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BERMUDA
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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Sitting number 4 of the 2017/18 Session
(pages 205–264)

Hon. Dennis P. Lister, Jr., JP, MP
Speaker

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BERMUDA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT****29 SEPTEMBER 2017****10:00AM***Sitting Number 4 of the 2017/18 Session*

[Hon. Dennis P. Lister, Jr., Speaker, in the Chair]

PRAYERS

[Prayers read by Mrs. Shernette Wolffe, Clerk]

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

[Minutes of 22 September 2017]

The Speaker: Members, we received the Minutes of the 22nd of September.

Any objections? Any amendments?
The Minutes are confirmed.

[Minutes of 22 September 2017 confirmed]

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

The Speaker: There are none.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER
OR MEMBER PRESIDING****APOLOGIES**

The Speaker: There are actually three announcements this morning.

The first announcement is that we received notice from three of our Members indicating that they will be absent today. [They are] the MP Scott Simons, MP Leah Scott, and Minister Zane De Silva.

Also at this time, we would like to acknowledge the fact that serving us today as acting Sergeant-at-Arms will be our former Sergeant-at-Arms, Mr. Albert Fox, in the absence of Mr. Allen.

[Desk thumping]

**MESSAGE FROM THE COMMONWEALTH
PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION**

The Speaker: Further, I have a letter that we received from the CPA that I would like to read out at this time. And it is basically to all the branches in reference to the recent hurricanes. And it reads,

“On behalf of the Membership of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Caribbean, the Americas, and the Atlantic Region, the Regional

Secretariat wishes to commiserate with those countries which suffered utter devastation in the wake of the recent category 5 Hurricane Irma, which swept the northern Caribbean last week. We recognise the people of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda; the Bahamas, the British Virgin Islands, and the Turks and Caicos Islands [are] among the countries in the Caribbean region who experienced this storm of epic proportion and are now trying to deal with the aftermath, which, sadly, will last much longer than the passage of the storm. Please know that the Region stands behind you in your efforts to rebuild and return to normality. And we encourage you to keep strong in this face of adversity.”

It is signed by Heather Cooke, the Secretary for the Caribbean, Americas, and Atlantic Region.

I would also like to just note that we should, in giving consideration there, express consideration and concern for Dominica, which, after this letter was penned, also suffered the effects of Hurricane Maria.

MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE**PARLIAMENTARY JOINT
SELECT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

The Speaker: We have one message from the Senate.

“To his Honourable Speaker and the Members of the Honourable House of Assembly,

“I am pleased to announce the appointment of Senator James Jardine and Senator Vance Campbell to serve as the Senate’s representatives on the Standing Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Private Bills.

“And I am further pleased to announce the appointment of Senator Nandi S. Outerbridge and Senator Vance Campbell to serve as the Senate’s representatives on the Standing Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on the Registrar of Members’ Interests.”

It is signed by the President of the Senate, the Honourable Joan Dillas-Wright.

**PAPERS AND OTHER
COMMUNICATIONS TO THE HOUSE**

The Speaker: There are none.

PETITIONS

The Speaker: There are none.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS AND JUNIOR MINISTERS

The Speaker: Yes, we have seven Statements today.
First, I will recognise the Premier.
Premier, you have the floor.

Hon. E. David Burt: Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Good morning.

RECENT NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON, D.C., VISITS

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform this Honourable House of my [recent visits to New York City and Washington, DC](#).

Along with the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, his Permanent Secretary, and a representative of the Bermuda Business Development Agency, I visited New York from the 19th through the 21st of September to meet with individuals and companies interested in doing business in Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that there is excitement about the new direction in which Bermuda is heading and a keen receptiveness to our message that Bermuda is open for business and for investment.

While in New York, we hosted a luncheon attended by 24 guests including investment professionals, wealth managers, and venture capitalists. The guests included representatives of Chinese State companies and wealth managers of Gulf State families. Our discussions covered a wide range of areas including hospitality, technology, agriculture, energy, and transportation. We also met with leading law firm Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP, Rosecliff Ventures, Wafra Investment Advisory Group, Inc., Ridgewood Investments and Astor Investment Management.

Such meetings are a critical component of our efforts to grow and diversify our economy, and to create jobs. In order to do so, we must increase our international profile and interest in Bermuda as a well-regulated jurisdiction in which to conduct business. The visit provided an opportunity for us to advance our agenda, including the creation of a tech hub at Southside and encouraging the development of start-ups based in Bermuda.

You would also recall that after leading the debate on a number of Bills in the morning session at our last meeting, I had to quickly leave in order to depart for Washington, DC, to attend the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Annual Legislative Conference event, at the invitation of US Congressman, the

Honourable G. K. Butterfield, a dear friend of Bermuda. The Minister of Economic Development also joined me on this visit.

The Congressional Black Caucus event presented an excellent opportunity to connect with lawmakers and influencers in Washington, DC. We have committed to reopening the Government of Bermuda's Washington, DC, Office, and this visit not only enabled us to renew relationships, but also to meet with key individuals who are well placed to assist us in that reopening.

As was the case with the New York visit, this visit, too, furthers our efforts to communicate that Bermuda is open for business and investment. We are committed to growing and diversifying our economy and to the creation of jobs, for the benefit of all Bermuda.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Premier.

We have a further Statement.

I recognise the Minister for Marine and Ports, the Deputy Premier.

Deputy Premier, you have the floor.

A FLEET STATUS REPORT—DEPARTMENT OF MARINE AND PORTS SERVICES

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this House to report on the [Department of Marine and Ports Services](#) [the Department]. Unfortunately, right now the Department requires additional funding for the year, which, if it is not addressed, would leave Bermuda's marine fleet service unable to properly serve the Island's residents and visitors alike. This is as a result of a number of interrelated factors.

Marine and Ports Services is a key department within Bermuda's transport structure. The Department is essential to all of our shipping; it coordinates the transport of commuters and visitors on the water from St. George's to Sandys and all throughout the Island; and it manages aids to navigation and all matters related to activity on Bermudian waters.

In respect to the funding shortfall, first there is the factor of the America's Cup event this year, which required additional passenger lift between Dockyard, Hamilton, and St. George's. This resulted in an additional ferry boat schedule in May and June of this year, which operated in conjunction with the normal full-service ferry schedule. The two schedules combined to all but exhaust the Department's budget allocation in the areas of fuel, inventory, and overtime.

During the America's Cup event, the Department of Marine and Ports Services operated a total of nine ferries at the weekend, compared with the normal summer schedule of four weekday ferries and two weekend ferries. The additional lift caused an excessive burden on these budget items. Exacerbating the

situation is the fact that, unfortunately, the Department did not have additional funding in its budget to cover the expense of the America's Cup.

I pause here, Mr. Speaker, to commend the Marine and Ports staff who performed to a very high standard throughout the America's Cup and received many well-deserved kudos for their hard work and professionalism.

However, the America's Cup was only one factor to take into consideration with respect to the Department's shortfall. A second factor was the leasing of the Rhode Island *Millennium* ferry for a fifth year in a row, which caused a further drain on the funding resources of Marine and Ports.

Mr. Speaker, you will recall the *Millennium* ferry was originally leased to assist with passenger lift from Dockyard to St. George's during a period when the Marine and Ports ferry fleet was to undergo major maintenance by way of a required mid-life refit. However, it appears that the maintenance did not take place until this past winter when a portion of the required work was carried out, some five years after the *Millennium* was first brought to Bermuda. So far, these "catch-up" repairs have cost the Bermuda Government \$2,418,435 in materials, parts and labour.

To meet the expenses of the *Millennium* ferry, the Department was allocated \$862,000 in the current fiscal year. However, actual costs will be approximately \$1,500,000 for the six-month period. This amount consists of the ferry's base contract price of \$1,250,000, together with crew travel costs, housing, fuel, international crew wages, and vessel delivery fees.

To meet a contractual obligation with respect to an instalment payment in June of this year, the Department completed a budget [virement] that transferred funds from the very areas—fuel, inventory, and overtime—now impacted by the budget shortfall. Mr. Speaker, given that the total cost of the *Millennium* to Bermuda by the end of this year will be approximately \$7,933,728, one can argue that we could have simply purchased a new ferry for ourselves. Third, and this gets to the crux of the matter, for the fiscal year 2017/18, the Department received an operational budget allocation of \$20,097,138. This represents an increase of just 1 per cent over the prior year's budget allocation of \$19,900,000, which itself proved inadequate to meet the demands of the marine fleet for the 2016/17 fiscal year.

A combination of the above-mentioned factors means the current year's budget allocations for fuel, inventory, and overtime are now largely depleted, and we have more than half of the budget year left. The funds have been spent on the America's Cup and the *Millennium* ferry.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members are being informed that the Department will require additional funding in the amount of \$1,674,440. This is absolutely necessary to enable the fleet and tug boat

services to meet service-level schedules for the remainder of the 2017/18 fiscal year. The funds cannot be obtained elsewhere in the Department's or Ministry's budget allocation, and, as such, a Supplementary Estimate has already been placed before the House.

Although, like other government departments, Marine and Ports has experienced extensive vacancies as a result of retirement, resignation, and the hiring freeze, in addition to having newly established posts linked to the approved re-organisation of the Department, it is critical for the Department to maintain its marine fleet in an optimal condition. A programme of maintenance and repair is required for the fleet to keep its Lloyd's of London class certification. Falling out of class is not an option. Additionally, with the *Millennium* ferry contract coming to an end this year—I repeat that, *coming to an end this year*—it is imperative the existing fleet be properly maintained, with repairs taking place in a timely manner.

Mr. Speaker, going forward, I am pleased to report Marine and Ports can satisfy its service obligations to the Bermuda community, with its existing fleet, which is fully operational now. The Department is recruiting the staff needed to ensure that it retains the necessary class certification, with a regular maintenance and repair programme. The future looks good for the Department of Marine and Ports Services.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Premier.

I understand that you have a second Statement. Would you like to do that Statement now as well?

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Yes, please.

The Speaker: Deputy Premier, you have the floor.

THE STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—BUSES

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members of the House, I rise today to give a statement on [the situation regarding our public buses](#).

The Department of Public Transportation [DPT] has had a high number of buses out of service in recent months. This has been a challenge for the Government since taking office on July 18th. We also recognise this has been challenging for commuters, school students, and visitors to the Island. What has been going on with buses for some time now is not a secret. For this reason, the Government believes it is imperative to be open about the situation—what it is we are dealing with and the planned way forward.

The reasons for the buses being out of service are numerous and varied. Some of the issues relate to design. Some of them are as a result of the bus fleet simply being old.

With respect to age, the bus fleet has an average age of 11 years, when the industry norm is 7 years. In fact, we have some buses that are 20 years old. Although new buses were purchased in 2009 and 2014, this was insufficient to keep the average age of the fleet commensurate with best practice. To remedy this, more needs to be done to augment a fleet that is on the road 18 hours a day, almost every day of the year. The newer buses are being utilised more often in the rotation, which, in turn, means that they are ageing faster. The remainder of the fleet is older, and with so many buses out of service, the Department of Public Transportation is unable to carry out a programme of preventive maintenance as it has done in the past.

However, I am pleased to report that, in addition to the four new buses already ordered and due on Island at the end of the year, the Office of Project Management and Procurement is currently reviewing a request for proposal prepared by the department, which seeks tenders for up to eight new buses. As stated in the Throne Speech, the Government will continue with this long-overdue re-investment in the bus fleet.

Mr. Speaker, with the new buses on order, DPT mechanics have used their knowledge to eliminate, as much as possible, design flaws that plague the existing fleet. For example, the engine compartment on the buses, as received from the manufacturer, is enclosed. However, in Bermuda's summer temperatures, this results in overheating of the vehicle, which puts it out of service. The new buses will have vented engine compartments to ensure sufficient air circulation around the engine.

Overheating, generally, can result in the buses being put out of service when air-conditioning fails. If the bus does not have windows that open, then it is difficult to provide relief for passengers and bus operators. The new buses will have windows that open.

The proximity and proliferation of Bermuda's roadside vegetation is another issue. DPT has worked with the current bus manufacturer, MAN, to find a solution that addresses the infiltration of vegetation into the radiator, which is the main part of a bus's cooling system. This involves fitting a pan under the radiator to stop debris from being sucked in and causing overheating.

Also, buses that have fabric seats are susceptible to spillage of drinks or to rainwater when the windows are left open (for those that have windows). Something as simple as wet seats can put a bus out of service. The new buses will not have fabric seats. (They will have windows, though.) This is possibly less comfortable, but it will be easier to keep the buses clean and dry.

On matters of cleanliness, I should point out that all buses have signage indicating, "No food. No drink." This is to avoid food scraps being left behind, as a bug infestation can put buses out of service. This

is an issue of human behaviour, and we all can help to make a difference by changing our individual behaviours on the bus.

Mr. Speaker, no doubt Honourable Members will want to know what is being done now to reduce the level of buses out of service. I can report that, with respect to the engines overheating, vents are being retrofit on the existing buses in the fleet. In addition, new radiators are being installed, as well.

To address the high temperatures in the interior of the buses, an appropriately qualified bus operator was transferred to the maintenance division to assist with hastening air-conditioning repair. Also, DPT is working to ensure that all buses have working fans and sun visors in the operator's compartment, in addition to seeking quotes to tint the driver's side window. These measures will reduce the likelihood of a bus being taken out of service due to temperatures that are too high. Remember: It is not necessarily *engine problems* that cause buses to be taken out of service.

Also, the Government supports the filling of funded, vacant posts in the Department of Public Transportation. With the age of the fleet and the difficulty of maintaining sufficient numbers of buses on the road, additional mechanics are being hired. Once their training on the bus systems is complete, they will bring much-needed extra manpower to the maintenance division.

An important element of the maintenance process is the tracking, ordering, and control of inventory. Online inventory tracking is unavailable at the present time, but the Government considers resolution of this matter to be a high priority. The Department will be working with the Accountant General's Office to achieve the online inventory system.

All of this, Mr. Speaker, provides some assurance that DPT is addressing the challenges encountered with the existing fleet of buses, to the best of its ability, plus taking steps to ensure that the new buses do not start service in Bermuda with the current disadvantages.

For the travelling public, however, there remains the challenge of consistency with respect to the bus schedule. As announced previously, the Department of Public Transportation has hired minibuses to service the schools. However, until the level of buses out of service is consistently below 40, it will continue to be extremely difficult to fulfil the promise of the published schedule for the general public.

To assist in supplying the travelling public with timely and, to the extent possible, accurate information on buses and bus routes, DPT is working with the Department of Communications to improve the flow of cancellation information. The existing process of notification is antiquated, cumbersome, and fraught with difficulties. Not least, it is hampered by the sudden change in circumstances of each bus. Vehicles can be pulled out of service without any prior notice for any number of reasons. On many occasions, out-

of-service buses have outstripped the number of in-service buses. A revamped communications process will need to be more nimble and responsive to ever-changing circumstances, at least until such time as the bus fleet is stabilised.

Working together, the Departments of Communications and Public Transportation have already implemented a system of direct notification of bus cancellations to media outlets. We expect to see further improvements to the communications process shortly, and will continue to work towards additional enhancements where possible.

Mr. Speaker, the difficult economic times encountered in recent years, and decisions made on spending priorities, have resulted in an overall lack of investment in the material and human resources for the Department of Public Transportation. Most unfortunately, this means that DPT is unable to provide the published and expected bus service, despite the hard-working efforts of its staff. Notwithstanding, DPT has, and will continue, to put into place short-term remedies while, at the same time, working toward long-term effective solutions. As such, the Government would like to acknowledge and thank the public for its patience at this time.

Looking ahead, Mr. Speaker, three additional actions are in progress or will be shortly. First, DPT is seeking to fill existing vacancies within the Department, particularly in the maintenance division. Second, the Department is proceeding with development of a new strategic plan. This will help with respect to bus transportation system structure, direction, and issues.

The plan will be valuable when looking at DPT's role as work commences on the third action: the Ministry's Green Paper on Transportation. The Green Paper will be a wide-ranging review of Bermuda's transportation needs, desires, and options. There will be extensive opportunities for the community to participate, contribute, and learn. As recently as last week, I attended a town hall meeting with public transportation representatives, organised by the Ministry of Health and the Disability Advisory Council, on *Transportation Services for Persons with Accessibility Challenges*. This clearly demonstrated the need for further dialogue and highlighted the many viewpoints that ought to be integrated into the debate. As work on the Green Paper progresses, I anticipate a lively and enlightening discussion, along with the development of innovative and workable solutions.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Premier.

We have a further Statement. For the next Statement, we recognise the Minister of Education. Minister Rabain, are you ready to do your Statement?

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: I am.

The Speaker: You have the floor, Minister.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Oh, I am sorry. I did overlook you, Minister Brown. But being that Minister Rabain is on his feet, if he is ready . . . or would you like to go now? We will let the Minister . . .

My fault; I overlooked Minister Brown.

Minister Brown, you have the floor, then. Yes.

Hon. Walton Brown: Good morning, Mr. Speaker, and good morning, colleagues. I know I am from Pembroke, Mr. Speaker—no reason for me to be overlooked.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: You are further down the room than your colleague down front here. See?

AN EXPLANATION OF THE RECENT FISH DIE-OFF

Hon. Walton Brown: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform this Honourable House about the [fish die-off](#) that has been occurring this month. Honourable Members are probably aware of the hundreds of reef fishes that have been dying around the Island or washing up on our shoreline. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources started receiving evidence of this phenomenon at the beginning of September, and [evidence] is still coming in. This die-off has been affecting a wide range of fish species, from butterfly fishes to parrot fishes to large black groupers.

Mr. Speaker, it is not unusual to see fishes dying at this time of year when the seawater is at its warmest. Increasing temperatures reduce oxygen levels in the water, which affects some species of fish. Furthermore, warmer temperatures stimulate the growth and reproduction of bacteria, viruses, and other parasites that are naturally occurring in our waters, which can affect fish health. In the last couple of weeks, however, it has become apparent that Bermuda is witnessing a fish die-off of a magnitude not seen since at least 2009.

Mr. Speaker, the reasons why so many fish have been affected this year are not clear. However, technical officers are almost certain that water temperature has paid a large part in the deaths. Sea surface temperatures around the Island have been higher than normal for a couple of months. This August, the average sea surface temperature was 85.8 degrees Fahrenheit, which is 2.8 degrees above normal. And temperatures during the first three weeks of September averaged 84.6 degrees Fahrenheit, 3.3 degrees above normal. In all, sea surface temperatures were 84.9 degrees Fahrenheit, and higher, for two months without any respite.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to determine the cause of a fish's death, after it has been dead for a while, due to secondary infections that take hold after death. Therefore, technical officers searched for fish that were clearly in poor health, but not yet dead, in order to determine why so many fish were dying. With the help of several individuals, notably, Dr. Thaddeus Murdoch, Mr. Jirani Welch, and the staff of the Department of Parks, a few dying and freshly dead fish were collected for examination. Officers examined several organs from the collected specimens and found that the gills of each specimen were heavily infested with a mobile single-cell parasite that resembled *Brooklynella*. This species was linked to the fish die-off event in 2009. The other organs from the examined specimens did not show any obvious signs of pathogenic effects.

Mr. Speaker, in large numbers, *Brooklynella* parasites can cause serious damage to the gills of a fish, which make it difficult for the fish to acquire oxygen from the water. This generally leads to the fairly rapid death of the fish. When the water gets warmer, the life cycle of this parasite accelerates, and this is compounded by the fact that fish are often stressed when the water is warmer, in any event.

Unfortunately, there is nothing we can do to prevent deaths of this nature. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I would like to stress the importance of investigating events such as this to confirm the cause of death and make sure that any actions that can be taken to preserve our marine environment are put in place whenever possible. Fortunately, sea water temperatures now appear to be dropping in the wake of recent storm and hurricane activity, and it is anticipated that, with cooler water temperatures, fish deaths will decrease.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

Now I will recognise the Honourable Minister of Education.

Minister, you have the floor.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BERMUDA COLLEGE STUDENTS

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning, colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning before this Honourable House to provide an update on the recent grant that was awarded to Bermuda College for offering [financial support](#) to its students.

Mr. Speaker, let me first remind my honourable colleagues that the Progressive Labour Party Government made a promise to the people of Bermuda that, during its first 100 days in office, we would "provide financial support to students in need, to ensure access to Bermuda College for all Bermudians

and increase job training to prepare Bermudians to fill jobs held by guest workers."

Mr. Speaker, I am most pleased to share with my honourable colleagues that, on August 15th, 2017, this Government fulfilled that promise and announced that a grant would be issued to Bermuda College which, in turn, was used to provide financial support for 183 students seeking to attend academic and job-training courses.

[Desk thumping]

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: The funding for this grant was not additional monies allocated to the Ministry of Education and Workforce Development, but rather a reallocation of funds within the Ministry.

Mr. Speaker, the grant was to be used to financially assist students enrolled in three categories of study at the Bermuda College: (1) non-programme and programme Academic Division courses; (2) Professional and Career Education (PACE) programmes. This is a new benefit for potential students, as, currently, the Bermuda College does not provide funding for students enrolled in the Division of Professional and Career Education; and (3) bachelor's degree programmes offered through the Bermuda College.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of this grant, Bermuda College received 197 applications during the nine-day period between the press conference to announce the grant, and the application deadline [date]. Of the 197 applicants, 131 requested financial support to enrol in courses offered by the academic divisions; 66 requested funding to enrol in courses administered by PACE; and of the PACE applications, 18 students were seeking funding for the bachelor's degree programme offered by Mount Saint Vincent University through the Bermuda College.

Mr. Speaker, the financial awards granted ranged from 30 per cent to 80 per cent of a student's educational costs, with the educational costs defined as "the value of tuition, plus fees." Students were required to complete an application form, in addition to a financial worksheet to demonstrate financial need. Also, current students needed to have a grade point average of 2.0 or higher.

Mr. Speaker, the main criteria for determining financial need was a comparison between the applicant's annual household income and the median household income of \$102,024, as reported by the *2013 Household Expenditure Survey Report*, which is the latest available produced by the Department of Statistics. However, other factors were also considered, as follows:

- the number of persons supported by the household income;
- the monthly balance of income and expenses, as demonstrated by the financial worksheet;

- educational costs funded by the household income, such as child care, other dependents at Bermuda College or overseas; and, lastly,
- any extensive debt owed such as medical bills, credit associations, et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, let me first share the distribution of funding for persons enrolled in the Academic Divisions. Eighty-six individuals who applied for funding through the academic divisions received funding. An additional 40 recipients who had already received the maximum available funding from Bermuda College's financial aid programme were also granted financial support as a result of a needs assessment conducted during the Bermuda College Financial Aid process. Hence, a total of 126 awards were granted to students enrolled in Academic Division courses. Of the 126 awardees, 54 are new students to Bermuda College and 72 are returning students. The total amount paid out to the 126 students enrolled in Academic Division courses was \$102,501.50. The minimum amount received by a student was \$132, while the maximum amount a student received was \$1,760. On average, the amount received per student enrolled in the Academic Divisions was \$813.50.

Mr. Speaker, I will now turn to the funding awards for students enrolled in the Professional and Career Education Division of the Bermuda College, which is otherwise known as PACE. As a reminder to my honourable colleagues, this is the first time funding has been made available for students enrolled in PACE. Mr. Speaker, there were 66 students who applied for courses offered by PACE, of which 63 students received funding. Forty-six students registered for the open enrolment courses, while the remaining seventeen enrolled in the Mount Saint Vincent University Bachelor of Business Administration degree programme.

Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, the PACE Division of the Bermuda College serves the non-traditional students by offering both professional and workforce development training. This helps individuals achieve both professional and career goals in the workplace. As a result of the funding provided, this division received 56 new registrants, of which the majority of these students were unemployed, while the remainder were temporary, seasonal, or part-time employees.

Mr. Speaker, the total amount of funds provided to PACE students was \$91,212.53. Awards in the amount of \$43,869.60 went to the 46 open enrolment students, and \$47,342.93 to the 17 Mount Saint Vincent University students. The minimum amount of financial support to the open enrolment students was \$235, while the maximum was \$2,312. On average, the amount received per student was \$953.69. The Mount Saint Vincent University students received between \$385.00 and \$5,444.42, with the average amount received totalling \$2,784.88.

