, Member.

Then in relation to my learned friend from Bodden Town West, I also thank him for his contribution and support to this Bill along with the other independent Opposition Member. The Member summarised some of the consultation that occurred because for quite some time, as the Member indicated, there was contemplation of where to take the entity next; what else could be done? However, with only two firms now registered, the answer presented itself, Mr. Speaker.

As we now move into the FATF [Financial Action Task Force] Fifth Round of evaluation, there's now a new component where the Department of Commerce itself has its own standard, whereas previously in what was called the Fourth Round they were clustered with the Monetary Authority. This isn't unique to Cayman, this is the world over. Commerce itself now has its own standard. Within that, CIIPA, essentially the Accountants Institute, now is part of that framework of regulating the accountants, so as that body has more regulatory responsibility, instead of what usually happens, [where] you keep entities on the books and government is supplying money for an entity that really has no purpose, let's take the bold step of calling a spade a spade, shut down one that has lost its purpose and then eventually transfer its budget to one that now has a greater regulatory purpose.

With that I applaud my Caucus colleagues for seeing the merit in that, I applaud the Official Opposition for seeing the merit in that, and of course the independent Opposition for seeing the merit in that.

The Member for Bodden Town West also talked about some of the history and that the eventual loss of mandate of this entity was not the fault of the staff. I would like to personally thank Paul Anderton who was there for many years; Alister Mason; the longstanding financial services, I'll call him oracle, Mike Austin, who's very gentle in his 90s, but still keeps up, attends financial services conferences, is aware of current affairs and was really one of the anchors of this particular Authority, among his many other responsibilities and achievements to the financial services community; and as the Member for Bodden Town West said, Don Cockburn, who was instrumental and served as the first Managing Director. Although it may not have fulfilled the purpose, it was not your fault. It was one of these items that was, as one Member would say, foisted. However, they served well, they served admirably, they did their time and now we're moving on.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026 be given a second reading.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026 was given a second reading.

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the Second Reading of the Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill.

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

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Yes, sir.

Mr. Speaker, every year hundreds of thousands of people pass through our airport. They arrive as tourists drawn by the beauty of these Islands, they return as Caymanians coming home, and they depart carrying with them an impression on who we are and how we operate. Mr. Speaker, that first and last experience, the gateway of the Cayman Islands, falls under the Ministry and I take that responsibility seriously.

Mr. Speaker, our airports have been known for their professionalism, their order and their warmth. We have worked hard to maintain public areas that are accessible and welcoming while ensuring our security presence is efficient and effective.

Mr. Speaker, the world we know is changing and the responsibility of government does not wait for a crisis to act, it sees the gap and it closes it; that is precisely what the Bill does.

Let me be clear about what this legislation is and what it is not. This Bill is not about turning our airport into a fortress. It is not about treating our people as suspects or making visitors feel unwelcome, it's about making sure that the relaxed professionalism, the environment we are proud of, can be sustained legally, securely and in full compliance with international standards. We are not changing the experience, we are protecting it.

Mr. Speaker, the catalyst of the Bill was identified during a routine oversight check by the Air Safety Support International, known as ASSI. Their review noted the absence of a legally supported framework for stopping and inspecting vehicles in the proximity of our

airport terminals. The Cayman Islands Airport Authority responded responsibly by introducing a temporary vehicle stop and visual inspection measures to address the gap. That little hut that we put right in the middle of the road when you're going through is what we're talking about.

Mr. Speaker, the temporary measures—I don't want to say that they're not good enough, but they fell short of what we needed. The Bill amends the Airports Authority Act (2005 Revision) to empower approved officers of the CIAA, including our CEO, Chief Airport Security Officer, and its designated security personnel to maintain the integrity of our airport gates and zones. It gives them three clear powers:

1. The powers to stop any vehicle within a designated airport security zone.
2. The power to conduct a non-intrusive visual inspection of the vehicle's exterior, interior and contents in plain view; and
3. The power to control vehicle access ensuring our operational zones remain secure.

Mr. Speaker, [for] the vast majority of people this will be a brief, unremarkable interaction—that's the best I could say it. A quick visual check. No delays, no intrusion, no searching through personal belongings without cause.

Mr. Speaker, security that has no power to act is not security at all, it's just theatre. The people of these Islands deserve better than theatre. This is why the Bill establishes a clear, lawful threshold for when a visual check may become a physical search. That threshold is reasonable grounds — not a hunch, not a feeling, not a suspicion based on nothing, but a factual, objective reason to believe that a vehicle and its contents or its occupants present a risk to airport safety, or that of a criminal conduct involved. Only at that point may any approved officer proceed to a physical search without a warrant.

Mr. Speaker, we have thought carefully about this balance. Our officers must have the tools to be the shield of our Islands, and the law must remain the shield of our citizens. The right for both matters, neither is negotiable. Where a person refuses to comply with a lawful order, our officers are empowered to refuse entry or to detain and to seize any weapons or prohibited articles found. Anyone who obstructs these lawful powers commits an offence liable to a fine of \$5,000 or six months in prison, or both. Mr. Speaker, we do not put those provisions in lightly, but we put them in firmly because the law must have the teeth to be meaningful.

Mr. Speaker, let me speak plainly about what is at stake. The Cayman Islands is a premier destination. Our airports are our front door and the international standards that govern aviation safety are not just suggestions, they are conditions on our continued standing in a global travel community. If we fail to act, we risk more than the complaints, we risk our airline partnerships, our reputation, and ultimately, the

confidence of every person who chooses to bring their family, their business and their tourism dollars to these shores. The Bill is proactive in protection, addressing the threat before it reaches the terminal door.

Mr. Speaker, I have always believed that good governance is not about building walls, it's about building foundations, and this Bill is one such foundation. It gives our security officers the legal authority they need to act; it gives our partners the compliance assurance they require; and it gives every Caymanian, every visitor and every family passing through our airport the protection they deserve without ever compromising the welcome they have come to expect. Our airports will remain what they have always been — a safe harbour and a proud gateway to these Islands.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go back and say that the amendments to this Bill facing us today were based on the recommendations of the Airport Safety Support International that came here.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026 to this honourable House.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Member for George Town Central.

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

I rise again to offer the Official Opposition's contribution to this debate on the Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill. Mr. Speaker, I want to state categorically from the outset that we stand in support of the Bill because there seemed to have been some confusion in the last contribution I made as to whether we were supporting it or not.

For the benefit of the listening public, those who are listening at home or at work, it is important to explain exactly what this Bill seeks to do. Essentially, Mr. Speaker, this legislation is about modernisation and security. It moves to give the Cayman Islands Airport Authority, CIAA, the specific legal tools it needs to manage threats in an ever-changing world. It grants **“approved officers”** the power to inspect vehicles, manage access to security zones and, where necessary for the safety of the traveling public, to detain and arrest those who pose a risk to our airport security.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as the former Minister responsible for the Airports Authority, I'm immensely proud of the technical drivers at CIAA who've brought us to this milestone and these amendments in this Bill. Their dedication to bringing our security arrangements into alignment with the Air Safety Support International's oversight and expectations is a vital step in maintaining our status as a first-tier nation.

For those who are listening at home, Air Safety Support International is the body responsible for helping to ensure that our aviation safety within the overseas territories meets the highest global standards. Now, while we support the Bill's intent, we are merely

offering some constructive reflections to ensure that the implementation is [as] clear and fair as possible for the Caymanian people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister suggested that if I had critiques and criticisms, maybe I should submit amendments. I'm surprised because I was hoping that we would take a working together kind of approach and just give an observation by our side, rather than me submitting amendments to Bills. However, if that is the tone that we'll take, I can promise the Honourable Minister, every Bill moving forward, if we have a critique, we will be submitting amendments. The Honourable Premier can expect that approach moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, I want to expand on the powers being granted under section 32A(3)(h) in this Bill. This section states that if a person fails to permit an inspection or obstructs an officer, that officer may **“arrest, without a warrant, any person who contravenes or is suspected of contravening this section.”**

This is a significant legal power in the policing world, Mr. Speaker. In our common law tradition, an arrest without warrant is the highest level of enforcement action. While it is a necessary tool for the airport's security to do the job, because the power is being extended to “approved officers” which under Schedule 4 item 5 can include **“Any person designated in writing...”**, I dare say we in this Parliament must be certain that these individuals exercising that power are held to the highest standard of accountability.

Mr. Speaker, please allow me to highlight the section which specifically speaks to that. In clause 4, [section] 32C it says: **“An approved officer, on the written instruction of the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Security Officer or the designate of either the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Security Officer, may take such steps as are necessary to comply with any safety or [security] measures which may be specifically required by the Governor.”**

Mr. Speaker, an “approved officer” by its definition on page 8 under clause 3 of definitions — **“‘approved officer’ means a person described in section 32A”**. In 32A, which is in clause 6 at the back of the Bill, says the approved officers of the Cayman Islands Airports Authority are five categories:

- “1. Chief Executive Officer;**
- 2. Chief Airport Security Officer;**
- 3. Manager Airport Security;**
- 4. Airport Security Officers;”**

Now those first four, I think, no one will have any questions, but the fifth one, says:

“5. Any person designated in writing by the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Airport Security Officer.”

Mr. Speaker, we're going to get back to that shortly, but let's create a hypothetical scenario of concern. To illustrate why these things I just highlighted matter, Mr. Speaker, consider this as a practical

scenario. Under the current wording in clause 4, the Authority could designate any person, perhaps a temporary staff member or someone from another department within the airport who doesn't deal with security, with a simple letter under the written hand of the Security Manager or the CEO of Airports Authority. That person may have the best of intentions, but they lack the formal training in policing and constitutional rights.

Now imagine that person is patrolling one of these designated zones, though it's not clear here today what the zones are—let's say for instance, the long-term parking lot—and one of these lovely seniors who helped build this country just came back from Miami on a trip with the family. They are approached by this untrained individual and they demand to see the inside of the trunk to do a visual inspection. I'm glad that the honourable Member highlighted the definition of visual meaning you can only look, you cannot demand to dig up, you can't say move this and move that. By then the people already feel imposed upon.

If that person who is just trying to get home after a long flight feels that their privacy is being invaded, pushes back and says, *hold on, what do you mean you want to look at my trunk?* They run the risk of being arrested by a person who has no training, mandated in clause 5(md) — and we're going to get to clause 5(md) in a second, Mr. Speaker. Designated individuals may move straight to warrantless arrest under section 32A(3)(i) [sic].

Again, I say Mr. Speaker, warrantless arrest is one of the highest levels of power within the common law system, which I know the Attorney General will support. We cannot have a situation where a citizen's liberty is taken away by someone who has not been properly schooled in the legal thresholds of arrest. We must protect the Authority, first and foremost, but also, we must protect the public and their freedoms from unforeseen negatives of an untrained enforcement officer that this law will allow; I dare say.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I draw your attention to the definition of “visual inspection” in clause 3 which includes looking into the trunk and the engine compartment — natural, it is being done in the UK and many other Overseas Territories, but I suggest that the government clarifies that visual inspections must be strictly nonintrusive. We must ensure that officers do their job effectively without inadvertently crossing into a warrantless physical search before the “reasonable grounds” threshold, which is not defined in this Bill, of section 32B has been met. Now what does that mean, Mr. Speaker? Trained persons with arrest [powers] understand these legal and constitutional rights perspectives, that's why police officers take so long to become officers.

Mr. Speaker, thirdly, we must look at clause 5(md) which empowers the Authority to make regulations for training of approved officers, and I'm very happy about that. This training must be expanded to align directly with the standards of the Royal Cayman

Islands Police Service. When an officer is given the power to arrest under section 32A, they must be trained to the same legal principles of “reasonable grounds” and “use of force” of our police officers who police us every day, because officers are not only there to arrest you, they’re there to protect your rights. We cannot have a two-tiered system of justice where airport training is less vigorous than the police training when the powers that they get from this legislation can deprive a citizen of their liberty at the same time.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, regarding the designated airport security zones in section 32G of the Bill, we all agree that the terminal itself and the front of the drop off curbs by the airport are all high security areas and they must be protected. We’ve seen, in the UK, circumstances where persons with serious high threat levels parked the car and the car exploded right next to the terminal. By no means am I surprised that the ASSI, who is the British overseer of airports for British Overseas Territories, would suggest that this piece of legislation be worded in this particular way for security zones, but it does not specify what the zones are, it’s only saying determined by the airport security.

