



Ministerial Statement

By

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General Election 2020

November 13th 2020

Mr. Speaker,

Today I would like to provide this Honourable House with details emanating from the recently held General Election. On October 01st 2020, the people of Bermuda went to the polls to exercise their democratic right to vote; a vote that led to an emphatic victory for the Government.

Mr Speaker, you will recall that earlier this year, this Honourable House approved a raft of changes to the Parliamentary Election Act 1978. The most significant changes were enacted to:

- Increase the number of persons who are eligible to vote in our Country
- Increase the categories of persons who could vote in an advance poll
- Enable people who are shut-in at home to vote
- Enable visually impaired persons to vote using tactile devices
- Give the Parliamentary Registrar more flexibility at polling stations in order to ensure safety

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to inform this Honourable House that, despite the threat and health risks posed by COVID-19, the Parliamentary Registrar, Ms Tenia Woolridge, and her entire team delivered a safe, seamless and secure electoral process for the electorate. Elections, both the Advanced Polls and the General Poll, were very successfully conducted and enormous credit for this has to be given to the Parliamentary Registrar's Office.

Mr Speaker, this Honourable House, and all of Bermuda, would be interested in the statistics emanating from the General Election of 2020. To that end, I am pleased to share the following data:

- A total of one hundred and eighty-three (183) votes were taken at Senior Citizen Rest Homes
- Fifteen (15) votes were taken at the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital
- Ten (10) visually impaired voters used the newly implemented tactile devices to assist them in the voting process

Mr Speaker, a total of twenty-five thousand seven hundred and sixty (25,760) persons voted in the General Election of 2020. Of these, a total of four thousand four hundred and eleven (4,411) persons voted in the advanced polls. Put another way, 17% of those who voted did so in the Advanced Polls. The number of voters in the advanced polls for each constituency are detailed as follows:

Constituency 1	80
Constituency 2	112
Constituency 3	83
Constituency 4	161
Constituency 5	200
Constituency 6	209

Constituency 7	169
Constituency 8	143
Constituency 9	127
Constituency 10	190
Constituency 11	164
Constituency 12	135
Constituency 13	145
Constituency 14	148
Constituency 15	126
Constituency 18	105
Constituency 19	125
Constituency 20	121
Constituency 21	83
Constituency 22	94
Constituency 23	120
Constituency 24	103
Constituency 25	176
Constituency 27	164
Constituency 28	153
Constituency 29	145
Constituency 30	160
Constituency 31	150
Constituency 32	148
Constituency 33	90
Constituency 34	108
Constituency 35	108
Constituency 36	66

Mr Speaker, additional detailed data for the General Election 2020, as well as for previous elections, can be found on the website elections.gov.bm.

Mr Speaker, general elections require an enormous amount of planning, preparation and execution. They also require a small army of workers to ensure a smooth and secure voting process, not only on the actual polling day but also, for advance polls, voting at rest homes and voting at private residences.

Mr Speaker, there were approximately five hundred and forty (540) workers involved in the General Election of 2020. These are broken down as follows:

- Seventy (70) Returning Officers
- Two hundred and two (202) Presiding Officers
- One hundred and forty (140) Police Officers – who provided security at polling stations and escorts for ballot boxes
- Forty (40) Works and Engineering staff – for setup and breakdown of polling stations
- Seventy eight (78) Private Security Firm staff – to deliver and collect ballots and supplies from polling stations; assisting with administering hand sanitizer at polling stations
- Ten (10) Red Cross volunteers

Mr Speaker, to all of these folks I want to express my sincere thanks for their contribution and efforts in ensuring a well-run and safe election.

Mr Speaker, the cost of the General Election 2020 was six hundred and ninety two thousand, six hundred and ninety eight dollars (\$692,698). This compares to the seven hundred fifty nine thousand, five hundred and eleven dollars (\$759,511) spent on the General Election of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, you would recall that the former Leader of the OBA, The Hon. Craig Cannonier said that, quote “it is an insult that the Premier would contrive to underestimate our collective intelligence by trying to convince us that he is calling a million dollar election to save the country money.” The Hon Member Cannonier also said as COVID cases reach double figures again, the Premier was asking us to jeopardize our health.

Mr. Speaker, let me inform this Honorable House that not only did the Government through the Parliamentary Registrar’s Office keep its citizens safe by taking meticulous precautionary measures during the election, it did not spend a million dollars in doing so.

Mr Speaker, the Government spent approximately sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) less than the One Bermuda Alliance did when they held the election in 2017. **Mr. Speaker,** it was because of our good stewardship and leadership that the Government achieved a whopping majority of 30 to 6, a massive 20% increase and the largest margin of victory in our political history.

Mr Speaker, I have already mentioned the amount of work involved in this election and I have also stated that it was extremely organized and effectively run. I therefore, wish to add my commendation and congratulations to Ms Tenia Woolridge and the entire team at the Parliamentary Registrar’s Office for the sterling work they did in this election. The delivery of a well-organised and incident-free election is a testament to the exceptional job that they all do at the Parliamentary Registrar’s Office, and I am grateful for their outstanding service to our Country.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker,