

BERMUDA

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SENATE

SESSION OF 2025 - 2026

No. 9

WEDNESDAY, 2nd JULY 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 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

ABSENT:

Senator the Hon. C.C. CAESAR, J.P.

10:02a.m.

On the motion of Senator R.J. Wight, the minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, 3rd June, Wednesday, 4th June and Thursday, 5th June 2025 were taken as read and confirmed.

Madam President announced that Senator the Hon. C.C. Caesar will be absent from today's sitting.

Announcements

10:04a.m.

Senator the Hon. The President announced that she received the "Ombudsman for Bermuda Annual Report for the year 2024" submitted in accordance with section 24 (1) and (3) of the Ombudsman Act 2004.

10:04a.m.

Senator M.G. Fubler presented for the information of Senate the "Privacy Commissioner Pre-Implementation Annual Report – January 2020 to December 2024", submitted by the Privacy Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of section 37 of the Personal Information Protection Act 2016.

10:05a.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson, on behalf of Senator the Hon. C.C. Caesar, presented for the information of Senate the "Chartered Professional Accountants of Bermuda Amendment By-Laws 2025", in exercise of the power conferred by section 7 of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Bermuda Act 1973, makes the following By-Laws which, pursuant to section 7(2) of that Act, have been approved by a majority of the members of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Bermuda.

10:06a.m.

Senator L.K. Simmons presented for the information of Senate the "Electricity Amendment Act 2022 (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2023" as made by the Minister responsible for energy, in exercise of the power conferred by section 12(2) of the Electricity Amendment Act 2022.

10:06a.m.

Senator L.K. Simmons presented for the information of Senate the "Electricity (Innovative Licence) Regulations 2023" as made by the Minister responsible for energy, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 54 of the Electricity Act 2016, and section 5 of the Regulatory Authority Act 2011.

10:07a.m.

Senator M.G. Fubler presented for the information of Senate the "Bermuda Airport Authority Annual Report 2022-2023".

10:07a.m.

Senator L.F. Bell presented for the information of Senate the "Factors Driving Emigration in Bermuda Report, January 2025".

10:07a.m.

Senator L.F. Bell presented for the information of Senate the “Department of Statistics May 2024 Labour Force Survey Report”.

Notice of Motion

10:08a.m.

Senator M.G. Fubler presented for the consideration of Senate the “Tourism Investment (Clearwater Community Event Venue) Order 2025”, proposed to be made by the Minister responsible for tourism, with the written agreement of the Minister of Finance, in exercise of the power conferred by section 5 of the Tourism Investment Act 2017; and gave notice that at a later point in the meeting he would move that the said draft Order be approved.

Ministerial Statements

10:10a.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson, as Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, made a Ministerial Statement entitled “Clarification on Legal Status of Cannabis Possession”.

10:17a.m.

Senator L.F. Bell, as Junior Minister of Economy and Labour, made a Ministerial Statement on “May 2024 Labour Force Survey and Development and Training Update”.

10:25a.m.

Senator L.F. Bell, as Junior Minister of Economy and Labour, made a Ministerial Statement on “Factors Driving Emigration in Bermuda”.

10:31a.m.

Senator L.K. Simmons, as Junior Minister of Home Affairs, made a Ministerial Statement on “2025 Cost of Living Summit”.

Introduction of Bills

10:37a.m.

The following Public Bills were brought up from the Honourable House of Assembly, and given their First Reading in the Senate:-

The “Insurance Amendment Act 2025; and
The “Trade Marks Amendment Act 2025”.

Question Period

10:38a.m.

Senator M.G. Fubler provided Oral Responses to Parliamentary Questions from Senator M.J.A. Jones.

*1. Will the Junior Minister please inform the Senate as to how many of the 600 taxi permits in circulation are actively in use; and whether there are plans to increase the numbers considering the overwhelming pressure on the taxi industry to service locals and visitors?

Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

Senator M.J.A. Jones asked a supplementary question.

Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

*2. Will the Junior Minister please inform the Senate as to how many dispatch companies or services are currently active in the taxi industry, and whether the Ministry has identified any companies or services operating outside of the relevant provisions of the Motor Car Act 1951?

Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

Senator M.G. Fubler provided Oral Response to a Parliamentary Question from M.E. Foley.

*1. Following the EY Culture Review commissioned by the Bermuda Tourism Authority (BTA), can the Junior Minister please inform the Senate as to what actions the Government is taking to address the concerns raised and to ensure that public funds are being managed under a culture of accountability and professionalism?

Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

Senator M.E. Foley asked a supplementary question.

Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

Senator T.O.P. Tannock asked a supplementary question.

Senator M.G. Fubler announced he would provide an answer at a later date.

Senator M.E. Foley asked a second supplementary question.

Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

Senator M.J.A. Jones asked a supplementary question.

Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

Senator M.J.A. Jones asked a second supplementary question.

Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

Senator M.G. Fubler provided Oral Response to a Parliamentary Question from Senator M.E. Foley.

*1. Several publicly owned buildings across Bermuda, including the former Clearwater Middle School in St. David's, remain underutilized or vacant. Can the Junior Minister please inform the Senate as to the Government's plan for the adaptive reuse of these vacant facilities, and whether any are being prioritized for redevelopment into community hubs that address social isolation among seniors and provide services for youth and working families?

Senator M.E. Foley asked a supplementary question.

Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

Senator the Hon. C.C. Caesar to provide Oral Response to a Parliamentary Question from Senator V.J. Cunningham.

*1. Can the Honourable Minister please provide the Senate with an update on the development and finalisation of the Signature Learning Programme curriculums for the Signature Schools, including the timeline for when these curricula will be fully

implemented, and whether they have been accredited or reviewed by any external educational standards bodies to ensure quality and relevance?

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied on behalf of Senator the Hon. C.C. Caesar.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a supplementary question.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator the Hon. C.C. Caesar to provide Oral Response to a Parliamentary Question from Senator V.J. Cunningham.

*1. Will the Honourable Spokesperson for Finance please provide the Senate with the number of companies currently in arrears with their Social Insurance contributions and what steps are being taken to recover the outstanding amounts?

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied on behalf of Senator the Hon. C.C. Caesar.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a supplementary question.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a second supplementary question.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator R.J. Wight asked a supplementary question.

Senator L.K. Simmons replied.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a question to Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson on her Ministerial Statement entitled "Clarification on Legal Status of Cannabis Possession".

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a supplementary question.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator R.J. Wight asked a supplementary question.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a second question.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator M.J.A. Jones asked a second question.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator T.O.P. Tannock asked a second question.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator M.J.A. Jones asked a question to Senator L.F. Bell on her Ministerial Statement entitled "May 2024 Labour Force Survey and Development and Training Update".

Senator R.J. Wight asked a question.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a question.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a second question.

Senator T.O.P. Tannock asked a question.

Senator M.J.A. Jones asked a question to Senator L.F. Bell on her Ministerial Statement entitled "Factor Driving Emigration in Bermuda".

Senator T.O.P. Tannock asked a question.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a question.

Senator L.F. Bell replied.

Senator T.O.P. Tannock asked a second question.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

Senator L.F. Bell replied.

Senator T.O.P. Tannock asked a supplementary question.

Senator L.F. Bell replied.

Senator V.J. Cunningham asked a question to Senator L.K. Simmons on her Ministerial Statement entitled "2025 Cost of Living Summit".

Senator L.K. Simmons replied.

Orders of the Day

11:49a.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson, on behalf of Senator the Hon. C.C. Caesar, moved that the provisions of Standing Order 25 be granted so that Senate may now proceed with the Second Reading of the Public Bill entitled "Insurance Amendment Act 2025", which was agreed to.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson moved that the Public Bill entitled the "Insurance Amendment Act 2025" be now read the second time, which was agreed to.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson spoke on the Bill.

11:59a.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones

12:00p.m. – Senator R.J. Wight

12:00p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson replied.

The Bill was accordingly read a second time.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson moved that Standing Order 26 be suspended in respect of this Bill, which was agreed to.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson moved that the Bill be now read a third time, which was agreed to.

The Bill was accordingly read a third time.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson moved that the Bill entitled the "Insurance Amendment Act 2025 do now pass, which was agreed to.