Mr. Speaker, approximately \$193,714.03 has been expensed to date from the \$300,000 grant to the Bermuda College, leaving a balance of \$106,285.97, which will be used to assist students with their tuition in the 2018 spring semester.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, let me share with this Honourable House one statistic that is worth noting—67 percent of students who received financial support to participate in the Academic Divisions and 98 per cent of students supported in courses offered by the PACE Division received the maximum financial award, reflecting 80 per cent of their total educational costs.

Mr. Speaker, this stemmed from the fact that the student's annual household income was less than \$51,012, which represents 50 per cent of the 2013 median household income in Bermuda, which is also the widely used definition of "poverty." This is significant and underscores the need for the establishment of a living wage in Bermuda, and it underscores this Government's position to have a better and fairer Bermuda for Bermudians. As such, we will continue the provision of all available resources, as needed, to ensure access to higher education and access to job-training courses at the Bermuda College, for all Bermudians.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

Minister, I understand that there is a second Statement on your behalf. Would you like to read that Statement now, Minister?

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Continue.

RELEASE OF NEW GEOGRAPHY TEXTBOOK FOR YOUNG GEOGRAPHERS

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: This Statement is on the release of a new Geography textbook for young geographers. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to share with Members of this Honourable House and to the listening audience an exciting public/private partnership initiative related to the release of a new geography textbook for primary schools, titled [*Young Geographers*](#). The textbook was a collaborative effort between Panatel VDS Ltd. and the Department of Education. The book has a Bermudian focus, which will be a resource for teachers delivering Module D of the social studies curriculum that focuses on the environment. The textbook will be used specifically to introduce our P1 to P6 students to geography and teach them about the Bermuda environment.

Mr. Speaker, let me share two contextual definitions associated with geography and geographers. As we are aware, geography is the study of specific places on earth and the relationships between people and their environment. Geography seeks to develop

key skills as they relate to the understanding of where places are found, why they are there and how geographical areas developed and changed over time. Similarly, geographers study how people interact with the environment and with each other from place to place. Geographers also classify earth into regions in order to draw generalisations about the complex world in which we live.

Mr. Speaker, our teachers will expose P1 to P6 students to the world of geography in the Bermuda context through the use of this book. Students will learn about the various types of geographical maps, and how to read city maps and interpret information, using tables, graphs, compass points, and geographical scales. Students will be taught how to navigate the Cities of Hamilton and St. George's, using topographical maps. They will also understand the geographical size and structure of the Island as it relates to parishes and the many smaller islands linked by bridges. There will also be lessons taught on Bermuda's land formations, its natural rock caves, Bermuda vegetation, and its local plants and animal life.

We all understand the importance of planting seeds when soil is fertile so that it guarantees fruit. This is our intent as we expose the fertile minds of our primary school students to the understanding of origins and features of the Bermuda environment. The basic geographical concepts understood from the local environment will form the foundation for our students to build on and conceptually link to the global perspective as they progress to the middle and senior school levels, and ultimately beyond to tertiary schooling.

Mr. Speaker, Bermuda is a leading international financial centre. Bermuda is also a business hub and tourism destination. Developing these types of skills in our students through the delivery of a social studies curriculum of geography at the early grade levels of P1 to P6 is essential. Certainly, such skills sets, through continuous nurturing, would also lend to the development of a citizenry who understand the relationship between geography and economics; the relationship between humans and the environment in which they live; and the importance of establishing environmental policies for sustainability.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge and congratulate those individuals who were instrumental in making the *Young Geographers* book a reality for youths in our primary school. This initiative was led by Lisa Marshall, Education Officer for Social Studies; Wendi Fiedler, of Panatel VDS Ltd. The actual text in the book was written by Rebecca Chewitt, a former CedarBridge Academy geography teacher.

Other contributors to the textbook were Andrew Dobson; Anthony Wade; Richard Lee; and Mark Outerbridge, who provided photographs. Sean Patterson and Jamie McDowell also provided some maps. Donna Pink, Assistant Project Manager at Candice Dickinson, designed the layout; and Elizabeth

Mulderig, who granted permission for the use of *Tiny the Tree Frog*, a much-loved character in her local children's books about Bermuda.

In closing, on behalf of the Bermuda Government and the Department of Education, I thank all involved in the creation of this new geography textbook for primary schools, entitled *Young Geographers*. I am confident that their efforts will benefit both current and future generations of our children in Bermuda.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I would also like to add that I did bring one book, and I passed it on to the Shadow Minister of Education. But I will bring additional books [to our] next sitting.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister. You can table that book when you bring it next week so the House has it here for the record.

We have a further Statement. I believe it is the last Statement for this morning. And it is from the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Minister Simmons, you have the floor.

BERMUDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

Hon. Jamahl S. Simmons: Good morning, Mr. Speaker, and good morning, Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide an update on one of the Government's 100-day promises under the Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism. As you may recall, Mr. Speaker, in our election platform, we pledged to double the guarantee capacity of the [Bermuda Economic Development Corporation](#) (BEDC) to give more access to capital for entrepreneurs. I am pleased to report that Cabinet has approved the increase of BEDC's capital from \$1 million to \$2 million, thereby laying the foundation to assist many more local entrepreneurs through doubling its guarantee capacity.

Mr. Speaker, what does this mean? Well, before I explain, I think it would be helpful to give some historical context of BEDC. Established on January 20th, 1981, to provide advice and support to Bermuda's local small businesses, in 2011 the BEDC remit was expanded to serve not only Bermuda's local small businesses, but also its medium-sized businesses, vendor markets, and the Island's economic empowerment zones [EEZ].

In 2015, the BEDC was given the authority to manage the Island's peddlers and vendors industry, thereby becoming a one-stop shop for all things entrepreneurial, for Bermuda's local businesses from start-up microenterprises to established medium-sized entities and everything in between.

The BEDC's mission is to inspire, inform, support, and grow new and existing Bermuda businesses through education, guidance, data provision, advocacy, networking, and financing. Since 1981, BEDC has assisted thousands of local Bermuda business owners and entrepreneurs to start, sustain, or grow their businesses, and offers the following services and programmes:

- general business development support and technical advice;
- entrepreneurship workshops;
- intensive multi-week entrepreneurship development courses;
- economic empowerment zones
- vendor markets;
- vending licences;
- Business Mentorship Programme;
- small business construction incubator support;
- Retail Development Programme;
- Loan Guarantee Programme;
- Micro Loan Programme;
- HM Customs Letter of Credit Programme;
- entrepreneurship pitch and networking events;
- international partnerships; and
- Global Entrepreneurship Week/Global Entrepreneurship Congress events.

Mr. Speaker, via its legislation, the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation Act 1980, the Corporation is able to provide financial assistance products up to six times its capital; therefore, it currently can provide a maximum total of \$6 million in loan guarantees and other financial products at any one time.

With this increase of its guarantee capacity through doubling its capital to \$2 million, BEDC will be able to offer a maximum total of \$12 million in guarantees, loans, grants, and other financial products for businesses to access. This opens the opportunity for more Bermudians to consider entrepreneurship, *doing for self* and creating new business and new jobs. The increased capitalisation will commence in the 2018/19 fiscal year and allows BEDC to assist with the delivery on other areas within the Government's 100-day platform, such as the Sports Clubs Guarantee Programme.

Mr. Speaker, increasing BEDC's capitalisation would also assist local businesses by creating an avenue and budget to provide access to capital directly from BEDC through direct loans, as opposed to the only option being through Bermuda's financial institutions. Many local small- and medium-sized businesses need access to small amounts of capital, under \$20,000, which banks, historically, do not provide as they are not very profitable and require the same amount of human resources as larger facilities.

BEDC has seen success in its past direct lending programmes. Both BEDC's Economic Empowerment Zone Loans and Micro Loan Programmes

have assisted nearly 50 entrepreneurs, and this increase in capitalisation will allow past programmes to be improved, re-instated, and expanded.

As this Honourable House is aware, Mr. Speaker, the BEDC currently offers a loan guarantee bank financing product for entrepreneurs to access in order to startup, sustain, or grow their local businesses. While not a bank, the BEDC has the legislative authority to act as a guarantor for portions of bank loans for small and medium-sized businesses that appear viable and where the creditworthiness of the borrower is sound.

As the guarantor of last resort, BEDC's current policy is that it can guarantee up to 50 per cent of an agreed business bank loan amount up to a guarantee maximum of \$200,000 per business. The loan guarantee helps if the business does not have enough collateral required to secure the loan. The guarantee is currently provided only for demand or term loans and not for other bank products such as overdrafts, lines of credit, or credit cards.

As of August 31st, 2017, within the 2017/18 fiscal year, BEDC has supported 25 business loan guarantees and guarantee-backed micro loans, helping these entrepreneurs to secure nearly \$4 million in bank loans for their businesses. In addition, currently, BEDC's direct loans to another 15 businesses total nearly \$200,000. Doubling BEDC's capitalisation allows it to assist many, many more Bermudians.

Mr. Speaker, although it is improving since the Island's recession, banks are still slow to lend to local small and medium-sized local businesses if bank loans are not 100 per cent collateralised. The BEDC sees this in reality every day, and then this lack of lending contributes to a lack of growth and job creation for the Island.

In this regard, BEDC believes that increasing its maximum guarantee percentage would assist local businesses. Given the experiences from the recession, the Island's financial institutions, more often than not, will require loans to be 100 per cent secured. Despite businesses' receiving approval from BEDC for its loan guarantee, many businesses are not able to secure bank financing because they do not have the ability to come up with the remaining 50 per cent in collateral to fully secure the loan.

As such, we are currently exploring the viability of increasing BEDC's guarantee percentage beyond 50 per cent, up to 65 per cent, to a maximum guarantee amount of \$200,000 of a bank loan, which would reduce this gap for businesses. This option could be actioned as a policy change not requiring any legislative amendments.

Mr. Speaker, while the Government is providing access to additional finances for Bermudian entrepreneurs, I want the public to know that BEDC also has a robust policy for paying out on any called loans and collecting on any loan guarantees it pays out on. In the event that a borrower is unable to repay the

BEDC guaranteed loan, the loan is called and the BEDC must make a payment to the bank for that borrower. The borrower is then liable to the BEDC for the amount paid to the bank, plus administration fees and any legal expenses that may be incurred by BEDC in recovering the outstanding debt.

Every approved business applicant is required to sign an undertaking, agreeing to pay BEDC back if the corporation pays out a defaulted loan on its behalf. This can also involve the use of debt collection agencies and legal recourse with the courts, as necessary.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, this Government is working to build a fairer and better Bermuda. We are committed to business and job growth, as well as the recovery of our economy. Today's announcement provides another milestone for the Government and the corporation whereby doubling its capital will allow it to provide more financial products to Bermuda's business owners and entrepreneurs.

We are confident that through continuously offering opportunities to our local entrepreneurs, we can help to foster economic growth, create opportunities for new businesses, and facilitate job creation.

Bermuda's economic prosperity is founded on entrepreneurial vision, hard work, and ingenuity. It is our intention to continually develop the BEDC as a stronger, more powerful tool for economic empowerment and to foster cooperative economics.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

That brings us to an end of the Statements by Ministers.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The Speaker: Reports of Committees. There are none.

QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker: Question Period. We have two questions that were submitted to Ministers. I believe the first was for a written response [from] the Honourable Minister Walton Brown, [to] the Honourable Pamplin Gordon [*sic*].

Have you received your written . . .

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: That is Patricia Gordon-Pamplin, Mr. Speaker. And, yes, I have received them; thank you.

WRITTEN ANSWER

QUESTIONS: WORK PERMITS IN ISSUE ON 18 JULY 2017

1. Will the Honourable Minister please inform this Honourable House of the number of work

permits that were in issue on July 18, 2017, analysed by duration; specifying [short term](#), between one (1) and two (2) years, between two (2) and three (3) years, between three (3) years and five (5) years and over five (5) years?

2. Will the Honourable Minister please inform this Honourable House of the [business categories](#) of work permits that were in issue on July 18, 2017; separated by duration?

The Speaker: Yes. Thank you.

The next question is an oral question requiring an oral response. That is to the Honourable Premier, a question from the Honourable Member, Mrs. Jeanne Atherden.

Mrs. Atherden, you have the floor.

QUESTION 1: FULL- AND PART-TIME MINISTERIAL POSITIONS

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Honourable Premier: Would the Honourable Premier please inform the Honourable House of all government minister positions and junior ministerial posts, and indicate whether each is a full-time or a part-time position?

The Speaker: All right.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Regarding question number 1, all information regarding ministerial and junior ministerial positions is already in the public domain.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes, is this a supplementary?

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: This is a supplementary.

The Speaker: Yes.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: I asked for the names of the posts so that there could be clarity as to who was minister or junior minister and which ones were full-time or part-time.

The Speaker: Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: And as has been stated, Mr. Speaker, all of that information is in the public domain, as it was asked in another place.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Supplementary?

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

In other place, the question was not asked with respect to the junior ministerial posts.

The Speaker: Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Speaker, all junior ministerial posts are within the public domain. And there is no question as to full- or part-time because junior ministers do not sit as part of Cabinet. The information is in the public domain.

The Speaker: Premier, thank you.

Mrs. Atherden, you have used your two supplementaries. Would you like to move on to your second question, or does anyone else have a supplementary?

No. You are moving on to your second question now.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: I will move on to my second question. I will be able to do my own calculations and deal with that appropriately.

Mr. Speaker . . . no, I do have a supplementary. I do have a supplementary.

With respect to—

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: No, no, no, no, no, no. That was a supplementary on your first question?

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Yes.

The Speaker: You asked your two supplementaries.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Okay. Then I am moving on to the next one.

The Speaker: Thank you.

QUESTION 1: TOTAL COST OF MINISTERIAL POSTS FY 2017/18

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Okay. And truly, it is the next one.

Would the Honourable Premier please inform this Honourable House of the total cost of the above-mentioned ministerial and junior ministerial posts for the remainder of the 2017/18 fiscal year, and what the future cost is on an annual basis?

The Speaker: Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, although that information is in the public domain, I will assist the Shadow Minister with her calculations to say that the total cost of the above-mentioned ministerial and junior ministerial posts for the remainder of the 2017/18 fiscal year is \$631,808, which represents the cost for six months.

The second part of this question, according to Standing Order 17(5)[(h)], is a hypothetical question. I am unable to answer, as we do not know what the ministerial pay will be and how many ministers and/or junior ministers will serve in the future, or whether they will be on a part-time or full-time basis. However, I can let the Minister know if there are no changes, we can just double the \$631,000 figure.

The Speaker: Any supplementaries?

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased that the Premier did not ask me to double it, and you gave me the answer. So I thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you.

We now move on to the questions regarding Statements that were read out this morning by Ministers. And just to remind you, the 60-minute period started actually when the response to the written questions began.

The first Statement was that of the Premier in regard to his trips overseas. And we have the Opposition Leader, the Honourable Pat Gordon-Pamplin, who has indicated she would have a question.

Honourable Opposition Leader, you have the floor.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Tongue-twister.

QUESTION 1: RECENT NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON, D.C., VISITS

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I wonder if the Premier would be willing to share with this Honourable House the cost of the trip that he has just described to New York and to Washington, DC.

Hon. E. David Burt: I thank the Honourable Opposition Leader for her question. I had anticipated that question would come. We attempted to make sure that all costs were accurately compiled last evening. We were unable to do so. Under Standing Orders, I will take that question as notice and will provide the answer at the next day of meeting.

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Premier.
Supplementary?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: No, I have a second—

The Speaker: Supplementary? I recognise the Honourable G. E. Gibbons, from constituency 22.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Dr. Grant E. Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Premier could let us know, in terms of the costs of these trips, whether Government intends going forward to make them public. I gather that some of the websites which were done for the previous Government have been taken down at this point. Thanks.

The Speaker: Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Speaker, Standing Orders state that Members should make sure that they are truthful in their statements. And it seems the Honourable Shadow Minister would like to play fast and loose with the facts. The Honourable Minister for Government Reform made it very clear that the Government travel website is being redone so that it can actually have accurate information, which was a challenge with the former Government. What we will do is that we will continue to publish that information. And as she had indicated in the public domain, that website will be up and running and that information will be published.

However, we have no problem in any way, shape, or form putting forward the costs for our travel, as it is understood. I will just let Members know I was presented . . . as a perfect example, I was presented an option for ground transportation in Washington, DC, and a bill that said it would cost \$1,200. And I said, *No*. And then we decided to take Uber instead. I think that picture [shows] that Government Ministers, much to our chagrin, rode the subway in New York City as opposed to bracing the traffic for the UN General Assembly.

[Desk thumping]

Hon. E. David Burt: We will be responsible with the people's funds, and we will be transparent in that nature.

An Hon. Member: Glory!

The Speaker: Premier, thank you.

Any supplementary?

No supplementary.

We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 19.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: I have a supplementary. And, Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate that the Premier is trying to make sure that the public is informed of all the Government is doing to try and increase the options for us in terms of growing our businesses.

In terms of the leading law firm, Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP, could you clarify what their area of specialty is?

The Speaker: Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much.

The Honourable Shadow Minister of Finance may not be aware, but the Government has had a long relationship with that particular law firm. That particular law firm has worked with Bermuda for a number of years. Their specialty is dealing in the areas of international finance, and they have advised the Government on a number of Acts, most recently, in 2013, our Investment Funds Act. In addition to that, they send a lot of clients to Bermuda, and they are in the perfect place to advise us on what we are doing well, what we are not doing well and how we can do better. Our engagement was a very good meeting. And as with them and with the other persons of which we met, they are excited about the new possibilities, understanding that Bermuda is open for business and there are no conflicts insofar as inward investment inside of this Government, as it is our mission to grow the economic pie for all.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Premier.

Any supplementaries?

No supplementaries.

The Honourable Opposition Leader, you indicated you had a second question?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I do, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: Go ahead.

QUESTION 2: RECENT NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON, D.C., VISITS

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I wonder if the Honourable Premier would be willing to share with this Honourable House what the anticipated cost of reopening and operating the DC office is.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

What I would say is that, under Standing Order 17(5)[(h)] that would stand as a hypothetical ques-

tion, as we are unaware. We are examining the various possibilities, and when we decide on a course of action, we will be happy to come to this Honourable House with a Ministerial Statement to provide all Members of the House, and indeed the public of Bermuda, in what our engagement strategy will be inside of Washington, DC. But as has been seen, and the challenges of which we are facing in the latest news from the new US administration, it is now more critical than ever that we have a consistent voice in the United States to protect our interests. And this Government is committed to doing that.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Thank you, Premier.

No further questions for the Premier on his recent trips Statement?

We will move on to the second Statement. The second Statement is that of the Deputy Premier in regard to the ferry fleet. We have an indication of five Members who would like to ask questions. The first Member who has indicated a question would be that of the Honourable Member from constituency 24.

Member Scott, MP Scott, you have the floor.

QUESTION 1: A FLEET STATUS REPORT— DEPARTMENT OF MARINE AND PORTS SERVICES

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Would the Minister agree that the failure of the previous administration to properly and proactively plan for the AC35 has put us in this unfavourable position?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, in answering the Honourable Member's question, based on the fact that funds were not available, [were not] given to the department to fund their work that they were required to do over AC35, and the impact that it has had on the department, I think it is a fair assumption to make.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Supplementary? I have a supplementary from the Honourable Member from constituency 22.

Honourable Member Gibbons, you have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Is the Minister aware that there was a Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] between the ACBDA and Marine and Ports with respect to the America's Cup ferry services?

The Speaker: Thank you.
Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Yes.

The Speaker: Any supplementaries?

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Supplementary.

The Speaker: Supplementary. Yes. Continue, Mr. Gibbons.

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Could the Honourable Member say how much was paid to the Department of Marine and Ports as a consequence of that MOU?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: No.

The Speaker: Those are your two supplementaries.
Any further supplementaries before a new question?

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Supplementary.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I have a supplementary.

The Speaker: The Member behind you was on his feet first.

Is this a supplementary or a new question?

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Supplementary.

The Speaker: Supplementary.

We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 28. The Honourable D. J. Lister has the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Can the Minister answer if, due to the inappropriate preparation of AC35 and the lack of financial oversight, there are enough funds left for training staff in the Marine and Ports for those that are needed?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Member's question, training is not an issue, because (1) much of the training is co-ordinated through the Department of Workforce Development; and (2) despite the challenges faced by the Marine and Ports [Department] in its operations, it manages its funds very well when it comes to making sure staff are trained so they can meet their international obligations.

The Speaker: Okay. Thank you.
Supplementary.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes, supplementary, Opposition Leader, the Honourable Member.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, I have a supplementary.

If the Honourable Minister, in response to the question asked by the Honourable Member from [constituency] 24—if the Honourable Minister cannot say how much was paid by the ACBDA to the Department of Marine and Ports to offset some of the costs, how can the Honourable Member say that there was a significant shortfall, if he does not know what the revenue side of it is?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, that was not the question from the Member for [constituency] 24. That was the question from the Member for [constituency] 22.

The Speaker: Well, would you like to restate your supplementary and address it?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, I would like to restate the supplementary. If the Honourable Minister would be willing to share with this Honourable House, if he cannot say how much was paid by the ACBDA to the Department of Marine and Ports, how can he answer the question posed by the Honourable Member Scott from [constituency] 24 that this was poor planning in terms of the amount of the cost relating to the ferry services?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: The facts are the facts, Mr. Speaker. The department asked for money to help us through AC35. The Government did not give them the money. End of story. Sounds like bad planning or bad preparation, to me. And those are the facts.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Supplementary? Supplementary?
I recognise the Deputy Speaker.
Deputy Speaker, you have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Yes.

Mr. Minister, are you aware that approximately 67,500 people were transported during the Ameri-

ca's Cup by the ferries and [paid] \$10 per person for a round trip? Are you aware of that?

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Yes.

The Speaker: Further supplementary?

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Yes.

Minister, we understand that \$1.7 million was the cost of these ferries. Would you agree there was poor planning by the previous Government to pay \$1.7 million to the America's Cup for the ferries, and only taking in \$675,000?

The Speaker: Minister. Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Yes.

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: A new question.

The Speaker: A new question?

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Yes.

The Speaker: Let me see. Any supplementaries first?

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Oh, I am sorry.

The Speaker: Supplementary?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, I have a supplementary.

The Speaker: We recognise the Opposition Leader for your supplementary.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Thank you.

Would the Minister be willing to share with this Honourable House whether every single ferry route and run operates at a profit?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: I cannot answer that question at this time, but I am happy to do the investigation and bring that information back to the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you. Thank you.
No supplementaries to that?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, I have one more supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Supplementary. I recognise the Opposition Leader.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes. In light of the number that was put out by the Honourable Member from constituency 5, approximately \$675,000 was being taken in as revenue as a result of the passenger fees coming from these trips. Can the Honourable Member let us know the breakdown with where the deficiencies lie in terms of the cost versus how much actually was taken in as revenue and how much was contributed by the ACBDA with respect to the cost of running the ferries?

The Speaker: Thank you.
Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: I undertake to provide that information as best as I can, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Any supplementary before we move on to a new question?
New question. On the list we have the Honourable Member from constituency 5, the Deputy Speaker, has indicated he would have questions.
Go ahead, Deputy Speaker.

**QUESTION 1: A FLEET STATUS REPORT—
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE
AND PORTS SERVICES**

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the Statement, we talk about the deficiencies in the department regarding the hiring freeze and retirement. Mr. Minister, are you aware that, under the 2017 budget as at March 31st, actually 4,955 people were budgeted to be employed by government, but only 4,608 were actually hired, meaning a shortfall of 247 people?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Yes.

The Speaker: Supplementary? Supplementary?
New question. The Honourable Member from constituency 6. Mr. Furbert, no?

The Honourable Member from constituency 1 indicated that she had a question.

The Honourable Member, Mrs. Ming, from constituency 1, you have the floor.

**QUESTION 1: A FLEET STATUS REPORT—
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE
AND PORTS SERVICES**

Mrs. Renee Ming: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In light of the fact that the Statement reads that \$7,933,728 was spent on the *Millennium* ferry for the last four years, I just want to know, prior to Ju-

ly 18th, 2017, what was the plan for the old town of St. George's when this ferry contract expired this year, and if there even was a plan?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Very good question, Mr. Speaker.

