

BERMUDA

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SENATE

SESSION OF 2025 - 2026

No. 6

TUESDAY, 3rd JUNE 2025

PRESENT:

Senator the Hon. Mrs. J.E. DILLAS-WRIGHT,
M.B.E., J.P. - PRESIDENT
Senator R.J. WIGHT – VICE PRESIDENT
Senator Ms. T.O.P. TANNOCK
Senator the Hon. K.R. WILKERSON, J.P.
Senator the Hon. C.C. CAESAR, J.P.
Senator Ms. L.K. SIMMONS
Senator M.G. FUBLER
Senator Ms. L.F. BELL
Senator M.J.A. JONES, J.P.
Senator Ms. V.J. CUNNINGHAM
Senator M.E. FOLEY

10:02a.m.

On the motion of Senator R.J. Wight, consideration of the minutes of the meeting of Monday, 2nd June 2025 was deferred.

10:03a.m.

Madam President acknowledged the presence of Mr. Adrian Dill, Director of the Department of Energy, Ms. Debbie Reid, Land Registrar from the Land Title and Registration Office, Mr. Tom Matvey, Acting Executive Director of Consumer Affairs and Ms. Shavonna Simpson, Senior Policy Analyst and Special Advisor to the Ministry of Home Affairs, in the Chamber.

10:04a.m.

Madam President announced that Senator L.K. Simmons would entertain questions at the end of each Head, and not at the end of the entire presentation.

Orders of the Day

10:04a.m.

Senator the Hon. C.C. Caesar moved that the Senate do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the “Appropriation Act 2025”, together with the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the Year 2025/2026, which was agreed to.

(Senator R.J. Wight in the Chair)

10:07a.m.

Senator L.K. Simmons moved that the Committee do now take under consideration Head 93 – Ministry of Home Affairs Headquarters, Head 89 – Energy and Head 97 – Land Title and Registration -- which was agreed to.

Senator L.K. Simmons spoke on Head 93 and provided responses to the Pre-Budget Questions that were submitted in advance of the debate.

Head 93 – Ministry of Home Affairs HQ

(2025/26 EST) B-310) Line Item 103000 Administration \$2,439M Revenue and Line Item 103010 Consumer Affairs-Admin: Significant Increase in Headquarters Budget

Question 1: The Ministry of Home Affairs Headquarters' budget has increased from \$1.796 million in the revised 2024/25 to \$2.439 million in the 2025/26 estimate, representing a 36% increase, plus additional funds of 1,145M under Line Item 103010 Consumer Affairs-Admin. Can the Junior Minister provide a detailed breakdown of the factors contributing to this substantial increase?

(2025/26 EST) B-310) Estimate, \$1.420M
Object Code Description, Line-Item Professional Services

Question 2: The Ministry of Home Affairs Headquarters, under the Object Code Description, Professional Services has increased from \$590,000 in the previous fiscal year to \$1.42 million for 2025/26 - an increase of \$830,000 or approximately 141%. Could the Junior Minister provide a detailed explanation of what specific

professional services or contracts account for this substantial increase, and how these expenditures align with the Ministry's strategic priorities for the year ahead?

**(2025/26 EST) B-310) Estimate, \$1.734M
Object Code Description, Line-Item Salaries**

Question 3: Under Head 93 for the Ministry of Home Affairs Headquarters Administration, the number of staff remains constant at 8, yet the salary expenditure has increased by \$874,000 which is approximately 101%. Could the Junior Minister clarify the reason for such a significant increase in compensation without any increase in personnel? Does this reflect union increases, reclassifications, promotions, or the inclusion of new executive-level posts within the Headquarters allocation?

11:03a.m. – Senator M.E. Foley

11:04a.m. – Senator M.J.A Jones

11:10a.m. – Senator L.K. Simmons replied.

11:12a.m.

Senator L.K. Simmons spoke on Head 89 and provided responses to the Pre-Budget Questions that were submitted in advance of the debate.

Head 89 - Energy

**(2025/26 EST) B-313 – Line Item 99000
Administration \$550,000**

Question 1: The budget for the Energy Department has decreased from \$550,000 2024/25 to \$526,000 in this fiscal year. Given the importance of energy reform, sustainability goals, and the Integrated Resource Plan, can the Junior Minister explain how this reduced allocation supports Bermuda's national energy priorities? Are there concerns that this decrease may slow down progress on renewable energy adoption, regulatory improvements, or public education efforts?

(2025/26 EST) Expenditure, Advertising & Promotion, B-314

Question 2: The budget allocation for Advertising and Promotion within the Energy Division is just \$1,000 for 2025/26. Given Bermuda's urgent need to educate the public on energy conservation, renewable technologies, and the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), can the Junior Minister explain how the Department plans to conduct any meaningful public outreach or education with such a minimal budget? Is there another funding mechanism being used to supplement public awareness efforts?