I think the public of the Cayman Islands would like to understand what those zones are. We should be cautious, Mr. Speaker, about designating general public spaces, specifically our long-term parking lots as an example, because at this particular moment, in my mind, anything that the Airports Authority owns by way of property is considered a security zone because it’s all a component of the airport’s operations. Do we suspect that it’s everything after the check-in point by the airport? Does that mean the long-term parking is involved in that?

Mr. Speaker, we also have to consider the security zones under normal threat levels because an expectation of enforcement and powers increases under different threat levels. On the average day to day where there is no concern, should an officer be able to come to the long-term parking lot and say, *open your trunk, Ms. Rankin?* I don’t think so. I don’t think that’s what happens in the UK either. I’ve been to the UK a couple of times and I don’t recall ever having a situation where you’re two or three miles away from the airport and an officer being able to do that.

Mr. Speaker, this ensures that the heightened enforcement powers in this Bill are focused where they are most needed without causing unnecessary friction for our constituents, our people of the Cayman Islands, and all those who call the Cayman Islands home, in areas that are removed from the immediate terminal building.

Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate this very clearly before the Minister gets up and gives his contribution, because I can feel the heat already. I offer these points in the spirit of cooperation. I did not propose any amendments to leave it to the Honourable Minister and the government to propose *[sic]* what our observations were because sometimes something may be missed

and they don’t see it, but if the tune is one of, *well, if you see a problem, make an amendment*, we’ll be doing that moving forward.

By clarifying the training standards that are necessary in clause 5(md) and the arrest protocols in section 32A, the government can ensure that this Bill is a success for our security, but also a win for the rights of the Caymanian people and those who call this country home. By all good intentions, sometimes we infringe on people’s right and freedoms to privacy and we have to be careful that we do not step over that threshold.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the good news is that the government of the day has the support and the legal guidance of the Attorney General, [and] I am certain this Bill went through Cabinet; so maybe if our interpretation, (or mine directly) is wrong, [he would] be happy to clarify these concerns, particularly when it comes to appointed persons becoming an officer and having those severe powers, whether they’ll be obligated to have the same standard of training. It does not specify anywhere in this Bill what standard of training they’ll be obligated to.

Can CIAA give one of the FADS (Flowers Air Dispatch Services) officers — and I’m not trying to be rude in any capacity, but somebody from Pakistan, because we see a couple of them down there by the airport already. Can CIAA say, *you’re a FADS officer, here, you have the security powers to go arrest somebody down by the parking lot*, and Ms. Rankin gets arrested because the person doesn’t know what they’re doing.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: My apologies, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Bryan then, let me use a [different] last name. It’s just because I respect Ms. Rankin so much, that’s all, I apologise. I won’t do it again, Mr. Speaker.

We need clarity that this Bill will not go that far. We do support the improvement, the heightened security to protect our international standard and to protect all those who use our ports in any capacity, so take it in the spirit that it is delivered. We’re here to support the government in their endeavours, but it’s our job to critique. We’re the extra filtering point to ensure that we don’t do something unintended.

Mr. Speaker, with that being said, those are the contributions on behalf of the Official Opposition.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? Member for Bodden Town West.

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders: I knew you’d be looking at me after my amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to lend my voice to the debate on the Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026.

Firstly, Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister from North Side well. I have would work with him on a personal level, a professional level and of course, a political level. He's a very hard worker and in my opinion a very competent Minister.

On the surface, Mr. Speaker, the Bill is straightforward. It is asking this Parliament to update the legislation that governs the Airports Authority Act to give designated airport security officers new powers to stop and inspect vehicles in secure airport zones, and to control access to those zones. Like I said, Mr. Speaker, on the surface, very straightforward.

However, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that you will agree, whenever we're going to give any public officer the authority to infringe on any person's rights that are guaranteed in our Constitution, we need to approach that legislation seriously and carefully. I'm also aware that the Constitution allows for those rights to be curtailed in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality, or public health or for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedoms of other persons. In short, Mr. Speaker, those rights also have limits.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also very aware that our airports are not merely gateways to the Cayman Islands, they are the front door to our Islands. Every visitor who steps off a plane, every cargo shipment that lands on our tarmac, every vehicle that moves through our operational zone passes through a system that we as legislators are duty bound to keep safe and secure. I thank my good friend, the Minister from North Side, for bringing this Bill which allows us to remind the public of our duty and responsibility as legislators.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is necessary and timely when also considering the world that we're living in right now, where threats in the aviation industry are constantly evolving. Airports around the world have learned, sometimes through tragedy, that land side and airside vehicle access must be treated as a serious security consideration. We cannot wait for something bad to happen here in Cayman for us to do something about it. I believe the Minister is being proactive and should be commended in that regard.

Mr. Speaker, I also accept that many of our visitors come from countries where other people from other countries want to do them harm and as such, we also have a duty to protect them when they're on our soil. The ongoing conflicts in the Middle East should give us all pause when considering that it also has a possibility of escalating outside the Middle East. We must be proactive in securing our people and our visitors, and for that, this Bill will have my support.

I support this Bill, Mr. Speaker, because at present, approved security officers at our airports operate without clear statutory authority to stop and inspect vehicles moving through sensitive operational areas. That is a gap, a real tangible gap in our security framework and this Bill is looking to close that gap as it will give approved officers the legal footing they need to do their jobs effectively and confidently.

However, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned before, if we're going to give any public officer the authority to infringe on any person's rights that are guaranteed in our Constitution, we need to approach that legislation seriously and carefully. With that in mind, I do have some concerns with some aspects of the Bill and may be filing some amendments to address those concerns. Emphasis on "may".

Mr. Speaker, I want to use this opportunity to remind Members and the listening public that section 55 of the Constitution states that internal security is part of the special responsibilities of the Governor. If this Bill passes in its current form, it'll be the first time that we have handed this level of power to an SAGC [Statutory Authority and Government Company], an entity that is not under the direct control of the Governor and outside the remit of the Deputy Governor.

Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Governor can confirm that I have said many times that rather than create the Public Authorities Act, we should have focused on moving from the Portfolio of the Civil Service to the portfolio of the public service. This is not to say that we move away from SAGCs, but rather, move towards uniformity and standardisation within the public service. I have some serious concerns with the disparity and inconsistencies in remunerations and benefits across the public service as a whole, but that is a debate for another time.

The question I'm asking is this: Will there now be amendments to the Port Authority Act, as both the airport and the seaport serve a similar purpose?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders: Okay, that's good.

Mr. Speaker, I want Members of this House and members of the public to fully understand what this Bill includes which I hope will make my concerns clearer. There are 5 areas of this Bill that give me pause.

Firstly, Mr. Speaker, section 32A(3)(h) grants approved officers the power to arrest, without a warrant, any person who contravenes or is suspected of contravening that section. That is a slippery slope and can only be exercised by law enforcement under very strict conditions.

Even more concerning, Mr. Speaker, under clause 6 that category can be extended to any person designated in writing by the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Airport Security Officer.

Mr. Speaker, I want you to hear what I just said— any person designated in writing by an internal airport authority official can be given responsibility to infringe on the rights of our people. We are being asked to hand the power of warrantless arrest to an open-ended category of individuals whose appointment is entirely within the discretion of airport management. That should give every Member of this Parliament serious pause.

Mr. Speaker, by turning down my amendment you took 2.5 pages out of my speech, but that's fine.

Mr. Speaker, my second concern is a part of the Bill that says, after a visual inspection, an approved officer who has "reasonable grounds" for suspecting a risk or threat may carry out a physical search of a vehicle or a person without a warrant. The reasonable ground threshold, while established by law, is only as meaningful as the oversight process that surrounds it; and what oversight process does this Bill provide at the point of search? None that are immediately visible on the face of the legislation.

We are told that the regulations will be made, we are told that the record-keeping and accountability mechanism will be provided for, but those regulations have not been brought before this Parliament. We're being asked to approve sweeping search and arrest powers today on the promise that the safeguards will follow tomorrow. Mr. Speaker, that is not good enough. Those safeguards should come first, not afterwards in a regulation that none of us may see.

Mr. Speaker, my third concern is the definition of "approved officer" and the extraordinary reach of these powers. Schedule 4 includes at item 5, **"Any person designated in writing by the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Airport Officer."**

Mr. Speaker, I want to draw Members' attention to the Private Security Services Act, in particular sections 5 and 6. In other words, this is the current legislation that we have that deals with private security firms. Section 5 deals with application for licence and it reads as follows—

- "5. (1) A person of or above the age of eighteen years may apply to the Commissioner for a licence.**
- (2) Application for a licence shall be made in the prescribed form.**
- (3) The Commissioner shall make such inquiry and investigation as he thinks fit regarding the character, antecedents, financial position and competence of an application for a licence."**

Mr. Speaker, section 6 deals with determination of application for a licence and it reads as follows—

- "6. (1) The Commissioner may issue the licence sought by an applicant, or may decline to do so on any of the following grounds —**
- (a) the applicant is disqualified from holding or obtaining a licence by virtue of an order made by a court under section 19;**
- (b) the applicant has been convicted of an offence under this Law;**
- (c) the Commissioner is not satisfied as to the character,**

antecedents or competence of the applicant; or

- (d) in the case of an applicant for a security business licence, the Commissioner is not satisfied as to the financial position of the applicant."**

And subsection (2) under the same section, Mr. Speaker reads—

"(2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1)(c), the Commissioner is entitled to consider under that paragraph, insofar as it relates to the competence of an applicant for a security business [licence] —

- (a) the applicant's understanding of modern security systems, technology and methods;**
- (b) [I want to stress this one.] the applicant's understanding of civil rights of citizens;"**

I want to say that again — under the Private Securities Act [*sic*] section 6(2)(b), the applicant's understanding of civil rights of citizens.

"(c) The applicant's ability to provide, or procure the provision of, suitable courses of training for security technicians and security guards proposed to be employed in the business."

That is from the Private Securities Act [*sic*], Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker that is what we require for an ordinary security guard in the Cayman Islands and that requirement isn't in regulations. That requirement is in primary legislation; it is in an Act. Are we saying that we can include qualifications for normal security guards in primary legislations, but we can't do the same for officers with extraordinary powers?

Mr. Speaker, I believe at a minimum that we should have some safeguards built into the Airports Authority Act and I implore the Government to make the necessary amendments at the Committee Stage to include such language. Without that amendment, this Bill creates a double standard in what we are asking the private sector companies to do, with a different standard for government companies. Like I said, this is the first time we're doing something like this.

Mr. Speaker, my fourth concern deals with the powers that are exercisable upon an increased threat level under section 32D. When there's a change in the prevailing threat level, a determination made by the Governor, the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Security Officer may implement whatever safety or security measures they consider necessary or appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, again there are no limits specified, and more importantly, not to be facetious, what qualification does the Chief Executive Officer or the

Chief Security Officer of the Airports Authority have in this regard? Isn't a Commissioner of Police the best person to make that determination as to what is absolutely necessary?

Mr. Speaker, I noted that section 32F requires that all powers be exercised reasonably and proportionately. Mr. Speaker, as you know, I sit on an Ombudsman Committee and I will say no more in that regard. All I will say — oh yeah, Gary sits on it too, so he knows where I'm going with this, along with other Members. All I will say is that people who pass through our airports deserve protections that operate before an incident and not after an incident.

Mr. Speaker, my fifth and final concern is this, or rather a question. Who do we think is going to be affected by this legislation if something goes sideways? Do you think it's going to be the people who are flying on the private jets? Actually, Mr. Speaker, I'll leave that alone. I'll ask another question instead.

Mr. Speaker, section 32 of the Airports Authority Act deals with security at the airport and it reads as follows—

- “32. (1) The Authority shall consult the Security Committee on all matters relating to security at all airports.**
- (2) The Authority shall, with the advice and assistance of the Security Committee —**
- (a) develop and implement, at all airports, security measures and procedures adequate to the requirements of international civil aviation, and ensure the effectiveness of such security measures and procedures; and**
- (b) develop and implement airport security training programmes adequate to meet the requirements of international civil aviation.**
- (3) In this section — “Security Committee” means the National Aviation Security Committee established upon the implementation of the Cayman Islands National Civil Aviation Security Programme on the 21st December, 1993.”**

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise in his wrap up, who are the members of this committee? Where and when are meetings held? Where can we as parliamentarians go to get a copy of the minutes of those meetings? Most importantly, was the security committee consulted about those proposed changes to the Airports Authority Act?