I cannot speak to what the plans [were] that the Government made in these matters prior to July 18th. But having examined the situation, I see no evidence of any plans that were left for us to review after July 18th for St. George's around replacement of the *Millennium* ferry.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Supplementary?

No supplementary.

The next Member who had indicated he had questions for this Statement would be the Member from constituency 4, Mrs. Furbert.

Mrs. Furbert, you have the floor.

**QUESTION 1: A FLEET STATUS REPORT—
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE
AND PORTS SERVICES**

Mrs. Tinee Furbert: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, could the Honourable Minister answer, would the cost of the catch-up repairs [have] been less if the ferry fleet maintenance would have been carried out earlier by the previous administration?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Your indulgence, Mr. Speaker. Could the Honourable Member just repeat her question so I can hear it clearly?

The Speaker: Sure.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Thanks.

The Speaker: Honourable Member, could you please repeat the question for the Minister?

Mrs. Tinee Furbert: Sure, Mr. Speaker.

Could the Honourable Minister answer, would the cost of the catch-up repairs have been less if the ferry fleet maintenance would have been carried out earlier by the previous administration?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Very good question, Mr. Speaker.

Presumably, if you follow a maintenance plan properly, it avoids costs and liabilities later. Having not followed that, it obviously has affected the cost and time and energy that have to be put into maintenance now.

The Speaker: Any supplementaries?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I have a supplementary.

The Speaker: Supplementary. We recognise the Honourable Opposition Leader. You have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I wonder if the Minister, since he seems definitive in his response, would be able to tell this Honourable House what the differential might have been if there had been a different glide path with respect to making maintenance service agreements and work being done when there was no money?

The Speaker: One second. One second before you get up.

Let me remind the House that we should try and stay away from hypothetical questions here. The questions . . . if you follow the Standing Orders on the instructions for how questions should be put, try not to be hypothetical. And that was basically a hypothetical, *what it might have been*.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I accept your ruling, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: But I believe that my question, being primed off of the previous speaker, then if there was hypothetical, then, obviously, the speaker prior would have been guilty of a hypothetical question.

The Speaker: Point taken.

Do you have any further supplementary?

No further supplementary.

The other Member who indicated she had a question on this Statement was, in fact, the Opposition Leader.

Did you ask your question yet? I know you are on supplementaries. You have not asked your question yet?

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Okay, you are fine. Good.

The Opposition Leader, you have a question for the Minister on this Statement?

QUESTION 1: A FLEET STATUS REPORT— DEPARTMENT OF MARINE AND PORTS SERVICES

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, I do have a question, because my question relates to the Minister's Statement on page 4, respecting the costs. And my question to the Minister is, does the Minister appreciate that it takes money to do major repairs and that, if such money is not available, such repairs are not able to be done?

The Speaker: Minister. Yes.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, I have not answered that question. Of course. But not doing the maintenance and not having the money for them impacts the quality of the service, of which, clearly, the previous Government was responsible for.

The Speaker: Okay.

Any supplementary on that?

Supplementary? We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 24.

Mr. Scott, you have the floor, Honourable Member.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Would the Minister agree that, talking about lack of money, if the previous administration had put money in the right places—i.e., maintenance for the public ferries instead of maybe into AC35—we would not be in this predicament?

The Speaker: Do not stretch it a bit there. We are trying not to be hypothetical.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, I cannot, again, predict the decisions of the previous administration as to what might have been.

The Speaker: Understood, Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: But, clearly, we have been left with a situation, and this is the negativity we are having some challenges with.

The Speaker: I was trying to save you from getting to your feet on that one.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Simple.

The Speaker: But, Minister, fine. Supplementary?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I have one more supplementary.

And that is the fact that . . . is the Minister prepared to accept the fact that there was no money left when they left office in order to be able to accommodate such planned maintenances?

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, I think I am only required to answer questions related to my Statement. And so, that is the only question I have to answer—this speaks around that, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Minister.

All Members who had indicated that they had questions of the Minister for that particular Statement have taken advantage of their questions.

We are going to move on now to the third Statement, and that third Statement was also from the Minister Roban in reference to the bus fleet.

We have five Members who have indicated they have questions, and first being the Honourable Member from constituency 24.

The Honourable Member, Mr. Scott, you have the floor.

QUESTION 1: THE STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—BUSES

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Would the Minister agree with my interpretation that the previous Government was allowing the public transportation to fall into disrepair so that it would be a prime candidate for privatisation?

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: We are going to ask the questions, trying to be more pointed to what the Statement is so there is a clear response.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, I will avoid the hypothetical, other than to make it clear that we did inherit a service in disrepair. We did inherit a service where most of the fleet actually is broken. And we are now doing our best to fix it.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Supplementary?

No supplementary.

The next Member who indicated he had a question for the Minister is the Opposition Leader.

We recognise the Opposition Leader.

QUESTION 1: THE STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—BUSES

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would share with this Honourable House, how are the drivers being redeployed in light of the Minister's indication that the drivers have no buses to drive?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: I do not believe that is actually a topic that was discussed in my Statement. But at this point, our drivers are very cooperative, and they are working and cooperating with the team in DPT [Department of Public Transportation] to deal with the situation that they are confronted with on a daily basis. That is all I have to say on that.

The Speaker: Supplementary?

Supplementary or new question?

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: It is a supplementary. The Honourable Member did not really answer the question. The question was, if the buses are depleted, there are drivers who are scheduled, I am just wondering how those drivers are being redeployed while they are lacking buses to drive?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: The management and the team at DPT are working with what they have. And all our drivers are working. They are operating the buses that are available to ensure that what service can be provided is provided.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Supplementary?

No supplementary.

The next Member who had indicated he had a question would be the Honourable Member from constituency 22.

Honourable Member Gibbons, you have the floor.

QUESTION 1: THE STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—BUSES

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it was a matter of record, certainly for the former Government, that the bus schedule contributed towards the issue of maintenance and cost. Will the Minister be going forward to revise the bus schedule, something which has been in the works for some, I think, almost 15 years now, to essentially

improve the effectiveness and deployment of the buses, which should reduce both cost of maintenance and also reduce the cost of the service?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: The schedule was not a subject in my Statement, Mr. Speaker. But I will give an answer to it.

We are doing all that we can to make sure that the system will run effectively and efficiently to improve the service for all of our clients and the public at large.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

Supplementary?

The Honourable Member from constituency 22.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Yes, supplementary. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So is the Minister saying that they will not be proceeding with a revised schedule for the buses?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: No.

The Speaker: Supplementary?

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: No, Mr. Speaker. It is another question.

The Speaker: New question?

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Yes, exactly.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Supplementary. I have a supplementary on the other question.

The Speaker: Well, we have a supplementary.

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Yes.

The Speaker: The Opposition Leader, you have a supplementary?

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The Honourable Minister indicated that the schedule was not a part of his Statement. However, maintenance is the subject of his Statement. And if the Honourable Minister would be able to tell this Honourable House, since he has now indicated that

he has no intention to move forward with a new schedule—

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I am sorry; maybe I misunderstood.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Point of order, Minister?

POINT OF ORDER

[Misleading]

Hon. Walter H. Roban: The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I said no such thing. And the record will show that. The Honourable Member is purposely, *purposely*—

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I am not purposely!

Hon. Walter H. Roban: —misleading the House on what I said.

The Speaker: Well, we will not imply personal motives if we are not certain of it.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: No, I may have—

The Speaker: Member.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Sorry.

The Speaker: Just restate your question more in line with what was actually stated by the Minister.

An Hon. Member: Will he or will he not have a new schedule?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Okay. Will the department of bus operators, given that maintenance is the subject of his Statement, and it is agreed that buses can be maintained if a proper schedule is implemented to allow freedom for a bus to go in for maintenance, is there an intention or not to implement a schedule which accommodates allowing buses to be free to go in for maintenance?

That was the question.

And I do apologise, because it certainly was not my intention to mislead this Honourable House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: No problem, Member.
Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, everything is being done by DPT to make any adjustments neces-

sary to ensure that we can keep the buses running, have proper repairs, so we can ensure the best and most efficient service to all of our clients.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Thank you.
Yours is a new question, right?

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: New question, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Okay, your second question. Go ahead, Honourable Member from constituency 22.

QUESTION 2: THE STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—BUSES

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, second question.

The former Government indicated that for the purchase of new buses it would look at hybrid or electric buses. For the eight new buses, which I think are being proposed, is the Minister looking at hybrid or renewable energy-sourced buses?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, I myself would not have a role with designing an RFP for the new buses. But I can tell you that we are leaving all of our options open to any possible opportunities that can further advance the fleet in a positive way, whether it be with hybrid, whether it be with other types of technology. But we are just more interested in just having buses that can operate, right now.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Supplementary?
No supplementary. The next Member who indicated that he had a question in regard to this Statement would be the Member from constituency 6.

The Honourable Member, Mr. Furbert, you have the floor.

QUESTION 1: THE STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—BUSES

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
Mr. Speaker, would the Honourable Minister agree that the former Government was negligent in not giving sufficient funds in the 2017/18 budget to keep the buses maintenance-clear?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak to the mind of the former Government in its choices. They clearly had spending priorities. But certainly, the

choices made have not positively impacted on the service as we have it now.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Supplementary?
No supplementary. The next Member who has indicated that he had a question would be the Member from constituency 19. Honourable Member Atherden, you have the floor.

QUESTION 1: THE STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—BUSES

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
Minister, recognising in your Statement that there was an indication that the OPMP [Office of Project Management and Procurement] had a request for tender for eight buses, recognising that the Budget Book says that \$2.5 million has been allocated for this fiscal year 2017/18, would the Minister be able to clarify whether any of that 2017/18 money has been spent?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, well, that is money that was approved under a previous budget, and we have not constructed our own budget yet. But I can say that this is the money that was allocated for buses. We are receiving the four buses. Presumably, that is money that was allocated to pay for the four buses that are already here. We are preparing an RFP to go forward. And what we spend going forward will be determined by the conclusions of that RFP. I can only say that I believe that \$2.5 million has to do with the four buses that we are receiving at the end of this year.

The Speaker: Okay. Thank you, Minister.
Any supplementary?

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Yes, I have a supplementary.

The Speaker: Supplementary. Yes.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Could the Minister indicate how much a bus costs? The reason I say that is because the previous . . . there was \$750,000 put in for buses. And if we got buses before and we spent \$750,000 and we have \$2.5 million available, I would just like to know how much a bus costs?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: I believe, Mr. Speaker, to land a bus that is based on the type of buses we have now,

that we are currently in, is somewhere between \$350,000 and \$400,000 to land a bus. That means the payment for it and customs and everything that it costs, shipping to get it on the land that is Bermuda.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Supplementary?

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Supplementary.

The Speaker: Yes.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Just to clarify, if my accounting is correct, if \$2.5 million is in the budget, and if I take the lower end of the scale, \$350,000 would give us at least seven buses. And \$400,000 would give us six. So the eight that are in the Statement should mean that there is not going to be any big supplementary, because \$2.5 million is already in the budget.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: I cannot speak to what the budget plans are going to be, going forward, Mr. Speaker. And perhaps we can wait until the budget to see what we do, and I can . . . around our future purchase of buses. But we have an RFP, as I said in my Statement, that we are in the midst of repairing and finalising. And that will give us a better picture of how much we are going to spend on the next group of buses, going forward.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Supplementary?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, just a supplementary.

The Speaker: Supplementary, the Opposition Leader.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, just for clarification.

Is the Honourable Member saying to this Honourable House that there is no intention of getting new buses until after the 2018/19 budget? Or are you planning on spending money between now and March 31, to spend some of the money that has already been budgeted? I am just trying to understand what you are saying.

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: That money in the budget is a capital allocation. So presumably, we will not use it for anything but what it has been allocated for. We have

four buses coming, [and they] will be here by the end of the year. And we are preparing an RFP so that we can finalise the purchase of another group of buses. How that will affect the spending of what is in the budget I cannot report at this time. But I am prepared to give information about that once we know what we are going to do with it, that which is left over from the \$2.5 million. I'm happy to bring the information to the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Any supplementary?

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Yes, supplementary.

The Speaker: Supplementary from the Honourable Member from constituency 22. Dr. Grant Gibbons, you have the floor, Honourable Member.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: The question I think that the Minister needs to answer is, is the spending for the new buses going to be in this budget year, 2017/18, or in the next budget year?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: I beg your indulgence. Can the Honourable Member repeat his question for me, please?

The Speaker: Honourable Member.

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; certainly.

The question that I think we are trying to get an answer from the Minister is, will the money for the eight buses be spent as a capital expenditure in this budget year, which is the 2017/18 budget year, for which \$2.5 million (I think) has been allocated already? Or will it be in the next budget year?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, all I can report is that we have the four buses that are coming. And we are focused on spending that and preparing to . . . the RFP for the eight buses, going forward. How we are going to use the rest of the \$2.5 million I am happy to report back to the House at a later time, if there is any left over after that is done.

The Speaker: Supplementary? Okay. We will move on to your next question. The Honourable Member from constituency 19, Mrs. Atherden, you have the floor.

QUESTION 2: THE STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—BUSES

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if I could ask the Honourable Minister, recognising that part and parcel of this maintenance issue are some of the flaws that have been identified, and recognising that an RFP is being proposed, I guess I would ask the Honourable Minister as to whether some of these flaws, which one would think should have been anticipated, as to what involvement is there in terms of individuals who drive the buses or individuals who maintain the buses? Because things like the fact that we have summer . . . and I just wonder whether there has been wide consultation with respect to the RFP items.

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the question is quite convoluted. But I will say this: We are working with every person in DPT to deal with the issues that we have been left with. And our goal is to deal with them and move forward with a successful and efficient service.

The Speaker: Supplementary?

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Supplementary.

The Speaker: Yes. Continue, Member.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Recognising that the Statement indicates that there are some buses here that are 20 years old, which meant that we had a good model of buses that we were able to keep on and on forever and we have changed to some new buses which are now creating problems as it relates to heating, as it relates to the outside . . . I just wondered, on what basis are we changing from what I call tried-and-true models to new models which have not been as efficient?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Unfortunately, still a little convoluted, Mr. Speaker. But all I can say is that we are doing everything we can to ensure that we have an efficient, successful bus service system that provides quality service to our clients.

The Speaker: All right.

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Supplementary.

The Speaker: Supplementary. We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 22.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Yes. I think the question we were trying to get out of the Minister, and the previous Member asked, was . . . it would appear that the former Progressive Labour Party Government bought some lemon buses, which the previous OBA Government had to deal with. Is the Minister going to avoid those mistakes, going forward?

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Minister, any comments? Or no comment, Minister?

Hon. Walter H. Roban: None.

The Speaker: Thank you.

We have one other Member who had indicated he had a question under this Statement. And that would be the Honourable Member from constituency 28. Do you still have a question?

We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 28, Mr. D. Lister.

You have the floor.

QUESTION 1: THE STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—BUSES

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister answer [whether or not] the previous Government let the fleet of public buses fall into such a state of disrepair that over 60 per cent of the fleet is either out of order or unreliable?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak, again, to the mind of the previous Government. But the reality is that the majority of the fleet is in serious disrepair. And that is the situation this Government has been left with. But we are committed to changing it, in the positive.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Any supplementaries?

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Supplementary.

The Speaker: Supplementary.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Yes.

To the Minister: Is it fair to say that if funds that were allocated to AC35 were allocated to the DPT, that buses and maintenance issues would have been alleviated enough to the extent—

The Speaker: Try and keep on point.

Mr. Dennis Lister III: —that they are now?

The Speaker: Try and be on point rather than hypothetical.

An Hon. Member: Hypothetical.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Very hypothetical. I cannot speak to the mind of the previous administration. But I can say once again this is the situation we are left with, with a fleet [in disrepair], which we are committed to changing and repairing and getting back in good service.

The Speaker: Thank you.

I saw another Member who was going to rise on a supplementary. Supplementary?

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I recognise the Member from constituency 19.

Mrs. Atherden, you have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Could the Minister indicate that, in terms of those buses which were subject to all of this maintenance, the disposition between those of what I call the old buses and the new buses, especially if there is an indication that there are some design flaws in the new buses?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, my Statement speaks to what we are doing to deal with design flaws. I think it was very clear.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Our team at DPT themselves have found solutions. And I am very satisfied with that.

The Speaker: Thank you. Thank you.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Supplementary. Continue.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Mr. Speaker, my question is in terms of the buses which are subject to the maintenance. What is the percentage of buses which are what I call the old buses which are requiring the

maintenance versus the new buses which are requiring the maintenance?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, all buses require maintenance. So, there is no differential.

The Speaker: Thank you, thank you, Minister. Supplementary?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Supplementary from the Honourable Opposition Leader.

You have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes. Can the Minister advise, of the buses that are out of service, how many of those buses were purchased prior to 2012 and how many of those buses were purchased subsequent to 2012?

Hon. Walter H. Roban: I will undertake to get that answer to the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

There are no other Members who have indicated they have questions for that Statement.

So we are going to move on to the next Statement, that from Minister Brown. And we have had two Members who have indicated that they had questions, the first being the Honourable Member Cole Simons, from constituency 8.

Member Simons, you have the floor, Honourable Member.

QUESTION 1: AN EXPLANATION OF THE RECENT FISH DIE-OFF

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Given the rise in water temperature and the prevalence of parasites and bacteria, I think this will apply primarily to our inshore waters. Do you anticipate any health risks for those fishing in our inshore waters?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walton Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the question.

Obviously, it is a matter of concern, and so, the technical officers are keeping a watch on the issue. And we have not noticed any increase in incidents of diseased fish. We have reports on an ongoing basis from fisherman, as well as members in the

Department of Marine Resources . . . the Department of the Environment. So, we have not received any data that would support that query.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.
Any supplementary?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: We recognise the Opposition Leader.
You have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I wonder if the Minister would be able to advise whether any of the dead fish residue, as I can put it, had washed up and caused the closing of Tobacco Bay, or whether that was a different issue?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walton Brown: Thank you, Opposition Leader.

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walton Brown: That was a different issue outside of my brief. But I am happy to say that it was a consequence of the impact of the hurricane stirring the waters and pushing back to our shores debris that otherwise should not have been there.

The Speaker: Supplementary?
Yes.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Minister, given this is an almost annual occurrence, does the Ministry of Health have any protocols that can be used to ensure that the fish caught in our inshore waters through sampling are safe for consumption, given that this is not a one-off occurrence?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walton Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Obviously, the Member must know I cannot speak for the Minister of Health. What I will say is that we rely on the excellent service and work undertaken by the commercial fishermen who catch the fish and sell the fish. They are highly unlikely to have any fish made available for public consumption that is not fit and proper. So, in response to your question, it is highly unlikely that any fish unfit for consumption will make it into the public arena.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.
Supplementary.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Yes. He spoke to the commercial fishermen. I am speaking of inshore fisheries, where the average Joe, the weekend fisherman, might go out and go fishing. They, obviously, do not have the responsibility for reporting their catch like the commercial fishermen. So if I, as a weekend warrior, go out fishing, can I be sure that the fish that I catch are safe for consumption? And that is what I am talking about, your average man, not your commercial fisherman.

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walton Brown: Thank you for the question.

I cannot give any guarantees on any matter that the non-commercial fishermen might encounter. Obviously, one has to be aware of what one catches, properly assess it and then make a decision about what to do with it.

The Speaker: A supplementary or a new question? A supplementary?

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Supplementary.

The Speaker: Yes. The Honourable Member from constituency 28. D. Lister, you have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mr. Dennis Lister III: The previous Member just asked a question with regard to an annual occurrence. Is there anything that you have seen that the previous administration did to address this, being this is a previous annual occurrence and we have only just come into this under our regime?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walton Brown: Thank you, Honourable Member.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Walton Brown: The issue of global warming is one that has been ongoing since we decided to mess with the environment. And, yes, in a moment of elation I might want to hold the OBA responsible for global warming; I will not do it today, Mr. Speaker.

[Laughter]

Hon. Walton Brown: But what I will say is that we need to be mindful of how the environment is changing as a result of our interference and our lackadaisi-

cal attitude toward a number of issues with respect to economic development.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Supplementary?

I recognise . . . supplementary? He is withholding his supplementary. Okay. I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 22. Honourable Member Gibbons, you have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Honourable Member mentions the single-cell parasite called *Brooklynella*, in his Statement. Is the Honourable Member aware of whether this pathogen affects humans? And would he be aware as to whether raw fish might present a problem if ingested? A lot of people do eat sushi, sashimi, these days. So is there any possibility of cross infection with *Brooklynella* in humans?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Walton Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would say that is highly unlikely. First of all, the sushi-grade fish that we get very rarely comes from our waters, in the first instance. Secondly, the *Brooklynella* penetrates the gills of fish. It is not in any other organ of the fish; it is only in the gills. And because there is no comparable organ in the human, it is unlikely to have any impact if we made contact with it. And also, the fishermen and others, the scientists who come into contact, always use gloves. So it is unlikely there would be any impact in that regard.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The other Member who had indicated he had a question has waived his question.

We are now going to move on to the next Statement. And that Statement is from the Honourable Minister of Education. It is the Statement in reference to funding for the college students.

First, do we have the three Members who have indicated that they had questions?

The first Member is the Member from constituency 24, the Honourable Member, Mr. Scott.

Lawrence Scott, you have the floor.

QUESTION 1: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BERMUDA COLLEGE STUDENTS

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On pages 2 and 3, the Minister highlighted the positive impacts on enrolment this programme has had. How has enrolment at the college been affected by the previous administration's cuts to the financial assistance?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Mr. Speaker, enrolment at the Bermuda College had decreased from a total of 1,207 students in 2012 to 675 students last year. And it can be attributed to the direct effect of the previous Government's cutting the subsidy to students from 50 per cent, first to 25 per cent and then to 0.0 per cent.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Supplementary. I recognise the Opposition Leader. Opposition Leader, you have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, I have a supplementary.

The Minister indicated in his Statement that there was \$300,000 that had been budgeted for student assistance for tuition and that \$102,000 (I believe) was left after the latest take-up. So would the Minister explain to this Honourable House whether the \$300,000, given that it has not all been taken up, was adequate in terms of funding and financing for this current year?

The Speaker: It is almost a new question, but, Minister. . . we are in supplementaries, but go ahead.

Go ahead, Minister.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question.

The Speaker: Good question. But go ahead.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: That supplemental.

As I indicated within the Statement, we granted the Bermuda College the \$300,000 as the grant they advertised for students, and 197 students applied. Out of those 197 students, 183 qualified. So, the fact that we have money left over means that it was suitable enough for what the Bermuda College needed for the number of students who did apply.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The next Member who had indicated he had a question was the Honourable Member, Mr. Simons, from constituency 8.

Honourable Member.

QUESTION 1: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BERMUDA COLLEGE STUDENTS

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Mr. Speaker, they spoke to various criteria required to be successful in achieving the scholarships. The first question that I have is this: Was funding ever entertained for the master's programme? I see you have it for the bachelor's pro-

gramme. But, you know, we need to provide support at all levels at Bermuda College.

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Mr. Speaker, there was no restriction on any student who could apply for the funding.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Supplementary? Supplementary or new question? Supplementary?

Continue, Member.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Supplementary. And this goes back to criteria.

The other question is, they say that the applicant must have a minimum grade [point average] of 2.0 or higher.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Do not tone out the Speaker, please. We have got one person speaking. We will need to hear him throughout the House; thank you.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Do you think it is time, Mr. Minister, that we really consider raising the minimum grade [point average] to 2.5 or 3.0 so that we can have our young people aspire to better performances instead of just hanging everything onto a 2.0 or higher?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Mr. Speaker, I do want to make sure that colleagues are aware that it is the highly skilled and highly educated people that we hire at the Bermuda College that make that determination, not the politicians who sit in this room.

An Hon. Member: Ahh!

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Supplementary or new question?

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: New question or supplementary?

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Supplementary.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard the Minister's comment. But we are policymakers. And if we want to set the standard for better performance in schools, then surely, Mr. Speaker, do we have—

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: *Shhh!* He is getting there. He is getting there. He is getting there.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: —as policymakers the authority to recommend that the minimum criteria be raised from 2.0 to 2.5, as policymakers?

