



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

TO THE SENATE

BY SENATOR THE HONOURABLE OWEN K. DARRELL, JP

MINISTER OF TOURISM, CULTURE AND SPORT

“CULTURE EQUALS ENERGY”

WEDNESDAY 14th FEBRUARY 2024

Madam President, today marks 100 days remaining until the 2024 Bermuda Day Parade. Preparations have already begun across the island to ensure that the costumes are ready, the floats are designed and the dance steps are on point for this beloved celebration of all things Bermudian.

Madam President, you will recall my announcement of the Heritage Month theme this past November, “Culture Equals Energy”. This theme speaks not only to the amazing momentum created by last year’s parade where participants and spectators alike danced and celebrated in the torrential rain, but also encapsulates the vibe of a holiday that many of us love above all others.

Madam President, as part of building that energy in the leadup to the Bermuda Day holiday, the Department of Culture is providing a “behind the scenes” peek into parade preparation. For those of you who follow the Department on social media, you’ll see weekly content showing what this year’s participants are doing to get ready for the big day.

Madam President, I would like to remind the public that last year was the first time that participants were able to benefit from the Bermuda Day Fund, which was established to help offset essential parade costs such as truck rentals, float-building materials and costumes. Thanks to the generosity of corporate and individual donors, every group that applied in 2023 was able to receive assistance.

Madam President, as the Minister responsible for Culture, I would like to encourage the corporate sector to support these community groups by donating to this fund. The Bermuda Day Parade is an event that brings together the entire community to celebrate our culture and identity; it is an event which is not possible for the Department to execute without community

participation. For this reason, it's so important for us to help lower the financial barriers for entering the parade, especially given that several of these groups are charities. Anyone wishing to support these participants can visit the Bermuda Community Foundation website at www.givebermuda.org/BermudaDayFund.

Madam President, participating in the Bermuda Day Parade is an opportunity to be an integral part of something truly special – it's a day that promises to be a celebration of our diverse cultural tapestry. With a signup deadline fast approaching on April 19th, I urge our cultural groups, schools, performers, businesses, charities and other Government departments to seize this chance to showcase the vibrant colors of our collective heritage. For more information on entry categories and sign-up forms, please visit the Department's website at www.culture.bm. As a reminder, groups that wish to be considered for sponsorship through the Bermuda Day Fund must submit their applications on time, no later than Friday April 19th.

Madam President, participation matters. This parade is our canvas; participating in the Bermuda Day Parade is not just an individual act, it's a collective expression of who we are as a

community. Let's make the 24th of May 2024 a day to remember—a day when we collectively celebrate the kaleidoscope of our heritage. Together, let's make our community parade a resounding success!

Thank you, **Madam President.**