Mr. Speaker, as I said before, I support the Bill and what the Minister is trying to achieve, but as you are aware, every one of us in this Chamber has the constitutional responsibility to pass laws that are for the

peace, order and good governance of the people of the Cayman Islands. This Bill has good intentions, but we have a responsibility to strengthen it where it is weak and to ensure that there are sufficient safeguards written into the primary legislation, rather than deferred to regulations. This is necessary to protect our people and also the security officers who will be required to do this job at the airports.

Mr. Speaker, I know that security comes at a cost and some of those costs may infringe on our personal freedoms for the greater good, but if we're going to ask people to give up their rights and bear with us in their best interests, we have to pass legislation that gives them some protections that this will not be abused.

I know many of the security officers at the airport. Just about all of them are Caymanians. They are our family and they are our friends. We also have a responsibility to ensure that they are properly paid, properly trained, properly compensated and properly protected from the many visitors who come from countries where people like to sue for fun.

Mr. Speaker, with that said, I commend the Minister for bringing this Bill. Like I said, we don't want to wait until something bad happens before we do something, but as legislators we also have a responsibility to make the Bill stronger. I do not have the team around me, thus the reason why the Parliament (Management) Bill is necessary, but in the meantime what I would like for this legislation is, we can cut and paste some language already used in the Private Security Services Act and tailor-make it to fit into this Bill; that at least gives some level of consistency.

As it stands right now, Mr. Speaker, we can't have a double standard where we're asking the ordinary security guards to have one set of standards and yet we're now doing this blanket-type approach to a government entity. Like I said, this is the first time we're doing it and this is an opportunity... Well, this is the first time we're doing it for an SAGC, I should say. This is the first time we're stepping out and it's important for us to get it right.

With that said, Minister, I thank you for bringing the Bill. Like I said, it's timely, it's relevant, it's needed and with the way the world is going right now this is not something that we can take lightly. However, at a minimum, I think we need to strengthen some of the language to give the people protections and comfort and also to protect the various security officers because we may be opening some of them up to personal liability too. We just need to make sure we do that.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Minister and I'll be supporting the Bill. Thank you.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: The House is suspended until 6 o'clock.

Proceedings suspended at 5:03pm.

Proceedings resumed at 6:00pm

The Speaker: Before we recommence the debate on the Airports Authority Bill, I'd just like to remind the Ministers that we need the answers to the questions for Thursday and Friday if at all possible. Thank you very much.

Does any other Member wish to speak?

[Pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?

[Pause]

Honourable Attorney General.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a short contribution to the debate.

[Pause]

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

Mr. Speaker, the Bill itself like many things that we do around here these days, many, is usually in response to external issues. We are now, whether we like it or not, part of the global society and to that extent we're expected to play by those rules that regulate the traffic on a global highway. I think someone said earlier today, it might've been the Premier, that we are a victim of our own successes.

Mr. Speaker, a number of observations have been made by honourable Members about the Bill, especially Members on the other side. I must say that their observations are, quite understandably, reasonable, and as we all know, well intended.

Mr. Speaker, permit me to clarify that these are all things that are mostly, if not totally, already permissible under the current Airports Authority Act (2025 Revision) [sic]. The reason why we have this Bill is because the government considered it prudent and in the interest of transparency, among other things, it is best to have an amendment to the primary legislation instead of using the provisions of section 41 to make regulations, which most people would not have been aware of, Mr. Speaker. As I said, most of the things that have been discussed are either already permissible under the current Act or they are contemplated by the Bill that is being discussed before the House.

I can give you a number of examples, Mr. Speaker. Section 41 of the current Act allows for the making of regulations for a number of things. If you look at [section] 41(1) it says, **"The Authority may, in respect of any airport, with the approval of the Governor make regulations for regulating the use and operation of the airport and the conduct of all persons while within the airport, and, in particular, such regulations may —**

- (a) provide for securing the safety of aircraft, vehicles and persons using any such airport and

preventing danger to the public arising from the use and operation of the airport".

Mr. Speaker, those are very wide powers — to take measures to deal with the safety of vehicles and persons using the airport. Wide plenary powers, if I might say so.

Mr. Speaker, in [subsection] (f) it says, the regulations may **"regulate, promote or restrict the movement of persons into, in or out of the airport, and in this connection may designate any area a restricted area"**. Permit me, sir, to also mention [subsection] (h) which is to **"regulate vehicular traffic anywhere within the airport, and in particular may impose speed limits on vehicles therein"**.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, in this regard, [subsection] (m) where it says that the regulations may **"provide for security arrangements in accordance with ICAO requirements and the security requirements of this or any other law of the Islands"**. Those, Mr. Speaker, are very wide powers to use regulations to underpin or streamline the use of the airport.

Mr. Speaker, the current Act also already provides for the designation of authorised persons and it gives them powers of arrest. I refer to section 37 in particular, Mr. Speaker, which says:

"Arrest without warrant

37. (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Law, a constable or an authorised person may, within any airport or any area under the control of the Authority, arrest without warrant any person who —

- (a) is contravening or is suspected of contravening or having contravened this Law or regulations made or deemed to have been made hereunder"**.

Mr. Speaker, the current law provides for persons other than police officers to arrest persons without warrant, so the Bill is not breaking any new ground in that respect.

Mr. Speaker, if I might, with your leave, look at clause 5(d) of the Bill on page 11 — Amendment of section 41 - regulations. This is relevant in the sense that the honourable Member for George Town Central quite rightly observed that these people should have proper training if they're going to be exercising these powers, and no one could take any issue with that, Mr. Speaker. The Bill does contemplate that they will have training.

"5. The principal Act is amended in section 41(1) by inserting after paragraph (m) the following paragraphs—

- (mb) provide for the operational framework for stopping vehicles and carrying out visual inspections, including any procedures,**

**limitations on visual inspections and safe-guards;
(md) provide for the authorisation, identification and training of approved officers”.**

Thus, the Bill does contemplate, Mr. Speaker, as does the honourable Member, that persons who are going to be wielding these kinds of powers should have the requisite training, and the government did have that in mind, Mr. Speaker, when the Bill was crafted.

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

The Speaker: Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Member for George Town Central, what is your point of order?

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Speaker, I stand on a point of elucidation if the Member would allow.

The Speaker: Member.

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

The honourable Member just alluded to references I made in my speech about training, and I did clarify that I recognised that training was allowed. By way of understanding, did you understand what I said to be “the lack of identification of what kind of training”? I just want to make sure that's what your understanding was of what I said rather than me bringing up a point of order for clarification.

The Speaker: I think a point of elucidation should be asking the AG to explain something, not giving your own explanation of what you said earlier.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: I'm willing to understand what the honourable Member said. If my response is incorrect or inadequate... Clearly, I'm here to assist; so if I misunderstood what you've said, I'm happy for the clarification. Subject to you, of course, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry.

The Speaker: The point I'm trying to make is that under a point of elucidation it's normally because you're asking the Member speaking to elucidate something not to clarify what you said earlier for that Member.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: If you give way Mr. Speaker, I agree with you 100 per cent. Hence the reason I asked him to give clarity if he understood because if he didn't understand that to be the case, then I would have to do a point of order for clarification, which would be afterwards. It's up

to him to say what he understood or not and if he didn't understand it then I can give clarity to what exactly I said before the House.

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Mr. Speaker, I think I understand.

The spirit of what he said is that, given the enormity of the powers that have been vested in these people who are not law enforcement officers, it is imperative that they be given adequate, proper training, which I agree with; and I'm saying the Bill does contemplate that they will be trained. I mean, it's quite a salient and sensible observation, Mr. Speaker, that they be trained and the Bill contemplates that they will be trained if they're going to exercise powers of arrest, especially powers of arrest without warrant or any of those kinds of powers so it makes sense; it is quite a reasonable observation, honourable Member.

The Bill having provided for such, Mr. Speaker, allow me to say here, even if rather tangentially, that if —

[Inaudible interjection]

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: On the point of arrest.

Allow me to say, if even tangentially, against the backdrop of what is contained in this Bill: If, Mr. Speaker, any of us in here, or in fact an ordinary citizen, is in the airport which is *[INAUDIBLE]* a restricted zone, and we observe a serious offence being committed, the law, the common law, gives us the powers of arrest if it's a serious offence. There is such a thing as a citizen's arrest, Mr. Speaker — and I'm just saying that because not many of us would have the benefit of any training but would have been smart enough to realise that some serious transgression is taking place there; and the law, in its wisdom, says that as a citizen, you have the powers of arrest.

I just want to make that point, Mr. Speaker, for what it is worth. Having said that, I do not, in any way, seek to minimise the honourable Member's concerns. As I said, they are reasonable, but they are either already permissible under the Act or contemplated in the Bill itself.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier that the reason for the Bill, again, is that the Government considered it prudent and I think that in the interest of transparency, the best way to go about this is to make an amendment to the primary Act, but I read section 41 before, which gives plenary powers, through the Cabinet, to make regulations to address the issues we are addressing in this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member for George Town Central observed, again quite sensibly, that there's a need to ensure that the power to stop and inspect is not intrusive. He wants to make sure that it is not of an intrusive nature — and the Government agrees; and the Bill says so in clause 4. It says... if I

might with your leave, Mr. Speaker. [The Bill] makes the point that... Yes. Clause 4, which seeks to amend section 32, says, Mr. Speaker, with your leave:

"The principal Act is amended by inserting after section 32 the following sections —

'Visual inspection of vehicles and associated powers

32A.(1) An approved officer, while on duty at the airport, may —

(a) stop any vehicle in a designated airport security zone; and

(b) carry out a visual inspection of any stopped vehicle in a designated airport security zone.

(2) A visual inspection of a vehicle in accordance with subsection (1) shall not include [shall not include] —

(a) a physical search of a person in the vehicle;

(b) an intrusive search of the vehicle or a person in the vehicle;"

Thus, Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member, again quite reasonably, suggests that care should be taken that the search or inspection is not of an intrusive nature. The Government agrees, and the Bill so reflects.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of clarifying what would constitute reasonable grounds for a search, an observation was made that there's a need for clarity around it. That it should be more explicit, if I might say so. The truth is that the concept of what constitutes reasonable grounds cannot be prescriptive. What constitutes reasonable ground is going to be informed [or] determined by the facts of each case because the state of mind of the person is informed by location, movement, intelligence, among other things, and whether there's reasonable ground for a search, a stop, inspection, arrest, whatever it is, is usually determined by the facts of each case. The specific, particular, fact situation cannot be overly prescriptive so, whilst the observation is again reasonable, the legal position is that it cannot be too prescriptive and so the language there, again, is adequate, in my view, to address the situation.

Mr. Speaker, there was observation about the expertise of the CEO and the Chief Security Officer in the exercise of their powers in the event of an increase in the threat level as contemplated by the new section 32D of the Bill but the clear contemplation here is that the CEO... Mr. Speaker, I will just read what the new section 32D says for context, so Members can follow. It says:

"Powers exercisable on increased threat level.

32D. Where there is a change in the prevailing threat level, the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Security Officer of the Authority, may at any time implement the safety or security measures

considered necessary or appropriate to address the prevailing threat."

Mr. Speaker, what was contemplated here, and understandably so, is that if this happens, the CEO and the Chief Security Officer will liaise as necessary with the Commissioner of Police and the relevant security team and come up with a suitable response to deal with the elevated threat level. Again, the observation is reasonable, [and] the Bill contemplates it, but it is clearly within the contemplation that the CEO and the Chief Security Officer will not be seeking to act solo, but will make the necessary connection and discuss with the Commissioner of Police what would be a suitable response given the level of threat as they perceive it to be.

Mr. Speaker, I think all in all there were other things said but of course the Honourable Minister will deal with those issues in his wrap-up. I just thought it would be helpful to seek to clarify some of the legal issues that were flagged by honourable Members in their contributions — all reasonable observations, I might say.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, all in all I think the Bill is a very responsive piece of legislation by the Government to an ever-increasing, erratic, and unpredictable world where we see copycats every day, and we cannot, should not, and ought not to wait until something happens. We need to be proactive, but we also need to be responsive. As the honourable Member for Bodden Town West observed, the human rights that we so cherish are not absolute; he's quite right about that. We have to agree to sacrifice some of our civil liberties in the interest of public safety and security.

In that regard, I think the Bill strikes the right balance. It looks forward but it is also responsive. The Bill itself is proportionate and contains therein the adequate safeguards as it relates to our civil liberties, Mr. Speaker, so I too would like to commend its safe passage.

I thank you, sir.

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, does the Mover wish to exercise his right of reply?