(2025/26 EST)

Question 3: While the Department of Energy's operational budget is modest, can the Junior Minister advise whether any capital funds have been allocated elsewhere in the Estimates - perhaps under capital development or through quangos like BEDC or BLMC for the development of renewable energy infrastructure, such as solar, wind, or grid improvements? If so, how are these efforts being coordinated with the Energy Division to ensure alignment with the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)?

(2025/26 EST) Expenditure, Salaries, B-314

Questions 4: The Energy Division is projected to generate \$15.385 million in revenue, yet its total expenditure is just \$526,000, of which \$514,000 is allocated to salaries. Can the Junior Minister clarify where this substantial revenue is being directed, and whether any of it is being reinvested into renewable energy initiatives, infrastructure development, or public energy programs? Is there a plan to expand the operational capacity of the Energy Division to ensure this revenue supports Bermuda's long-term energy transformation goals?

11:52a.m.

Senator L.K. Simmons spoke on Head 97 and provided responses to the Pre-Budget Questions that were submitted in advance of the debate.

Head 97 - Land Title & Registration

(2025/26 EST) B-316 – Line Item 107030 Land Title Management

Question 1: The Land Title & Registration Department's budget has increased from \$1.575 million 2024/25 to \$1.657 million for 2025/26. This is an increase of \$82,000. Could the Junior Minister update us on the progress of land title registration efforts? How does this budget support the goal of completing the land title registry, and what milestones are expected in the upcoming fiscal year?

(2025/26 EST) B-317 – Line Item 8294 Land Title Registry Fees

Question 2: The revenue from Land Title Registry Fees is projected to decline significantly — from a revised estimate of \$724,000 in 2024/25 to just \$402,000 in the 2025/26 fiscal year. Can the Junior Minister explain what is driving this notable decrease? Is this due to a slowdown in voluntary land registrations, fewer property transactions, or a strategic shift in the Ministry's approach to land title reform?

12:07p.m.

Senator L.K. Simmons moved that Heads 93, 89 and 97 be approved as printed, which was agreed to.

12:08p.m.

Senator R.J. Wight moved that Senate do now adjourn for lunch and return at 1:45p.m.

1:46p.m.

Senate resumed in Committee of the Whole.

1:48p.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson moved that the Committee do now take under consideration Head 87 – Ministry of Justice Headquarters; Head 03 – Judicial Department; Head 25 – Department of Corrections and Head 74 – Department of Court Services -- which was agreed to.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson spoke on Head 87 and provided response to the Pre-Budget Questions that were submitted in advance of the debate.

Ministry of Justice

Head 87, 03, 25, 74

(2025/26 EST) Line 97030, page B-80

Question 1: Can the Minister explain the proposed increased in Legal Aid and whether this is an increase in funding or administrative expenses?

(2025/26 EST) Capital Development page C-4, lines 75027, 75227 and 75365

Question 2: Can the Minister explain what refurbishment is taking place in the Department of Corrections/Prisons with \$600,000 allocated for the upcoming period when \$1m was originally budgeted for 2024/25 and not used?

2:02p.m. – Senator T.O.P Tannock

2:03p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham

2:04p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

2:05p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham

2:06p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

2:08p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham

2:09p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

2:10p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham

2:11p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

2:15p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham

2:16p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

2:18p.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson spoke on Head 03.

2:31p.m. – Senator T.O.P Tannock

2:35p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

2:36p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock

2:37p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

2:39p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 2:39p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 2:40p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 2:41p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 2:43p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 2:44p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 2:46p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 2:46p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 2:48p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 2:50p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 2:51p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 2:51p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 2:53p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

2:56p.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson spoke on Head 25.

3:14p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 3:17p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 3:20p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 3:21p.m. – Senator R.J. Wight
 3:21p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 3:21p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 3:22p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 3:23p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 3:25p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 3:25p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 3:29p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 3:30p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

3:33p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 3:34p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 3:36p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 3:40p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 3:42p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 3:42p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 3:43p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 3:44p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 3:45p.m. – Senator R.J. Wight

3:45p.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson spoke on Head 74 and provided response to the Pre-Budget Questions that were submitted in advance of the debate.

(2025/26 EST) Head 74, page B-99

Question 1: Can the Minister confirm there is adequate FTE count for the Business Units in the Department of Court Services despite the movements between units?

3:58p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:03p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 4:04p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 4:06p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:07p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 4:08p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:08 p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 4:09p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:09 – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 4:09 p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 4:09p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:10p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

4:10p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:12p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 4:13p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:14p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 4:14p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:16p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 4:17p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 4:21p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:22p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 4:23p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 4:23p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham
 4:24p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.
 4:25p.m. – Senator R.J. Wight

4:25p.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson moved that Heads 87, 03, 25 and 74 be approved as printed, which was agreed to.

4:27p.m.

Senator L.F. Bell moved that the Committee do now take under consideration Head 44 – Ministry of Economy & Labour Headquarters; Head 14 – Department of Statistics; Head 27 – Immigration; Head 60 – Workforce Development and Head 99 – Department of Labour -- which was agreed to.