The Speaker: Thank you.
Minister.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: The simple answer to that question, Mr. Speaker, is yes.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Any further questions?

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Second question.

The Speaker: Yes. Continue, Member.

QUESTION 2: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BERMUDA COLLEGE STUDENTS

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Would the Minister explain or confirm whether, if a family made \$102,024, would they be eligible for scholarship?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Mr. Speaker, clearly outlined in the Statement was the financial requirement applied. So, if there is someone who does make the amount that the Minister spoke to, and they filled in their financial status report, and they did quality, they will receive funding.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Supplementary?
There are no supplementaries.
Third question.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: This is a supplementary.

The Speaker: Supplementary.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: So, simply put, if a family made \$103,000, would they qualify for subsidy for education? It is a simple question.

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Mr. Speaker, I already answered that question.

The Speaker: Fine, Minister.

New question?
Supplementary?

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, yes.

The Speaker: Supplementary. We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 22.
Honourable Member Gibbons.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Mr. Speaker, I am looking at enrolment going back to 2004 for both full-time and part-time at Bermuda College. Is the Honourable Member aware that in that period, 2004/05, up until about 2010/11, there was a continual decline in enrolment at Bermuda College?

The Speaker: Does that necessarily relate to the question that was asked right now? I think you are taking it outside the scope of his question.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Okay.

The other Member who indicated he had a question for this Minister on this Statement was the Honourable Member from constituency 28.

Do you still have a question? We recognise the Honourable Member D. Lister, from constituency 28. You have the floor.

QUESTION 1: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BERMUDA COLLEGE STUDENTS

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister answer that what the Ministry has done is find ways to reallocate funds to invest and educate our children and give opportunities for higher learning and training?

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: The simple answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is yes. And this Government will continue to find more ways to provide our people with funding so they can continue their education and improve their training, improve their stead in this Island of Bermuda.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Supplementary?

We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 19. Mrs. Atherden, you have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Minister can clarify, we keep talking about . . . I think the word is talking about improving their educa-

tion and training. My concern is that everything I have seen here in terms of the courses and what is available focuses very strongly on academics, people getting courses. We have known, because of when we were on the doorstep we had people talking about going to the college, taking these courses and not being able to get any jobs.

And I am just wondering whether any opportunity has been availed of reaching out to businesses to say that, in conjunction with getting someone at the college, offering them the opportunity of having, if you will, a free (if you will) person to come and use their skills in their employment—

The Speaker: You're stretching. You are getting long, now.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden:—whether any opportunities for training have been incorporated into the programmes, so that when persons go to the college and get their training, they get some practical aspects?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Mr. Speaker, under the previous Government a department was established called the Department of Workforce Development. Unfortunately, that department was not given the mandate possible to make things as easy for our people to find employment. Instead, we spent four years waiting for a National Training Plan that just did not exist and did not happen.

So, this Government will ensure that opportunities are afforded to our people based on the training that they receive.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.
Supplementary?

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes, I have a supplementary question.

The Speaker: Supplementary?
We recognise the Opposition Leader.
Opposition Leader, you have the floor.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Yes. Would the Honourable Member accept the fact that for the 14 years of the prior administration, there was no National [Training] Plan?

[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

The Speaker: Honourable Minister, response?

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Ah, if you are going to speak, rise to the floor! Rise to the floor if you want to speak.

Honourable Member, you have a supplementary? Yes, the Member from constituency 19.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Will the Honourable Minister acknowledge if he knew that the previous Government had a plan? It is called "Dare2Be," where monies were allocated so people could get training and then go out and have some practical experience. You seem to indicate that you were not aware of this.

[Timer beeps]

The Speaker: Members, that is time. We are now moving on.

CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 14.

Honourable Minister Caines, you have the floor.

Hon. Wayne Caines: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to offer congratulations to Senior Airport Fire Officer, Mr. Gary Renaud. He joined the Bermuda Hamilton Fire Service as a volunteer in October 1970. In 1973, he joined the City of Hamilton Fire Service as a full-time member of staff. In 1981, he left the Bermuda Fire Service to pursue a business opportunity, but he returned in 1983. In 1990, he became the Chief Fire Officer for St. George's, and in 2000 became Chief Fire Officer for the Bermuda International Airport Fire Service. In 2007, [he] amalgamated with the Bermuda Fire Service and Rescue Service as the Divisional Officer and the Senior Airport Fire Officer. On September 30th, 2017, he retired from active service after a total of 45 years serving firefighting in Bermuda. But that said, he would never retire in his heart and [had] appreciation for having served his Island home. My colleagues have indicated they would like to be associated with those remarks.

Mr. Speaker, last night the Bermuda Regiment returned from a two-week deployment in the Turks and Caicos Islands. I would like a letter of congratulations to go to Lieutenant-Colonel Curley. The mission was headed by Major Corey Smalley, Lieutenant Gordon Emmerson, WO2 Jason Harrell, and WO2 Peter Ramm.

Mr. Speaker, I crave your indulgence, because this is a significant undertaking by the young men and women of the Bermuda Regiment. I seek

your indulgence to read off all the names of the young people who went on this endeavour, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Let us see if time allows it. Continue.

Hon. Wayne Caines: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have Major Smalley, Lieutenant Emmerson, Warrant Overclass 2 Harrell, WO2 Ramm, Colour Sergeant Edwards, Colour Sergeant Smith, Colour Sergeant Fort, Corporal Iris, Corporal Fox, Corporal Swan, Corporal Maderas, Corporal Amos, Corporal Raynor, Corporal Arruda, Corporal Iris, Corporal Showers Cassidy, Corporal Robinson, Corporal Martin, Corporal Bowman, Corporal Abrams, Corporal Govia, Corporal McKenzie, Corporal Outerbridge, Corporal Bean, Corporal Darrell, Corporal Steede, Private Darrell, Private Steede, Private Francis, and Private Tucker.

If we can send letters of appreciation and thanks to those people on behalf, and associate the whole House with those remarks.

Mr. Speaker, one of our senior educators has recently retired.

[Timer beeps]

The Speaker: Well, you have got the names in, so we appreciate that the names made it in time. But your time has expired.

Hon. Wayne Caines: Sure.

The Speaker: I am going to recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 36.

The Honourable Member, Mr. Scott, you have the floor.

Hon. Michael J. Scott: Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. Speaker, a request for a welcome to be sent by this Honourable House is the order of business, sir. Mr. Speaker, may I ask that this Honourable House send a note of welcome? And it is a notification, really, to the Members of this House of important medical information, of the arrival in our Island of renowned urologist, Dr. Abdussalam Musbahi. He has joined Brown-Darrell Clinic. He is a practitioner of more than 30 years within the United Kingdom. We would like the indication of this House to be a warm welcome to urologists, who are particularly needed in the population of this country at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask that this House also send a note of congratulations to the establishment of a panel of legal practitioners that has been appointed, as part-time assistant justices, to deal with civil and commercial matters in our Island. Heading up the line, members of ladies and gentlemen are Mr. Narinder Hargun, Mr. John Riihiluoma, Mr. David Kessaram, Mr. Delroy Duncan, Mr. Mark Diel, Mr. Jeffrey Elkinson, Mr. Rod Attride-Stirling, and

Ms. Kiernan Bell. These members of the bar will fill the role of commercial and civil judges on a part-time basis.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, if time permits, over the period before this House came into session, we lost Ms. Corinne Nina Powell, the wife of my constituent, Mr. Ivoe Powell. I would ask this House to send a letter of condolences to Mr. Ivoe Powell. Mr. Ivoe Powell and his wife, during the period when I canvassed, and either a relative or a friend in the name of the Opposition Leader, because I remember . . . I think she was at the service for Ms. Powell.

An Hon. Member: Quite right.

Hon. Michael J. Scott: He was the brother-in-law. So the Opposition Leader wants to be associated with these condolences. Ms. Powell, unfortunately, passed actually on the day of the election.

The Speaker: Election Day. If the memory serves me right, correct?

Hon. Michael J. Scott: Yes. And yet, Mr. Powell, Mr. Speaker, turned up on the polling station. I was touched by this conduct of Mr. Powell.

So, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

At this time, we would like to recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 24.

Member, Mr. Scott, you have the floor.

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would just like this House to send a letter of congratulations to Dr. Lou Matthews. He has put in a lot of time and effort in our educational system here, and he is now going to be going overseas and sharing his talents in the African region. He is going to be sharing his talents in Ethiopia, Malawi, Tanzania, Nepal, and Cambodia. In February, he is going to be in Ghana. And he is just going to be going and focusing on mathematics to the children and to the youth of Africa, which I think is very noble in nature. And he is probably the best person to do it. The only thing that Dr. Lou Matthews excels at more than math is out there on the football field, where I have had a chance to play with him. I have had a chance to play with him when the Alphas would beat up on the Kappas on the football, as we are reigning champions right now. So I do not want to take up too much time talking about how much better the Alphas are in football than the Kappas, but right now I want to focus on Lou Matthews' taking his knowledge . . . that he has given back.

This is a young man, a Bermudian, who came up from the town area, has gone and he has been part of the education system, part of putting our children first and setting our children up for success on a

daily basis. And I feel as though we cannot say enough and thank him enough for his service to his country through education and mathematics. I would like to associate the Honourable Premier. I would like to associate the whole House—

Some Hon. Members: The whole house.

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Yes, the whole House. And I just want to make sure that Dr. Lou Matthews feels and knows the love that this country has for him, the appreciation we have for him, and all the well wishes that we have for him, moving forward.

The Speaker: Thank you.

I recognise the Honourable Minister.

Deputy Premier, you have the floor.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to be associated with the remarks of the Honourable Member who sits for constituency 24. Any time any of our Bermudians go out with their acquired skills and do something positive in the world, that is an example of Bermuda, and certainly it is as an ambassador, Dr. Lou Matthews will be for all of us.

I would like to ask for two congratulatory messages to be acknowledged. One is for the 109th anniversary of Heard Chapel. They celebrated it just this past period. It is a testament for any organisation in Bermuda to be thriving and alive for 109 years as a member of the AME family. And they had a humble service to celebrate that, and I just wanted to ensure that this is recognised.

The other event I would like to give some congratulatory remarks on is, I attended last night on behalf of the Premier the *Grow, Eat, Save* graduation at the Botanical Gardens. This is a programme that is orchestrated by Pastor Santucci, who is the chaplain, I believe, for the Corporation of Hamilton. And he has taken it upon himself to put together a programme to assist people with learning how to cultivate their own gardens and become, essentially, much more in control over what they are eating to better themselves nutritionally and also physically.

It was a number of people who received their graduation certificates, and I am impressed with the keen interest across the board with these activities, because, as we know, in the past, long before we had supermarkets and these large opportunities to buy food from single providers, we had to cultivate our own food in our backyards. And I myself have been impressed by what I have seen in my own constituency, which is very much an urban-developed area, the number of home gardens that people have in just small spaces, even some spaces smaller than the table where the mace sits, where they are cultivating local products for themselves and their families. So, hats off to any programme, and the Parks Department

and others, who are supporting that programme! And I encourage other Bermudians to take advantage of it as well.

My last remark, I would like to congratulate the West Indian Association, Mr. Speaker, of which I am a member, for their efforts to promote a campaign for Caribbean relief. This has been launched just recently to respond to what we have seen happen to our brothers and sisters in the Caribbean. And I encourage all of us in this House and the community to support their efforts, along with all of the efforts being made locally to support the recovery of our brothers and sisters in the region. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you.

I recognise the Honourable Member, the Opposition Leader. The Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that this Honourable House send congratulations to the organisers respecting *Dive In*—the festival for diversity and inclusion in insurance. This is a programme, Mr. Speaker, which was conceived under the auspices of Lloyd's for their members to try and enhance and perpetuate the incidents of diversity and inclusion within the insurance industry. Bermuda joined countries from around the world in recognising this particular festival. We joined Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Dubai, France, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Italy, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. And in each of those jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker, there were various events that were held to recognise this particular festival.

The opening festival—and I would just briefly speak to the local participants. But before I do that, so I do not run out of time, the opening ceremony, which was hosted by XL, actually had guest speakers who were a couple of members from the Red Bull sailing team that Bermuda put forth in the America's Cup. And Shomari Warner, who was one of the speakers, was one of the members of the Red Bull team, Bermuda team, who in his presentation indicated that he had spent a year and a half of investment in his life, which is now paying and repaying tremendous dividends. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that this Honourable House send congratulations to the organisers and just indicate that the events were hosted by CHUBB. Other events were *Today's Leadership Is Evolving* by XL Catlin; *Next Generation Strategies* by XL Catlin; Argus Group on *No Limits*; *Lip Service: A frank discussion about race in the workplace* by Willis Towers [Watson]; *Racial Diversity and Inclusion: Lessons from the Classroom* by XL Catlin; and then, ultimately, the closing event, which was hosted by XL Catlin.

And I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that everybody who attended was able to get something out of it in

terms of how they can improve the lot of each of their respective jurisdictions and how we can make sure that this diversity and inclusion are perpetuated in a very positive way for our jurisdiction.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

I now recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 21. The Honourable Member, Mr. Commissioning, you have the floor.

Mr. Rolfe Commissioning: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Raynor and Burrows families are jointly mourning today. Firstly, I would like to offer condolences to the family of Tyrone McDonald Raynor, from the Mount Hill Raynors, and particularly his lovely wife, Heather. He was a constituent of mine. It was extraordinary, Mr. Speaker, because during the funeral at the First Church of God, his brother-in-law, his sister's husband, had died only a few hours before that funeral. And I am speaking here now to the passing of Mr. Maxwell Harold Tracy Burrows, Mr. Raynor's brother-in-law. So, to such an extent that Mr. Raynor's sister, Debra, was not in the condition to attend her brother's funeral because of the great grief she was experiencing . . . and so I would ask again, and I want to associate the Member from constituency 2 with these condolences. I would ask the House to extend condolences. . . and the Member from constituency 16. I repeat, I would ask the House to extend condolences to the Raynor and Burrows families as they are joined together in grief over the passing of these two men. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Member.

I now recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 3, Minister Foggo. Minister Foggo, you have the floor.

Hon. Lovitta F. Foggo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Minister of Social Development and Sports, and indeed the Ministry itself, to share condolences to the entire sporting community and the Bermuda public regarding the passing of Mr. Thom. Mr. Thom was recognised for his efforts and coaching of the Paralympics. Indeed, Mr. Thom gave athletes whom he coached the encouragement to believe in themselves and to believe in their ability to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Mr. Speaker, let me just remind you of a well-known Paralympian, Jessica Lewis. And her ability to capture a Gold Medal in the Parapan Am Games in Canada in 2015 indeed serves as a tribute, Mr. Speaker, to the works of her coach, Ken Thom. And I can say, Mr. Speaker, that Bermuda is now at a loss, having lost Mr. Ken Thom. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 1. The Honourable Member, Mrs. Ming, you have the floor.

Mrs. Renee Ming: Good morning and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to take this time to . . . first of all, I would like to be associated with the comments for Mr. Gary Renaud, whom I knew very well from not just my days of being on the corporation as councillor and an alderman, but also just in my time of being around the Corporation of St. George's, because, in his capacity as fire chief, he spent a lot of time in the corporation. And I spent many years in the corporation, as my mom worked there for 41 years. So, you can imagine that we go way back.

And I would also like to be associated with the comments for Shomari Warner because I remember this young man from baseball days down at Kindley Field. I did not coach him, but my husband coached him, and I got to know his family very well. So I am happy to hear that he is progressing and doing things that we would like for him to do.

I would like to offer an obituary note right now to the family of Cal Brown. And, Minister, you are from St. George's, if you remember . . . those of you from St. George's, you will know exactly where you knew him from. I would like to associate Mr. Swan and Mrs. Foggo with those comments, as well.

I would also like to send congratulations, and I am sure that Mr. Swan and Mrs. Foggo would like to be associated with this, for the St. George's Sea Cadet tribe. We left here last week Friday, and we went down and looked at their presentation and their recruitment for nine new recruits. And it was awesome to see young people being engaged and actually interested in sailing.

And my last congratulatory is for George Dowling III. And he is the new councillor down at the Corporation of St. George's. I am sure that each and every one of us who sits here can attest to what it is like living in a political world, whether it be big politics, small politics. But we want to let him know that he is in our thoughts. I would also like to associate MP Foggo with those comments, and MP Swan with those comments, MP Burgess with those comments, as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 11. Honourable Member Famous, you have the floor.

Mr. Christopher Famous: Good morning, Mr. Speaker, and good morning, colleagues.

I want to speak briefly on Mr. Cal Brown, as well. At one point in time, I used to pump gas for a high school living, and Cal Brown was my manager at Flatts. He then moved on to Blue Hole Hill Gas Sta-

tion. Anyone who knew Cal knew he would always talk about, I think, Wellington Rovers, because he was a proud St. George's person. So, you know what else he talked about, Mr. Speaker. I just want to give condolences to his family, as well.

I want to say thanks to BELCO for sending six linesmen to BVI [British Virgin Islands] to help with the restoration.

Some Hon. Members: Yes.

Mr. Christopher Famous: In 1989, BELCO sent people down there, as well. So I want to thank BELCO for continuing to help CARILEC [Caribbean Electric Utility Services Corporation].

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, at times we take for granted the cleanliness of Hamilton and the function of the street lights. So I want to take this time to thank the workers of the Corporation of Hamilton, who keep Hamilton meticulous and functioning.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Would any further Members?

We recognise the Member from constituency 2. Honourable Member Swan, you have the floor.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Yes, good morning, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like a letter of thanks and congratulations to be sent to performing artist, Mr. Jeffrey Osborne, who had a group who had come on a jazz cruise and played golf at Port Royal yesterday. I was honoured to be able to provide an exhibition and clinic for them. And it was an awesome experience, and it was a very wonderful gathering that took place yesterday. In spite of any inclement weather that tried to threaten the situation, a wonderful time was had by all. And I would like to associate the Honourable Member—Brother Weeks claims to know a little bit about that music.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: Thank you.

No further speakers? No further speakers.

MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE

The Speaker: There are none.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Speaker: There are none.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

ON MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

The Speaker: There are none.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

GOVERNMENT BILLS

The Speaker: There are two Bills to be introduced. We recognise the Premier. Both Bills are under the Premier.
Premier, you have the floor.

FIRST READINGS

TAX REFORM COMMISSION ACT 2017

APPEALS TRIBUNALS (MISCELLANEOUS) ACT 2017

Hon. E. David Burt: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.
Mr. Speaker, I am introducing the following Bills for their first reading so they may be placed on the Order Paper for the next day of meeting: Tax Reform Commission Act 2017, and Appeals Tribunals (Miscellaneous) Act 2017.

The Speaker: Thank you, Premier.

OPPOSITION BILLS

The Speaker: There are none.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

The Speaker: There are none.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

The Speaker: There are none.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Speaker: We have indication that there is one item that we will deal with today under Orders of the Day. And the first item is the second reading of Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment Act 2017.

Mr. Premier, we recognise you as the Minister of Finance.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can you give me one second, please?

The Speaker: Sure.

[Pause]

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled the Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment Act 2017 be now read for the second time.

The Speaker: Go ahead.

BILL

SECOND READING

CORPORATE SERVICE PROVIDER BUSINESS AMENDMENT ACT 2017

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the primary purpose of the Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment Act 2017, which I will refer to as I go forward as the "Bill," is to amend section 10 [of the Corporate Service Provider Business Act 2012, the "principal Act"] in order to clarify the tiered licensing regime for corporate service providers. The passage of this legislation is integral to the effective operation of Bermuda's corporate service provider regime, which is, in turn, critical in the context of the 2018 evaluation of Bermuda's compliance with the Financial Action Task Force (the FATF) standards on [combatting] money laundering and the financing of terrorism and proliferation.

Mr. Speaker, the objectives of FATF are to set standards and to promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory, and operational measures for combatting money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

FATF recommendation 28 requires Designated and Non-Financial Business and Professions, which I will refer to going forward as DNFBP, to be subjected to regulatory and supervisory measures. The term "designated non-financial businesses and professions" includes lawyers, notaries, other independent legal professionals and accountants; or sole practitioners, partners or employed professionals within professional firms. The Corporate Service Provider Business Act 2012 places the responsibility for oversight and enforcement of the corporate service provider sector with the Bermuda Monetary Authority [the "Authority"].

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members are advised that, while the Corporate Service Provider Business Act 2012 [the "principal Act"], established a new licensing and supervisory regime for individuals or companies involved in the business of formation of corporate entities providing nominee services, corporate services, and other related administrative services, to such corporate entities it is necessary to amend so that the Act be revised to meet FATF requirements.

Mr. Speaker, provision of the necessary framework has been delayed several times in order to

make adjustments for the international developments related to beneficial ownership and transparency, ranging from the 2013 G7 Lough Erne Declaration to the exchange of notes between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of Bermuda in respect of the sharing of beneficial ownership information, dated the 9th of April 2016.

Mr. Speaker, currently, FATF mutual evaluation results for recommendation 28 revealed that the majority of countries, 21 out of 36, evaluated to date have received a partially compliant rating, while 6 out of 36 countries have received a noncompliant rating. This is largely because of the following implementation issues:

1. Lack of adequate coverage. There are no legal requirements for all DNFBP sectors to comply with AML [anti-money laundering] and CFT [counter terrorism financing] obligations.
2. Assessing or understanding risks. A low level of understanding risks at the entry level, at the supervisor level and nationally. This has led to a rules-based approach to compliance.
3. Low level of awareness of compliance with obligation. Requirements may exist in law, but they are not implemented or enforced—often as a result of lack of supervision and guidance.
4. Identifying the DNFBP population. Large numbers of DNFBPs make identifying the regulated population challenging.
5. Legal professional privilege. Issues with defining how privilege applied contributes to low compliance in the legal sector; and
6. Sanctions. Sanctions have not been applied or are not sufficiently dissuasive.

Bermuda fits into category 3, which covers countries where the requirements exist in law, but they have not been fully implemented.

Mr. Speaker, the Authority has advised the Minister of Finance that there are approximately 100 entities or individuals to be licensed. As applications have already been received, licensing can commence from the date of the commencement of the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, key aspects of the amendments are as follows: Section 10 of the Corporate Service Provider Business Act provides for a tier licensing regime, an unlimited licence allows a corporate provider to provide any or all corporate services set out under the definition of “a corporate service provider business.” A limited licence prevents a corporate service provider from acting as a company formation agent—an agent for the establishment of a partnership—and keeping or making any necessary alteration in the register of members of a company, unless certain requirements are met.

It is proposed to amend the principal Act as follows . . . and to make sure that . . . The Amend-

ments provide that a corporate service provider holding an unlimited licence may provide any or all of the corporate services under the definition of the “corporate service provider business.” It is also to amend the Corporate Service Provider Business Act to provide that a corporate service provider holding a limited licence may provide any of the corporate services under the definition of “corporate services,” subject to the limits that are going to be set out in the amended and new subsection.

Further amendments to the principal Act will impose limits on corporate service providers with a limited licence by requiring that an undertaking so licensed shall not provide the following services unless those requirements are met—and those services that they will not be allowed to provide are acting as a company formation agent or agent for the establishment of a partnership; and keeping or making any necessary alteration in the register of members of a company, in accordance with section 65 of the Companies Act 1981.

The requirements are as follows:

Corporate services to be provided to a company/new formation. Where the corporate service is to be provided to a company or in the case of a new formation, the proponents of the company, the requirement is for the company or for the proponent to have obtained the permission of the controller of foreign exchange under the relevant section of the Exchange Control Regulations 1973, as follows: Regulation 12 with respect to the issue of securities; Regulation 13 with respect to transfer of securities registered in Bermuda; Regulation 14 with respect to matters related to nominees; Regulation 17 with respect to a substitution of securities and certificates outside of Bermuda; Regulation 19 with respect to duties of persons keeping registers; and Regulation 20 with respect to additional provision as to nominee holdings.

Corporate service providers are to be provided to a partnership. Where the corporate services are provided to a partnership, the requirement is for the partnership to have obtained the consent of the Authority for the formation of a limited partnership or its change of particulars under section 5 or section 8B of the Limited Partnership Act 1883, or for the registration of an exempted partnership or the change of its general partner under section 8 or section 13(1)(a) of the Exempted Partnership Act 1992.