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Honourable Attorney General for the clarity of the Bill that he just laid out. I think with what he just laid out there's no need for me to go over it again.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank all the Members in the House who contributed to this Bill for their support and for understanding too, that we do know that not every Bill will be right. There are Bills that are going to need tweaks and changes as we go along and we learn from them as we continue to move; but I have

faith in the individuals we have in our Airports Authority. I see the work they do there on a daily basis [and] I know many of the members who were there before [also] know the hard work they do.

Mr. Speaker, in good faith there's no way in the world I could ever think that they would actually put powers into the hands of people they were not a hundred per cent sure of when it comes to searching vehicles. The vetting process of that is something that we take very seriously. It is our borders, our gateway to this country. We don't just put anybody out on the front lines to do this kind of thing.

Mr. Speaker, I think the arrest side and the power to be able to arrest without a warrant was the one that triggered the biggest spark for everyone and I want people to understand that if you are faced with someone coming to you upfront you don't have time to go get a warrant and come back to search the person's vehicle. This is why we need to make sure that the people who are going to be there have the powers to be able to look in and see what's going on and if they feel they need help, that's why CBC and the police are always there — to help, to back them up when they need help.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, if it does get to that point, as the Honourable Attorney General just reminded me, the same people with the powers are required to hand over the individuals to the police. It's like any one of us trying to protect our home; we need to make sure that the people who are there have the power, the strength, to do their job. You can't give a man a job to do and tell him he doesn't have the power to do it because no one would take him seriously.

However, Mr. Speaker, this is a part of a problem that we can fix. Once we get to the distance from the front door where we can allow the drop point, which I think is just over 30 metres back from the front door of the airport, this search, et cetera, wouldn't have to happen. The small hut in the middle of the road wouldn't [need to be there] anymore. We just need to be able to step back.

As part of the enhancement of the airport, I know the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, the Board, and the members are looking at this to be able to resolve this problem, but right now we have another problem facing us which we need to fix and this is what they said. This is our fix for it right now, until we can get to that next step, so we need to continue to work to get to the next step where we can get the 30 metres distance. Well, just over 30 metres from the doorway.

The Attorney General also mentioned section 37 of the Airports [Authority] Act, which actually talks about the powers already. It is already in the law, we're just helping to strengthen it where we see a need to strengthen.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank everybody, all of my colleagues, for the straight clarity, the concerns that they may have had about the changes to the law but, again, I think everybody started off by saying it is the right approach and this is the direction that we need to go.

With that, sir, I want to thank everybody for supporting this Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026 be given a second reading.

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

AYES

The Speaker: The Ayes have it

Agreed: Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was given a second reading.

HEALTH PRACTICE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Health.

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

Mr. Speaker, I wish to move the Second Reading of the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill, 2026.

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

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present on behalf of the Government, the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill, 2026 which amends the Health Practice Act (2026 Revision).

Mr. Speaker, before turning to the clauses of the Bill, it is important to place these amendments in context. For years, the Public Accounts Committee, through required undertakings — three of both 2018 and 2021 — called for decisive action directing the Ministry responsible for Health to provide a clear plan to develop and roll out a National Healthcare Standards Programme. Today, that long-standing mandate is finally being honoured. The adoption of this Bill signals a decisive commitment to elevating national healthcare standards, closing a critical and persistent gap, and delivering on an obligation that has been delayed for too long.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the current Health Practice Act and its regulations provide an important standards framework. Under section 35 of the Act, each Council is required to prepare and publish a code of standards of professional practice for the members

of the professions regulated by that Council. Those codes are intended to lay down standards of professional conduct and practice, provide guidance in relation to the delivery of healthcare services, and set out the conditions of practice and supervision for registered practitioners.

The Act further integrates those standards into the regulatory and disciplinary regime by permitting action where a practitioner fails to comply with the standards of professional conduct and practice.

Other types of regulations already permitted by the Act regard matters such as registers for practitioners, functions of the Councils, Cabinet directions to the Councils, registration, fees, suspensions, courses and qualifications, contraventions or offences. However, Mr. Speaker, a safe and effective healthcare system requires more than individual professionalism, goodwill or minimum legal requirements.

It requires clear, enforceable standards grounded in law and updated to reflect the latest international best practice. It requires, for example, a clear and consistent framework across all health professions for patient consent and capacity to consent; one that protects both patients and practitioners. It requires the same level of expectations regarding the patient's access to their own information regardless of the practitioner's profession, and these are just a few examples. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a Bill that will provide for the development of this framework and I will now turn to a brief overview of its key clauses.

Clause 1 provides for the short title of the legislation.

Clause 2 provides for the amendment of section 35 of the Health Practice Act (2026 Revision) to empower the Cabinet to prescribe standards of professional practice that apply to every registered practitioner, thus establishing a clear structure for how standards are set.

Clause 2 also provides that the standards of professional practice shall be in respect of the following matters —

- (a) professional responsibilities and clinical practice;
- (b) licensing, performance and scope of practice;
- (c) clinical practice;
- (d) consent and capacity to consent;
- (e) prescribing and handling medicine;
- (f) clinical trials and research;
- (g) patient related standards;
- (h) safety;
- (i) trust, honesty and integrity; and
- (j) any other matter related to standards of professional practice that apply to registered practitioners as the Cabinet considers necessary.

The policy intent here is straightforward. Certain foundational standards should apply consistently

across the health sector. Patients and the wider public should be able to expect that all registered practitioners are guided by common baseline principles of professionalism, safety, ethics, competence and patient care. The Act further integrates those standards into the regulatory and disciplinary regime by permitting action where a practitioner fails to comply with the standards of professional conduct and practice.

The new section 35(1B), together with the other existing provisions of section 35, expressly preserve the duty of every Council to prepare and publish a code of standards of professional practice for the members of the profession regulated by that Council. Therefore, the professional councils will:

- continue to regulate their respective professions based on enhanced regulatory structure to be set by the Health Practice Act and regulations;
- regulate the professional conduct and discipline of registered practitioners;
- regulate the training requirements of registered practitioners in the Islands;
- promote high standards of professional conduct and performance of registered practitioners; and
- carry out such other duties and powers as are set out elsewhere in the Act.

In other words, the Bill adds a common layer of general standards across the system and strengthens the council's role by providing a clearer framework under which councils can develop standards and oversee practitioners more effectively.

Next, Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer a practical example of how Cabinet-issued regulations and council-issued standards will operate together. Regulations may, for instance, set a general expectation that registered practitioners maintain up-to-date knowledge and skills in order to deliver a safe and appropriate standard of practice including, where relevant, training in identified priority areas determined by the councils.

It is then through the professions' specific codes and standards, issued by each council, that these requirements are given practical effect. Those codes will define the relevant priority areas and outline the courses or competencies required, whether by speciality, scope of practice or where appropriate on the basis of individual assessment. This approach ensures that consistent overarching expectations are established at the regulatory level, while professional judgement and expertise continue to be guided by the councils.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to clarify the consultation aspect. The Bill before this House includes only those provisions that are being amended and does not restate existing consultation mechanisms which remain fully in place under the Health Practice Act. Section 42 of the Act already provides a clear framework under which Cabinet when drafting regulations may

consult the Health Practice Commission and the relevant councils where it considers this necessary. That framework applies regardless of the subject matter of the regulations, and strikes an appropriate balance. It supports consultation as a general rule while preserving Cabinet's ability to act swiftly in urgent circumstances where a lengthy consultation process may not be feasible.

In practise, Mr. Speaker, consultation is integral to how regulations are developed. The Ministry routinely engages a broad range of experts and stakeholders, including our Chief Medical Officer, our Chief Nursing Officer, the national epidemiologists, the Department of Health and Regulatory Services and other departments.

In line with good policymaking principles, the Health Practice Commission and the councils were consulted on the first version of the standards, and it remains my clear intention, even if we are not legally required, to consult both key stakeholders and the public once a draft prepared by legislative drafting is available. I also wish to be very clear that this framework does not diminish professional leadership. On the contrary, it ensures that professional expertise continues to guide the development and evolution of standards.

While this Bill provides a mechanism for Cabinet to prescribe overarching standards through regulations, those standards are informed by the substantive work already undertaken by the professional councils. The initial draft regulations will be based on council-endorsed standards, and it is my expectation that the same collaborative approach will apply to any future amendments.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill does not prescribe a rigid review or consultation mechanism in the primary legislation, and this is deliberate. It ensures that the framework remains flexible and responsive over time. Consultation with councils, the Health Practice Commission and other relevant entities will continue to form an integral part of how standards are developed and updated, consistent with established government practise. Cabinet-prescribed standards are intended to operate as overarching baseline requirements that apply across all regulated health professions while council codes of practice will continue to play a vital role in setting profession-specific standards that reflect the scope, risk, and realities of each field. The provision allowing Cabinet standards to prevail in the event of inconsistency is not intended to undermine the role of the councils but to ensure clarity and consistency in matters affecting patient safety, accountability and systematic risk. This approach is already embedded in the existing legislative architecture. This honourable House has approved overarching standards through the Health Practice Act, and Cabinet has given effect to those standards through regulations, the nursing regulations being a particularly good example; therefore, this Bill simply builds on and strengthens that established framework

by improving coherence and consistency across the health system.

Mr. Speaker, while this Bill enhances the legal framework allowing for regulations to be made, it does not, however, introduce per se, new professional standards. The actual development of regulations for professional standards will involve, as I mentioned, extensive consultation before being adopted. Stakeholders expected to be involved would include healthcare practitioners, professional councils, healthcare facilities, relevant entities and departments, and patients and the wider public. The goal is to ensure that standards are practical, appropriate for the Cayman Islands, and developed with input from the people who work in and use the health system.

Additionally, consultation will represent a valuable opportunity to better educate the public about what they should expect from their healthcare system and the professionals helping patients to better navigate care, provide informed consent and recognise when something falls short of acceptable practise. Granting Cabinet the power to establish overarching professional standards is intended to address fragmentation, inconsistency, and regulatory gaps that have emerged under the current framework; by setting high-level crosscutting standards at the Cabinet level, government can ensure coherence, consistency, and alignment with national health priorities, public safety objectives, and broader public policy settings.

These overarching standards will provide a clear foundation upon which the councils can build profession-specific requirements, allowing them to retain technical expertise and operational independence while working within a unified and modern regulatory framework. In this way, the reform strengthens governance, improves transparency, and ensures that professional regulation remains responsive, proportionate, and fit for purpose.

Mr. Speaker, some may ask why Cabinet should concern itself with the quality of care delivered within our health system. My answer is a simple one: That is precisely what Cabinet should be doing. Cabinet bears collective responsibility for the wellbeing of our population, for public confidence in essential services and for ensuring that national systems operate safely, consistently, and in the public interest. Quality of care is not an abstract or technical matter. It goes to patient safety, public trust and the effective use of public resources. While clinical expertise rightly resides with professionals and regulatory councils, it is Cabinet's role to set the overarching direction, ensure coherence across the system, and respond when gaps or inconsistencies arise, far from constituting overreach.

This reform reflects responsible stewardship of the healthcare system and a clear acknowledgement that safeguarding quality of care is a core function of government. Mr. Speaker, as Parliamentarians and Members of Cabinet, I don't think there are many of us here who are scientists or engineers. I know we have a

social worker, clinicians — Mr. Speaker, I know you've had your experience in that space; yet, through legislation and regulations, we are required to establish the frameworks by which these highly specialised professions are governed.

By empowering Cabinet to establish overarching professional standards developed through structured consultation with qualified experts and stakeholders, we ensure that regulation is grounded in sound policy and national priorities while allowing the councils as the disciplined-specific authorities to expand on those standards with the necessary technical depth. This approach strikes the appropriate balance between democratic accountability and professional expertise and strengthens the credibility, consistency, and effectiveness of the regulatory system as a whole.

During the 28-day consultation period, Mr. Speaker, members of the public, health practitioners, and representatives of the health facilities provided valuable feedback, much of which consisted of constructive suggestions on the standards to be developed.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my sincere thanks to all those who took the time to participate in the consultation process and to contribute their views. Their engagement, insight and willingness to assist are greatly appreciated and reflect a shared commitment to strengthening the regulatory framework and supporting high standards of professional practice in the Cayman Islands.

I also wish to place on record my sincere gratitude to the chairpersons and members of the councils; to the Health Practice Commission; to the Registrar and to the Department of Health Regulatory Services and staff who provide ongoing support to the health practice bodies for their continued hard work and commitment in carrying out these important responsibilities. Their service is essential to the effective functioning of the regulatory framework for health practitioners in the Cayman Islands.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments are measured but important. They will help strengthen the regulatory framework for health practitioners in the Cayman Islands, promote consistency across the healthcare sector and reinforce the protection of patients and the public working in partnership with the health practice bodies, the councils and the Health Practice Commission. This is ultimately a public protection measure. Licensed healthcare professionals are entrusted with people's lives, health and their wellbeing. It is therefore appropriate that the law should provide for clear, modern, and consistent overarching standards while still relying on the councils to add specifics to those standards, regulate their professions and uphold discipline, oversee training requirements, and promote high standards of conduct and performance.

I therefore commend the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill to this honourable House and respectfully seek the Members' support.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Minister for her contribution and say that at the outset the Official Opposition supports strengthening professional standards, we support improving consistency across the health system, and we support putting patient safety and public trust at the heart of healthcare.

However, Mr. Speaker, when we first looked at this amendment Bill it gave us pause because just reading what it said, it seemed — not just to us but to others in the public — that it was removing the ability for the medical fraternity to have a say in what the codes of practice for health care standards would be and putting it solely in the hands of the Cabinet. That's how it seemed, and when we started asking around, there was concern also from various individuals in the medical fraternity, so it wasn't just a concern that we had; it was a concern out there in the general public.

I heard the Minister speak about consultation and we did get from one of those organisations what they submitted in terms of consultation, but it doesn't seem as if what they received assuaged their concerns; so I believe, upon speaking with the Minister, that she had not yet had the opportunity to more widely maybe have the kind of one on one consultation with some of the medical fraternity — and if I'm incorrect she can say so.

I reached out to the Minister asking whether we could have a chat about it — she was unable to get back to me. I had an opportunity to speak with her very briefly on Monday gone; a very brief conversation. We agreed that I would send her a note regarding the concerns. I did not hear back. I reached out again and I have not heard back. I'm not saying this, sir, to go after the Minister at all, far from it. She's very busy. I appreciate that, so this afternoon when I came in I said to her, can we spend some time and have a huddle and she agreed.

We spoke to some of her staff and then she indicated to me what she just explained to the House in terms of where this came from. It wasn't obvious to us where it came from — an Auditor General's report. She went on to further explain how it is anticipated that the role of the councils, if I heard her correctly, would be actually strengthened in the regulations.

She also explained to the House, like she mentioned to me, that there are other Acts that require consultation. That was not obvious to me. I mention that, sir, to say that I came here prepared for a different debate than I'm about to have but, as the Minister indicated, we felt strongly about making sure that we understood where this was going because, as all of us here know, medical standards are not an abstract notion. They guide how patients are treated and the decisions that are made — they protect people.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the approach that we have decided we're going to take is to give the Government the opportunity to bring the Regulations. I did say to the Premier, I think I may have said it to the Minister, that if it were me I would withdraw this for now and ensure that we have full, proper consultation and discussion with the medical fraternity because from what I can gather there is much concern but that's not going to happen. I accept that.

Mr. Speaker, I had put forward some amendments. I will say what they are...

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: No, I don't plan to debate them. I'm just going to say what they are. I don't think there's anything wrong with me saying what they are— Are you disagreeing with that, Mr. Speaker? Can I actually say what the amendments were? The Speaker's happy with it.

The Speaker: There's an accepted standard. If you intend to move an amendment to a Bill at Committee Stage, you should give notice of it during your debate, or [it] should not be allowed to be moved in Committee Stage so of course you can move *[sic]* it.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: I will say what these were, but I will give notice, sir, that I do intend to withdraw them. These we're seeking to try to maintain the ability for councils to still have a say with regard to the standards. The Minister has given assurances that it will actually happen in the regulations, so I won't go forward with these. I was hoping she would have said as much in my conversations with her. I said this to her.

In her debate, she did indicate that she thought these were more suitable to be included possibly within the regulations that would be coming. We will see, but I accept her at her word. Mr. Speaker, given the concerns we had, I will not be voting against the Bill, but will likely abstain because I want to see what regulations come later; the concerns are out there and we did have them.

I will move away from that, Mr. Speaker, and speak to two issues once I can find them — these are all the pages that I won't be speaking to; but we became aware, as we started to have conversations with the public and with constituents that there are certain situations out there that maybe should be addressed. I will begin my written presentation there, sir.

Mr. Speaker, there's also a practical dimension to this issue of standards. In a modern healthcare system, Caymanians and residents often use overseas centres of excellence. Sometimes, recommended overseas treatments are not adopted locally because they are not reflected in the current standards or accepted protocols. The problem is not necessarily the validity of the treatment. My understanding is that our current framework does not provide a clear way to assess it

and act on it; it is therefore important that our health practice framework is sufficiently flexible and responsive to evolving best practice and does not inadvertently create barriers to high-quality healthcare simply because types of care have not yet been incorporated locally.

I'm hoping, by what the Minister has said in terms of where they're moving to, that it will incorporate those kinds of protections. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the Honourable Minister consider whether the health practice framework that has been put together would provide for a clear and timely pathway through which individual, internationally recognised specialist guidance or treatment plans can be reviewed and, where appropriate, approved for implementation within the local healthcare system where it is clinically appropriate and feasible.

Otherwise, where that is not the case, such treatment can be considered for time referral to appropriate overseas specialists, caregivers, or care providers. The development of such an approach should of course be informed by the Chief Medical Officer and the relevant professional councils. This will ensure that our system can respond in a timely, lawful, and clinically appropriate way to evolving best practice and ultimately achieve better health outcomes for our people. Mr. Speaker, to help better understand what I'm speaking of, I'm happy to discuss, as will the Leader of the Opposition, a specific situation this seeks to address.

Mr. Speaker, I discussed this with the Minister; there's also a wider point of regulatory coherence, and I will take the opportunity to mention it because I've had constituents recently raise this with me. While the government seeks to strengthen and centralise standards for registered health practitioners, there remain other sectors such as cosmetology, tattooing and body art that involve direct physical procedures including skin penetration.

Mr. Speaker, these activities carry recognised risks of infection, allergic reaction and other complications, yet they are regulated primarily at the facility and hygiene levels rather than through a comparable practitioner-based regulatory framework with appropriate oversight and accountability. I raise this not to conflate it with the issues we were discussing earlier, but as I said, sir, I did speak to the Minister about this and she did mention that this sector is also being considered, so I would ask that she maybe speak to this when closing and give some assurances as to when attention might be paid to that sector as well, sir.

Mr. Speaker, it is here that I was going to be speaking more about the amendments that I'd be bringing, but I will end here. The Opposition will not oppose this Bill. I'm assuaged by the assurances that we've received that the councils will actually be strengthened and their role will not be diminished in the regulations that are coming forward. I have asked the Minister already, and I will do so again, to please have conversations with the medical fraternity so that they can be

further assuaged. It is important that what we do here maintains the confidence not just of those of us in here, but also of the public — in this case, the medical fraternity as well.

Thank you very much, sir.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?

[Pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?

[Pause]

Member for Bodden Town West.

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to lend my voice to the debate on the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill, 2026 that seeks to amend section 35 of the Health Practice Act to give Cabinet the power to set universal professional standards that apply to all registered health practitioners in the Cayman Islands and not just those governed by individual professional councils.

If passed, this Bill will allow the Cabinet to set standards that cover professional responsibilities and clinical practice; licensing and scope of practice; consent and capacity to consent; prescribing and handling medicine; clinical trials and research; patient-related standards; and safety.

Mr. Speaker, the most significant structural change is the hierarchy it establishes. Please note that individual professional councils can still prepare and publish their own codes of practice for their members but, if there is ever a conflict between a council's code and the Cabinet-prescribed regulations, the Cabinet regulations take priority. In short, it centralises minimum professional standards at the Cabinet level, creating a uniform baseline across all health professions while letting individual councils maintain their own, more specific code, so long as those codes don't contradict the overarching regulations made by Cabinet.

Mr. Speaker, I initially had some concerns with this Bill. On my first reading, I was curious as to the driving force behind this Bill — what was the problem we were trying to fix and the level of consultation with the professionals in the medical industry. Mr. Speaker, also on my first read, I saw this Bill as a transfer of power and responsibility away from the expert professional bodies that have earned their authority through years of specialised knowledge and experience toward politicians. Toward a body whose expertise, however considerable in matters of governance, is not and cannot be the clinical and professional expertise that a growing healthcare industry demands.

My other concern related to the possible impact that this Bill would have on the malpractice insurance of professionals in the healthcare industry; however, Mr. Speaker, I must say kudos to the Honourable Premier and the Honourable Minister of Health. They took it upon themselves to call me to discuss the Bill and the concerns that I had with it.

I can safely say, Mr. Speaker, that after my call with the Premier and the Minister of Health, most of my concerns were relaxed when the Minister indicated that she would be filing a Committee Stage amendment, which she did. The remaining concerns were not material enough for me not to support this Bill, and as such, Mr. Speaker, after consulting with my Bodden Town East colleague, whereby he and I have discussed the Bill, it is our intention to support the Bill and thank the Minister for bringing it.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I just want to extend my appreciation to both the Honourable Premier and the Minister of Health for taking a proactive and collaborative approach to allay our concerns and move this Bill forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?

[Pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?

[Pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?

[Pause]

Does the Mover wish to exercise her right of reply?

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks: Mr. Speaker, could I ask for just one moment before we start, please.

[Pause]

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to conclude the Second Reading debate on the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill and to thank the Honourable Members on all sides of this House for their considered and constructive contributions. This Bill represents a measured but important strengthening of the regulatory framework for health practitioners in the Cayman Islands. It supports consistency across the system, reinforces public protection and provides greater clarity for practitioners, regulators and patients alike.

The role of the professional councils is not diminished by these amendments; it is strengthened. Councils remain responsible for regulating their professions, developing profession-specific standards, and overseeing training and discipline now within a clearer and more coherent legislative framework. Consultation will take place as we move forward with the regulations. The practitioners and health facilities were also given the opportunity, along with the public, on this 28-day consultation period and many did. Their input has helped shape the approach before this House and that engagement will continue as the framework is developed and implemented.

I also want to say, as I shared even with some of my colleagues earlier, that as we discussed some of the concerns that had been shared across the Floor on the consultation process, I reminded colleagues that all we are doing right now is providing Cabinet with the

ability to draft regulations and subsequent to that we should, as legislators, go back and consult with the public.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks: We will. I did say that; you weren't here, but I said that.

Before I conclude, I wish to briefly respond to the points raised by the honourable Member for Red Bay. This Bill does not remove or diminish the role of the medical fraternity or professional councils. On the contrary, it establishes a consistent system-wide baseline of standards while preserving the council's central responsibility to develop, expand, and apply profession-specific requirements based on their expertise.

Consultation has already informed the approach before this House including input from practitioners and health facilities and that engagement will continue in a more detailed and focused way at the regulation stage, where the actual professional standards will then be defined. That is where the depth of technical discussions rightly belongs.

Mr. Speaker, this is enabling legislation. It addresses a longstanding gap in our regulatory framework. Delaying it would only postpone the structured development of standards that all Members agree are necessary for patient safety and public trust, and as I mentioned in the earlier part of my debate, it has been outstanding for quite some time. Passing this Bill allows that important work to proceed in an orderly, consultative, and transparent manner.

For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I commend the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill to this honourable House and respectfully seek the Members' support.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill, 2026 be given a second reading.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Health Practice (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was given a second reading.

PARLIAMENT (MANAGEMENT) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

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

I beg to move the Second Reading of a Bill entitled the Parliament (Management) (Amendment) Bill, 2026.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly moved. Does the Member wish to speak to it?

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

I rise to present the Parliament (Management) (Amendment) Bill, 2026 on behalf of the Government.

Mr. Speaker, democracy is a system, and like any system, it performs only to the standard that its design allows. For too long we've asked Members of this honourable House to serve the public at the highest level without providing some of the most basic levels of institutional support; today we continue on the road to adjust that. This Bill is about more than just allowances and managers; it's about building the kind of Parliament the people of the Cayman Islands deserve — one that is suitably resourced, accountable and genuinely able to serve constituents in each electoral district.