4:27p.m.

Senator L.F. Bell spoke on Head 44 and provided response to the Pre-Budget Questions that were submitted in advance of the debate.

Ministry of Economy & Labour

Head 44

1. (2024/25 REV) Business Unit 54060 B-173 - \$545K Professional Services: Can the Junior Minister provide specifics to the \$245K

increase in this expense from the original budget of \$300K and how it contributed to the Department's objective of implementing Immigration Reform and providing oversight to its associated departments within its remit?

4:39p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones
 4:41p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:43p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones
 4:44p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.
 4:45p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:46p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones
 4:47p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:48p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones
 4:49p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.
 4:49p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:49p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.
 4:50p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:50p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.
 4:50p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:52p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.
 4:52p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones
 4:52p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock
 4:53p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones
 4:53p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.

4:55p.m.

Senator L.F. Bell spoke on Head 14 and provided response to the Pre-Budget Questions that were submitted in advance of the debate.

Head 14

2. (2025/26 EST) Business Unit 24010/24055 B-175 - \$152K Census & Surveys:

Can the Junior Minister explain how this department is budgeting to conduct the ten-year National Census in 2026 when the Annual Census

& Surveys allocation of costs increases by \$152K but the Non-Annual Census & Surveys, which would by definition include this ten-year National Census, decrease its estimated cost by \$4K?

5:13p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones

5:18p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.

5:24p.m.

Senator L.F. Bell spoke on Head 27.

5:38p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock

5:41p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones

5:47p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock

5:49p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.

5:51p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock

5:55p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.

5:55p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock

5:58p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.

6:00p.m.

Senator L.F. Bell spoke on Head 60.

6:15p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones

6:20p.m.

Senator L.F. Bell spoke on Head 99 and provided response to the Pre-Budget Questions that were submitted in advance of the debate.

Head 99

3. (2025/26 EST) Business Unit 9901 B-199 - \$935K Salaries – Can the Junior Minister inform this Senate of the number of employment complaints processed, labour disputes resolved and Tribunal cases filed and processed within this past fiscal year?

6:24p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell answered the questions relating to Head 60.

6:29p.m.

Senator L.F. Bell moved that Heads 44, 14, 27, 60 and 99 be approved as printed, which was agreed to.

Senator L.F. Bell moved that the Committee rise, report progress and ask for leave to sit again -- which was agreed to.

The Chairperson reported that the Committee had risen, reported progress and requested leave to sit again for further consideration of the Bill.

The Committee rose and the Senate resumed.

The Committee was accordingly granted leave to sit again.

6:31p.m.

Items 2-6 on the Order Paper were carried over.

Congratulations and/or Obituary Speeches

6:32p.m.

Senator T.O.P. Tannock congratulated the Gender Affairs Council bringing attention to the murder of Mr. Ming on their social media during Pride Month. Mr. Ming was a victim of a hate crime due to his sexual orientation and during this month it is important to have protections under the law for these types of crimes. She thanked them for recognising and highlighting one of the struggles of the LGBTQ+ community this month.

Senator V.J. Cunningham congratulated the Bermuda Smash Cricket Invitational at the National Sports Centre involving 12 international players alongside 44 local players. She also congratulated the organisers of the 2025 Santo Cristo Festival, an Azorean tradition that has been celebrated in Bermuda for almost 50 years by the Portuguese community.

6:36p.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson moved that, at its rising, the Senate adjourn to Wednesday, 4th June 2025 – which was agreed to.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson moved that the Senate do now adjourn – which was agreed to.

6:36p.m.

Adjourned until Wednesday, 4th June 2025.

“BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate approves the “City of Hamilton Plan 2025”, pursuant to the provisions of Section 11 of the Development and Planning Act 1974.”

PRESIDENT

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Wednesday – 4th June 2025

(1) Resolution into Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the “Appropriation Act 2025”, together with the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the Financial Year 2025/2026

{Governor’s Recommendation Signified}

[Senator the Hon. Crystal C. Caesar| Spokesperson for Finance]

(2) Consideration of the “Government Fees Amendment Regulations 2025” – Senator the Hon. Crystal C. Caesar, Spokesperson for Finance

{Governor’s Recommendation Signified}

(3) Second reading of the “Customs Tariff Amendment Act 2025” – Senator the Hon. Crystal C. Caesar, Spokesperson for Finance

{Governor’s Recommendation Signified}

(4) Second reading of the “Land Tax Amendment Act 2025” – Senator the Hon. Crystal C. Caesar, Spokesperson for Finance

{Governor’s Recommendation Signified}

(5) Second reading of the “Payroll Tax Amendment Act 2025” – Senator the Hon. Crystal C. Caesar, Spokesperson for Finance

{Governor’s Recommendation Signified}

(6) Motion to be moved by Senator Mischa G. Fubler, Junior Minister for the Cabinet Office and Digital Innovation