First (1st) Sitting of the Twenty-Fourth (24th) Meeting of the First Session of the Thirteenth (13th) Legislature

THE PARLIAMENT OF TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

25 JUNE 2026

(Parliament)

Hon. Speaker

Speaker

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PRAYER

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT AND CALL TO PRAYER

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Good morning, Honourable Members. I now call this first sitting of the 24th meeting of the first session of the 13th Legislature of the Parliament of the Turks and Caicos Islands, to be held on Thursday, 25th June, 2026, at the Honourable NJS Francis Building, Horn Street, Grand Turk, to order. Honourable members, I now call on our chaplain, Bishop Coleta Williams III, to pray for this meeting.

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, leader. Micah chapter 6 and verse 8. He has told you, O man, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. As we approach the half-year point, Micah chapter 6 and verse 8 is one of the most famous verses in the Hebrew Bible and the Old Testament.

It summarises the core of religious and ethical living: doing what is right, showing compassion, and maintaining a close and humble relationship with the Divine. The verse consists of three clear, actionable directives. One, do justice. This means upholding fairness and righteousness in your dealings with others. It involves standing up for the marginalized, being honest, and actively working against systematic unfairness in our community and country. Two, love mercy. The original Hebrew word used here is chaste, which implies loyal love, steadfast compassion, and grace. It's not just about showing mercy, but developing a deep, passionate love for extending grace and compassion to others.

Number three, and finally, walk humbly with your God. This requires living with an attitude of submission, recognizing your place before God and letting him lead your life. It involves setting aside arrogance and self-righteousness. In the broader context of the book of Micah, the Israelites were asking how they could appease God with extravagant sacrifice and rituals. The prophet Micah clarified that God is not primarily interested in performative religion.

Instead, he desires authentic ethical character and a heart devoted to him and compassion for people above self. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for showing our Speaker, our Premier, our Leader of the Opposition, our Cabinet Ministers, our Government Members, our Opposition Member, our Independent Member, our Attorney General, and our Clerk what is good and what you require of them. Today I pray for the strength and the courage of our leaders to put words into action.

Give them the wisdom to do what is right. Open their eyes to see and stand up for those who are on their knees, those who are marginalized, oppressed, or in need within our community and country. Lord, keep our leaders grounded and remind them to submit their plans to your will, put others before themselves, and to learn to lean on your strength instead of our pride. Guide their thoughts and words and actions today so that they honor you in everything they do.

Bless this Parliament. Bless this country. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. We pray the Lord's Prayer. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive our debtors, as we forgive those that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

TRANSITION AFTER PRAYER

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Please be seated. Honorable Premier.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 12 TO SIT BEYOND 6 PM

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, Turks and Caicos Islands, at home and abroad. And

to all others in radioland. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 130, I move that Standing Order 12 be suspended to allow this Honourable House to sit beyond the 6 PM hour. Do I have a seconder?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS AND BILL READING ARRANGEMENTS

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, Turks and Caicos Islands, at home and abroad, and to all others in radioland. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 130, I move that Standing Order 12 be suspended to allow this Honourable House to sit beyond the 6 PM hour. Do I have a seconder? Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 130, I further move that Standing Order 44 be suspended to allow Government business to have precedence over all other business, and so that Item 6, Papers, be taken as Item 4, and Item 11, First Reading of Bills, be taken as Item 5.

Item number 17, Orders of the Day, to be taken as item number 6. Mr. Speaker, I also beg leave for the following bill to go through all three readings in this sitting. I have consulted with the Leader of the Opposition in this regard, and so I move that pursuant to Standing Order 90.5, the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 be allowed to go through all three readings within this meeting.

Do I have a seconder? Mr. Speaker, I think it is at this juncture as well that I will have to move that, again under Standing Order 90.5, the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be allowed to go through all three readings within this meeting. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Second.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 12 TO SIT BEYOND 6 PM

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Honourable Deputy Premier, that this Honourable House sits beyond the 6 PM hour. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Honourable Premier.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 44 AND PRECEDENCE OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS; PERMISSION FOR INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026 TO GO THROUGH ALL READINGS

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 130, I further move that Standing Order 44 be suspended to allow Government business to have precedence over all other business, and so that Item 6, Papers, be taken as Item 4, and Item 11, First Reading of Bills, be taken as Item 5.

Item number 17, Orders of the Day, to be taken as item number 6. Mr. Speaker, I also beg leave for the following bill to go through all three readings in this sitting. I have consulted with the Leader of the Opposition in this regard, and I move that pursuant to Standing Order 90.5, the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 be allowed to go through all three readings within this meeting.

Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Second.

PERMISSION FOR INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026 TO GO THROUGH ALL READINGS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that the Bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 go through all three readings during this meeting. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Deputy Premier that the Bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 go through all three readings during this meeting. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Honourable Premier, anything else, or are you finished? Honourable Members, I want to welcome you again to this meeting of Parliament.

I want to first offer apologies to the listening public for our late start, as we had some logistical challenges this morning. I also

want to welcome persons who are listening via Radio Turks and Caicos and those who are listening via our social media platforms. I want to send out condolences to persons who have passed since we last met, particularly to the family of Eileen Nene Bean, Dada Bean, and Mr. Mac Smith, who have recently passed, and all others.

I want to send out congratulations to persons who have graduated recently and who will be graduating over the next week. Honourable Members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are now at number 3, Messages from Her Excellency the Governor, and there were none. Number 4, Papers, and we'll now have the Office of the Complaints Commissioner Annual Report 2025/2026 to be laid by the Honourable Attorney General. Madam Clerk.

PERMISSION FOR REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 TO GO THROUGH ALL READINGS

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Mr. Speaker, I move that under Standing Order 90.5, the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be allowed to go through all three readings within this meeting. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Second, Mr. Speaker.

PERMISSION FOR REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 TO GO THROUGH ALL READINGS; CONDOLENCES; ANNOUNCEMENTS; TRANSITION TO PAPERS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 go through all three readings during this meeting. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it.

Honourable Premier, anything else, or are you finished? Honourable Members, I want to welcome you here again to this meeting of Parliament. I want to first offer apologies to the listening public for our late start, as we had some logistical challenges this morning that resulted in us starting the meeting late.

I also want to welcome persons who are listening via Radio Turks and Caicos and those who are listening via our social media platforms. I want to send out condolences to persons who have passed since we last met. Particularly, I want to send out condolences to the family of Eileen Nene Bean, who recently passed, and also Dada Bean, who recently passed, and all others who have recently passed.