I suppose what makes this Bill significant, Mr. Speaker, is that it formalises, for the very first time in Cayman Islands parliamentary history, designated specified staff for the office of the Leader of the Opposition and I deliberately phrase it as such because we are here to take names and faces out of it, look at the post and determine whether that post, which is in the Constitution, deserves more suitable resources to carry out the office. This is a milestone, Mr. Speaker. The NCFC Government recognising that it takes a strong, properly resourced Opposition to have greater governance in the country; and it is not unusual. Our view was maximised by last year's visit from other Commonwealth members who came in October, I think, and discussed the level of resources for the Opposition in their Parliaments, so this is not radical.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, as part of International Women's Month, this Parliament [established] a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association branch for women. We also held Youth Parliament — if we are going to convince more women and ask more young people who have extraordinary degrees and can go off and do other things in the world, to contest the polls and take part in politics, we need to show them that if they choose to turn to this profession there'll be adequate resources.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is not in any way ground-breaking. It's making suitable adjustments for this House of Parliament in 2026. Arranged into eight clauses, the Bill is relatively short.

Clause 1 provides the short title of the legislation and contains a commencement provision including that the amendments to Schedule 1 and paragraph 1(2) in Part 2 of Schedule 2 are deemed to have come into force on the 1st of January this year.

Clause 2 makes general amendments to the principal Act to standardise terminology, replacing references to "member of the Parliament" and "Members of the Parliament" with "Member of Parliament" and "Members of Parliament" throughout.

Clause 3 amends section 2 of the principal Act to redefine “constituency assistant” as a person appointed by the Chief Officer responsible for providing services to an elected Member of Parliament and to insert a new definition of “constituency office manager” as a person appointed by the Chief Officer responsible for managing the constituency office of an elected Member of Parliament. That affords Members to have a more senior person who may have additional managerial role qualifications and to have the ability to hire a subordinate.

Clause 4 amends section 4 of the principal Act to expand the Commission's general functions to include providing constituency office managers to elected Members of Parliament and providing an office and staff to support the office of the Leader of the Opposition.

Clause 5 repeals and substitutes section 12A of the principal Act to provide that part 1 of Schedule 2 applies to constituency office managers and constituency assistants, and that part 3 of Schedule 2 applies to staff appointed to support the office of the Leader of the Opposition.

Clause 6 amends section 13 of the principal Act to update the structure of the Commission, expressly providing for the appointment of constituency office managers, constituency assistants, and the staff of the Leader of the Opposition, and setting out the relevant allowances.

Clause 7 amends Schedule 1 of the principal Act to increase the allowances for both the Deputy Speaker and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition from 2.5 per cent to 10 per cent of their monthly respective salaries.

Clause 8 repeals and substitutes Schedule 2 of the principal Act in its entirety. The new Schedule 2 contains 3 parts.

Part 1 governs the appointment, remuneration, and termination of constituency office managers and constituency assistants.

Part 2 sets out the constituency allowance at \$6,500 per month up from \$5,000 for each elected Member of Parliament — a modest increase to take account of cost of living and other pressures; and provides for executive allowances which were already there for the office of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition; the allowance for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman representatives; and severance entitlements which were there.

Part 3 establishes the terms and conditions for staff appointed to support the office of the Leader of the Opposition comprising an Operations and Communications Manager, and a Senior Policy Adviser because we recognise that as part of discerning legislation, reviewing policy, creating proposals, you can't be expected to do that by yourself. When the Government is loaded with resources, it is appropriate for similar resources to be given to the Leader of the Opposition now and whoever occupies that office in the future.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to sincerely thank the Members of the NCFC Government for seeing the wisdom and, again, taking names and faces out of it, thinking about advancing democracy; the Leader of the Opposition and all Opposition members for leaning in and working with the Government to create the Bill — we did it together; and, particularly, the Council that helped do this Bill.

If we continue to advance Parliament, ideally there would be a legal drafter assigned to the Parliament itself, and then the Council would not need to come to Cabinet for drafting instructions; it would just be done here, but we're getting there, chipping away and advancing our democracy. Thus, I thank all Members for all of their mature, sensible views to take the Parliament from strength to strength.

I also thank legal drafting as always, no matter where they're situated — at the moment, they're situated in the government admin building — but I also thank them for seeing the urgency and helping us prepare; and also Madam Clerk for her always wise interventions.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I commend this Bill to this honourable House for its second reading.

The Speaker: Does any other 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 very brief contribution to the Parliament (Management) (Amendment) Bill, 2026.

Mr. Speaker, after being chief cook and bottle washer for the last year, I found some new talents, one of which is poem writing. If you allow me, I'll read my latest poem, sir.

*In the hush of twilight's grace,
I lingered soft
in silent hope of an office space.
With dreamlike whispers light and free,
I built my hopes
on what having staff support could be.
Alas, at a Chamber luncheon,
the stars above began to gleam
as time wove through
my tender dream;
and with the dawn the promise came.
No longer waiting, I felt the flame.
At last, the moment
bright and clear.
The time is now.
The time is here.
With open arms I greet the sun,
for in the waiting
life as the Leader of the Opposition
has begun.*

[Desk thumping]

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Leader of the Opposition: A poet, and I didn't know it.

Mr. Speaker, let me join in thanking the Parliamentary Council, the Government, yourself, sir, and the staff, for the hard work and the many hours put in bringing this to a reality for us. Being one of the first cohorts of the Parliament when we changed from the Legislative Assembly to the Parliament and began this journey of being independent from the government, having more autonomy, I am very satisfied today to see the progress we are making in our democratic journey as a Parliament.

I think this is a step in the right direction, Mr. Speaker, and it would be remiss of me not to say that you have always been, since you were a Member of Parliament, an advocate for advancing our democratic process; an advocate for advancing the way we do business here in the Parliament, and the role of the Opposition, so I thank you for your support. I thank you for all that you've done in the past and I know you have great plans for the future.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I say thank you, and we support this Bill.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Does any other Member—
Member for Red Bay.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to add my voice to this as well, having worked in what was a past office of the Leader of the Opposition, primarily when my colleague the Member for George Town East was the Leader of the Opposition.

I want to commend you, sir, because we're moving forward; we're advancing, we're actually having it within law which is a good thing, but the concept for this started with you and, I believe, during Sir Alden's time, and I want to add my voice to commending you because you were the Leader of the Opposition [when] that first office of the Leader of the Opposition was set up, [and] we have had subsequent Leaders of the Opposition.

It's regrettable that it fell away when the autonomy of the Parliament happened, [but] it was probably a good thing because what we have now is something better, and I join voice in thanking the Premier, the Government, and the Council for bringing this to fruition and putting back in place the office of the Leader of the Opposition.

Thank you, sir.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
Member for Bodden Town West.

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders: Mr. Speaker, I really wasn't planning to speak on this Bill but, on behalf of my Bodden Town East colleague, we also want to extend our thanks to the Premier and his Government for making this step.

Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Red Bay highlighted, we know this is something that started with you pushing not just for the name change of the Legislative Assembly to Parliament, but also to raise the standard of representation that we offer our people. I know it is something that's near, dear, and passionate to you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm glad that God has blessed you with long life and longevity for you to sit in this chair to actually see it and be a witness from that standpoint.

Mr. Speaker, you know my relationship with you goes way back and my respect for you has been marrow-deep — I mean, granted, you saved my life too, that does help. At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, I am happy that you have seen what you have fought for, for so long. I'm glad that you have lived in a time when history will vindicate you and be kind to you. No place better can we look at than the Health Services Authority. Like, why build a new hospital for \$16 million when you can renovate the old one for \$70 million and can't grow? I think in that sense, history has vindicated you in many respects.

Mr. Speaker, I also have to give credit to the Honourable Premier for the tone he has set in this session of Parliament. It takes a lot for a Government to come here without a quorum and expect some level of cooperation and you have to give credit because I think he has created an atmosphere that is that comfortable, and I think it says something about how much we have matured as a democracy. Credit has to be given to him in that regard because I see he has gone above and beyond to take a more collaborative approach. We both know, when I entered this body we looked over there and if they weren't 10 on that side you stayed outside — you know what I mean?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders: That was the rule, yeah.

It goes to show it has changed and I think the Premier has to be given credit for the tone that he has brought you can't take anything from him in that regard, you know.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders: It still shows a level of leadership because the Government still carries the majority, so I'm not going to take anything.

Overall, going into my third term, I would say this session of Parliament has been one of the most productive and constructive whereby we have been dealing more with the issues rather than the politics and I think that augurs well from that standpoint. I just want

to say thank you to the Premier and his team for this, again.

What we do is quite challenging. My good friend from Bodden Town East [and I] have the two largest constituencies and I can tell you it is a challenge sometimes, you know what I mean? I have people in my constituency, and I'm sure my friend in Bodden Town East has the same, who were used to saying how they could find this one and that one. Back then, people had home phones; they didn't have mobile phones so you could have a situation whereby if you wanted your politician you had to wait till either they were in the office or their home to get a call returned. Now it's constant where, as you send out a message and people see you're online, they expect you to respond same time.

It is a challenge and resources can never be enough, but for us to move and represent our people well this needs to be done; and I'm really moved to hear that it will come with a legal drafting for Parliament because honestly, Mr. Speaker, as Parliamentarians, and especially on the Opposition bench, we need to be carrying more Bills. Motions are fine, but Bills are needed to really get the people's work done, so I am very happy to hear that.

Again, Premier, I just want to thank you, your Government, and the Leader of the Official Opposition for the tone you have set for this term.

Thank you.

[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, does the Mover wish to exercise his right of reply?

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly, to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his eloquent poem. We don't know if it was Google Gemini or ChatGPT, or if he really did have those ponderings but either way, it was good and it really was a pleasure.

Mr. Speaker, I've saved some special comments for you — it isn't easy chairing the management council. I don't envy you; it isn't easy because everyone in this room is a leader in their own right. It's not easy managing leaders, and you do it well in the Council, so thank you, sir. You've seen this coming a long time, so you've seen this from bookend to bookend, so thank you, sir.

I appreciate the Member for Bodden Town West's comments about the tone of Parliament but really, it's a partnership throughout the entire Parliament and it also comes down to the relationship with you, Mr. Speaker. This is also part of your vision. It isn't just André Ebanks, it's also the Speaker saying *let's be more*

collaborative; let's get things done for the people and try to keep politricks out of it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank all the Members for their support, all the way around the House, and I hope that we can continue to have even more modifications because this isn't the end; we have to continue to evolve to be a mature, advancing Parliament in this Caribbean. These three beloved Islands of ours — three. For the Member for Cayman Brac East: three islands, not one. Three islands, working together.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: You are a given. You are a given, and you remind me weekly in Caucus; but I don't see the Member for Cayman Brac East as often. Thank you, colleagues. I think this is a good thing for our Parliament.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Thank you.

The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Parliament (Management) (Amendment) Bill, 2026 be given a second reading.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Parliament (Management) (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was given a second reading.

PROCEEDS OF CRIME (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Attorney General.

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the Second Reading of a Bill entitled Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2026.

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

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

[Pause]

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with your leave, may I just read the long title into the record.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Proceeds of Crime Act (2025 Revision) in order to expand the membership of the Anti-Money Laundering Steering Group (The Steering Group) (AMLSG) to include the Minister with responsibility for financial services or a designate

of the Minister to be Chairperson of the Steering Group and to include the Chief Officer of the Ministry responsible for Customs and Border Control or the designate of the Chief Officer; to provide for the sharing of information between members of a committee appointed by the Steering Group and between members of the Steering Group and members of that committee; to provide for an annual performance report of the activities of the Steering Group; and for incidental and connected purposes.

Mr. Speaker, I seek to move this Bill on behalf of the Government. By way of background: As we are aware, the Cayman Islands financial services sector and other economic drivers are highly exposed to global anti-money laundering (AML), counter-terrorist financing (CFT), and counter-proliferation financing (PF) scrutiny. I remember saying some time ago in this House that as a jurisdiction we are suffering from review fatigue and therefore, robust national coordination is required to ensure sustained compliance with the financial action task force standards.

Mr. Speaker, the FATF upcoming fifth round of mutual evaluations will assess the effectiveness and technical compliance of the Cayman Islands regime in 2027, and this Bill seeks to enhance the prospect of successful evaluation by, among other things, threatening institutional arrangements, including providing for a more robust mechanism for the anti-money laundering steering group; to monitor competent authorities' progress against national action plan or strategy for combating AML, CFT, and PF. The Bill amends the Proceeds of Crime Act to expand the membership by including the Minister responsible for financial services, who will serve as Chairperson, or a designate of the AML Steering Group.

Mr. Speaker, the AML group is the body responsible for the general oversight of the Government's anti-money laundering policy and includes promoting effective collaboration among competent authorities in a manner that ensures the compatibility of the requirements for combating money laundering and terrorist financing with the law protecting personal data privacy and related matters.

