



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

The Ministry of Finance

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**Ministry of Finance Headquarters**

**Ministerial Statement**  
To the House of Assembly

By

**The Hon. Everard T. Richards, JP, MP**  
Minister of Finance

**Public Bodies Reform Act**  
Date: 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2014

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**Mr. Speaker,** I rise today to provide Honourable Members with an update on the status of the Public Bodies Reform Act. Honourable Members will recall that it was announced in the Budget Statement that in order to introduce reforms to Government's public bodies and related agencies so as to achieve financial savings and efficiencies in the delivery of public services, I intended to lay legislation entitled the "Public Bodies Reform Act" before Parliament before the end of this Budget session.

**Mr. Speaker,** I can advise that significant progress has been made on this initiative. I have also decided that as part of the consultative process, a "for discussion" draft of this Bill will be provided to key stakeholders such as the unions, before it is tabled in the Legislature.

We anticipate that the discussion draft will be completed early April and the Ministry looks forward to any comments that the unions may have on this important Bill.

**Mr. Speaker,** Honourable Members are advised that the Public Bodies Reform Act will provide for, amongst other things, the following:

- Establish the legal authority for the relevant Minister charged with the responsibility of the effected entity under the Bermuda Constitution, in consultation with the Minister of Finance to make various reforms to government departments, quangos, government funds, government boards & committees (i.e. abolish, merge, modify, transfer) and related legislation;
- Establish the Efficiency & Reform Authority reporting to the Minister of Finance and provides for its various powers, functions, responsibilities, operations and related provisions;
- Provides for the requirement to consult before reforms are made;
- Provides the relevant Minister, in consultation with the Minister of Finance, with the discretionary power, upon making a reform order, to transfer property, rights and liabilities to an eligible person;
- Enables the Minister of Finance to vary any applicable taxes related to such transfers.

**Mr. Speaker,** it is important to note that any reforms to government departments, quangos, government funds, government boards & committees will be provided for by the making of a Reform Order. Given the potential extent and implications of Reform Orders and the fact that Reform Orders will necessarily amend primary and subordinate legislation these orders will be subject to the affirmative resolution procedure. These Orders will only be made after a mandatory consultative period which will be embedded in the Act.

**Mr. Speaker,** the Public Bodies Reform Act is an important piece of legislation as it will allow Government to make the cost savings required as we seek to reduce the deficit. We recognize and understand people's concerns about this matter and will work carefully to ensure that the proposed reforms work in a manner that is responsible and fair to both the workers of the Government and Bermuda taxpayers.

**Thank you, Mr. Speaker.**