I want to send out condolences to their families. I want to send out congratulations to persons who have graduated recently and who will be graduating over the next week. I also want to send out condolences to Mr. Mac Smith, who passed recently as well. Honourable members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are now at number 3, messages from Her Excellency the Governor, and there were none. Number 4, papers, and we'll now have the Office of the Complaints Commissioner Annual Report 2025/2026 to be laid by the Honourable Attorney General. We'll now have the Office of the Complaints Commissioner annual report for the years 2025/2026 to be laid by the Honourable Attorney General. Madam Clerk.

PAPERS

LAYING OF OFFICE OF THE COMPLAINTS COMMISSIONER ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to lay on the table of this Honourable Parliament, in accordance with Standing Order 32 and Section 21 of the Complaints Commissioner Ombudsman Act, the Office of the Complaints Commissioner's Annual Report for the period 2025 to 2026.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

TRANSITION TO FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Madam Clerk and Honourable Attorney General. Honourable Members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are now at the first reading of bills. And we'll have the first reading of the Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026, to be moved by the Honourable Premier and Minister for Finance, Economic Development, Investment and Trade. Honourable Premier.

INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026 - FIRST READING

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that pursuant to Standing Order 90.4, that the Bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 be read a first time. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Second.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Education that the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 be now read a first time. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. Aye. The ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

This Act may be cited as the Invest Turks and Caicos Agency Validation Act 2026 and shall come into operation on publication in the Gazette.

TRANSITION TO FIRST READING OF REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. Honourable Members, we will now return to the Order Paper, and we are still at the first reading of bills, and we'll have the first reading of the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026, to be moved by the Honourable Deputy Premier and Minister for Immigration and Border Services.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - FIRST READING

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that pursuant to Standing Order 90.4, the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be read a first time. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Second.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable members, motion moved by the Honourable Deputy Premier and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Public Safety that the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 now be read a first time. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no? The ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

This act may be cited as the Real Estate Brokerage and Salesman Licensing Amendment Act 2026 and shall come into operation on publication in the Gazette.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TRANSITION TO SECOND READING OF AIRPORTS AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL 2025

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. Honourable members, I'll return to the Order Paper. And we are now at Orders of the Day, the second reading of bills. We will have the second reading of the Airports Authority Amendment Bill 2025, to be moved by the Honourable Premier.

ORDERS OF THE DAY - SECOND READING OF BILLS ANNOUNCEMENT

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable members, I'll return to the Order Paper. And we are now at Orders of the Day, the second reading of bills. We will have the second reading of the Airports Authority Amendment Bill 2025, to be moved by the Honourable Premier.

DEFERRAL OF AIRPORTS AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - SECOND READING

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Mr. Speaker, I move that this bill be deferred to the next sitting of the House. Thank you.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Second.

DEFERRAL OF AIRPORTS AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - SECOND READING; TRANSITION TO SECOND READING OF INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Deputy Premier that the Bill entitled Airports Authority Amendment Bill 2025 be

deferred until the next meeting of Parliament. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Honourable Members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are still at the Second Reading of Bills, and we will have the Second Reading of the Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026, to be moved by the Honourable Premier.

INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026 - SECOND READING

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 92.2, I move that the Bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 be read a second time. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Shaun David Malcolm:

Second.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Public Safety that the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 be now read a second time. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Honourable Premier.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026 - SECOND READING

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me first direct members' attention to the very short explanatory memorandum before I make my comments. This bill seeks to validate the actions and policies made under the Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Amendment Act 2022, which has not been brought into force. The purpose of this bill is to validate actions taken under that act. The Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 is procedural in nature. There was a bill that went through this House in 2022, but there's no evidence that it's been enacted, and certain transactions or actions have been taken relying on the bill.

It's important to bring the matters back to this House to have those actions by Invest TCI validated. The bill is intended to complete the legislative process surrounding the Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Amendment Act of 2022. Parliament previously approved amendments to strengthen the legislative mandate of Invest Turks and Caicos. Those amendments expanded the agency's role in several important areas, including conducting due diligence for investment-related immigration matters, developing due diligence policies for applicants seeking concessions and incentives, developing policy necessary to carry out the agency's statutory functions, and changing fees for due diligence services where appropriate.

Although the Amendment Act received assent, it was not formally brought into force. In anticipation of its commencement, the Agency developed a number of policies and administrative procedures intended to support implementation of the new legislative framework. These actions were taken in good faith and reflected Parliament's original intent. However, to remove any legal uncertainty surrounding these actions, a validation bill is now required.

This bill does not introduce any new policy or create any new powers for Invest Turks and Caicos. Its sole purpose is to validate actions already taken and provide legal certainty before the Amendment Act comes into operation. The Attorney General's Chambers has advised that the Validation Bill and the commencement of the 2022 Amendment Act should take effect simultaneously. This ensures continuity in the law and avoids any legislative gaps.

The bill supports good governance by ensuring that the Agency's legislative framework is complete, legally sound, and fit for purpose. It also provides certainty for government, investors, and other stakeholders who rely on the Agency's statutory functions. Ultimately, this is a housekeeping measure that gives effect to policy decisions already approved by Cabinet and enables the 2022 amendments to become fully operational. That is my contribution.

I now invite members to speak to the Bill. Thank you.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me first direct members' attention to the very short explanatory memorandum before I make my comments. This bill seeks to validate the actions and policies made under the Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Amendment Act 2022, which has not been brought into force. The purpose of this bill is to validate actions already taken and provide legal certainty before the Amendment Act comes into operation. The bill is procedural in nature and is intended to complete the legislative process surrounding the Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Amendment Act of 2022. Parliament previously approved amendments to strengthen the legislative mandate of Invest Turks and Caicos, expanding the agency's role in areas such as due diligence for investment-related immigration matters, developing due diligence policies for applicants seeking concessions and incentives, developing policy necessary to carry out the agency's statutory functions, and changing fees for due diligence services where appropriate.

Although the Amendment Act received assent, it was not formally brought into force. In anticipation of its commencement, the Agency developed policies and administrative procedures to support implementation of the

new legislative framework. These actions were taken in good faith and reflected Parliament's original intent. However, to remove any legal uncertainty, a validation bill is now required.

This bill does not introduce any new policy or create new powers for Invest Turks and Caicos. Its sole purpose is to validate actions already taken and provide legal certainty. The Attorney General's Chambers has advised that the Validation Bill and the commencement of the 2022 Amendment Act should take effect simultaneously to ensure continuity in the law and avoid legislative gaps. The bill supports good governance by ensuring the Agency's legislative framework is complete, legally sound, and fit for purpose.

It provides certainty for government, investors, and other stakeholders who rely on the Agency's statutory functions. Ultimately, this is a housekeeping measure that gives effect to policy decisions already approved by Cabinet and enables the 2022 amendments to become fully operational. That is my contribution. I now invite members to speak to the Bill.

Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Premier. Honourable members, the floor is now open for debate on the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026. Are there any contributions? The Chair recognizes the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to make my recommendations on the Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026. Before I do, let me say a pleasant good morning to all those listening by radio and all those tuning in by internet. Let me also associate myself with the words of bereavement previously offered to the bereaved families of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

We want to say words of bereavement to the 8th All Island member. We know that it's like your second mother here in Grand Turk, and we have known her all our lives to be a second mother to you. Please accept our sincere words of bereavement at this time for the late Dorothy Bean Francis. We also want to extend condolences to the Deputy Premier and the Robertson family, who will be laying their cousin Anya Robertson's daughter to rest this Saturday.

Condolences as well to the Crease family, who will be laying Miss Patricia Crease to rest on Saturday, and to Mr. Alfred Mack Smith, and to the Attorney General and all the members of Bible Baptist Ministries here in Grand Turk. The Bean family, Richie and Claudia Bean, also lost their mom, Nanny. Many people are being lost by conditions that could have been prevented if caught and diagnosed early, but that is a discussion for another time, especially regarding healthcare. However, I rise to make my contributions to this investment agency bill.

Even though we know this is necessary for our country and for the agency to operate legally, we have to ask, what happened? Why are we here today? Why wasn't this enacted? Are all concessions made between 2022 and now legal? Yes, it was passed in Cabinet and there is a policy, but any investments or concessions given between 2022 and now—are they illegal? In spirit, perhaps not, but what will happen? This is to validate actions already taken. I do believe that, as we had the accountability workshop, as a government we need to ensure that these things don't happen, that any lawyer of any bus companies that may have felt aggrieved could challenge the legality. God forbid anything like that has happened, but we hope we can address this.

But why, after almost four years, do we have to come back here today to correct things and make legal actions that have already taken place? Not future actions, but actions already taken. Does this open up a Pandora's box that we can do things and then come to the House of Assembly to make those actions legal? We have to be cautious in using this. This is my point of view. I'm not a legal scholar, but as the commercial says, I do stay at the Holiday Inn from time to time.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's what I'm wondering, if that can be clarified. What is the legality of us going retroactive, taking actions, and now making those actions legal here today? But I do understand that we want our country to run properly, and enacting this bill will ensure things are run properly and that we do not open ourselves as a country to litigation. We have to support this for the well-being of our country and to protect our industry, especially in West Tisia. With that, I rest. Thank you.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

What is the legality of us going retroactive, taking actions, and now making those actions legal here today, Mr. Speaker? But other than that, I do understand. We want our country to run properly, and enacting this bill will ensure things are run properly and that we do not open ourselves as a destination or country up to litigation. We have to support this for the well-being of our country and to protect our industry, especially in West Tisia. With that, I rest.

Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much for your contribution, Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Honourable AG, do you want to comment on the legality of this amendment so that people would understand that this does make everything that has happened before legal? Thank you.

Hon. Rhondalee M. Braithwaite-Knowles, OBE, KC:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to comment, the door having been opened by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. As the lawmaking body of these islands, we must comply with the law made here. As the Honourable Premier indicated, there was legislation that has already come through this Parliament and approved the expansion of the remit of InvestTC.

That law has been made and is on our law books, but it was not brought into force because no notice was given to commence it. However, the agency proceeded in accordance with the policy position of Cabinet and the authority it believed it had, having the bill passed and assented to.

This validation bill clarifies any possible question that could arise, not about investments or concessions given—they already had the remit to do that—but about the specific expansion which the Honourable Premier referenced, such as assisting the Ministry of Home Affairs in respect of immigration applications for PRCs and so on.

Those actions would have only been valid because of the Act that came through this Parliament, and they acted in accordance with that authority, but the Act itself was not brought into force. So it doesn't raise questions, thankfully, about any concessions that have been given. It is really only about the actions, and ultimately the decisions in respect of the applications for investors would have been made by the correct authority. Their action was to facilitate processing, not make final decisions. So it's a very narrow legal risk, but it is best, as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said, to close it, settle the issue, and put it beyond doubt.

As my Chambers advised, it is best to bring that legislation which the House approved into force at the same time as a Validation Act, because lawmaking power lies here with Parliament. It is Parliament who is best placed to say that the House validates the action taken in accordance with the legislation that has been passed. That's what this does. Just to put the mind of the Leader of the Opposition at rest, and for the benefit of the public, as he asked the question.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Attorney General, for that explanation. Honourable members, the floor is still open for debate on this bill. Are there any further contributions? The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to colleagues present and to Mrs. McCartney in the gallery. A pleasant good morning to the people of Electoral District 9, including Five Keys, South Dock, and Chalk Sound. Like those before me, condolences to the bereaved families across the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Special condolences to the family of Dorothy Bean Francis, grandmother of one of my nephews. Let us continue to support the families during this time. On a positive note, congratulations to our students graduating from primary, secondary, or tertiary institutions. We wish them all the best and encourage everyone to join in supporting our students during graduation celebrations.

I rise to support the Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Act 2026. As stated by others, the bill is straightforward. It validates the actions and policies that the agency has already been using under the 2022 Amendment Act, an act that although passed was never formally brought into force. The word validate means to make something officially legal and recognized, even if it was done before the law firmly took effect.

That is exactly what this bill does. It ensures that the due diligence work the agency has been doing, especially checks connected to investment-related immigration permits, remains lawful and protected. It also confirms that the policies created under Section 31A, as outlined by our Honourable Premier, are valid and continue to guide the agency's operations. This is good governance.

It protects the integrity of our investment system, ensures continuity, and strengthens public confidence in the processes that safeguard our islands. I therefore give my full support to this act.

INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION ACT 2026 - SECOND READING

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to our colleagues present here, and to Mrs. McCartney in the gallery. A pleasant good morning to the people of Electoral District 9, including Five Keys, South Dock, and Chalk Sound. Condolences to the bereaved families from across the Turks and Caicos Islands, especially to the family of Dorothy Bean Francis, grandmother of one of my nephews.

Let us continue to support these families during this difficult time. On a positive note, congratulations to our students graduating from primary, secondary, or tertiary institutions. We wish them all the best and encourage everyone to join in celebrating our students' achievements. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Act 2026.

As stated by others, the bill is straightforward. It validates the actions and policies the agency has been using under the 2022 Amendment Act, which, although passed, was never formally brought into force. The bill ensures that due diligence work by the agency, especially checks related to investment-related immigration permits, remains lawful and protected. It also confirms that policies created under Section 31A, as outlined by our Honourable Premier, are valid and continue to

guide the agency's operations.

This is good governance. It protects the integrity of our investment system, ensures continuity, and strengthens public confidence in the processes that safeguard our islands. I therefore give my full support to this act.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you, Honourable Minister of Education, for your contribution. Are there any further contributions? There will be no further contributions. I call on the Honourable Premier to wrap up the debate.

INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION ACT 2026 - REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank those who contributed to the bill, particularly the Attorney General for clarifying the main point, which is to facilitate the immigration process in relation to PRCs and other procedural due diligence issues to determine qualification. As the AG stated, this has no impact on concessions available to would-be investors, as those are already enshrined in policies and legislation, particularly the relevant development incentive policy. With that said, Mr. Speaker, under Standing Order 93, I move that the Invest Turks and Caicos Investment Agency Bill 2026 be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the persons who contributed to the bill, and particularly the Attorney General who clarified the main point, which was to facilitate the immigration process in relation to PRCs and other procedural due diligence issues to decide whether a person qualifies or not. As the AG stated, this has no impact on the concessions available to would-be investors because those concessions are already enshrined in policies and legislation, particularly the relevant development incentive policy. With that said, under Standing Order 93, I move that Invest Turks and Caicos Investment Agency Bill 2026 be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Second.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - SECOND READING

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Education that the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 be referred to the Committee of the Whole. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it.

Honourable Lady, do we go to the second bill before we go to committee? Honourable Members, we are still at the second reading of bills, and we will now have the second reading of the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026, to be moved by the Honourable Deputy Premier. Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Order 92, I move that the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be read a second time. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Second.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Deputy Premier and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Education that the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be now read a second time. All in favor say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise for the second reading of the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026. Good afternoon to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, strangers in the galleries, and those listening across Radio Turks and Caicos and social media. I share condolences with all who have lost loved ones and extend birthday and anniversary wishes to those celebrating since we last met.

Congratulations to all graduating students at primary, high school, and TCI Community College. Mr. Speaker, this is a narrow but important bill. At its heart, it is about protecting the work this government has done to place Turks and Caicos Islanders at the centre of the real estate sector. This bill does

not change government policy, does not open the door to new non-islander salesmen, and does not weaken the Turks and Caicos Islander first approach.

It deals fairly and responsibly with a small group of long-established persons already working in the sector who have formal legal or immigration status recognized by the government. The bill addresses this narrow issue without putting the wider localization program at risk. The localization agenda remains unchanged. Real estate is vital to our land, economy, communities, and opportunities for our people.

Turks and Caicos Islanders should be at the heart of the industry as employees, salesmen, brokers, business owners, and leaders. The Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Act was first passed in 2004 to regulate the sector and ensure greater participation by islanders. However, it was not properly brought into operation for many years.

In 2024, the government modernized and strengthened the framework, bringing proper licensing requirements into effect, strengthening the islander requirement, and introducing a clearer structure for regulating brokers and salesmen. Regulations followed in 2025, and a further amendment extended transitional arrangements to 30th June 2026. That framework remains in place. Nothing in this bill removes it or changes the government's commitment to greater islander ownership, participation, and leadership in the real estate sector.

During the implementation of the new framework, a specific issue arose: a small group of non-islander salespersons who have been here for many years, not new arrivals, but persons already working in the industry before the current framework took effect. Some hold permanent residency certificates, some hold British Overseas Territory citizenship, and many have lived and worked here for years. The original 2004 Act contained a transitional provision to protect those already established, but it did not function as intended until the 2024 framework was brought into force. A small number of long-established practitioners found themselves outside the transitional arrangement.

The Government has carefully considered legal advice on this issue, which does not question the policy of advancing Turks and Caicos islanders in the sector. The concern is how the framework affects a small group of long-established persons with formal legal or immigration status who were already working in the industry. If left unaddressed, there is a risk of consequences beyond this bill that could make it harder to defend future measures to advance islanders. The government is acting now in a narrow and proportionate way to protect the broader interests of Turks and Caicos Islanders.

That is responsible governance. Specifically, the bill provides three elements: first, a permanent licensing route for most long-established practitioners. New Section 5 provides a permanent route for non-islanders who were actively engaged as real estate salespersons as at 30th December 2024, for not less than 5 years, hold British Overseas Territory citizenship or a permanent residence certificate, and are ordinarily resident in the islands for at least 183 days in any year prior to the bill coming into force. Once passed, the 183 days will be for the previous 12 months, with the remaining 182 days accounting for leave, travel, or business outside the country.

All four requirements must be satisfied. This is not an open category and does not apply to new entrants. Each person must apply to the Permanent Secretary of Finance with proof of legal status, period of engagement, evidence of ordinary residence, and any other evidence required. Upon commencement, there will be 21 days to apply.

The government is not approving a list of names; each application must meet the criteria with evidence. Second, a time-limited two-year transition for those who do not otherwise qualify. Clause 8 provides a two-year transition for those engaged as salespersons as at 30th December 2024, for not less than 5 years, or for less than 5 years but not meeting Section 5 or 6 requirements, such as the ordinary residence test. This is not a permanent exemption but a managed transition.

After two years, full compliance is required. Applications must be made within 21 days of commencement, supported by proof of legal status and engagement. Third, mandatory training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship for Turks and Caicos Islanders. New Section 7A places a legal obligation on every licensed broker to establish and implement training and mentorship programs, and to bear the cost.

Every licensed broker must also establish internship and apprenticeship systems for islanders, with associated costs. This is a legal condition for holding a license. The bill also amends Section 33 to allow regulations prescribing the terms and procedures for training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship, ensuring clear rules and proper implementation. The Ministry of Education and TCICC are ready to participate in developing this program.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise for the second reading of the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026. Good afternoon to my colleagues, yourself, Mr. Speaker, strangers in the galleries, those listening across the nation's number one station, Radio Turks and Caicos, and those following via social media and the Parliament's Facebook page. I share condolences with everyone mentioned, and those not mentioned, who have lost loved ones.

I also wish happy birthdays and anniversaries to those who have celebrated since we were last here. Congratulations to all graduating students from primary, high school, and TCI Community College. Mr. Speaker, this is a narrow but important bill. At its heart, it is about protecting the work this government has done to place Turks and Caicos Islanders at the centre of the real estate sector.

This bill does not change government policy, does not open the door to new non-islander salesmen, and does not weaken the Turks and Caicos Islander first approach. It deals fairly and responsibly with a small group of long-established

persons already working in the sector, who have lived in these islands for many years and hold formal legal or immigration status recognized by the government. This bill allows us to address that narrow issue without putting the wider localization program at risk. The localization agenda remains unchanged.

Real estate is one of the most important sectors in the Turks and Caicos Islands, linked to our land, economy, communities, and opportunities for our people. Turks and Caicos Islanders should be at the heart of that industry, not only as employees but as salesmen, brokers, business owners, and leaders. That remains the government's settled position. The Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Act was first passed in 2004 to regulate the sector and ensure greater participation by islanders.