The Bill also adds the Chief Officer of the Ministry responsible for Customs and Border Control or his or her designate as a member of the anti-money laundering steering group. It also adds the Legal Services Supervisory Authority (LSSA), and the Cayman Islands Institute of Professional Accountants (CIIPA), as members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee (IACC). The Bill introduces provisions to enhance information sharing and by extension of domestic cooperation and coordination among members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee. It also provides for that sort of facility between members of the IACC and the AMLSG. Under the Bill, sir, investigative and prosecutorial authorities will now be required to submit an annual report to the AMLSG, as it relates to AML matters, and as effectiveness indicators.

Mr. Speaker, in fashioning the Bill, consultations with internal stakeholders were held in January 2026 with all members of the anti-money laundering steering group and the IACC including the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service, Customs and Border Control, the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Financial Reporting Authority, the Office of the DPP, the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority, the Department of Commerce and Investment, the General Registry, the Legal Services Supervisory Authority mentioned earlier, and the Cayman Islands Institute of Professional Accountants as well as the Office for Strategic Action on Illicit Finance (OSAIF). The feedback from the authorities has been considered, and the Bill was revised accordingly.

If I may with your leave, sir, mention briefly the clauses of the Bill.

Clause 1, as usual, provides for the short title.

Clause 2, sir, amends section 2 of the [principal] Act to insert definitions for "Inter-Agency Coordination Committee", "self-laundering offence", "stand-alone money laundering offence" as well as "third-party money laundering offence".

Clause 3 amends section 5 of the Act, and repeals and replaces section 5(1) of the principal Act to change the composition of the anti-money laundering steering group. It is proposed that the group will now be chaired by the Minister responsible for financial services or a designate of that Minister. Clause 3 also amends section 5(3A) of the principal Act to provide for the continuation of the committee known as the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee; and inserts a new provision that allows representation on the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee by agencies or bodies assigned as supervisory authority by Cabinet under section 49 of the principal Act. As I mentioned earlier, these would include the self-regulatory body, CIIPA, and the LSSA.

Clause 4 inserts a new section 5A which provides for the submission of annual performance reports by every competent authority charged with responsibility for investigating or prosecuting money laundering as well as prosecuting associated predicate offences and terrorist financing. Such reports, [which] must be prepared and submitted to the anti-money laundering Steering Group no later than three months after the end of each calendar year, will thereafter be submitted to Cabinet for information, and then published in the Gazette and any other government website determined by the anti-money laundering Steering Group.

Mr. Speaker, reporting entities must submit annual performance reports containing, at a minimum, the following information.

- (a) key achievements and indicators of progress —
- (i) as measured against the national action plan approved by the Steering Group, if one exists; to combat money

- laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing; and
- (ii) in the absence of a national action plan, which are in line with the national strategy to combat money laundering, the financing of terrorism and proliferation financing;

- (b) an outline of the operational and strategic priorities of the relevant competent authority for the forthcoming year where such priorities relate to the national anti-money laundering, CFT and counter-proliferation financing strategy.

Mr. Speaker, there also needs to be contained therein:

- (c) statistical or performance indicators relevant to the effectiveness of the relevant agency in its performance against—
 - (i) the national anti-money laundering, counterterrorism financing and counter-proliferation action plan approved by the AMLSG.

Mr. Speaker, matters to be included in an annual performance report submitted by an entity which prosecute offences — that would be a report submitted by the DPP — should include:

- (a) the number of prosecutions for money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing activity;
- (b) the nature and types of associated predicate offences from which proceeds are derived;
- (c) the number of money laundering convictions related to —
 - (i) third-party money laundering offences;
 - (ii) stand-alone money laundering offences;
 - (iii) self-laundering offences; and
 - (iv) foreign predicate offences

These are all details which are required to be included in the report and also include:

- (d) the number and types of sanctions including monetary fines and prison sentences imposed for money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing offences; and
- (e) the types of offences to which each sanction relates.

Matters to be included in an annual report that is submitted by the investigatory agency should include:

- a) the number of criminal investigations for money laundering and other related offences,
- b) the number of criminal cases where there was an investigation to identify and trace assets; and
- c) the value of criminal assets seized or frozen for domestic purposes, if any.

Mr. Speaker, I might add that [regarding] the reports that are being required, especially from the DPP, I propose to bring a Committee Stage amendment to make it quite clear that they are not expected to be too granular and should not contain any information which may identify a particular person or case and such other details. It must be aggregate and anonymised.

Clause 5 inserts new sections 7A and 7B. The proposed new section 7A deals with information sharing among the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee members; and between the committee and the Anti-Money Laundering Steering Group, and it provides, sir, in short, that members of the IACC may in good faith share information with other IACC members or with the AMLSG members where necessary to perform their statutory function, Mr. Speaker.

The new section 7B of the Act will provide that no member of the AMLSG or the IACC, nor any Member of that committee shall be liable for damages for anything done or omitted in the discharge of their respective functions or duties under the legislation unless, of course, it can be shown that the act or omission was done in bad faith or constituted wilful misconduct or negligence — in other words, immunity unless there's bad faith, negligence or misconduct.

Clause 6 validates any sharing of information which took place prior to the date of commencement of the Bill if it becomes law.

In conclusion, those are the main highlights of the Bill. In closing, I wish to thank the staff of the Office for Strategic Action on Illicit Finance in the Ministry of Financial Services and Commerce, in particular, Mr. Duwayne Lawrence and Ms. Erika Bodden; as well as the Legislative Drafting Department for their efforts with respect to the design and the preparation of this Bill.

With that, sir, I commend the Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2026 to this House for its second reading, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
Member for George Town East.

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

I rise very, very briefly, on behalf of the Official Opposition to make this very short contribution to the debate on this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I actually prepared something a bit lengthier to go through some of the actual provisions of the Bill but having listened to the Attorney General expound on it, I can see very little that I can add to it, so I will skip that and conclude my presentation.

I want to say that I was truly pleased with the extent of consultation that the Bill seems to have gone through with so many different entities and groups that have had input into it; it really gives me much comfort as well.

Mr. Speaker, I will end by saying that we support the Bill and look forward to voting in the affirmative once the vote is taken.

Thank you, sir.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
The Member for Bodden Town West.

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Bill also on behalf of my good friend and colleague for Bodden Town East. We have discussed it and we agreed that it is important that on matters such as these this Parliament should always have a unified approach because of the nature of it [and] the international competition we have. All the different regulatory bodies need to understand that we take this kind of legislation, which deals with AML, et cetera, very seriously. We also need to ensure that we carry a unified voice in this regard. With that said, Mr. Speaker, we support the Bill.

Something I want to thank the Government for that caught my attention was the change of the Chairmanship from the Attorney General to the Minister of Financial Services. Ultimately, as representatives and as the voice of the people, I think it is high time that we play a more active role in that regard. I think it again augurs well to our maturity, as representatives of the people and also maturity as a country that we can now move these things — it shows more seriousness when they see the Minister of Financial Services, who in this case happens to be the Premier, leading the charge. I think it sends the right message internationally and is what regulators and different people like to see.

Mr. Speaker, we're happy with it. We have no issues with it and we welcome the changes. I also want to give credit to the Minister of Financial Services and his team. Though we know it is a very difficult area, it is a lifeline to our country so whatever we can ever do to help in that regard, we'll do so.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? I like the pattern that is developing with the debate, you know — one Member of the Opposition, one Independent Member, one Member of the Government.

I call on the Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, we aim to please.

[Laughter]

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, this Bill is bittersweet. I'm going to save part of what I'm going to say for when an actual retirement occurs. In his presentation of this Bill, the Attorney General adequately set out all the reasons on the surface, but let's also let the public have some insight. The Attorney General has been at the forefront of anti-money laundering and counterterrorist financing framework legislation for years upon years — he's seen it all.

Because we know he has plans, has earned a retirement in the foreseeable future; and none of us know who the next Attorney General will be and whether they will have such a keen interest and monumental experience in this area, it is time, in addition to the reasons that the Member for Bodden Town West has said, for a shift of the policymaker with responsibility for financial services — again, as I said on the last Bill, take names and faces out of it.

The lion's share of legislation and policy that drives the anti-money laundering framework comes from that Ministry and I'm glad that the Member for Bodden Town West made this point because the AG can tell you [that] when you're in these rooms those international standard setters ultimately want to know what the elected policy-makers think about all this. We know they can send the Attorney General, we know they can send the chief officers, we know they can send the technocrats — but all of them are creatures of instructions. That requires high political commitment, so the people of the country have put people in post — what do the people in those posts in Parliament think of all this?

With that in mind, and the fact that earlier in the term we moved the Office of Strategic Action on Illicit Finance under the Ministry of Financial Services, you have the gelling of policy operational.

However, in this unique circumstance, we also are cognisant of the fact that a stalwart in the area, we have to call him by his name — not just the Attorney General, but Samuel Bulgin will be moving on.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier Hon. André M. Ebanks: We would hope the next AG, whoever he or she may be, will be lending their shoulder to this wheel, but we don't know. I'll save all the emotional stuff for when he actually retires — save that for another day; but I think I made my case for all the reasons for this shift in the legislation.

I thank the AG for moving this Bill and having an orderly transition. I personally am not asking for more work, but it is the right thing for the country.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[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—

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Okay. It's just been brought to my attention that I need to invite the Premier to suspend the Standing Orders to get us to work beyond 8 o'clock.

Suspension of Standing Order 14(1)

The Premier Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Clerk is quite right.

It is now the hour of 8 o'clock, so I move to suspend Standing Order 14(1) to allow the House to continue beyond the hour of 8 o'clock.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 14(1) be suspended to allow the House to work beyond the hour of 8 o'clock.

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: I now invite the Honourable Attorney General to respond to the debate.

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

I wish to thank the Members for their contribution to the Bill. There really isn't much more to say but I do confirm, Mr. Speaker, that whenever we are in these fora, if I represent the Cayman Islands as Attorney General, and not just Cayman but any country for that matter that is represented by a non-elected representative, one of the things we have to keep repeating like a broken record is that there is high political commitment behind these initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, they want to hear it; if you don't say it, it is as if something is missing from the record or something, so we usually put it at the beginning of our response to say there's political commitment at the highest level and everything else flows thereafter. Hence, it is quite fitting, quite in order, if you can have that body in the room instead of having to repeat it; but having said that, sir, there are other reasons, as you heard, which we will hear more about at the appropriate juncture.

I mentioned earlier on today, and I think the Member for Bodden Town West mentioned that we've always been responding to external concerns, if I might put it that way, so this is yet another example where, whatever we do around AML and proliferation financing and terrorist financing has always been in response to the FATF standards — the FATF methodology — and they're evolving on a daily basis.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in preparation for the 5th round, which begins in earnest in May or June of next year, culminating in an onsite visit in December of 2027, we [must] have the necessary personnel and framework in place as we make those kinds of preparations so that we can have sufficient lead time for effectiveness to be assessed prior to the actual mutual evaluation itself.

I'm very confident that it will go well whether or not I'm around; we have excellent players in all the relevant agencies and there's commitment, there's professionalism, there's sincerity and vision dealing with all of these initiatives so, like any other storm, we will weather this as we continue on this quest, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, I want to thank everybody for their support for this Bill and I commend it to this House.

Thank you.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2026 be given a second reading.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was given a second reading.

The Speaker: The House will be suspended until 8:30.

Proceedings suspended at 8:08pm

Proceedings resumed at 8:34pm

The Speaker: This Parliament is back in session and will now go into Committee.

House in Committee at 8:36pm

COMMITTEE STAGE

The Chairman: This House is now in Committee and with the leave of the House, may I assume that as usual we would authorise the Honourable Attorney General to correct minor errors and such the like in these Bills. Is there a consensus for that? Okay.

Would the Clerk please state the Bill and read the clauses.

**AIRPORTS AUTHORITY
(AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) BILL, 2026**

The Clerk:

- Clause 1: Short title
 Clause 2: Amendment of section 5 of the Airports Authority Act (2005 Revision) - functions of the Authority
 Clause 3: Amendment of section 20 - receipts of the Authority
 Clause 4: Amendment of section 41 - regulations
 Clause 5: Validation of payment and collection of fees for air navigation services
 Clause 6: Validation of penalties imposed and collected for non-payment of fees for air navigation services
 Clause 7: Orders or determinations by a court

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 1 to 7? *[Pause]*

If there are no questions, the question is that clauses 1 to 7 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 7 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Airports Authority Act (2005 Revision) to provide for the collection of fees by the Authority from aircraft operators for the use of air navigation services; to validate the collection of fees by the Authority and the payment of the fees by aircraft operators for air navigation services; to validate penalties charged or paid for the non-payment of fees for air navigation services; 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.