Corporate services provided to a limited liability company. Where the corporate service is provided to a limited liability company, relating to issue or transfer of an LLC interest, under section 45(7) of the Limited Liability Company Act 2016, the requirement is for the limited liability company, or in the case of a new formation, the proponents to have obtained the consent of the Authority for such issue or transfer in accordance with section 45(7). Section 45 of the Limited Liability Company Act 2016 deals with matters related to the admission of members of the limited liability

company. An LLC interest referred to under section 45(7) is an LLC interest with specified voting rights.

The Bill before us today would make consequential amendments to section 45 of the Limited Liability Company Act 2016 and to amend section 45(7), providing for LLC interests with voting rights to clarify when a limited liability company is required to obtain the consent of the Authority for the issue or transfer of such LLC interest. Where an LLC has its registered office at the registered office of a licensed corporate service provider, an LLC is not required to seek consent of the Authority for issue or transfer of such LLC interest.

The Bill before us will also amend section 45 of the Limited Liability Company Act by repealing section 45(7A), which requires that a limited liability company should notify the Authority of an issue or transfer of an LLC interest under section 45(7) on a forthwith basis, and replacing it with a requirement to notify the Authority as soon as practicable, but no later than 14 days after such issue and transfer.

Finally, clause 3 will also repeal the effective date provision in relation to the issue or transfer of LLC interests to which section 45(7) relates. The amendments to section 45 of the Limited Liability Company Act 2016 are linked to other legislation which is still to be tabled in the House relating to beneficial ownership. This Honourable House is advised that the minimal requirements have been included for the purposes of these amendments in order to clarify to the service provider regime. Further amendments are expected, but it was considered that the Bill should not be delayed, for these reasons.

Mr. Speaker, Bermuda benefits by having our own legislative regime which is intended to address speed-to-market and privacy concerns raised by industry, as well as the Financial Action Task Force and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development policy standards and commitments that are applicable to Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Bermuda Monetary Authority for leading this initiative, together with the Regulatory Unit within the Ministry of Finance, the National Anti-Money Laundering Committee, and the Attorney General's Chambers, for our progress to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Mr. Premier.

While you are on your feet, would you like to do the honours . . . at this hour, at this point?

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the House do now adjourn for lunch, to return at 2:00 pm.

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Premier.

[Gavel]

Proceedings suspended at 12:31 pm

Proceedings resumed at 2:02 pm

[Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr., Deputy Speaker, in the Chair]

BILL

SECOND READING

CORPORATE SERVICE PROVIDER BUSINESS AMENDMENT ACT 2017

[Continuation of debate thereon]

The Deputy Speaker: We are back with the resumption of the House after lunch and we are debating the Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment [Act 2017].

Any further speakers?

The Shadow Minister for Finance, Mrs. Atherden. You have the floor.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Pause]

[Crosstalk]

The Deputy Speaker: Mrs. Atherden, are you not going to speak?

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: I am ready.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must say I was very pleased that the Opposition—the Premier, sorry, the Premier and Finance Minister gave me his brief because that is also continuing in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation.

I obviously have to start off and say that this Bill has come . . . it has had a long journey. And most of the journey has been part of the journey that the previous Government (of which I am a part) was involved in. Because if you stop . . . and I reminded myself that the Bill that we are trying to modify here is the Corporate Service Provider [Business] Act 2012, and we came in right along after that. So when I started to go back and look at the transition, I recognised that there are effectively one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, actually seven Bills or Regulations that have come as a consequence of this.

We all know why we are doing this. We know that Bermuda is trying to make sure that we get on the right side of FATF [Financial Action Task Force], because if we do not do that then Bermuda is not going to be well positioned. And if we are not deemed to be

a regime or a jurisdiction that adheres to the rules, and if FATF feels that the regime is such that we [do not] meet the standards, then it is going to be really bad for Bermuda.

I am mindful of the fact that these changes here are in line to make sure that we have to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism and proliferation. And I must admit [that] sometimes Bermudians do not understand that when we first started to do all of this we used to just worry about, you know, are we a “tax haven” and whether people thought that we were a “tax haven.” We have gone past that. Right now the name of the game is making sure that we can make sure that FATF understands and believes, when they look at us, that we are doing the right thing so that we do not have people coming here and laundering their money and turning around and . . . Who would have thought? Who would have thought years ago that terrorists would be turning around and figuring out ways to get their money to wherever they need to go to make sure that the terrorist acts that they committed to would be used through all of these very intricate avenues?

So, I am mindful of the fact that everything that we do is designed to make sure that we do the right things with respect to the Financial Action Task Force standards and that what we are doing here . . . and as the Finance Minister and Premier said, this is not the end of it. There are more things. I mean, each time something comes up he has to remind us that this is just another layer in getting it right as it relates to making sure that we have the standards in place and that we are able to turn around and make sure that, not only do we have the standards in place, [but] that we are actually turning around and adhering to these standards.

And so I do, and I know that my colleagues [do], support this. We support this because we realise that it is important, especially as you go over time, you start to recognise that different areas have been, if you will . . . the areas where countries have seen that if terrorists want to do something, certain areas have come up. And, therefore, the corporate services area is something that has come up as a way for people to do things and, therefore, it is . . . these changes are things that have been designed to take care of this.

I know that the people in the Ministry of Finance have been effectively working with people in other jurisdictions to understand what is happening in other places to make sure that if something has come up as an issue that we get on the right side of it. Because the last thing we want is when the Task Force comes to look at Bermuda that we have anything here that someone can turn around and say, *Oh, this is a gap*, or, *Oh, they haven't done this*. We are trying to make sure that all of our boxes are ticked so that we can then turn around and get the good, clean report. So I am mindful of that.

And I am mindful of the fact that there is this balance of trying to make sure . . . especially when you already have people that are corporate service providers and, you know, they sort of feel, *Well hey, we're doing the right thing* . . . and I must admit . . . and I will say this, especially when you start looking at the range of persons that are corporate service providers. Because you forget that it is not just lawyers. It is when you talk about the notaries and you talk about the people in the legal professions and the accountants, and then you start talking about the fact that it is not just corporate entities, you have sole practitioners. And if you think about it . . . and I know from even my profession that corporate entities, everybody tries to do the right thing, okay? But corporate entities tend to have much more structure and control, et cetera. Sole practitioners sometimes are a stretch from the point of view of trying to make sure that they live up to the standards and they do all of the right things. And maybe sometimes they come across some things that they have not ordinarily done, but I am sure, with their Bermuda spirit they go at it and they sort it out and they do it.

Now, whether it was outside of their realm . . . I think what we are trying to do . . . this is trying to make sure that everybody does things that they are appropriately qualified to [do]. And if they are getting into an area which they are not normally involved in, that we put some sort of caveats there so that they get permission and they do not do anything such, as I say, that they get outside of their normal comfort zone and then something slips through and . . . you know what it is like. It slips through and when somebody discovers it we cannot turn around and take it back.

But one other thing I am mindful of is the fact that the BMA [Bermuda Monetary Authority] (who is the Authority to do all of this) has started the process. Because, remember, the applications have been in and that is why they have the opportunity to see how many people out there are basically saying, *I am a corporate service provider*. It has given them the opportunity to see the entire range of who is out there.

And I bet, if we could turn around and ask the technical people, I bet you they found that there were some people that perhaps they were not even thinking about as qualifying as corporate service providers. But the understanding is that as long as you are in this area of business and you are doing these types of things, then you are deemed to be a corporate service provider. And that is why it has been important to say with respect to people who have (what I call) traditionally done these things, and it has been accepted that they are a corporate service provider and properly licensed . . . those persons have effectively been able to be . . . I will not say “grandfathered,” but those persons have been able to go through and have what I call the “unlimited licence.”

Therefore, it has been important for us for when we start to look at people who might not be in-

volved in this, or might not have had the extensive experience, to turn around and have something in there so that they could have limited licences. So that is where the BMA has to turn around and, based on the application, based on all the information that has been provided, the BMA has to make this decision about whether you have what I call the "limited licence" or whether you have the "unlimited licence." And I think, by and large, all of the things here focus a lot on what I call the "limited licence," because that is where you have the concerns in terms of people understanding clearly what the requirement is, understanding the various types of transactions that you will be involved in, and making sure that you understand what you have to do.

So the clause which talks about the limited licence and talks about what you have to do in terms of applying to the BMA before you do certain things, as opposed to just doing them, those are all things . . . making sure that somebody, some entity, does not inadvertently create a problem and do something which Bermuda is going to be harmed by. Because the bottom line is if you do something and it comes up that you should not have done it, and we are then stuck saying, *Okay, this happened here in our jurisdiction* . . . you know, the red mark that we have [which] we cannot take away. That is why it is important to help entities understand, if they are in that limited category . . . Well, first of all, help entities understand why they might be given a limited licence.

It is really important for them to understand why they might be given a limited licence; especially if in the past we did not have any of this, what I call regulation, et cetera. So this is what I call the new procedure and you have to make people understand why the procedure is there so that when you tell them about it they do not feel that they are being picked on; they understand that it is something that Bermuda has to do. And the more that we can turn around and make sure that they understand why they have a limited licence, then it is very important.

I think after that, you know, it inserts the section to talk about if you have a limited licence that you are not supposed to do the service if you are in certain categories, et cetera. And especially when you start talking about new company formations, because this is what happens a lot. Somebody comes up with something that you had not thought about and somebody that is not aware of the trickiness of this and you decide to think, *Oh, it's fine*. And then before you know it someone has formed a company and something is happening in there and the genie is out of the box and we are not able to turn around and talk about where the money is coming from.

And the sophisticated people out there now have ways in which this money goes in somewhere else and comes around and comes back and they make it awfully difficult. The persons out there who have a criminal mind are the brightest people that you

want to see and I think we all acknowledge that. So what we have to do is make sure that the regulations are in place to try and prevent people from doing things that are going to harm Bermuda, try and make sure that the individuals that might have these things come across their businesses are alerted.

I think most people want to do the right thing. Obviously, people are entrepreneurs [and] they would like to make money. But I think that if they knew that it was going to cause a problem, or cause harm, then I think most people would turn around and make sure that they do not do that. But that does not mean that there are not people out there who are deciding to let it go and chance it. But then they have to understand that when they do things there are going to be penalties and they have to understand how all of these things take place.

I must admit that when I looked at the range of corporate services that were highlighted I realised that over time those are the ones that, if I reflect back on changes that have been made and regulations that have been introduced over time, relate to some of the things which, as I say, are a little more unique and which are things that we are not normally exposed to. So, this is where Bermuda has to make sure that we get this right.

Also, the regulations reflect the fact that if you are used to being in the business and, like you say, if you have the registered office and you are doing something, you do not have to turn around and seek the consent for transferring the LLC interests, et cetera. So certain things give recognition to the fact that if you are used to doing certain things we are not going to turn around and say that you need, effectively, your hand held. And I do not mean that in a negative way, but to say that it is giving recognition that you have been involved in that and, therefore, the risk and the danger is not quite so much.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just wanted to say it is . . . also the fact that the Finance Minister and Premier indicated there are going to be more amendments coming to be tabled in the House relating to beneficial ownership, which is fair enough. I think everybody understands that beneficial ownership has been one of the . . . how people do their beneficial ownership, how they have all their layers and everything, that has been one of the most difficult things in terms of transactions and how things can go. So it is not surprising that there are going to be additional amendments because I think what we have been mindful of is that the technical officers have been able to be out there to see what is happening, even in other jurisdictions or when concerns have been raised to make sure that we get it right.

And as the Premier and Finance Minister said, you did not want to delay all of this. We want to get a lot of it in place because some of these other things can be picked up later. Especially bearing in mind that the applications are out there, the BMA has to let

these people know what type of restrictions they are going to have, especially if people are going to have limited licences because those are the ones. And, therefore, it is important for us to get out and have the BMA start to talk with them about what is going to happen.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just wanted to say that we, obviously, support this and I know that as we go forward the idea of making sure that Bermuda stays on the right side, that we do not get that red mark, is what everybody is working towards. Now, that does not mean that there might not be some concerns in terms of people having to understand things that they might have to do that they did not have to do before. But I think that all we are all recognising now is that we are going to enter an era of having to have more regulations and having to do more things to make sure that we are on the right side.

I do not think any government . . . in the past, remember we used to say to ourselves that we would come here and would have *more red carpet and less red tape*? Well, we still want to have red carpet; but we have to make sure that where the tape is needed, we have to do that because we do not want a red tick against Bermuda. So I guess I have to say more red carpet, maybe we have to have a bit of red tape because we do not want a red tick.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we support this and we understand why this is required. And the one thing that we can do to help those people that will have the limited licences is to help them work their way through having to have a limited licence and try and make sure that more and more people understand. Because the BMA has got to get on the second part of this, which is what we talked about when I think someone was talking about FATF and all the other stuff. [And that] is that we cannot be having all of these things as stuff we are going to do. We have to have it as stuff we are doing.

If we are not seen to be doing this then we will not have that year in which to show that, you know, it has been in place and we have been making sure that these entities have been subject to the review for another year. Because as the Finance Minister said, you have got people in there who have implementation issues, so we are trying to make sure that we reduce our implementation issues by getting it right up front as it relates to the Act here and then over time making sure that we have enough time to get out and help the individuals.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am looking forward to the Committee stage. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Mrs. Atherden.

Any further speakers?

We recognise the Shadow Attorney General, the Honourable Trevor Moniz. You have the floor.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am going to be brief on this—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Oh, we want to know what is happening with those prosecutions and civil recoveries. We want to know. We have not . . . the Premier can stand on his feet right now and say where he stands on corruption.

The Deputy Speaker: Honourable Member, Member!

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: You need to be talking to me.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: I am talking to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay, well, let's . . .

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: That Honourable Member can stand on his feet right now and say what he is going to do about corruption. He is welcome to do that.

Now, with respect to the piece of legislation in front of us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I agree in broad principle. Obviously, we want to pass the assessment that we face in the coming year with respect to FATF. I am a little bit unsure, on reading the piece of legislation, exactly who would apply for a limited licence. I was not able to hear the entirety of the Premier's presentation when he spoke on this, and I do not know if it is possible to give exact examples of who would have a limited licence.

Now, one of the problems here is I have had a lot of complaints from people in the industry—and I declare my interest as a barrister and an attorney. A lot of the people in the practice do some corporate ministration work. And you get some people who are obviously large and you get those people who are much smaller. And, clearly, there have been complaints from the amount of paperwork that is required, exactly the "red tape" my colleague, the Shadow Finance Minister Mrs. Atherden, spoke to. There have been complaints about the paperwork required.

So, while we want to have compliance with FATF, we clearly want to have a light touch in this jurisdiction insofar as we are able. We do not want to be putting people out of business. And, of course, there are constantly suggestions that in the broader world there are those competitive jurisdictions who would like nothing better than to make us inefficient and unable to produce a good product for our customers.

So what I would like to be assured of is that this is going to be an efficient and a light-touch regime for those people who give these services, and to make it clear that there has been no allegation against

this jurisdiction of any substantial improprieties with respect to financial behaviour internationally.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Any further speakers?

We recognise the Honourable Member from Sandys, Michael Scott.

Hon. Michael J. Scott: Thank you, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I too am hopeful that we will be focused on a risk-based approach to these issues of compliance, rather than rule based. I declare an interest as a practitioner as well, as barrister and practitioner in this jurisdiction, so that there is a risk-based approach.

By and large, the issues that we are seeking to cover under the supernumerary regulators have been driven by the corporate service providers who are the big players. Those have been the areas where, I rather suspect, the large breaches of money laundering and anti-terrorist financing have been occurring. And taking the point of the Shadow Attorney General, small practitioners, or single practitioners, or medium to small practitioners, . . . there should be the minimum of impact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on their being cut out of carrying on formations of companies (if this is a part of their practice), because the compliance requirements or, indeed, the specific provision where you are forced to go into the cubbyhole of limited practitioner (where you cannot form a company) is imposed on you.

I am hoping, therefore, that across the board of the legal practitioners in this country the ability to form up an unlimited practice . . . or fall into the “unlimited” category of corporate service provision, is made as smooth as possible, and possible. Because it is pointless for a practitioner, as a sole practitioner like myself or some of the medium-sized firms, to only be able to have a limited category, or be in the limited category of limited corporate service providers, and not be able to form companies. Because that is where the basic practitioner and the basic service you offer is—to form the company, to maintain the corporate books, to earn the annual fees for renewal of these local companies. So, I hope we do not lose either the focus or fall into the fiction that we are confronted with.

The problem has no doubt been driven by existing major corporate service providers across the world, globally, that is driving these requirements. And a small practitioner, or a sole practitioner, is unlikely to be approached by a major money launderer or terrorist financier without the BMA being able to pick it up quickly. And so this is about how the risk can be better . . . will be well managed. The risk will be well managed by ensuring that the smaller practitioners who

are simply trying to make a living are doomed right there and expand their practice beyond civil and matrimonial into levels of corporate service provision and not be cut out.

I have had anecdotal information given to me that some small firms are just abandoning their corporate services altogether for the reason of not being able to meet this hurdle.

But, I obviously concur and am supportive of the Minister’s principal aim and, as has been indicated in the House, of getting this Bill put in place. And I do welcome . . . and I know that I have spoken briefly with the Premier and Finance Minister who has taken on board the whole concept of risk-based management of this process rather than just strict black-letter laws, rules that you must comply with and making it inflexible.

So, with those observations on behalf of sole practitioners and/or medium-sized practitioners, I think I have taken the point that I wished to make in relation to this important legislation.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member from constituency 36.

Any further speakers? Mr. Premier?

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank honourable colleagues for their comments and the few questions and, of course, I thank the other side for the support. As the Honourable Shadow Minister had stated, it is my practice to share briefs on financial matters with the Shadow Minister and allow her and her colleagues to have briefings from technical officers so that they can be well prepared with the subject matter that we have before we come to this House.

And I thank the Learned Member who just took his seat for understanding and recognising that we must make sure that Bermuda maintains its place as an internationally recognised and well-regulated financial jurisdiction, and that we cannot fail on the upcoming test. So what I would say is that it is surprising . . . and I will answer the question that the former Attorney General asked when he asked, *What types of firms?* even though he, a former Attorney General who had access to the brief from the Shadow Minister of Finance, is not able to understand precisely what it is.

And from that perspective what I will answer him is . . . he [asked], *Who will apply for limited licence?* And it will likely be small firms who are not able to or are interested in making the size of investment required to be in possession of the capabilities necessary to do all of the items that are performed by the unlimited stuff, including company formation and/or becoming shareholders. And from that perspective what we are trying to do, as was stated, is set up a two-tiered system for the small firms, or those

that do not want to do everything, so it is not unnecessarily onerous, and then for the large firms they can do other items.

But what I think is most important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that it is surprising to me that the old United Bermuda Party does not even remember what they advocated for. Because I am certain that . . . and I was not in this place, I was in another place. But I remember ad nauseam the former Minister of Finance (when he was the Shadow Minister of Finance) talking about double-vetting, double-vetting, double-vetting, and how we needed to get past double-vetting. So, here we are . . . the things that are necessary to get past this whole double-vetting. And, of course, the former Honourable Attorney General (now the Shadow Attorney General) gets up and complains about his interests.

Well, here is the thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a new world.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Honourable Member is misleading the House.

The Deputy Speaker: Do you have a point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

[Misleading]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Yes. He is misleading the House. I was not complaining about my interests whatsoever. I was just saying that I had received complaints from people in the community that there was a lot of paperwork involved with these applications, and I was hoping that this would use a light hand in terms of regulation. That was all.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Carry on, Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

As the Honourable Member who just took his seat—the Learned Member—spoke about *his* interests and the fact that he has a small law firm . . . and we understand because we have seen what happens when Members of the Government allow their interests in their private law firms to—

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member continues to—

The Deputy Speaker: Member, Member, you have been here long enough to know you . . . do you have a point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

[Misleading]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: I have a point of order. He is misleading the House.

The Deputy Speaker: All right. You must say that before you—

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: I did not speak about my law firm. I did not speak about that at all. So he must have problems with his hearing.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Carry on, Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Honourable and Learned Member must have a problem with his memory because he spoke about his law firm.

But let me explain to you what happens when Members of the frontbench allow their private interests to get in the way of public business. That would be the reason why for five years, under the former Government, there was no Land Title Registry put into place, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So let us talk about interests being in the way.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Honourable Member is imputing improper motive.

The Deputy Speaker: Member, Member, you cannot speak until you are recognised by the Chair.

And do you have a point of order?

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Yes, I do, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Well, you must state that first.

POINT OF ORDER

[Imputing improper motive and misleading]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: He is both imputing improper motive and he is misleading the House and the public of Bermuda. The situation is that those are not the reasons and we will, obviously at some point, get to the Land Title Registry and the debate on that item. But if he would learn himself up he would know that that is not the reason at all for the delay. It has nothing to do with that.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Carry on, Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the learning that took place inside of this country on July 18th should be clear for all to see, and that is the reason why we are over here and they are over there.

Again, the point: [For the] four and a half years that they were in Government, [the] Land Title Registry [was] not put into place because persons

may be looking out for their own interests instead of the interests of the country. And if the Honourable Member has a guilty conscience, then he can stand to his feet and say “point of order” one more time.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Point of order. Point of order. I do not think he can be suggesting,—

The Deputy Speaker: What is your—

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: —Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Honourable Member—

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Yes.

The Deputy Speaker: —you must be recognised before you speak.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: What is your point of order?

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Well, he is being outrageous in his statements. I think you should take responsibility as Deputy Speaker to stop him—

The Deputy Speaker: Mr. . . . Mr.—

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: —he is imputing improper motive.

The Deputy Speaker: Honourable Member, when I take to my feet, you sit, right?

You do not talk . . . or have that language in this House [about] what I should do. You have been here long enough to know better.

Carry on.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: He is continuing to do the same thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He is imputing improper motive. That . . . Land . . . and we are getting off the subject entirely, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I think there should be more control over the debate. But the Land Title Registry could have been introduced under their Government—

Some Hon. Members: Yes.
That’s right.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: And that is why it was not introduced under their Government. It was brought in . . . when? Several years before they lost the Government.

The Deputy Speaker: That is your point . . . you are not . . . you are going into a speech. You may sit.
The Premier can continue.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But as we see, the guilty conscience has run far and wide on that side because when we talk about—

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: What is your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

[Imputing improper motive]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: He is imputing improper motive. He is suggesting I have a guilty conscience. I have a clean conscience. Sometimes people look and they think they are looking in a mirror and they are saying something about themselves.

I, for one, do not have a guilty conscience.

The Deputy Speaker: Carry on, Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is amazing what the former Attorney General, the master of shredding documents, can say when he is up in this place.

Some Hon. Members: Ooh!

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Mr. Deputy Speaker, point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: What is your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

[Imputing improper motive and misleading]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: That was imputing improper motive, and it was misleading and untrue, and he should withdraw that statement.

The Deputy Speaker: Carry on, Mr. Premier.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: I am asking you to ask him to withdraw the statement, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Honourable Member, will you take your seat?

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: I am just asking if you will say—

The Deputy Speaker: Will you take your seat?
Carry on, Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker—

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Clarification, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. E. David Burt: I do not yield.

The Deputy Speaker: Do you yield for clarification?

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: What is your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: My point of order is I am asking you for a ruling, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The ruling is . . . Mr. Premier, carry on.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I will continue because . . . let me get to my point, because for those persons who seem as though if the best thing to do to progress this country is to protect established interests and the old way of doing things, they will realise that this is not the way to advance. And what we have to do in this country is look at compliance and the way in which the world is going towards as an opportunity. It is an opportunity for new law firms and maybe even older law firms, like the Honourable Shadow Attorney General has, to modernise their activities. It is an opportunity for Bermuda to become a centre for compliance and to look at how we can benefit off of what the world is going to.

So those are the type of opportunities, so the conversations that we should be having up here. And the conversation that fortunately this Government is having is how we are going to capitalise off of those opportunities. How are we going to make sure that Bermuda is not only a well-regulated jurisdiction, but how are we going to use these changes to provide jobs and opportunities and new industries inside this country? That is where our focus is and, as I have said many times, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they are the past, we are the future and we are moving forward.

And with that I move that the Bill be committed.

[Desk thumping]

The Deputy Speaker: The Bill has been committed to the whole of the House.