However, that law was not properly brought into operation for many years, and the industry continued under other arrangements. In 2024, this government moved to modernize and strengthen that framework, bringing proper licensing requirements into effect, strengthening the islander requirement, and introducing a clearer structure for regulating brokers and salesmen. Regulations followed in 2025, with a further amendment that year extending transitional arrangements to 30th June 2026. That framework remains in place. Nothing in this bill removes it or changes the government's commitment to greater islander ownership, participation, and leadership.

During implementation, a specific issue arose: a small group of non-islander salespersons who have been here for many years, not new arrivals, not seeking to enter the industry now, but already working before the current framework took effect. Some hold permanent residency certificates, some hold British Overseas Territory citizenship with a connection to the islands. Many have lived, worked, and built their lives here. The original 2004 Act contained a transitional provision to protect those already established in the profession, but as the licensing system was never operationalized, that provision did not function as intended, and the issue only crystallized when the 2024 framework came into force.

A small number of long-established practitioners found themselves outside the transitional arrangement. The Government has carefully considered legal advice on this issue. That advice does not call into question the Government's policy on advancing Turks and Caicos islanders in the sector. The concern is narrower: how the existing framework affects a small group of long-established persons with formal legal or immigration status who were already working in the industry.

If left unaddressed, there is a risk of consequences beyond this bill, potentially making it harder to defend future measures to advance islanders. The government is acting now through Parliament in a narrow and proportionate way to protect the broader interests of Turks and Caicos Islanders. That is responsible governance. Let me be precise about what is in this bill.

There are three distinct elements. First, a permanent licensing route for most long-established practitioners. New Section 5 provides a permanent route to licensing for non-islanders who meet all of the following: they were actively engaged as a real estate salesperson as at 30th December 2024, had been so engaged for not less than five years, hold British Overseas Territory citizenship with a connection to the islands or a permanent residence certificate, and are ordinarily resident in the Turks and Caicos Islands, meaning present for at least 183 days in any 12 consecutive months prior to the coming into force of this bill.

Once passed, the 183 days will be for the previous 12 months. The other 182 days in the year may be accounted for by leave, travel, or other business outside the country. All four requirements must be satisfied. This is not an open category. It does not apply to anyone seeking to enter the profession now, and it does not operate automatically. Each person must apply to the Permanent Secretary of Finance, providing proof of legal status, period of engagement in the sector, evidence of ordinary residence, and other evidence as required. Upon commencement, applicants will have 21 days to apply. No one is being handed a license without application and evidence.

The law sets the criteria, and each person must satisfy them. Second, a time-limited two-year transition for those who do not otherwise qualify. Clause 8 provides a two-year transition period for persons who were actively engaged as a salesperson as at 30th December 2024, who had been so engaged for not less than five years, or who have been so engaged for less than five years but do not meet the requirements of Section 5 or 6 of the Act.

For example, those who could not satisfy the ordinary residence test. This is not a permanent exemption but a managed and time-limited transition. Those persons may continue to engage as salespersons for two years from the date this Act commences. After that, they must satisfy the full requirements or cease to practice.

Applications must be made within 21 days of commencement, supported by proof of legal status, proof of engagement as at 30th December 2024, and other documentation as required. This is a transition towards full compliance, not a backdoor into permanent practice. The direction of the law remains unchanged. Thirdly and most importantly, mandatory training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship for Turks and Caicos Islanders.

New Section 7A places a legal obligation on every licensed broker to establish and implement training and mentorship programs and to bear the associated cost. Every licensed broker must also establish an internship and apprenticeship system within the business and bear the cost. Training, mentoring, internship, and apprenticeship must be provided for Turks and Caicos Islanders. This is not optional or aspirational; it will be a legal condition of holding a license.

The bill also amends Section 33 of the Principal Act to allow regulations prescribing the terms and procedures for training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship. That means the obligation will not be left vague and can be supported by clear rules and proper implementation. The Ministry of Education and TCICC are eager to help develop this internship and apprenticeship program to help develop it.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Good morning. Across the nation's number one station, Radio Turks and Caicos, as well as those listening via social media and the Facebook page of the Parliament of the Turks and Caicos Islands, I share condolences with everyone who has lost loved ones, and best wishes to those celebrating birthdays or anniversaries since we were last here. Congratulations to all graduating students from primary, high school, and TCI Community College. Mr. Speaker, this is a narrow but important bill.

At its heart, it is about protecting the work this government has done to place Turks and Caicos Islanders at the centre of the real estate sector. This bill does not change government policy, does not open the door to new non-islander salesmen, and does not weaken the Turks and Caicos Islander first approach. It deals fairly and responsibly with a small group of long-established persons already working in the sector, who have lived here for many years and hold formal legal or immigration status recognized by this government. This bill allows us to address that narrow issue without putting the wider localization program at risk.

The localization agenda remains unchanged. Real estate is one of the most important sectors in the Turks and Caicos Islands, linked to our land, economy, communities, and opportunities for our people. Turks and Caicos Islanders should be at the heart of that industry as employees, salesmen, brokers, business owners, and leaders. That remains the government's settled position.

The Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Act was first passed in 2004 to regulate the sector and ensure greater participation by islanders. However, that law was not properly brought into operation for many years, and the licensing system was not fully implemented. The industry continued under other arrangements. In 2024, this government moved to modernize and strengthen that framework. The amendment brought proper licensing requirements into effect, strengthened the Turks and Caicos Islander requirement, and introduced a clearer structure for regulating brokers and salesmen. Regulations followed in 2025, with a further amendment extending transitional arrangements to 30th June 2026.

That framework remains in place. Nothing in this bill removes it or changes the government's commitment to greater Turks and Caicos Islander ownership, participation, and leadership in the real estate sector. The narrow issue this bill addresses is that, during implementation of the new framework, a specific issue arose: a small group of non-Turks and Caicos Islander salespersons who have been here for many years, not new arrivals, but persons already working in the industry before the current framework took effect. Some hold permanent residency certificates, some hold British Overseas Territory citizenship with a connection to the islands.

Many have lived, worked, and built their lives here. The original 2004 Act contained a transitional provision designed to protect those already established in the profession, but because the licensing system was never operationalized, that provision did not function fully, and the issue only crystallized when the 2024 framework was brought into force. A small number of long-established practitioners found themselves outside the transitional arrangement as a result.

The Government has carefully considered legal advice on this issue. That advice does not call into question the Government's policy on advancing Turks and Caicos Islanders in the real estate sector. The concern is narrower: how the existing framework affects a small group of long-established persons with formal legal or immigration status who were already working in the industry. If unaddressed, there is a risk of consequences beyond this bill, potentially making it harder to defend future measures designed to advance Turks and Caicos Islanders.