**AUDITORS OVERSIGHT
(AMENDMENT, VALIDATION AND REPEAL) BILL,
2026**

The Clerk:

- Clause 1: Short title and commencement
 Clause 2: Amendment of section 2 of the Auditors Oversight Act (2020 Revision) - interpretation
 Clause 3: Repeal and substitution of section 6 - Board
 Clause 4: Amendment of section 7 - directors
 Clause 5: Amendment of section 8 - Managing Director
 Clause 6: Amendment of section 9 - disqualification and termination of appointment
 Clause 7: Validation of acts of the Board and the Managing Director
 Clause 8: Orders or determinations by court not affected
 Clause 9: Repeal of Auditors Oversight Act (2020 Revision)

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 1 to 9? *[Pause]*

If there are no questions, the question is that clauses 1 to 9 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 9 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Auditors Oversight Act (2020 Revision) in order to correct the statutory basis for the establishment of the Board of Directors of the Auditors Oversight Authority; to correct the statutory basis for the appointment of the Managing Director of the Authority; to validate any actions of the Board of Directors while improperly constituted; to validate any actions of the Managing Director while improperly appointed; to repeal the Auditors Oversight 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.

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Clerk:

- Clause 1: Short title

The Chairman: I have been given notice of an amendment to clause 1. Would the Member move the amendment?

Amendment to Clause 1

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In accordance with Standing Order 70(1) and 2 of the Parliament Standing Orders, 2025, I, the Honourable Johany S. Ebanks, JP, Minister responsible for Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure, give notice to move the following amendment to the Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026 —

That the Bill be amended in clause 1 as follows

-
- (a) in the clause heading, by inserting after the words “Short title” the words “and commencement”;
- (b) by renumbering clause 1 as clause 1(1); and
- (c) by inserting after clause 1(1), as renumbered, the following subclause —
 - “(2) This Act shall come into force on such date as may be appointed by Order made by the Cabinet, and different dates may be appointed for different provisions of this Act and in relation to different matters.”.

The Chairman: The amendment has been duly moved. Does any Member wish to speak thereto?
Honourable Premier.

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

The Minister moved this amendment after consultation [between us]. We discussed and said, as there are a number of moving parts and a degree of public education that should come with this Bill, it seems right for the usual commencement provision to allow time for the framework, regulations and public education to be developed so the Cabinet at an appointed time can then decide when this commences.

The Chairman: Does any other Member wish to speak? If not, the question is that the amendment stands part of the clause.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Amendment to clause 1 passed.

The Chairman: Does anyone wish to speak to the clause as amended?

If not, I will put the question. The question is that clause one, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clause 1, as amended, passed.

The Clerk:

Clause 2	General amendments to the Airports Authority Act (2005 Revision) - references to Parts, references to Schedules; references to Law
Clause 3	Amendment of section 2 - definitions
Clause 4	Insertion of sections 32A to 32G – visual inspection of vehicles and associated powers; reasonable grounds for suspicion; general powers of approved officers to carry out safety and security requirements of the Governor; powers exercisable upon increased threat level; offence; reasonable and proportionate exercise of power; designated airport security zone
Clause 5	Amendment of section 41 - regulations
Clause 6	Insertion of Schedule 4 - approved officers of the Cayman Islands Airports Authority

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 2 to 6? If not, I will put the question that clauses 2 to 6 stand part of the Bill.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clauses 2 to 6 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Airports Authority Act (2005 Revision) to empower approved officers to conduct visual inspections of vehicles; to empower approved officers to control vehicular access to designated airport operational zones; 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.

HEALTH PRACTICE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Clerk:

Clause 1 Short title

The Chairman: The question is that clause 1 stand part of the Bill. Are there any questions? *[Pause]* If not, I shall put the question.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clause 1 passed.

The Clerk:

Clause 2 Amendment of section 35 of the Health Practice Act (2026 Revision) - codes of standards of professional practice.

Amendment to Clause 2

[Withdrawal thereof]

The Chairman: We have had notice of an amendment by the Member for Red Bay. I think you indicated earlier that you were going to withdraw the amendment.

Mr. A. Roy Tatum: Yes, Mr. Chairman; based on the assurances given by the Minister, I do wish to withdraw the amendment.

The Chairman: The question is that the amendment to clause 2, as circulated, be withdrawn.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Amendment to clause 2 withdrawn.

The Chairman: The question is that clause 2 stand part of the Bill.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clause 2 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Health Practice Act (2026 Revision) to empower the Cabinet to prescribe standards for professional practice that apply to every registered practitioner; 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.

PARLIAMENT (MANAGEMENT) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Clerk:

Clause 1	Short title and commencement
Clause 2	General amendments to the Parliament (Management) Act (2023 Revision) - references to member of the Parliament, members of the Parliament, Member of the Parliament and Members of the Parliament
Clause 3	Amendment of section 2 - interpretation
Clause 4	Amendment of section 4 - general functions of the Commission
Clause 5	Repeal and substitution of section 12A - constituency assistants
Clause 6	Amendment of section 13 - structure of the Commission
Clause 7	Amendment of Schedule 1 - Salaries, Allowances and other benefits of Members of the Cabinet and Elected Members of the Parliament
Clause 8	Repeal and substitution of Schedule 2 - Constituency Assistants; Constituency Allowance for Members of the Parliament; Allowances for the Offices of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition and for Members of the Parliament for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 1 to 8? The question is that clauses 1 to 8 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 8 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Parliament (Management) Act (2023 Revision) to provide for the establishment of an office for the Leader of the Opposition; to provide adequate staff to support the work of the office of the Leader of the Opposition; to provide constituency office managers to support the constituency offices of elected Members of Parliament; to increase constituency allowances; 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.**PROCEEDS OF CRIME (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026**

The Clerk:

Clause 1	Short title
Clause 2	Amendment of section 2 of the Proceeds of Crime Act (2025 Revision) - interpretation
Clause 3	Amendment of section 5 - Anti-Money Laundering Steering Group

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 1, 2, and 3? If there are no questions, I'll put the question. The question is that clauses 1, 2, and 3 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:

Clause 4	Insertion of section 5A - annual performance reports of competent authorities.
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Amendment to Clause 4

The Chairman: We have received notice of an amendment.

Would the Honourable Attorney General like to move the amendment, please?

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

In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 70(1) and (2) I, the Honourable Samuel W. Bulgin KC, JP, Attorney General and Ex officio Member, give notice to move the following amendments to the Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2026:

That the Bill be amended in clause 4 by deleting the proposed section 5A (6) and substituting the following-

- “(6) An annual performance report-
 - (a) shall not contain information which, in the opinion of the Steering Group-
 - (i) is sensitive; or
 - (ii) is operational data,
 - or both, and the disclosure of which may prejudice law enforcement or national security; and
 - (b) if information is required under subsection (3)(f), shall contain such information which is only reported in an aggregate and anonymised form which means that the information does not identify a person, an investigation or a case.”.

Thank you.

The Chairman: The amendment has been duly moved. Does any Member wish to speak thereto? *[Pause]*

If no Member wishes to speak, I shall put the question. The question is that the amendments stand part of the clause.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Amendment to clause 4 passed.

The Chairman: Does anyone wish to speak on the clause as amended? *[Pause]*

If not, I will put the question. The question is that clause 4, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clause 4, as amended, passed.

The Clerk:

Clause 5	Insertion of sections 7A and 7B - information sharing among members
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of the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee and between the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee and the Steering Group; immunity of the Steering Group and its members and of the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee and its members

Clause 6

Validation

The Chairman: Are there any questions on clauses 5 and 6? If there are no questions, I'll put the question.

The question is that clauses 5 and 6 stand part of the Bill.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Clauses 5 and 6 passed.

The Clerk: A Bill for an Act to amend the Proceeds of Crime Act (2025 Revision) in order to expand the membership of the Anti-Money Laundering Steering Group (the Steering Group) to include the Minister with responsibility for financial services or a designate of the Minister to be Chairperson of the Steering Group and to include the Chief Officer of the Ministry responsible for customs and border control or the designate of the Chief Officer; to provide for the sharing of information between members of a committee appointed by the steering group and between members of the steering group and members of that committee; to provide for an annual performance report of the activities of the Steering Group; 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 Bills be reported to the House.

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

AYES.

The Chairman: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Bills to be reported to the House.

House resumed at 9:00pm

The Speaker: The House will resume. Please be seated.

REPORT ON BILLS

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) BILL, 2026

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

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: No, the first one is the Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I am to report that a committee of the whole House has considered a Bill shortly entitled the Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026 and [it] passed without amendments.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly reported and is set down for a third reading.

AUDITORS OVERSIGHT (AMENDMENT, VALIDATION AND REPEAL) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

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

I am to report that a Bill shortly entitled the Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026 was considered by a committee of the whole House and passed without amendments.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly reported and is set down for third reading.

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Minister of Planning.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I am to report that a committee of the whole House has considered the Bill shortly entitled the Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026 and it passed with amendments.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly reported and is set down for a third reading.

HEALTH PRACTICE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Minister of Health.

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks: Mr. Speaker, I am to report that a committee of the whole House has considered the Bill shortly entitled the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill, 2026 and it was passed without amendment.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly reported and is set down for third reading.

PARLIAMENT (MANAGEMENT) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

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

I am to report that a Bill shortly entitled Parliament (Management) (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was considered by a committee of the whole House and passed without amendments.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly reported and is set down for third reading.

PROCEEDS OF CRIME (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Attorney General.

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

I beg to report that the Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was considered by a committee of the whole House and passed with one amendment.

The Speaker: The Bill has been duly reported and is set down for third reading.

I invite the Honourable Premier to move the suspension of Standing Order 65 to allow all the Bills to be read a third time.

Honourable Premier.

Suspension of Standing Order 65 (to allow the Bills to be read a third time)

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

I move the suspension of Standing Order 65 to allow the Bills to be read a third time.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 65 be suspended to allow the Bills to be read a third time.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing Order 65 suspended.

THIRD READINGS

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill shortly entitled Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026 be read a third time and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026 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: Airports Authority (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2026 was given a third reading and passed.

AUDITORS OVERSIGHT (AMENDMENT, VALIDATION AND REPEAL) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

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

I beg to move that a Bill shortly entitled the Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026 be given a third reading and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026 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: Auditors Oversight (Amendment, Validation and Repeal) Bill, 2026 was given a third reading and passed.

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill shortly entitled the Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026 be read a third time and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026 be given a third reading and passed.

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

AYES.

Agreed: Airports Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was given a third reading and passed.

HEALTH PRACTICE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Minister of Health.

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to [move] that a Bill shortly entitled the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill, 2026 be read a third time and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Health Practice (Amendment) Bill, 2026 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: Health Practice (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was given a third reading and passed.

PARLIAMENT (MANAGEMENT) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

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

I beg to move that a Bill shortly entitled Parliament (Management) (Amendment) Bill, 2026 be given a third reading and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Parliament (Management) (Amendment) Bill, 2026 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: Parliament (Management) (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was given a third reading and passed.

PROCEEDS OF CRIME (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

The Speaker: Honourable Attorney General.

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

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2026 be given a third reading and passed.

The Speaker: The question is that a Bill shortly entitled the Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2026 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: Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2026 was read a third time and passed.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Suspension of Standing Order 14(1)

(For the House to resume at 11 a.m.)

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

I thank all Members, the parliamentary staff, and you for a productive sitting. I'll move a motion now to commence the House a bit earlier than the Standing Order, so I move the suspension of Standing Order 14(1) so that the House may resume tomorrow, Thursday, 30th April at 11 a.m.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 14(1) be suspended to allow the House to commence its business at 11 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, 30th May.

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

AYES.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour: You said 30th of May.

The Speaker: I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Okay.

The question is that clause 14(1) be suspended to allow the House to commence its business tomorrow at 11a.m.

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: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate Members agreeing to that Motion.

The Member for Bodden Town West commented they were brave to come down without a quorum of 10. I figured we had enough goodwill in the Parliament to try it for one sitting, but I didn't want to press my luck, so we moved to 11a.m. Tomorrow we should have a quorum of 10 on the Government side, so thank you, Members.

I now move that this House do stand adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, 30th April at 11 a.m.

The Speaker: The question is that the House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, 30th April at 11 a.m.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

At 9:12pm the House stood adjourned until 11am Thursday, 30th April, 2026.