Ms. Jackson . . . Mr. Commissioning, will you come at this moment, please?

Oh, I did not see you.

House in Committee at 2:38 pm

[Ms. Susan E. Jackson, Chairman]

COMMITTEE ON BILL

CORPORATE SERVICE PROVIDER BUSINESS AMENDMENT ACT 2017

The Chairman: Good afternoon, Honourable Members. We are now in Committee of the whole House for further consideration of the Bill entitled [Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment Act 2017](#). I call on the Minister in charge to proceed.

Minister, you have the floor.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman, I move clauses 1 and 2.

The Chairman: Okay. It has been moved that the clauses be approved—

Hon. E. David Burt: [Clauses] 1 and 2.

The Chairman: —[Clauses] 1 and 2.

Hon. E. David Burt: Would you like me to proceed?

The Chairman: Would anyone like to speak to the clauses?

Hon. E. David Burt: I will. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman, clause 1 provides for the citation of the Bill.

Clause 2 amends section 10 of the Corporate Service Business Provider Act 2012 to provide that a corporate service provider holding an unlimited licence may provide any or all of the corporate services under the definition of corporate service provider business and one holding a limited licence may provide any or all of the corporate services under the definition of corporate service provider, subject to the limits set out in subsection (6).

Clause 2 further amends section 10 of the Corporate Service Business Provider Act 2012 by inserting a new subsection (6), which imposes limits on a corporate service provider limited licence by requiring that an undertaking so licensed shall not provide the services to a company, partnership, or limited liability company unless certain requirements are met. And those requirements are:

- Acting as a company formation agent or agent for the establishment of a partnership and keeping or making any necessary alteration to the register of members of a company in accordance with section 65 of the Companies Act 1981.

- Corporate services to be provided to a company in new formations where the corporate services to be provided to a company, in the case of a new formation, the proponents of the company relating to the issue or transfer of securities or related matters, the requirement is for the company or the proponent to have obtained the permission of the Controller of Foreign Exchange under the relevant sections of the Exchange Control Regulations 1973.

We are going over the requirements, Madam Chairman, sorry.

- The corporate services provided to be a partnership is another requirement. And that means where the corporate service is to be provided to a partnership, the requirement is for the partnership to have obtained the consent of the Authority for the formation of a limited partnership or its change in particulars under section 5 or 8B of the Limited Partnership Act 1883 or for the registration of an exempted partnership or the change to its general partner under section 8 or section 13(1)(a) of the Exempted Partnerships Act 1992.
- And the final requirement would be for corporate services to be provided to a limited liability company and that would say that where the corporate service is to be provided to a limited liability company relating to the issue or transfer of an LLC interest under section 45(7) of the Limited Liability Company Act 2016, the requirement is for the limited liability company, or in the case of a new formation, the proponents to have obtained the consent of the Authority of such issue or transfer in accordance with section 45(7).

The Chairman: Thank you, Minister.

Would anyone like to speak to clauses 1 and 2?

The Shadow Minister of Finance has the floor.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman, obviously . . . and I just wanted to state this again because somehow it did not seem to get across. We understand the need to have this. We support these changes. And, therefore, I am really concerned when I hear this back and forth across the House as if to suggest that we do not understand that it is necessary for these parts of the Act—

An Hon. Member: One and two.

Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden: —that it is important for us to understand, especially as it relates to [clause] 2

where the limited licence is amplified and the requirements, et cetera, are laid out.

I am speaking to that because these are the new things that are being introduced, and I want to make sure that everybody understands [that] we understand the need for it. We are not turning around and saying we do not support this. So, let us see if we can stop this back and forth of saying that we do not understand that this is important for Bermuda and, therefore, we want the right things to happen.

We understand that new people can go and decide to go into these areas of business. We want people to have opportunities and, therefore, knowing that there are ways in which they can apply for licences and knowing that this is the limited licence, and especially as it relates to a limited licence we understand and we think that it is setting out restrictions, et cetera, which will give the control, which is the other side of this, to make sure that they do not get into things, that the BMA gets the opportunity to give their consent for those areas which are a little more unique and, therefore, we understand and support these changes.

The Chairman: Thank you, Shadow Minister.

Would anyone else like to speak to clauses 1 and 2?

Minister, you have the floor.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much and I thank the Honourable Shadow Minister for her support. As I said in the general debate, Madam Chairman, I do not believe that the question of understanding lies with her; I think it may be with other Members on her frontbench.

With that I will move that clauses 1 and 2 be approved.

The Chairman: It has been moved that clauses 1 and 2 be approved.

Is there any objection to that motion?

No objection.

Agreed to.

[Gavel]

[Motion carried: Clauses 1 and 2 passed.]

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I would like to move clause 3.

Clause 3 makes consequential amendments to section 45 of the Limited Liability Company Act 2016 in subsection (7) by causing the subsection to be subject to subsection (8) and by deleting the end provision that states that the consent of the Authority is not required for the issue or transfer of the LLC interests referred to in that subsection where the issue or transfer of such LLC interests is made by a limited liability company having its registered office at the reg-

istered office of a Licensed Corporate Service Provider.

Further, section 45 is amended by the repeal of subsection (7A) and the substitution of subsections (8) and (9). The new subsection (8) provides that subject to subsection (9) the consent of the Authority is not required for the issue or transfer of an LLC interest referred to in subsection (7) where the issue or transfer of such LLC interests is made by a limited liability company having its registered office at the registered office of a Licensed Corporate Service Provider.

The new subsection (9) requires a limited liability company that has, under subsection (8), issued or transferred an LLC interest referred to in subsection (7), to notify the Authority of the issue or transfer of such LLC interest as soon as practicable, but no later than 14 days after such issue or transfer.

The Chairman: Thank you, Minister.
Would anyone like to speak to clause 3?
Minister, you have the floor.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.
I move that clause 3 be approved.

The Chairman: It has been moved that clause 3 be approved.
Is there any objection to that motion?
No objection.
Agreed to.

[Gavel]

[Motion carried: Clause 3 passed.]

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Madam Chairman.
I move that the Preamble be approved.

The Chairman: It has been moved that the Preamble be approved.
Is there any objection to that motion?
No objection.
Agreed to.

[Gavel]

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.
I move that the Bill be reported to the House as printed.

The Chairman: Is there any objection to that motion?
No objection.
Agreed to.

[Gavel]

The Chairman: The Bill will be reported to the House as printed.

[Motion carried: The Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment Act 2017 was considered by a Committee of the whole House and passed without amendment.]

House resumed at 2:46 pm

[Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr., Deputy Speaker, in the Chair]

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

CORPORATE SERVICE PROVIDER BUSINESS AMENDMENT ACT 2017

The Deputy Speaker: The Bill entitled the Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment Act 2017 has been reported to the House.

Are there any objections?
There appear to be none. The Bill is approved.

[Gavel]

The Deputy Speaker: Order No. 2, has that been carried over?

An Hon. Member: Yes.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Deputy Speaker: Two, three and four have been carried over.

Order No. 5 in the name of the Honourable Member Commissiong.

Hon. Michael J. Scott: He will be right here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

An Hon. Member: He is not here.

[Crosstalk]

The Deputy Speaker: Just one second, we will give the Honourable Member a chance. He is probably in the boys' room.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, he has just returned.
Mr. Commissiong, you have the floor.

MOTION

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE,
REPORT AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A LIVING WAGE**

Mr. Rolfe Commissiong: Thank you, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, for your indulgence here. I am just trying to get myself together.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, on the 15th of September 2017, I gave notice that, at the next day of meeting, I proposed to move the following motion:

“WHEREAS it is acknowledged that the increasing maldistribution of national income has facilitated the growth of income inequality and thus incipient poverty to levels not witnessed in over seven decades [in Bermuda];

“AND WHEREAS, in addition, due to the near widespread utilisation of foreign sourced low cost labour over the last quarter century, wages in real terms once inflation has been factored in; have declined for many of Bermuda’s workers;

“BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to the Parliament Act 1957 part IV, that a Joint Select Committee be appointed to investigate, report on its subsequent findings; and to make recommendations to the House of Assembly with respect to the implementation of a living wage regime for Bermuda.”

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, thus we are here today in this hallowed Chamber of a House of Assembly in order to move the motion as articulated.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, allow me to share with the Members the following quote: “We can have democracy in this country, or we can have great wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we can’t have both.” Those words are from Louis D. Brandeis, the US Supreme Court Justice (1856–1941).

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, one of the more positive bipartisan developments with respect to the recent general election was that both parties—the One Bermuda Alliance and the Progressive Labour Party, which went on to win the election in question—affirmed their commitment, by way of their respective election platforms, to the proposition of a living wage for Bermuda. For many people, along with myself, that was an affirmation that this, indeed, was an issue whose time had come.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, certainly you will recall that as a Member of the previous Parliament I stood before this body and conveyed an internal report on the 19th of May 2017, as the former Chairman of the then Joint Select Committee, that the then Committee would lay its final report before the end of the summer session. However, my one regret was that our Joint Select Committee of Parliament, which was charged with laying before this Chamber that anticipated final report, found that task pre-empted by the decision of the then-Premier, the Honourable Michael Dunkley (who remains a Member of this body), to call upon the Governor to dissolve Parliament with the aim of bringing into being the recently concluded general election.

So I am here to beg the indulgence of the Members of this Parliament, and specifically this Chamber, to affirm once more your bipartisan support in order to ensure that this work is completed and that a final report can be brought before you for your due consideration in a timely fashion.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I am gratified that the present Government, led by the Honourable Premier David Burt, has made the decision to honour the aforementioned platform pledge made to the Bermudian people and has given support to this renewed effort to complete the work around this critically important task of devising the most efficacious model for the implementation of a living wage for Bermuda. I also reach out my hand to the new Opposition Members and their Leader and, as noted, commend them for their support on this issue and hope that this motion can enjoy their unalloyed confidence.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I wish to thank you and your Clerk, Ms. Shernette Wolffe, for your guidance in this matter. And for the benefit of the listeners out there I have been referring to the Speaker, but actually we have the [Deputy] Speaker, the Honourable Derrick Burgess in the Chair at this time.

Members, I will not belabour you with a lengthy presentation or engender a long debate. Suffice it to say that I believe that we have reached a common consensus to askew that outcome today so that we can get to the matter at hand, which is to approve the establishment of a Parliamentary Joint Select Committee so that we can complete this great and necessary work.

I am sure that you will share my view that the critical and substantive debate will come once the final report is laid before this House. Moreover, there was an extensive and rigorous debate in 2016 when a similar motion was approved by the House of Assembly.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I have agreed to this approach as agreed earlier, so I will keep my comments as brief as possible. I am also refraining from diving into the weeds with respect to the whole body of information or findings culled from submissions conveyed to the former Joint Select Committee over the preceding year. I am of the opinion that the incoming Committee should weigh those findings first before they are made available to this House. Instead I will address some of the overarching structural challenges that are relevant to our understanding of this issue.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, anyone who knows me knows that I did not get involved in politics in order to obtain status, great wealth or power, but to get things done, both great and small, on behalf of the Bermudian people, especially on behalf of the voiceless and the powerless in our midst. After all, in a land of plenty, of one with an abundance of riches, children go hungry and too many hard-working parents struggle to survive on wages that have been stagnant or even declining for years in real terms, and increasingly wages that do not afford many even the dignity of a

decent life. Charitable need has exploded and thousands of our fellow Bermudians have migrated to the United Kingdom and beyond since the great recession, many of whom because they simply could not afford to live here any longer.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I believe that this question of a living wage will not answer every need, but it will begin the process of answering the existential question of what kind of country we want to be. And for that very reason it remains for me not only an economic issue, or purely a labour versus business issue. Nor, for that matter, is it purely a political issue. It is all of that. But at heart it is also a moral issue. Note that over 90 per cent of countries have established statutory wage floors of one kind or another. In addition, many are beginning to embrace the call for a living wage even when it may not be characterised as that in terms of its nomenclature, the battle for \$15 per hour throughout the United States of America being but one example. At the other end of the spectrum, the UK has imposed a statutory wage scheme that will result in wage levels approximating living wage levels by 2020.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, certainly one of the defining questions of our age and particularly western political economies, in fact, revolves around the question of income inequality. But what is income inequality? Simply put, income inequality refers to a maldistribution of income as the financial gains in an economy such as ours increasingly and disproportionately accrue to an ever smaller segment of the population, usually characterised principally by the owners of capital and the professional classes.

However, we now live in a world whereby the 1 per cent of the global population has now captured more wealth than the remaining 90 per cent and extreme levels of income inequality with diminished social cohesion and even political stability.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, Bermuda is not immune to these trends. It is widely acknowledged that it also contributes, as in the case of Bermuda, to a slow but steady hollowing out of our middle income stratum and/or class and has concomitantly facilitated an expansion in the number of households that can be characterised as low income, and/or of households, a small but expanding number being Bermudian households, that are mired increasingly in multi-generational poverty.

As I have said before, some of the factors which have driven the growth of inequality on Island and which Bermuda has not been immune to are: the growth and mere impact of globalisation; the increasing financialisation of the economies of most so-called developed nations, including our own, over the last four decades; the decline in collective bargaining, and thus organised labour, as a countervailing power to capital; the growth of outsourcing and off-shoring; and, very relevant to Bermuda, the movement of unprecedented numbers of low-cost migrant labour be-

tween countries, across what former United States Foreign Secretary, John Kerry, described as a “borderless world.”

Some of my colleagues will speak to some of the other corrosive effects associated with widening income inequality on societies such as Bermuda. But allow me to offer an analysis that speaks to how it has driven, along with the growing adoption of low-cost, low- to medium-skilled foreign labour, an unprecedented increase in the number and the need for financial assistance for Bermudians over the preceding period as but one example.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, the growth of the client base at Financial Assistance over the last decade and a half can, in part, be attributed to that trend. In other words, there has been a price, largely unacknowledged, that the country has paid for this phenomenon as it relates to the growth of this sector.

Firstly, we have experienced the growth of those on the Financial Assistance roles as non-college educated, low-skilled, mostly black Bermudians that have been marginalised within our labour market.

Secondly, the outward migration of scores of Bermudians to the UK over the last decade is also, in part, a by-product of a ruinous cost of living, on the one hand, meeting low-paying jobs that cannot afford an employee a decent standard of living on the other. This has produced a continued downward pressure on wages precipitated by the wholesale adoption of foreign low-cost labour, as noted.

Thirdly, moreover the biggest price we pay for this is the millions of dollars that the Financial Assistance Department pays out every year on necessary assistance to the able-bodied and those that we categorise as low earners. Remember, the growth in both of these categories, again, over 90 per cent black clients, began during the greatest economic boom in Bermuda’s history under the previous PLP Government between 2000 and 2008/09, reinforcing the view that this is systemic and/or structural and not just the result of cyclical changes to the economy as occurs with recessions.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, one cannot be in denial over the fact that in Bermuda there has been unabated growth in the demand for low-cost foreign labour since the mid- to late-1980s. The reality is that this migrant labour force (most of whom are low- to medium-skilled), competes directly with non-college educated, low- to medium-skilled Bermudians within our workforce. And the most pernicious part of it is that it has had the deleterious effect of keeping wages low, as noted, and even led to their decline, once inflation is factored in, for many years of Bermudian household incomes. This as inflation soared during the self-same period.

We now live in a country where many occupational categories pay wages below the low income threshold established by our own Department of Sta-

tistics; or, to be more frank, they pay wages that keep growing numbers of employees mired in relative and, in some cases, real poverty. Is there any wonder, despite the modest decline in the numbers, that the client base of those Bermudians on Financial Assistance, as noted, has grown exponentially?

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, how can a Bermudian electrician, for example, compete with a fully-qualified electrician from India—the best that India produces—who back home works for only about \$25.00 a week? This is not a hypothetical example, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker. The Bermudian tradesman who told me of this conversation with an Indian work colleague a few years ago is still in shock every time he recounts it—as he should be. Fifteen dollars per hour to this individual would seem like a windfall. But it would consign the Bermudian tradesman to a poverty level wage.

However, I offer a caveat to my fellow Bermudians. Let us neither denigrate nor oppress those foreign workers who, in some cases, are fleeing lives of abject deprivation, who in their endeavours here are simply trying to take care of their families back in their countries of origin. No. Let us focus on the unscrupulous Bermudian employer and/or Bermuda-based companies that indulge in these exploitative employment practices.

Let us make it clear that, to paraphrase President Franklin Delano Roosevelt: “No business which depends for its existence on paying less than living wages to its workers has any right to continue in this country. By living wages, I mean more than a bare subsistence level—I mean the wages of a decent living.”

Let us also be clear, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, this level of exploitation will continue unless we here in this Chamber say, *Enough! No more*, and put in place the right policy and legislative prescriptions to curtail these egregious abuses.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I said before in this House that when Bermuda stops working for Bermudians, then what is the point? During the period of the 1960s, the 1970s, and the 1980s those Bermudians with only a high school education, and many with even less, could enter into the workforce and go into the hotel industry or the trades, such as those associated with the growing construction sector as well, and earn a middle income standard of living. They got married, had children, and provided for their families. And even if they had to work two or three jobs, they did so with the knowledge that they were getting ahead; unlike now, where the prospect of working two or three jobs represents nothing more than an effort to keep from drowning financially for too many.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, my point is that Bermuda cannot just work for its college educated and/or professional classes and the owners of capital. It must also work for its masons, its labourers, its landscapers, its restaurant and hotel workers, its delivery persons, and so many others trapped in occupations that

will hardly afford them, to quote President Roosevelt again, “the wages of a decent living.”

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, Bermuda is certainly not working for young 26-year-old Lady M. “Lady M” is not her real name. She has a precious four-year-old daughter and is a constituent of mine. Lady M works as a waitress and during a two-week period earlier this year—and I want the listeners in radio land to hear this. During a two-week period earlier this year, [she] worked for 96 hours over a two-week period as a so-called part-time waitress, and she did so without benefit of health insurance at a well-known mid-sized restaurant. I ask the Members here to consider that her hourly wage was \$7.50 per hour and she worked eight-hour shifts over a six-day week.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, Lady M also did so without the benefit of overtime pay. At the end of that gruelling two weeks she took home the princely sum of \$620.90, once social insurance and payroll taxes were deducted. Her gross earnings for 96 hours of unmitigated toil amounted to \$720.00. When one adds in her average tips per week of only \$130.00 to about \$140.00 per week . . . well, I challenge you to do the math. But allow me to put it this way: When it comes to her household budget the numbers never add up.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I implore the Members of this House, let us work together to halt this race to the bottom that is affecting the most economically vulnerable among us—fellow Bermudians. We all know that markets left up to their own devices, or left unfettered, will surely result fairly soon in wage rates falling even further. Already I have heard of certain employers who pay their staff \$6.00 an hour. In five years’ time, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, will the wage reach \$4.00 or \$5.00 per hour?

Let us also not forget that it was in this same Chamber two weeks ago today that the Minister of Home Affairs revealed that another employer was seeking to bring in a migrant worker—and that is the global title for those workers—under the premise that they would pay that worker \$11.00 per hour. To the Minister’s credit, he assured us that this approval was not granted. Colleagues know that by way of a full 40-hour week that worker would have earned the princely sum of \$440.00 before deductions.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, \$7.50 per hour is not a living wage and neither is \$11.00 and neither is \$15.00 per hour—not in Bermuda. It is a poverty level wage. Do not get me wrong, there are many excellent employers—and I mean this—some in this Chamber today on both sides of the aisle. But as long as we allow these perverse incentives that flourish unchecked while systematically placing Bermudian workers, and black Bermudian workers, in particular, without a college degree, at a distinct competitive disadvantage, it will only get worse, as it has over the last two or three decades.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, recent surveys over the last 18 months, including one from the *Telegraph*

newspaper in the UK, now assert that Bermuda has the highest cost of living in the world. Clearly, if some of us are not prepared to accept that dubious title we cannot ignore the fact that Bermuda's cost of living is now at least one of the highest in the known universe.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I conclude by noting that the September 22nd *Royal Gazette* edition had a front page headline that read, "Bermuda has 23 per cent living in 'poverty.'" I repeat, "Bermuda has 23 per cent living in 'poverty.'" They were quoting the comments of Bermudian economist Robert Stubbs, who noted, "Bermuda's economic model and tax system is producing systemic poverty on the island." And I would add, *to an extent that we have not seen since the 1930s before the Yankee dollar bill arrived with the Great War, otherwise known as World War [I]*. It is also producing widening racial disparities as the President of the Bermuda Industrial Union outlined in a presentation at the BIU banquet in 2015. This, too, should come as no surprise. Mr. Stubbs arrived at that figure by way of the 2010 Census, and his findings were delivered at a recent lecture entitled, "Bermuda 2017: Test tube to the World." His calculation was based upon the simple measurement of how many were living below the median household income in Bermuda as per that 2010 Census.

That begs the question, What will the next census reveal in a few months? Will Mr. Stubbs, shortly after that census is published, tell us that the poverty rate by that same measurement is now at 28 per cent? Or even 30 per cent? In 2010 we were in the depths of that Great Recession. Certainly, without major job growth since that period, why would it have gotten any better? I suspect that it has gotten worse.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, what should we do then as more and more young Bermudians migrate to the UK, as noted, while we turn a blind eye to the exploitative practices of some employers who seemingly have devised a business plan contingent upon the payment of poverty level wages? Or do we, assembled here, do the right thing and say with one voice, *no more?*

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, allow me to remind Members and the listening public that implementing a living wage in Bermuda, as indicated, is not the only answer in response to the structural challenges that confront us. Far from it! But it is an important and necessary part of the puzzle that we will need along with other critical structural reforms, such as tax reforms, which, combined, will reduce income inequality, arrest the concomitant erosion of our middle class, and revert the inexorable march of poverty in Bermuda.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will leave you with this sobering thought from a readers' survey conducted by columnist Martha Myron, featured in the September 23rd 2017 edition of the *Royal Gazette*. The headline for the column that week read, "Dealing with Ber-

muda's high cost of living." One respondent to the survey wrote the following:

"Living in Bermuda is absolutely unaffordable for the ordinary person. If we did not have decent professional jobs" . . . now I just want that to sink in, so everybody out in radio land and the Members here, she, or he, said that living in Bermuda is absolutely unaffordable for the ordinary person. This is the kicker. She (or he) went on to say, "If we did not have decent professional jobs and have help from my retired family member who lives with us, we would be forced to leave Bermuda."

When you get to a point where members of the professional class, that I talked about earlier, are saying things like that, if that is not a wake-up call for where we are at right now, then nothing is. Imagine then, this puts in greater relief what Lady M is going through with her four-year-old. I might also add she lost her fiancée who passed away due to diabetes . . . you know, only about five or six months ago.

So, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, as I conclude here, I am grateful again for this opportunity to call for the House to sanction the formation of a new Committee. I am happy that, at least as we stand right now up to this point, we enjoyed bipartisan support. Both parties, as mentioned, are in favour of us moving in this direction. I know there will be disagreements and honest arguments about, not necessarily when, but how. I take great responsibility here that we have to make sure that we have a model that is going to be one that can achieve broad support for this proposition.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, the professional said, "we would be forced to leave Bermuda" *if we did not have these jobs and the help from a retired family member*, who probably has multi-generational wealth.

I will only say, in closing, [leaving] will be an option, unfortunately for us, that thousands of our fellow Bermudians, as noted, have already exercised.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I humbly beseech the Members of this House to support this motion.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: That was the Honourable Member from constituency 21.

Thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

HOUSE VISITOR

The Deputy Speaker: Before we hear the next speaker, I would just like to recognise the Honourable Senator Hayward.

[Desk thumping]

[Motion: Joint Select Committee to Investigate, Report and Make Recommendations on the Implementation of a Living Wage, debate thereon continuing.]

The Deputy Speaker: Any further speakers?

The Opposition Leader, Ms. Pat Pamplin.

You have the floor, Ms. Pamplin.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the proposition before us today is a motion requesting Parliament to agree to a resolution to appoint a Joint Select Committee to investigate, report on its subsequent findings, and to make recommendations to the House of Assembly with respect to the implementation of a living wage regime for Bermuda.