That is not a risk this government is prepared to take. We are acting now through Parliament in a narrow and proportionate way to protect the broader interests of Turks and Caicos Islanders. That is responsible governance. Let me be precise about what is in this bill. There are three distinct elements. First, a permanent licensing route for most long-established practitioners. New Section 5 provides a permanent route to licensing for non-islanders who meet all of the following: they were actively engaged as a real estate salesperson as at 30th December 2024; they had been so engaged for not less than five years; they hold British Overseas Territory citizenship with a connection to the islands or a permanent residence certificate; and they are ordinarily resident in the Turks and Caicos Islands, meaning present for at least 183 days in 12 consecutive months prior to the coming into force of this bill.

Once passed, that 183 days will be for the previous 12 months. The other 182 days in the year may be accounted for by leave, travel, or other business outside the country. All four requirements must be satisfied. This is not an open category. It does not apply to anyone seeking to enter the profession now, and it does not operate automatically. Every person wishing to rely on this provision must apply to the Permanent Secretary of Finance, providing proof of legal status, period of engagement in the sector, evidence of ordinary residence, and any other evidence required. Upon commencement, they will have 21 days to make the application. The government is not approving a list of names; no one is handed a license without application and evidence.

The law sets the criteria, and each person must satisfy them. If the evidence is not there, the person does not qualify. Second, a time-limited two-year transition for those who do not otherwise qualify. Clause 8 provides a two-year transition period for persons who were actively engaged as a salesperson as at 30th December 2024, who had been so engaged for not less than five years, or who have been so engaged for less than five years but did not meet the requirements of Section 5 or 6 of the Act, such as those unable to satisfy the ordinary residence test.

This is not a permanent exemption, but a managed and time-limited transition. Those persons may continue to engage as salespersons for two years from the date this Act commences. After that, they must satisfy the full requirements of the Act or cease practice. Applications must be made within 21 days of

commencement, supported by proof of legal status, proof of engagement as at 30th December 2024, and any other documentation as required.

This is a transition towards full compliance, not a backdoor into permanent practice. The direction of the law remains unchanged. Thirdly and most importantly, mandatory training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship for Turks and Caicos Islanders. New Section 7A places a legal obligation on every licensed broker to establish and implement training and mentorship programs and to bear the associated cost.

Every licensed broker must also establish an internship and apprenticeship system within the business and bear the cost. The bill makes clear that training, mentoring, internship, and apprenticeship must be provided for Turks and Caicos Islanders. This is not optional or aspirational; it will be a legal condition of holding a license. The bill also amends Section 33 of the Principal Act to allow regulations prescribing the terms and procedures for training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship, supported by clear rules and proper implementation.

The Ministry of Education and TCICC are ready to help develop this internship and apprenticeship program.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Mr. Speaker, every licensed broker operating in this market must actively invest in the development of Turks and Caicos Islander talent. Holding a license in this sector is a legal commitment to building the next generation of Turks and Caicos Islander real estate professionals. That is Turks and Caicos Islander advancement written directly into the law. I want to be clear about what this bill does not do.

It does not open the door to new non-Turks and Caicos Islander entrants. The prospective prohibition remains in place. No person seeking to enter the profession as a new non-Turks and Caicos Islander salesperson after 30th December 2024 derives any benefit from this legislation. The government does not create a new route for new non-Turks and Caicos Islander entrants.

This bill does not give anyone outside the sector a route in. The transitional provision is only for those already actively engaged as a salesperson as at 30th December 2024, engaged for not less than five years and able to prove it. They have 21 days to apply. If you do not apply, you do not wish to continue.

This bill does not create a general exemption from Turks and Caicos Islander requirements. The Islander First Principle in the Act is unchanged. This bill provides a narrow, evidence-based route for a small number of individuals with formal legal or immigration status and long-established practice, assessed individually on evidence by the Permanent Secretary of Finance. The government's Turks and Caicos Islander First policy is unchanged and will be advanced.

The measures in the 2024 and 2025 amendments remain fully enforced. This bill adds to them, it does not subtract. It represents responsible management of a narrow legal issue to protect the broader program. In conclusion, the current transitional arrangements expire on 30th June 2026, five days from today. The law must be clear before the deadline. The ministry must be able to receive applications, assess evidence, and administer the new framework in an orderly way. That is why this bill must be passed now. This bill is not about changing course; it is about protecting the course we are already on.

The government remains committed to a real estate sector where Turks and Caicos Islanders are at its centre, increasing Islander participation, training, mentorship, internship, apprenticeship, and real opportunities for our people. This bill supports and protects that goal, ensuring the framework stands on firm legal ground. Mr. Speaker, I open the floor to debate the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026. Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - DEBATE

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Deputy Premier, for your presentation on the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026. Honourable Members, the floor is now open to debate on this bill. Are there any contributions? The Chair recognizes the Honourable Leader of the Opposition for his contribution.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to make my contributions to this Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026. It was much said about this bill, and there are concerns raised. Going through it, hearing it in detail, and reading the explanatory memorandum, you see there are concerns.

Yes, we do understand why the government is here to do it, but we have to ask ourselves, if we're doing this for this sector, did we consider other sectors that didn't get this kind of provision or attention? We want to do this for this sector, but what about other sectors? Other sectors that we passed legislation for didn't benefit from this kind of cushion or allowance. For example, the taxi sector—we said it's for Turks and Caicos Islanders only, and as of this date, anybody who is not a Turks and Caicos Islander cannot operate in this sector. However, for the real estate sector, you can be a PRC holder, a BOTC holder, and if you were operating before, you can continue to operate.

Going forward, it is only for Turks and Caicos Islanders. This is probably why I had to step down from being a party leader, because I see things differently, and it would hinder my party

from getting finances from big business people. You have to think not only of the big business people, but also the little people. The little people making $5 or $10 a day did not get this provision, but the big people making millions in a transaction are given this provision.

For the little people, only Turks and Caicos Islanders can be in this sector, but for the big sector, PRC and BOTC holders can be grandfathered in. For this sector, nobody will be grandfathered in. This sector, we're going to grandfather in all those who were operating before this time. I am pro-Turks and Caicos Islands, but we have to have parity in bills.

If it's good for one sector, it needs to be good for the next. One may argue that in the sector I used as an example, the jitneys, many are operating illegally. But did we check if any have an actual taxi license? We just said—if it's a BOTC or PRC holder operating in the sector and have a license and everything up to date, we just shut them out, but we are allowing here. If we're going all in for this sector, why not for the other? It has to be balanced.

As a country and as a Parliament, we have to look at balance. This sector will impact the sale of land, millions of dollars in land. The other sector impacts our ordinary citizens getting to work, to school, moving around. One sector impacts sale of land, one sector impacts people's everyday life.