The Bill was accordingly passed and ordered to be laid before His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's assent.

12:01p.m.

Senator L.F. Bell moved that the provisions of Standing Order 25 be granted so that Senate may now proceed with the Second Reading of the Public Bill entitled "Trade Marks Amendment Act 2025", which was agreed to.

Senator L.F. Bell moved that the Public Bill entitled the "Trade Marks Amendment Act 2025" be now read the second time, which was agreed to.

Senator L.F. Bell spoke on the Bill.

12:10p.m.

Madam President acknowledged the presence of Ms. Aideen Ratteray-Pryse, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Economy and Labour, in the Chamber.

12:10p.m. – Senator M.J.A. Jones

12:12p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock

12:14p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.

12:15p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock

12:16p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.

12:18p.m. – Senator T.O.P. Tannock

12:18p.m. – Senator L.F. Bell replied.

The Bill was accordingly read a second time.

Senator L.F. Bell moved that Standing Order 26 be suspended in respect of this Bill, which was agreed to.

Senator L.F. Bell moved that the Bill be now read a third time – which was agreed to.

Senator L.F. Bell moved that the Bill entitled the "Trade Marks Amendment Act 2025" do now pass – which was agreed to.

The Bill was accordingly passed and ordered to be laid before His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's assent.

12:20p.m.

Senator M.G. Fubler moved that the provisions of Standing Order 71(2) be suspended, which was agreed to.

Senator M.G. Fubler moved that Senate do now take under consideration the "Tourism Investment (Clearwater Community Event Venue) Order 2025" proposed to be made by the Minister responsible for tourism, with the written agreement of the Minister of Finance, in exercise of the power conferred by section 5 of the Tourism Investment Act 2017, which was agreed to.

Senator M.G. Fubler spoke on the Order.

12:24p.m. – Senator V.J. Cunningham

12:25p.m. – Senator M.E. Foley

12:26p.m. – Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson

12:27p.m. – Senator M.G. Fubler replied.

Senator M.G. Fubler moved that the said draft Order be approved and that the following Message be sent to His Excellency the Governor:-

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

The Senate, having had under consideration the draft Order entitled the "Tourism Investment (Clearwater Community Event Venue) Order 2025" proposed to be made by the Minister responsible for tourism, with the written agreement of the Minister of Finance, in exercise of the power conferred by section 5 of the Tourism Investment Act 2017, has the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Senate has approved the said draft Order."

-- which was agreed to and ordered accordingly.

Congratulations and/or Obituary Speeches

12:29p.m.

Senator L.K. Simmons offered condolences to the families of the late Mrs. Eunice Jones and Mr. Kendall Harvey. She congratulated graduates of Berkeley Institute as well as other local schools. She also congratulated the winners of the Minister's Achievement Awards. Senator Simmons

congratulated and thanked the Cedarbridge Academy graduates, Principal, teachers and staff on their dedication and success. She congratulated Deputy Principal, Ms. Kalreta Conyers-Steede, on her retirement after 43 years in Education.

Senator V.J. Cunningham associated herself with the congratulations extended by Senator L.K. Simmons. She congratulated Mr. Michael Branco on being elected as the new Councillor at Corporation of Hamilton. She offered condolences to the family of the late Mr. Courtenay Griffiths K.C.

Senator M.E. Foley congratulated Mrs. Berniece Smith on celebrating her 100th birthday. He also congratulated Ms. Mikaela Pearman on her role as panel moderator at the Black Travel Expo held in Atlanta.

Senator M.G. Fubler associated himself with the condolences offered to the family of the late Mr. Kendall Harvey. He congratulated Imagine Bermuda who hosted an event at the Bermuda Cathedral on the anniversary of the Theatre Boycott. He also congratulated the 'Cost of Living Summit' organisers and Bermuda is Love.

12:55p.m.

Senator the Hon. K.R. Wilkerson moved that, at its rising, the Senate adjourn to Wednesday, 16th July 2025 – which was agreed to.

12:55p.m.

Adjourned until Wednesday, 16th July 2025.

PRESIDENT

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Wednesday – 16th July 2025

NIL