You will know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that a similar motion was tabled before, in the prior House, and it was a motion which enjoyed bipartisan support. It is a subject for which this party has supported—the concept. It is one that you will know that as a part of the Labour Advisory Council there was a sub-committee that had been formed under the leadership of the Honourable Member who sits in the Gallery to whom you just referred, the Honourable Member who sits in another place, Mr. Jason Hayward, in terms of bringing a report, through the Labour Advisory Council, on this very same topic.

I was privileged at the time, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, to be the Minister who commissioned that report to be done and who received the substantive part of the report that had been completed up until the time that we were no longer in the Government.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I believe that the nucleus of what we require going forward would have been encapsulated in some of the recommendations that were included in that sub-committee report, and I believe it could be useful for that sub-committee report to be made available to the new Committee to which the Honourable Member is now attempting for this House to support the implementation of—

Mr. Rolfe Commissiong: I agree. I agree.

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: —in order that we can reach a conclusion on this matter in an expeditious manner.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are times when work is done and the results thereof find their way on to some shelf. And the idea comes up again and it sounds like a wonderful, great, new idea that already has had its genesis in a significant amount of work that has already been done. So my suggestion and hope is that we not have to go back to square one, but that we utilise some of the information that has already been garnered with the massive man hours that have already been expended to deal with this issue, and then to be able to bring that along with new information that will come from the new Committee in order for this House to debate this in a fulsome manner.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, it is egregious to us—both as Government and now as Opposition—to know

that we had employers who engaged in unscrupulous business practices in terms of trying to circumvent the rules and the restrictions that were implemented by the Immigration Department, and to utilise those unscrupulous practices to be able to undermine the ability for Bermudians, as well as our guest workers, to be able to live in an appropriate manner based on the salaries that they were being paid.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I can just make reference to one situation in which I can say the now-Minister of Immigration is not isolated in the requests that come before him and looking at documentation where you may decide that this is an inappropriate request and, therefore, could not be supported. I can just tell you, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, of a situation in which a particular application came before me, which I looked at and declined. It was sent back by the technical people to the person making the application. And then on the appeal the individual came back and said, *The Chief Immigration Officer doesn't know what she's doing, the Permanent Secretary doesn't know what she's doing, and, more importantly, the Minister doesn't know what she's doing because this is the person that I want to hire and this is the person that I will have.*

I was able to go back to that applicant to say, *Sir, you are perfectly right that I cannot tell you who to hire. But I can tell you who you can't have and you're not having this applicant. Because what you are asking for is not just unfair, I will not stand by and allow anybody to be used so shamelessly in the workplace and consider myself to be a part of the human family. So, if you feel that this is the way you wish to operate, you are entirely on your own. But you will not do it with my blessing. You cannot have this particular individual.*

And those are the underlying challenges that we face when we talk about people being able to live and to be able to survive and to sustain themselves and their families in the manner that is appropriate in the environment in which we live. We do not profess to be a Third World country where we can look to eke out a subsistence.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: I said we do *not* profess—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin: Okay. To be a developing nation in which . . . and I apologise. I do not mean to offend anybody. But we are not a developing nation whereby we have to look at how we can eke out a meagre existence and still force ourselves to get by in a manner which was forced on certain jurisdictions heretofore.

Bermuda went through its own challenges in that respect way back when, and we have developed and matured to an extent where, for the most part, we can manage in some way, shape or form with our own devices and with the additional support that has been offered by the Government in the various programmes.

But we heard the Minister responsible for Social Development last week indicate that it was going to be difficult to sustain the level of assistance that had heretofore been offered and, therefore, we have to start looking at different ways in order to ensure that our people are able to live in a dignified kind of way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me just say that as we support the formation of this Joint Select Committee, certainly from our perspective we will offer to the Chairperson who has brought this motion, Mr. Commissioning, once the Committee has been established, our unwavering support in terms of involvement, discussion, investigation, and the reporting of information that is appropriate. It is not my intention today, nor is it the intention of my team, to belabour the challenges, because I believe they have been adequately expressed by the Honourable Member who brought the motion. I believe that it is more appropriate for us to be able to save the information that is garnered as a result of the investigation and the Committee's findings and to have a fulsome debate at that point in time. It is also my understanding that the prior Committee that was established with the blessing of this Honourable House had reached the stage of nearly being, or at the cusp of being, able to bring a report to this Honourable House.

So it is my expectation, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, that new members of the Committee (because we do have new Members who are now in this Honourable House) will be able to bring themselves up to speed with respect to the requirements, with respect to the information that has already been investigated, with that which has already been gleaned, and will be able to compile a report to bring to this Honourable House in a reasonably short period of time. Because I believe that we recognise and understand that the matter is urgent, that we cannot rest on our laurels—for those of us who are better off than others—and to think, *I'm okay, Jack. Let's pull up the ladder.* We have to be our brothers' keeper and we have to show, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have the level of concern and the level of human consideration to make sure that all of us as countrymen—whether born here in Bermuda, whether transplanted from other jurisdictions as permanent residents, or whether guest workers—that we make sure that we do not exploit humankind in such a . . . and it is not just exploitative, but an unscrupulous manner.

So, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, as we support this, I certainly hope, as I said, I do not believe that there is a necessity, and I have no doubt that other Members

may wish to speak, but I do not believe that today is necessarily the time. According to this motion this is the establishment of the Joint Select Committee. And I certainly, again, reiterate the support of our party and our team to achieve the ends that are attempting to be achieved by the Honourable Member who has brought the motion.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Opposition Leader.

Again, we want to have a very limited debate. The debate has occurred already, so we are not going to be long with this.

Are there any further speakers?

We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 36.

Hon. Michael J. Scott: Mr. Deputy Speaker, good afternoon, sir.

I take note of the caveat just declared by yourself, but just briefly supporting my colleague the Member piloting this particular and important motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as he presented what really amounts to a clarion call, the Sermon from the Mount, and he delivered it as it was a sermon with urgency and with passion.

I pick up the point that the Honourable Member from constituency 21, Mr. Commissioning, mentioned the development, a side-product or by-product of the poverty in our midst, of charitable explosions in our country. And we have watched this take place and as a concomitant reaction to the explosion of charities in our country, in our Island, our little Island, there has been an equal reaction to regulate charities. And so on one hand charity and charitable activities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a typical human response by our Bermudians and fellow Bermudians, from small charities, like the Orchid Club, trying to deal with this question of reducing immigration or just helping Bermudians get by. We have over-regulation and the situation has become untenable, as has been indicated by Mr. Commissioning.

The issue of club hands has also been attacked and the helping practice of club hands has been regulated and soon probably will be because of matters presented by the Minister of Finance this morning (not to reflect) because of FATF and money laundering regulation, even saving efforts in club hands is being barriered in our Island. So I am merely underscoring in this debate and in this motion the urgency of this need for an adequate response.

You know of the presence of foreign, cheap labour in our country. It has become cheap labour because of the arguments made in this very motion that result in \$6.00 an hour wages and \$7.00 an hour wages amount to princely sums for many foreign migrant labourers in our midst. It also drives remittances. Remittances are a critical part of the majority, I would

say, of our foreign labourers. Remittances are taking place at a major pace and so with remittances there is, driven by it, the need and the absolute reaction by foreign migrant labourers to live off of fishing in our country so that their remittances are higher and get fully sent over to their families in their respective countries.

And rents are contributory rents, they are not full rents being paid into our economy, they are rents contributed by a migrant labourer living in a unit or in a room where they are contributing to the rent there. They are not spending in our economy in the measures and levels that they would otherwise do, or they are living on hospitality properties with reduced rents. And so the arguments that we need to have foreign workers in our country to occupy our homes and to boost our economy by and through rents and the spending in our supermarkets and the spending across all of our economy by our foreign guest workers is not occurring. So this is a deleterious outcome connected with low wages—poverty wages—and this motion will address this at the same time of lifting into dignity of earnings . . . native Bermudians, something that we have got accustomed to.

But my research tells me that it was in the 1970s that the cost of living began to be spiked in our country—spiked upwards—and there has been no let-up ever since. And it has produced a catastrophe, literally a catastrophe (or a *ca-tas-troff*, as the French put it), in our midst, a catastrophe of emigration, a catastrophe of Bermudians being and feeling under siege in income, in housing, in education. And these were the indicia identified by Professor Newman many years ago, looking at it happening in the 1990s. Professor Newman examined this peculiar and particular worrisome development in our midst in 1994 and wrote a report on it.

But when I last referred to the Newman analyses in a meeting of our group, the Member piloting this particular motion, Mr. Commissioning, reminded me that in 1994 the Professor Newman analyses that was being directed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to just Pembroke East—just there, across the way, in our suburb—has spread exponentially across Sandys North, Sandys South, down to St. David's, where the Honourable Members Ms. Foggo, Mrs. Ming, and Mr. Swan are holding up their representation.

And it is equally concerning that the 1994 presence of low income, low education, low housing occurrences in these communities are having an impact on our kids, are having a negative impact on their outcomes, are driving more children into the criminal justice system. It is causing all of the concerns that have become the everyday concerns of this House—whether it is gang management, whether it is inter-generational traumas of our kids.

And so I stand merely to support and underscore the urgency of this present problem of a liveable wage, and I commend Mr. Commissioning for reviving it,

inviting the support of the whole House for it, and I certainly look forward to its being progressed, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, to the point of adoption and then being actioned into real legislation that creates solutions.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I mentioned the sprawl that is occurring, the negative sprawl that is occurring on this critical problem and how, when we address it, we should hope to see better outcomes and the return of our capital—both intellectual and in the form of our human capital—back into contributing to the success of making Bermuda a better, fairer place for all of us. And so I thank you, Honourable Member, Mr. Commissioning, for the revival of this important initiative and I too, like Members who have already spoken on this matter across the House, look forward to the progress of this motion into its full implementation.

Thank you.

[Hon. Dennis P. Lister, Jr., Speaker, in the Chair]

The Speaker: Thank you.

Does any other Member wish to speak?

We recognise the Member from constituency 22, the Honourable Dr. Grant Gibbons.

Dr. Gibbons, you have the floor.

Hon. Dr. E. Grant Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am taking note of the fact that we are being asked to be relatively brief in terms of our comments this afternoon because there will be a report of the Committee at a certain point in the not too distant future.

Let me just reiterate quickly that, as my honourable colleague Pat Gordon-Pamplin said, we are certainly in support of the notion to set up a Joint Select Committee to look at the implementation of a living wage. I certainly do not have a problem with that. I would like to make a couple of observations, though.

My understanding is that in the previous Parliament report, or maybe a draft report had actually been done . . . I have not seen that report and I do not know how many people actually have, but I think it is going to be important to make sure that it is carefully looked at with some of the information that, perhaps, was not available to the last Committee.

And one of the things that I will start with right off the bat is that at this point we have not yet seen the results of the recent census. My understanding is that those results will be available sometime in October. But I think that it is going to be very important that this information be used to essentially educate or, perhaps, provide up-to-date information that could be very useful because the previous census goes back to 2010. And I think some Honourable Members will know that the 2010 Census was somewhat flawed because of the difficulty in getting a reasonable proportion of responses.

But I think it is interesting because that census actually . . . and I had a quick look at some of the information (and I am not going to get into detail). But even between 2000 and 2010 there was significant movement in terms of, what I will call, annual household income. For example, in 2010 those households earning under \$36,000 actually had halved from 2000. And in a sense, if the former Government—not the former Government, the former, former Government—wants to take credit for that I think, perhaps, they should as well.

I think the other thing I want to touch on is there was a fair amount of work done by the Department of Statistics back in around 2008. And some Honourable Members will be aware, others will not, that the Premier of the time, Dr. Brown, actually commissioned a council on economic advisors. And one of the reports that they were asked to look at was a report that was done by the Department of Statistics called “Low Income [Thresholds].” And the point I am going to make here is that I think the stats department was rather pointed in terms of looking at it on a household basis as opposed to simply the issue of a wage basis because . . . and again, I have not seen the report of the Committee that was struck before and that worked on this. But I think the household basis is an important way to look at this. And if the Committee did not have a look at this report, I would suggest that the new Committee do so.

Now, I think the sad thing is that the Council of Economic Advisors met, I think twice, had the report given to them and nothing much happened after 2008. But there are a couple of things in here which I found very interesting and, perhaps, are cogent in terms of the current consideration of this issue of a minimum wage.

The first was a quote, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, which came—and this is in the 2008 Report from stats—it came from the Chief Statistician of Statistics Canada who essentially said that “Poverty is a very difficult concept to define and measure.” His quote was that: “Poverty is intrinsically a question of social consensus at a given time and in the context of a given country.” And I think that is really important in terms of making sure that we do not simply adopt all of what other countries may or may not be doing with respect to one part of this, which is a minimum wage. And I am not suggesting that a minimum wage is not something that we should not adopt; but I think we should be aware of that in the context of Bermuda, our own economy, and our own consensus here.

The Report was also interesting in the sense that it went on to say in the conclusion, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, “In an affluent society such as Bermuda, it is very difficult to distinguish between those who are in need and those who are simply less well-off. However, the results of this study not only confirm that there are households in need but also

provide the empirical data on the number and the type of households with low incomes.”

It goes on to say: “The results deserve much thought and policy attention. Among the selected household types for this study, single adult, single-parent households with children, and two-parent households with children are the household types most vulnerable, with income levels falling consistently below the threshold levels for each method.” They had a number of methods they looked at in terms of looking at issues of poverty.

It said: “Those households with children aged 16 years and younger increase the cost of essentials for a family and therefore the burden of provision is heavier. Further investigation will be carried out to identify the extent of low income level incidences for larger family household types with more than two children.”

I do not know whether the stats department did any further work on it, but I think it is important not to lose some of the work that they did and to look at some of their conclusions and, in fact, if it has not happened already I would certainly suggest that Government look at asking the stats department to update their “Low Income Thresholds” report from 2008 to the current time, looking at some of the current census data.

Now, one of the other things that I think is worth pointing out is that in these things there is often what is known as a law of unintended consequences. And I think I say that because we have seen examples of that before in Bermuda. And while the issue of a living wage is certainly well intentioned and I think, as I said before, we on this side think it should be carefully looked at, one has to be sure that in an economy like Bermuda it is going to work and it is going to be effective in terms of what may or may not have happened in other jurisdictions. And there is some interesting data that has come out fairly recently which, and this is the UK (and I think the Honourable Member touched on it very briefly), but an independent office there that I will refer to as the OBR (which is the Office of Budget Responsibility) in the UK. It is not a political office; it is independent, and it basically suggested that the overall impact of the living wage would actually not impact those who were poor and low-skilled. But many of those who would benefit the most would be second-earners in higher income families, whereas it went on to say many poor Britains do not work at all.

I say that because, again, I just want to reinforce this issue that simply looking at it through the lens of what is an appropriate living wage or not may not be the best way to look at it and we may actually do better by going back to what the stats department did, which was looking at the whole issue of households as opposed to single individuals and wages.

The issue of unintended consequences we have certainly seen before. The whole issue of term

limits was certainly well intentioned, but in the end what it ended up doing was essentially having lots of jobs outsourced out of Bermuda and, in fact, it made many of the entry level jobs simply disappear. Although, obviously, the issue of term limits was certainly by a former, former Government well intentioned and was put in to help Bermudians. But in point of fact, because of our very mobile economy and the fact that a lot of businesses that we have do not actually have to be here, it had an impact that certainly was way beyond what was intended.

I think the other thing (and again, I said I had a number of observations that are important here) is looking at where the impact will fall. And I think it does not take much consideration to know that it is probably not going to impact international business in any kind of direct way. I think most of those salaries from top to bottom are well above what would be considered to be a living wage. But it is going to impact areas like tourism, particularly hotels. And I think most of us understand, Mr. Speaker, that hotels in Bermuda have been subsidised—some would say heavily subsidised. And one of the largest components of their general G&A expenses [general and administrative expenses], their COLA [cost of living adjustment], or their cost of doing business is certainly labour.

So, I hope that the Committee going forward will certainly take some time to talk to hotel operators and have a look at what the impact could conceivably be on them. Simply putting up a living wage may not discourage foreign workers—because we seem to be spending some time talking about the impact to foreign workers—it may also have the impact of essentially making hotels very difficult to function here. Other services, certainly, horticultural services, cleaning, restaurants, and that sort of thing.

One of the things that the Honourable Member who introduced the motion has commented upon before, and I think this is also really important, particularly in terms of Bermuda, is . . . and this is, again, be careful of unintended consequences and be careful what you wish for. And I will give you an example. Those who have been in New York recently and have been in a CVS will know that they have done away with a lot of the cashiers or checkout counters. And what you are finding now with improved software and, dare I say, artificial intelligence is a lot of customers now are simply checking themselves out. And as we all know in Bermuda cashiering is a job that provides income for a lot of families. But when you start to essentially make it more advantageous to essentially invest in capital or software and things of that sort [to] reduce labour, what you end up with is job loss. And I think that is certainly something that has happened here.

We have also seen, obviously in this economy, and it happened in the late 1990s and early 2000s, a real shift from what I would call blue-collar jobs to more white-collar service [and] professional

jobs as well. And I think one of the things that you have already seen in Bermuda to some degree is . . . because of the cost of labour here you have seen a certain amount of back office that has been outsourced. And you have seen it in IT, you have seen it in the banks, and you have seen it in a number of areas where those jobs simply are no longer here. They have gone to other countries. India is a prime example. But we have also seen a number of jobs where companies here have put that back office in Canada as opposed to having it in Bermuda because the cost and the availability of labour is that much higher.

So, I think it is important for the Committee to look at this issue of potential outsourcing, the smallness of our economy, and to make sure that those unintended consequences do not come about simply as a consequence of a well-intentioned effort. So those are some of the things that I wanted to observe, Mr. Speaker.

I also had a little bit of an issue with the way the motion was written. I am not sure I would agree that “it is acknowledged that increasing maldistribution of national income has facilitated the growth of income inequality.” We have not seen any data on that. Or that poverty levels have risen . . . fallen to levels not seen in seven decades. We had quite a few issues, I think, during the Second World War that effectively made it very, very difficult in Bermuda at the time. And I think simply to make assertions of this sort without any evidence to support them is certainly not something that I would be prepared to put my name to.

But as I said, I certainly do not disagree with the need to have a good look at this. But I hope it will be looked at in the context of some of the issues and some of the more recent data that has come out, particularly the census, because I think that it is going to be important that we use up-to-date data and that we look at it in a slightly broader way, not simply whether we should choose a minimum wage . . . not a minimum wage, but whether we should choose a living wage; but look at it on the basis of household income and what would be an appropriate way to measure how much a living wage is required. I think it is a broader issue as opposed to simply looking at a silver bullet which, as we all know, sometimes turn into lead balloons.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those comments, I appreciate the opportunity to make a contribution.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Does any other Member wish to speak?

We recognise the Member from constituency 2, the Honourable Kim Swan.

Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Just to add my voice to this motion moved by the Honourable R. P. Commissioning:

“WHEREAS it is acknowledged that the increasing maldistribution of national income has facilitated the growth of income inequality and thus incipient poverty to levels not witnessed in over seven decades;

“AND WHEREAS, in addition, due to the near widespread utilisation of foreign sourced low cost labour over the last quarter century, wages in real terms once inflation has been factored in; have declined for many of Bermuda’s workers;

“BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to the Parliament Act” (of the great year of) “1957 part IV, that a Joint Select Committee be appointed to investigate, report on its subsequent findings; and to make recommendations to the House of Assembly . . .”

Mr. Speaker, let me say that income inequality in Bermuda is very real, and I want to commend the Honourable Member for his stick-to-it-iveness to make sure that this is being followed through.

And, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to assisting, participating, contributing going forward as this particular issue impacts many, many thousands of people in this country in many complex ways. And the knock-on effect of what living beneath what one needs to live is far-reaching, and we have it taking place in this country—this country of plenty, this country of affluence, and this country when we go overseas and represent Bermuda.

When we go overseas and represent Bermuda we are proud of many things about Bermuda, but the underbelly that is masked is that great inequality exists in Bermuda. And great inequality exists because the economy that we are operating under is allowing Bermudians, and especially black Bermudians, to find ourselves at the lower end of the economic spectrum, and we must address that.

This motion gives us cause . . . whilst narrowing it down to a living wage, it does not preclude us from looking in a far more reaching way at some of the other knock-on effects that I think other Members have alluded to in supporting this motion, as I do.

In looking just a few minutes ago . . . and if one would just Google “Bermuda cost of living,” *Bermuda Online*, produced by Mr. Keith Forbes, outlines in great detail many areas in which Bermuda does have a high cost of living, Mr. Speaker. The article that some would refer to was in *The Independent* UK newspaper. He actually lists right up front when you talk about Bermuda’s cost of living and how we are listed first amongst many noteworthy countries as having a high cost of living. And those who are greatest impacted by that, unfortunately, are we the Bermudian people. And I think it is incumbent upon us to grapple with this problem.

The presenting Member of Parliament for this [motion] touched on matters and has done so in the past about the cost of food in the country, the cost of healthcare in the country, and for many people the absence of healthcare in our country. There are per-

sons who approach the age of 65 still healthy and still very much vibrant who need to work just to be able to pay that health insurance bill that is ever escalating, with the fear that this, indeed, could be the undoing of any savings that they have.

And so the living wage brings under the microscope persons, and many in Bermuda, of an increasing population by age that the census—which has been delayed—will reveal. The many vulnerable in Bermuda, in a buoyant economy, Bermudians who still did not escape being in the category of poor or near poor, whether or not you would choose to look at those persons individually or collectively in a household. We have seen a great exodus of Bermudians and we do not want that for our people. We want our people to look at Bermuda as the place that they can return once they have been educated, or stay even when times are tough.

And so the challenge that we have is a great one to tackle, but with motions such as this coming by the Honourable Member Commissioning, I just want him to know that I will do my part as I am out and about in the community talking to people, listening to people who have lived without health insurance for many years in this country, who cannot afford that, with people who in great numbers you hear the stories that are working for wages well below what it takes, are working and hustling 50 and 60 hours and not getting overtime and the like.

I would encourage those people to not be afraid to collectively come together and even seek the assistance of professionals like the Bermuda Industrial Union in this country. And that would help them, as it helped this country, grow to greater strengths. Even those persons who were not unionised reaped the benefits of organised labour in our country.

So, I wish not to speak too much longer, Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: —only to lend my support.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Any other further speakers?

Mr. Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to you.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise ever so briefly to speak to first of all commend the Honourable Member from constituency 21 for not only bringing this motion in a previous Parliament and managing to pass it successfully while we were in Opposition, but also agreeing to bring this motion again to complete the work which was started in the last Parliament.

It is without question that his passion on this issue is well regarded, and it is something that, clear-

ly, we must deal with. And the issue of income inequality and wages and poverty were no clearer on display than when we heard a Ministerial Statement from the Minister of Education this morning speaking about the work that this Government has done to recognise that there are barriers to higher educational attainment and that we have to provide financial support for those persons recognising that a vast majority of those persons who were able to receive that [support] lived below the poverty line.

Now, some of those persons may have been unemployed, but some of those persons also, Mr. Speaker, may have been working. And therein lies the challenge. The challenge is that when you talk about a living wage and you talk about a society, when you have persons who are deemed as responsible people who are working in full-time employment who cannot afford to keep up with the basic necessities of life due to the high cost of living which we have in Bermuda, that is a problem. Income inequality leads to reduced economic growth. That is a problem.

So when we hear the, I will call them *old* discussions, the *old* theories, the things about the past and not looking forward to the future, what we will hear . . . it puts us in a place where we have to imagine and wonder. If you keep on doing the same thing which you have been doing, how exactly do you expect to get a different result?

That is the reason, Mr. Speaker, why we are here. And what we said inside of our Throne Speech this year, what we said inside of our platform this year, is that we would implement a living wage. Our Throne Speech was very clear that we would support the reformation of this Committee so they can finish their work, complete their consultation, make their recommendations, and that Cabinet can move forward and this Government can move forward to implement a living wage. That is what the people of this country expect, that is what the people of this country demand, that is what the people of this country voted for on July 18th and that, Mr. Speaker, is what this Government will deliver for the people of this country.

I commend the Member and I hope that the House will support this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Premier.

I do not see any other Members standing to speak on this matter, so I am assuming this matter is closed.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: We will now go to vote on this matter.

Mr. Commissiong, would you like to put your motion to the floor now?