I've seen pictures of people having to jump out and walk into communities. We see what is happening, but we are not doing anything to make sure those who need to get to work or get their children to school, or move around, are not impacted so deeply by the laws we pass.

However, we make sure everything does not impact the sale of land. I'm not against this bill, but if we're doing it for one, we have to do it for the next. Then I start to question, what are the main differences? Both sectors have BOTC and PRC holders operating, but only one is allowed to continue. Why are we giving so much privilege to this sector—the real estate brokers, the people with influence and money—but not to the sector with people who are barely getting by?

Then I look at the demographics: one sector is dominated by people of African descent, the other by people of European descent. Since I last checked, the majority of us inside here are of African descent. So why is a Parliament of African descent giving so much privilege to people of European descent, but holding down those of our own?

I know that's not parliamentary, so I'll withdraw the word coconuts. All I'm saying is, if we can do it for this sector that makes millions, why can't we look at the sector impacting our people's lives? Our ordinary working citizens cannot get to work or school on time because we didn't make transitional provisions like we are now. We didn't consider allowing BOTC citizens to drive, get them legal, or give them a provision to register and continue driving, so our citizens can get to work and school.

Why haven't we come here with the same energy for that as we do for the Europeans and people with money? People will say it's because this sector donates to parties. I'm not saying any party in particular; people will say it about all politicians. So to correct that, the same energy we have here should be applied across the board.

No bias, no favoritism, not even the appearance of it. If we're not prepared to take risks for the sale of land, we must make provisions for the other sector too. Maybe Turks and Caicos drivers are not ready, but people need to get to work and school. Maybe we can allow BOTC citizens to register, or PRC if the need isn't being fulfilled.

We need to police it. Last but not least, we heard that training and mentorship will be mandatory. That's good on paper, but who's going to police that if the government can't even ensure it happens within its own ministries? How are you going to police it here? You're not doing it in government, so how can you do it in the private sector?

Sweep around our own front door first. Let us police this in government, make sure training and mentorship of young Turks and Caicos Islanders is happening, and that we continue to recruit and increase our budgets and housing. If we can't do it there, how can we do it elsewhere? I understand the need for this bill, but we cannot do this in isolation. We cannot favor one sector and leave the other to suffer.

We cannot say we are not prepared to risk one sector being impacted, but allow another to be impacted every day. That's where I rest on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - SECOND READING DEBATE

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to make my contributions to this Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026. There are concerns raised going through it and reading the explanatory memorandum. We do understand why the government is here to do it, but we have to ask ourselves, if we're doing this for this sector, did we consider other sectors that didn't get this kind of provision or attention? Other sectors that we passed legislation for didn't benefit from this kind of cushion or allowance.

For example, the taxi sector—illegal taxis and so—we said this sector is for Turks and Caicos Islanders only, and as of this date, anybody who is not a Turks and Caicos Islander cannot operate. However, for the real estate sector, you can be a PRC holder, a BOTC holder, and if you were operating before, you can continue.

Going forward, it is only for Turks and Caicos Islanders. This is probably why I stepped down from being a party leader, because I see things differently. You have to think not only about the big business people, but also the little people. The little people making $5, $10 a day did not get this provision, but the big people making millions in a transaction are given this provision.

For the little people, we say only Turks and Caicos Islanders can be in this sector, but for the big sector, PRC and BOTC holders can be grandfathered in. I am pro-Turks and Caicos Islands, but we have to have parity in bills. If it's good for one sector, it needs to be good for the next. One may argue that the jitneys are operating illegally, but did we check if any have an actual taxi license? We just shut them out, but we are allowing here.

If we're going all in for this sector, why not for the other? It has to be balanced. This sector impacts the sale of land, millions of dollars, while the other sector impacts ordinary citizens getting to work, to school, moving around. I've seen pictures of people having to walk into communities. We see what is happening, but are not doing anything to make sure ordinary citizens are not impacted so deeply by the laws we pass.

We make sure nothing impacts the sale of land, but not the daily lives of our people. I'm not against this bill, but if we're doing it for one, we have to do it for the next. What are the main differences? Both sectors have BOTC and PRC holders operating, but only one is allowed to continue. Why are we giving so much privilege to the real estate sector—the people with influence and money—but not to those just trying to make a living?

This sector is dominated by people of African descent; the other by people of European descent. Why is a Parliament of African descent giving so much privilege to people of European descent, but holding down our own? I withdraw the word 'coconuts' before you say it, Mr. Speaker. All I'm saying is, if we can do it for this sector, why can't we look at the other sector that impacts our people's lives? Maybe allow BOTC citizens to register, or PRC if the need isn't being fulfilled. We need to police this. Last but not least, we heard that training and mentorship will be mandatory.

That is good on paper, but who will police that, if the government cannot even do it within its own ministries? How are you going to do that here? You can't do it in your own house, but will do it elsewhere? Sweep around our own front door first. Make sure training and mentorship is working in government, then in the other sector. I understand the need for this bill, but we cannot do this in isolation. We cannot favor one sector and leave the other to suffer.

We cannot say we are not prepared to take a risk for one sector, but allow the other to be impacted daily. That's where I rest. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEBATE ON SECTORAL PARITY AND REAL ESTATE LEGISLATION

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Other sectors that we passed legislation for did not benefit from this kind of cushion or allowance, Mr. Speaker. For example, with the illegal taxis, we said this sector is for Turks and Caicos Islanders only, and as of this date, anyone who is not a Turks and Caicos Islander cannot operate in this sector. However, for the real estate sector, you can be a PRC holder, a BOTC holder, and if you were operating before, you can continue to operate.

Going forward, it is only for Turks and Caicos Islanders. This is probably why I had to step down from being a party leader, because I see things differently, and it would hinder my party from getting finances from big business people. We must think of the little people, not just the big business people. The little people making $5 or $10 a day did not get this provision, but the big people making millions in a transaction are given this provision.

For the little people, only Turks and Caicos Islanders can be in this sector, but for the big sector, PRC and BOTC holders can be grandfathered in. There is no grandfathering for the small sector. I am pro-Turks and Caicos Islands, but we must have parity in bills. If it is good for one sector, it should be good for the next.

One may argue that many jitney operators are operating illegally, but did we check if any have actual taxi licenses? We just shut them out, but we are allowing others here. If we are going all in for this sector, why not for the other? It has to be balanced. We as a country and Parliament must look at balance. One sector impacts the sale of land—millions of dollars.

The other impacts ordinary citizens getting to work, to school, moving around. I have seen pictures of people having to walk into communities because of this. We see what is happening but are not doing enough for those who need to get to work or get their children to school. We make sure nothing impacts the sale of land, but not the daily lives of our people.

