



Government of Bermuda
Ministry of Community Affairs and Sports

Ministerial Statement

By

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Minister of Community Affairs and Sports

Bermuda Charities

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Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognise the important work that Charities do in Bermuda and how this Government will continue to support them. Charities are referred to as the ‘third sector’ and the need for their services, in providing a safety net for our community, has never been greater.

Mr. Speaker, recently Charities were added to my list of responsibilities. I have begun meeting with key stakeholders to ensure that we are doing all we can to provide the support and regulatory framework for Charities, particularly those Charities that provide vital services for our Community.

Mr. Speaker, part of my goal is to:

- Improve the Communities’ understanding of the Third Sector’s value;
- Reduce Charities’ duplication of effort and work;

- review and amend where necessary the classifications of Charities; and
- Ensure that Government funding goes to the most effective programs and services to achieve greater social impact.

Mr. Speaker, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of Charities in providing a safety net for our residents. It has also brought to the fore the myriad of charities and the often, overlapping services, they provide and the resulting competition for limited financial support. As of April this year, there were over **three hundred (300)** Charitable Organizations registered in Bermuda under the Charities Act 2014.

Mr. Speaker, the types of Charities registered are quite diverse and they range from a ‘scuba diving club’ to ‘school Parent Teachers’ Associations’. They also include those Charities that provide essential services to the community, including food, shelter, medical assistance, counselling and other support services.

Mr. Speaker, Given the diversity of charities and their concomitant roles, a revised classification system will be implemented for the public to better identify and understand the purpose of said charities, and to also enhance efficiencies and to provide a clearer appreciation for how the public

should access and utilise their services, for optimum benefit. We must, both the Government and public, be able to make more informed decisions on donations and support, as it relates to charities.

Mr. Speaker, it is also necessary to ensure that these entities do not work in isolation and that the support services that Government and individual charities provide, work in tandem to be more effective for their specific communities in need, and generally for the community as a whole. There are limited resources and a more strategic approach to delivery of services will have the greatest beneficial, social impact.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we continue the work done with respect to the Charity regime that enabled Bermuda to receive a high rating during the recent Caribbean Financial Task Force mutual evaluation process. We will continue to collect and record data on these entities; their purpose, their deliverables and their effectiveness and ensure that they continue to meet all regulatory requirements including those set out by NAMLC.

Mr. Speaker, while we focus our efforts on achieving these goals, there is scope for every one of us to do our part for the betterment of Bermuda. A number of Charities live by the mantra that “I am my brother’s keeper”. They selflessly provide the safety net for those truly in crisis and most in need in our community. They have never needed our help more than they

do today! We can make a difference by holding true to that adage by each of us identifying how we can help, and then HELPING.

Mr. Speaker, charities need our help in aiding our community. Our support will make a real difference for those in need. With the proposed goals on charities, combined with the collective commitment to exercise them in a manner for optimal benefit for those in need, we CAN realise improved social gains. Archbishop Desmond Tutu said:

“Do your little bit of good where you are; It’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker**.