Mr. Rolfe Commissiong: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would.

The Speaker: Move your motion.

Mr. Rolfe Commissiong: Mr. Speaker, I move that this Honourable House approve the following motion:

“WHEREAS it is acknowledged that the increasing maldistribution of national income has facilitated the growth of income inequality and thus incipient poverty to levels not witnessed in over seven decades;

“AND WHEREAS, in addition, due to the near widespread utilisation of foreign sourced low cost labour over the last quarter century, wages in real terms once inflation has been factored in; have declined for many of Bermuda’s workers;

“BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to the Parliament Act 1957 part IV, that a Joint Select Committee be appointed to investigate, report on its subsequent findings; and to make recommendations to the House of Assembly with respect to the implementation of a living wage regime for Bermuda.”

The Speaker: Are there any objections to this motion?

No objections.

It is passed.

[Motion for a Joint Select Committee to Investigate, Report and Make Recommendations on the Implementation of a Living Wage was approved.]

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: It is the third readings. There are no other Orders of the Day so we will now do the third readings.

The only matter would be that of the Premier, and could we have the third reading for his item?

The Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment Act 2017, will one of the Ministers please stand in for him?

Yes, Minister of Health?

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 21

Hon. Kim N. Wilson: Yes, thank you and good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

I move that [Standing Order 21] be suspended that the Bill entitled the Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment Act 2017 be now read a third time.

The Speaker: Any objections to that?

No objections.

[Motion carried: Standing Order 21 suspended.]

BILL

THIRD READING

CORPORATE SERVICE PROVIDER BUSINESS AMENDMENT ACT 2017

Hon. Kim N. Wilson: Mr. Speaker, I now move that the said Bill do now pass.

The Speaker: Any objections?
No objections.

[Motion carried: The Corporate Service Provider Business Amendment Act 2017 was read a third time and passed.]

The Speaker: Mr. Premier, I now acknowledge you.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I apologise for my absence.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn until our next day of sitting, which will be Friday, October 6, 2017.

The Speaker: All right. Any Member wish to speak?
We see the Honourable Member from constituency 6.
Honourable Member, Mr. Furbert.

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
Mr. Speaker, I will be just brief. I would like to—

The Speaker: I will hold you to that then, how is that?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: Yes, how much? Twenty minutes? All right. I will not be more than whatever minutes.

The Speaker: Five minutes?

BERMUDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: I will be very brief, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Government for moving ahead with one of its promises, that is, the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation [BEDC] and increasing the capital. I see Cabinet has now moved forward to increase that amount from \$1 million to \$2 million. And it is very important, particularly when we are trying to encourage entrepreneurs in the fields and whatever it takes to make it

happen. And it is very difficult if you have very little access to capital to make it happen.

The last increase that was done in this Parliament, as a matter of fact, it was done by yours truly when I was the Minister of Culture in 1993. It has been a long time, and you know it is surprising that it has taken this long to increase it, but I congratulate this Government for doing that.

But let me just say that increasing the capital by the BEDC are now allowing to lend out . . . guarantee, I should say, guarantee more than it has in the past, does not put cash injection into the hands of small business. And I will give you an example, Mr. Speaker.

If a small company or small businessman wants to start a company with \$100,000 in capital they can only, based on this scenario, borrow \$50,000 (because it is 50 per cent right now). . . guarantee . . . sorry, guarantee \$50,000 by the BEDC. And they themselves still have to come up with \$50,000. That is not an easy task for any small business individual.

There are many aspects that one needs to look at, and I would encourage some more entrepreneurs not to run out there and fill their coffers with debt, but look at the possibility of doing equity and debt. And that is possible. Now what I mean by that is taking on some other shareholders with small amounts of equity being owned by them. The biggest problem is that banks (and I saw it in the report by the Minister) are still not lending out money. That is the real problem. It is not about increasing the capital, and I think that is great.

But now we are still having problems because what they put . . . and you know if you go borrow money from the bank not only do you have to guarantee it, but your grandmother and your grandfather who are dead. And that is difficult. It is very difficult. Most banks are not lending out to small businesses as they have in the past. So, there are many means that I think the Government needs to take a further look at and I will give you one example.

The Bermuda Economic Development Corporation should be the one stop for lending out and guaranteeing entrepreneur businesses out here. And why do I say that? Because the Bermuda Tourism Authority should get out of the business of doing it. They lend . . . they have a \$1 million . . . where they can give grants to individuals. Why is the Bermuda Tourism Authority involved in giving out funding? It was a bad decision, and I hope that the Government will take a look at that and make sure that it is not in keeping going forward—a million dollars.

The only body that should be giving out money should be the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation. Now, if the Bermuda Tourism Authority feels that there is a product out there, Mr. Smith and Mrs. Trott, go up there to say to them, *I want to put this attraction in place, I want to put this new product in place*, and the BTA should be able to walk them

through and say to BEDC, *I support the project*. Give that million dollars to the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation.

Now what you have is the ability for the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation to guarantee up to 50 per cent . . . and I see the Government is going to be eventually . . . hopefully up to 65 per cent, and I think that is great. But then BEDC has some cash that they can also give, maybe \$50,000 which was not there before.

So we should not be . . . and then we can save some money and BEDC . . . BTA . . . and all these different letters around here, the BTA . . . because we are spending probably within just that one department who is out there lending out money, probably \$400,000 or more a year. That money should be going out there to market and bring in tourists.

So, let us remove that facility from the BTA and allow the BEDC [to be] what it was meant to be—a corporate entity to allow entrepreneurs to get access to [money] guaranteed by an organisation. There is no reason why the BTA should be out there lending out money. And I understand the money they give out does not even have to come back. So why can we not have that funding at BEDC—a million dollars—so they can then give out a couple of dollars and help out new entrepreneurs going forward?

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: Mr. Speaker, I promise the next [Member that speaks] that I am going to put a sign up here that says “Don’t forget July 18th” because they keep on forgetting it. They keep on forgetting it.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: Mr. Speaker—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: I will, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member Trevor Moniz . . . in case the public is wondering who I am talking to, and the Honourable Member Grant Gibbons.

The Speaker: Speak to the Speaker now.

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: Who speaks—

The Speaker: Direct it to my Chair.

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: —who does not have to worry about going to the BEDC to get any funding for any guarantees.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Wayne L. Furbert: So, Mr. Speaker, if we are going to help . . . if we are going to work with small businesses I believe that we have to ensure that one body—which is the BEDC—speaks for it. So, again, I congratulate the Government on this promise, one of the 108 promises, and I think there are probably 75 there, so I think that the Government is moving ahead very quickly to make it happen.

So between the guarantor from the BEDC . . . so if we get some funding put in place by taking that money from the BTA and with a structure put in place where equity and debt can work, I think the company and the entrepreneur can make some headway going forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Furbert.

I recognise the Honourable Member, Mr. Moniz, from constituency 9.

Mr. Moniz, you have the floor.

STATUS OF CIVIL LAWSUITS FILED BY ONE BERMUDA ALLIANCE AGAINST LAHEY CLINIC AND PORT ROYAL GOLF COURSE

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I apologise to my honourable colleague, Dr. Gibbons. I know he wanted to have a piece of the Member there, but I want to change this conversation.

The Speaker: I hope he would not want a piece; I hope he wanted to contribute to the debate.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Contribute to the debate, yes.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Take him to the woodshed, as it were.

Mr. Speaker, I want to change the conversation here, and it is really as a result of something that came up earlier. You know it has been . . . and the Honourable Member who just spoke, spoke about July the 18th and how that was a watershed, et cetera. But of course that was a watershed in many ways. And the jury has been out, and I know the Government talked about their 100 days, what they are going to accomplish in their 100 days, and so people are still very curious about what is going on.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: And largely what is happening so far—

The Speaker: Speak to the Chair.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Largely, what is happening so far is [that] OBA measures are being carried through.

There is a little bit of the new PLP platform, we see the Tax Reform Commission, et cetera, Bills being tabled today, but most of the Bills that are coming are still OBA Bills.

Mr. Speaker, what I want to speak about today is really to encourage the new Premier—and I know he is a very young Premier, I think he is the youngest we have ever had—to take a firm position on improprieties of past governments; and that speaks both to general corruption and to other malfeasance in government.

As you will be aware, there were two civil cases started by myself when I was Attorney General; one involving the Lahey [Clinic] (which is taking place in Boston), and the other one involving Port Royal. Now, those two cases. . . my recollection . . . and I am sure the Premier will correct me if he thinks I am wrong, but when he was asked generally about these issues, he referred the matter to the new Attorney General. And the new Attorney General called a press conference and really did not shed any light on either matter.

In one case she said that there were not paper files in the office and, of course, that case is being run out of Boston so the files are there in Boston and it is being run electronically. And the other case is a Bermuda case, the Port Royal case.

And they are both very concerning. The Lahey case, obviously, concerned activities by a previous—

Hon. Michael J. Scott: Mr. Speaker, point of order.

The Speaker: Point of order.

Mr. Moniz, we must entertain this point of order.

Your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

[*Sub-judice*]

Hon. Michael J. Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not making the *sub judice* point in relation to Boston, we have had it clearly indicated that overseas matters are not *sub judice*, but if the Honourable and Learned Member and former Attorney General is going to be making a speech in this House at MTA [motion to adjourn] on Port Royal, matters that have been committed to the courts, he is breaching the fundamental standing order and I would invite him to tread . . . or just cease, really.

Thanks.

The Speaker: One second.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker: Is the matter still before the courts or has it been settled? Is there a current matter before the courts? Is there a current matter before the courts?

Hon. Michael J. Scott: It is not only before the courts, it has been taken out of the list, but it is very much a matter that has been filed in the Supreme Court of this country by the [Member].

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Honourable Member, I am a little concerned about that because from what I understood it is not a current listing before the courts at the moment. And if it is not a current listing before the courts, then I do not see it as being *sub judice* at this time.

Hon. Michael J. Scott: Mr. Speaker, I see the former Attorney General looking at me.

You can . . . it is filed. That is the rule. The fact that it is taken out of the list so that it is going to be not listed for hearing is just a procedural matter. It is under the judicial consideration, simply out of the list for being heard. So may I invite you, Mr. Speaker, to trust my legal view on this, that it is *sub judice* in that it is in the courts, it is simply taken off the list so that the current Attorney General is examining it, re-viewing it, with the view to whether it should be either reintroduced into the list or altogether withdrawn. But it has not been withdrawn. De-listed is the current status. That is my understanding.

The Speaker: I am still a little uneasy and here is what I am going to do. I am going to ask the Honourable Member to be guided by that until we can get a proper clearance on it because I feel that if it was actually still listed you would not be speaking to it. But I am not clear on that point, and until we get clear on it, we will ask you to just be guided by that.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I accept that ruling by you and I think it will . . . I think the general members of the public are probably interested to know whether it is in a temporary limbo or it is in a more permanent state. So, I guess at some stage we can expect the Attorney General to make a more definitive statement on what the position is in that respect. So, I will decline to speak any further on that detailed matter.

But the point I have to make is really a much broader point and the point is, you know, we have a new Government coming in, we have outstanding matters, we are dealing, obviously, with an OECD assessment, we are dealing with a FATF (Financial Action Task Force) assessment—these are all related to AML [Anti-Money Laundering] and ATF [Anti-Terrorist Financing] and our position as a jurisdiction. We heard the Premier give a grand statement about Bermuda

being on the White List in France so, obviously, we are doing our best efforts to keep above board.

So the point I am making is that this new Government should be making a firm and very public commitment to keeping the highest standards and to ensuring the prosecution of . . . in civil cases and in any criminal case . . . a criminal case is obviously an independent DPP [Department of Public Prosecutions], it is Larry Mussenden who governs those. But, of course, the Government provides the budget that he would need in order to proceed with cases.

So what I am saying is that the Premier . . . it is time for him to make a firm and public commitment to proceeding with those matters. If we see matters where the advice has been received, and certainly when I was Attorney General I followed the professional advice that I received from the best lawyers and solicitors that I could find and the best QCs I could find. I got advice and I followed that advice. Now that advice is there. I think the people of Bermuda expect this Government to follow through with it. Otherwise Bermuda as a jurisdiction will suffer.

We heard today in the Minister's brief (and I will reflect ever so quickly) . . . we talked about Bermuda having a legislative framework. But they did not see the implementation. Where the rubber meets the road, nothing was happening. And my concern is that Bermuda's credibility as a jurisdiction will be swiftly eroded, and even corroded, if those cases are not followed with and if a statement is not made that this present Government has a firm commitment. It is very difficult when, you know, one of the cases involves a present Member of Cabinet.

So these things are discussed in Cabinet. So the public is thinking, *Well, is that sending a signal that this person is in Cabinet who is up . . . ?* So I think the air needs to be cleared. And it needs to be cleared at the highest level by the person who appoints Cabinet and by the Attorney General who proceeds with the civil cases and funds the criminal ones.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Does any other Member wish to speak on motion to adjourn?

We recognise the Member from constituency 28, the Member D. Lister and I believe this is your maiden speech.

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Yes, it is, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Mr. Lister, you have the floor.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Good evening, Mr. Speaker. Good evening to my honourable colleagues, fellow Opposition, to those in the Gallery, and the listening audience.

I stand today to speak on purpose. As a young person I feel that it is my duty to speak not only to the House but also to the young people in Bermuda.

In our Throne Speech and in our platform the PLP has said that we will look to fix the education system and also to give local Bermudians opportunities for better education and better training. I believe also to that we have to speak to teaching and getting people to reach their purpose.

I have here the definition from the dictionary of what a "purpose" is. The definition of a purpose is: The reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists. If you know what your purpose is, then you will know what you are born for and what you were made to do.

I believe that young people must be given the opportunity to find their purpose and pursue this. So the young people with education, if you are taught from young or given the opportunity to get the best education, you will be able to then have more opportunities to reach your purpose and to pursue it to the ultimate ends.

Not everyone will be a doctor, a lawyer, an accountant or an insurance agent. There will be mechanics; there will be masons, artists, tradesmen, athletes, and more. Everyone must be given the opportunity to reach their goal.

Today's school system is geared towards the academics. So those that are academically inclined will always have a better chance to succeed at school and to go on to higher education or whatever else they pursue in life. For those that are not academically inclined, that is where the challenge lies. And that challenge has a knock-on effect in society and what we see today with a lot of antisocial behaviour, a lot of negative that young people get caught up in. If a young person in school knows that they can be, whether it is a hands-on or skills person or an athlete, or they can do the arts or dance, which is their talent or is what they want to do and pursue, then they will see that [as something] to keep them away from any negative influences in life.

I want to use the story of a well-known Bermudian, Nikki Bascome. Mr. Speaker, can I—

The Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Dennis Lister III: —refer to the newsletter or the news article—

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Yes, speaker, Honourable Member, you can refer to it.

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Okay.

I want to refer to the August 15th article in the *Royal Gazette* about Nikki Bascome in which says:

"In the absence of a stable family environment, Bascome found himself lured into a life on the streets; fighting, stealing and doing drugs.

"A quick-tempered and disruptive pupil, Bascome was kicked out of Spice Valley Middle School and CedarBridge Academy because of his poor behaviour, although he did eventually earn his General Education Diploma from The Education Centre [Tech].

"It was not until he turned to boxing at the age of 14 that he slowly started to divert his energy from the streets to the ring."

Mr. Speaker, this speaks to finding your purpose. His purpose, after he was introduced to boxing, he saw that he could use boxing as his way to be a positive role model or to have a more positive life. And that speaks to a lot of young people. If you are not given the opportunity, whether it is academic or hands-on, you do not know what your purpose is in life. You drift through life just waking up and thinking, *Wherever the wind blows today, that is where I am going to go.*

So, Mr. Speaker, as stated (and I would like to refer to the 2017 Throne Speech) on page 10 of the Throne Speech:

"Reforming and improving our public education system will yield better outcomes in the future. Poor educational attainment and the lack of economic opportunities are the main contributing factors to anti-social behaviour and violence."

This speaks, Mr. Speaker, to the case of Nikki Bascome, but [there are] many other cases in Bermuda like that. School was not his forte. He got caught up in some negative vibes in life. But he got the exposure to something good that he used to his benefit. And if we can do that with our whole school . . . with all the young people coming up, you can imagine the positive effect that this is going to have on Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker, I have a story in my canvassing. I canvassed a house. A young teacher in our public school system told me this story. She teaches, I believe, at Clearwater. And at Clearwater they were testing the Pulse programme. In it she told this story. In M1 they took all the boys, they split them up and they put them on projects. At the end of the project one little boy came up, he got a good grade (I believe it was an "A") and the teacher gave him a little certificate. Instead of going back to his seat, he walked out of the class. He ran away for a few minutes. He came back. At the end of the class the teacher asked him why he left the room. He said, *Because he had never gotten an "A" before in his life and ran outside to cry.* He did not want to cry in front of the other boys; it made him feel less of a man.

But the fact that he got an "A" for the first time in his life, he was able to go home, tell his parents about it, and it made him feel good. Again, imagine that impact if we can do that will all of our kids.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer to the 2017 Throne Speech, page 9: "With the summer suc-

cess of the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (S.T.E.A.M.) Academy, the Government will concentrate on the development of S.T.E.A.M. in our primary schools."

Again, Mr. Speaker, this speaks exactly to the story that I just gave. That effect on one kid . . . if we implement this programme in primary and middle school levels the effect that we will have on all of those kids will change the direction of this generation going forward. These kids will then know—I have *potential*—whether it is . . . again, a lot of young males especially are hands-on, Mr. Speaker. So they know that they can be successful if they want to be a mechanic. A lot of kids like to be spray artists. They can be a tiler, a carpenter . . . if they know that they can be successful in that and make a living, Mr. Speaker, that will give them a focus in life, a purpose and keep them from getting distracted in negative things that as an idle mind with no purpose it is much easier to get caught up in, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I say all this, but I also would like to give my own experience. I stand here today as a Member of Parliament, but in my younger days—

[Laughter]

Mr. Dennis Lister III: I say that relatively, being I am the youngest.

[Laughter]

Mr. Dennis Lister III: In my younger days, Mr. Speaker, I did not have clue of what I wanted to do. But I knew that I wanted to sit up in this House on this Hill. I knew I had a purpose; I just did not know my path, Mr. Speaker. And like any young man growing up in Bermuda, you do get distracted, you get caught up, you go with your friends. And I must admit I was in the wilderness for a while, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Dennis Lister III: But I had one experience that did change my life and showed me the path that I wanted to be on.

Back in 2010, Mr. Speaker, I worked with my uncle, former MP Terry Lister, when he was running to be the Leader of the PLP party on a platform. And he chose me to work alongside him and another party member on the issue of gang violence in Bermuda. And as a young person, it resonated with me to see how this affects Bermuda. So, after working on it, I felt that it was my turn, my time, now, to stand up and to try and make a difference, Mr. Speaker.

Fast forward seven years, and here I am, Mr. Speaker. Because I found what my purpose was. And I stuck to it. It was a . . . seven years might not be long to some, but it was a long, long journey, Mr. Speaker.

In that time, Mr. Speaker, and recently with my candidacy being rolled out and with my successful election here, I have seen how my role has positively affected other young people in Bermuda. I have been contacted on social media, messages, emails, from many young people that told me that I was an inspiration to them, that I was standing up for our generation, and—

[Desk thumping]

Mr. Dennis Lister III:—I was helping to make a difference, Mr. Speaker.

[Desk thumping]

Mr. Dennis Lister III: And that all ties into finding my purpose, following through with my purpose, Mr. Speaker, and using my purpose to positively affect other people, Mr. Speaker.

Today I stand here as a witness to say that I have been encouraged by other young people in my generation that saw me stand up and now they want to make a difference, Mr. Speaker. They want to join whatever party it is—hopefully the PLP!

[Laughter]

Mr. Dennis Lister III: They want to get involved with politics, Mr. Speaker, and they want to sit in this House one day. All because one person took a stand, followed their purpose and used it, Mr. Speaker, to make a difference.

So in closing, Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker: You still have got seven minutes left.

Mr. Dennis Lister III:—may I ask how much time I have left?

[Laughter]

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Can I ask how much time I have left?

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: There are seven minutes left.

[Laughter and crosstalk]

Mr. Dennis Lister III: In closing, Mr. Speaker—because I know everyone wants to get out of here and get home and get some dinner—I want to encourage our Government to continue going forward with their Throne Speech promises of introducing the S.T.E.A.M. Academy and also to go through with re-vamping the middle school system because that is where the majority of our young, and especially black, males fall through the cracks. They get lost because

they are not as academic as that person, so they feel like they are a failure. A lot of young men and young women do not come from positive home environments that reinforce to them *you can do and be whatever you want to be*. So when they feel failure in school, it is reinforced by their peers and they go home and it is reinforced.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have to do all that we can to make a positive environment for the young people coming up to enforce them and reinforce and reiterate to them that *you can be whatever it is that you want to be*. Give them all the opportunities education-wise, training-wise, so that they can be exposed to anything so that they can see their opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, when I was coming up, not too long ago . . . I admit I played football. I loved football. I am an avid football person. When I was coming up, I must admit that I did not know of the other business or other careers in football other than just being a player or a manager. If I had known, I might not be sitting in this House, I might have been an agent or so . . . a sports psychologist—

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Or a scout.

Mr. Dennis Lister III: Or a scout.

But Mr. Speaker, it is about being exposed to the opportunities. There are a lot of kids in Bermuda nowadays and football is what they love. There is a very small chance of a young Bermudian making it. Nahki Wells is a very good example of one. We can have many more, but the opportunity, the chance right now is very limited. But if you want to be involved in sports in a different aspect, again, you could be a scout, like my honourable cousin Derrick Burgess said. You could be an agent. You could be a sports psychologist. You could be a [physiotherapist]. It is about being exposed to the opportunities so that you can know what you want to be.

So, again, in closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage all young people to find what your purpose is, do all that you can to pursue your purpose, do what you can to make it your goal in life to use your purpose to affect those around you positively so that the change that one person makes . . . one person makes a change; but if we all make a change together, Mr. Speaker, we are unstoppable.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Thank you.

Does any other Member wish to speak?
Premier, it looks like you have the floor.

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Speaker, it seems as though your offspring has shut down the House today.

The Speaker: Well, we all wanted an early day, did we not?

Hon. E. David Burt: No problem, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

MISSION OF PLP GOVERNMENT

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Speaker, it is now 4:40pm and we are going to have what will be regarded as a short day.

However, I will take to my feet to close and just make a few comments because, as we saw earlier today from the Ministerial Statements that were given, and as we heard from the Honourable Member who just took his seat who represents Warwick West, constituency 28, this Government has a purpose. And the purpose which we were elected to do was to tear down the Two Bermudas and build one, to provide opportunity to those who do not have opportunity, and to make sure that we can deliver on the promise and ensure that all Bermudians can advance and live out their purpose.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is clear, whether it is the doubling of the capital for the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation (which will enable new entrepreneurs to have an opportunity to live out the dream of the New Bermuda), or whether it is providing educational opportunities at Bermuda College, or retraining opportunities at the Bermuda College (which this Government has found the money to do), we will not be deterred from our mission.

Now, we will hear chirping, we will hear comments, we will see former leaders of parties who will not speak when I am here, but will wait for me to leave until they start to . . . or tweet. We will hear former Attorneys General who will come and decide to lecture regarding advice which they have received. We have seen that advice. We have also seen the advice and know and understand the fact that if you want to . . . (how do you say?) live in a glass house, do not throw stones.

We understand our responsibility not only to the electorate, Mr. Speaker, but we also understand our responsibility to the future. We will guard jealously Bermuda's international reputation, we will do the work that is required, and we will—as the Honourable Member who just took his seat—make sure that every young Bermudian can live out their purpose.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: We now adjourn until—

Hon. E. David Burt: Next Friday.

The Speaker: —next Friday. Thank you, Mr. Premier.

I am going to take a liberty, if the House does not mind, and add my congratulations to the young man who just finished his maiden speech and say I sat here with pride in mind, not only because he deliv-

ered the speech, but today is also the anniversary of the passing of my father who was the first Dennis. We refer to Dennis III, so it was very timely.

Thank you, son.

[Gavel]

[At 4:44 pm, the House stood adjourned until 10:00 am, Friday, 6 October 2017.]