I am not against this bill, but if we do it for one, we must do it for the other. I question the main differences between the people in these sectors. Both have BOTC and PRC holders operating, but only one is allowed to continue. Why are we giving so much privilege to the real estate sector—people with influence and money—while those barely getting by are not given any concession?

One sector is dominated by people of African descent, the other by people of European descent. Why is a Parliament of African descent giving so much privilege to people of European descent, but holding down people of our own descent? I withdraw the word 'coconuts' as unparliamentary. I am not lambasting the government, but asking that if we can do it for the sector making millions, why not for the sector impacting our people's lives? Our ordinary citizens cannot get to work or school on time because we did not make transitional provisions like we are now. Why not allow BOTC citizens to register and get legal, or form a company, so our citizens can get to work and children to school?

Why not bring the same energy to this as we do for the wealthy? People will say politicians do everything for those who donate to parties, just like in the US with oil companies. In Turks and Caicos, people will say politicians take care of those who donate, but not others. This is about all of us. We must avoid any appearance of bias or favoritism.

If we are not prepared to take risks for the sale of land, we must make provisions for the TCI-only sector as well. Maybe

allow BOTC or PRC citizens if needed. We must police this. Training and mentorship will be mandatory, but who will police that if government cannot ensure it in its own ministries? How will it be policed in the private sector? We must sweep around our own front door first—ensure training and mentorship in government, then in other sectors.

If we cannot do it in government, how can we do it elsewhere? I understand the need for this bill, but we cannot do this in isolation or favor one sector over another. We cannot refuse to take risks for one sector but allow another to be impacted daily. This affects our young, our old, our working population, our ordinary citizens. That is where I rest on this.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEBATE ON SECTOR PARITY AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS IN LEGISLATION

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Other sectors that we passed legislation for did not benefit from this kind of cushion or allowance, Mr. Speaker. For example, the taxi sector—illegal taxis—we said this sector is for Turks and Caicos Islanders only, and as of this date, anyone who is not a Turks and Caicos Islander cannot operate in this sector. However, for the real estate sector, you can be a PRC holder, a BOTC holder, and if you were operating before, you can continue to operate.

Going forward, it is only for Turks and Caicos Islanders. This is probably why I have to step down from being a party leader, because I see things differently, and it will hinder my party from getting finances from big business people. We must think not only of big business people, but also of the little people. The little people making $5 or $10 a day did not get this provision, but those making millions in a transaction are given this provision.

For the little people, only Turks and Caicos Islanders can be in this sector, but for the big sector, PRC and BOTC holders can be grandfathered in. There is no grandfathering for the small sector. I am pro-Turks and Caicos Islands, but we must have parity in bills. If it is good for one sector, it should be good for the next.

One may argue that in the jitney sector, many operate illegally, but did we check if any have a license? We just shut them out, but allow it here. If we are going all in for this sector, why not the other? It has to be balanced. As a country and a Parliament, we must look at balance. This sector will impact the sale of land, millions of dollars.

The other sector impacts ordinary citizens getting to work and school. One sector impacts land sales, one impacts daily life. I have seen pictures of people having to walk into communities because of this. We are not doing enough to ensure ordinary citizens can get to work and their children to school, but we are protecting land sales.

I am not against this bill, but if we do it for one, we must do it for the other. I start to question the main differences between the people in these sectors. Both have BOTC and PRC holders, but only one is allowed to continue. Why are we giving so much privilege to the real estate sector, dominated by people of European descent, while holding down the sector dominated by people of African descent?

Why is a Parliament of African descent giving privilege to people of European descent? I withdraw the word 'coconuts' as unparliamentary. I am not lambasting the government, but asking: if we can do it for the sector making millions, why not for the sector impacting people's lives? Our ordinary citizens cannot get to work or school on time because we did not make transitional provisions. Why not allow BOTC citizens to register and get legal, or form a company, to continue driving? Why not make the same provisions for ordinary citizens? People will say politicians do everything for those who donate to parties, as in the US with oil companies. In Turks and Caicos, they will say politicians take care of those who donate, but not others.

This applies to all parties. To correct that, we need the same energy for both sectors. The government is not prepared to risk the real estate industry, but is prepared to risk ordinary citizens' ability to get to work and school. If we are not prepared to risk land sales, we must make provisions for the other sector too.

Maybe allow BOTC or PRC citizens if needed. We need to police this. Training and mentorship will be mandatory, but who will police that if the government cannot ensure it in its own ministries? How will you police it in the private sector? Sweep around our own front door first. Make sure training and mentorship work in government before demanding it elsewhere.

If we cannot do it in government, how can we do it in other sectors? I understand the need for this bill, but we cannot do this in isolation. We cannot favor one sector and leave the other to suffer. We cannot refuse to risk one sector being impacted, but allow the other to be impacted daily. That is where I rest on this.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND TRANSITION TO MINISTER OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, for your contribution. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister of Public Safety for his contribution.

DEBATE ON REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMAN LICENSING AMENDMENT ACT 2026

Hon. Shaun David Malcolm:

Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to my Honourable colleagues in this House, Ms. McCartney in the

gallery. Mr. Speaker, I want to say good morning to the lovely people of these Turks and Caicos Islands, rather good afternoon to the lovely people of these Turks and Caicos Islands, of whom I am proud to be representing, from Kipskee to West Caicos and all in between.

Mr. Speaker, I too would like to register my condolences to many around these Turks and Caicos Islands, great families that are in mourning today. This weekend I will attend the funeral of the late Mr. Kenneth Hamilton, brother of Pastor Derek Hamilton and the Hamilton family, my good cousins out of Middle Caicos. I also want to pass on condolences to my

South Caicos family, the family of the late Miss Nene Bean, her sister here in Grand Turk, and her children Richard and Claudia and their families. And then, Mr. Speaker, Miss Dorothy Francis, a fixture here in North Back Salina, which I grew up right across. She was on the south side of Methodist Church, and I grew up on the north side. Her yard was better known as Hotel California, better known by Miss Nina, the late Miss Nina, Hotel California.

We're going to miss Miss Dada. She has certainly paid her debt here in these Turks and Caicos Islands, especially here in Grand Turk. And the family of the late Mr. Alfred. Thank you. I want to pass on my condolences to Mr. Smith, better known as Mac Smith, the Smith family.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to register our prayers for the people of Venezuela. As you know, there were two massive earthquakes a few hours ago. There is devastation, and we ought to pray for them today. Mr. Speaker, I rise to contribute to this bill. I am always beside myself when I hear my good learned friend cousin from the Leader of the Opposition when he makes his contribution. I was wondering if I was hearing right, that the Leader of the Opposition was actually making this amendment to this bill that seeks grandfathering persons who have been in the industry. We are talking about persons that would have been in the country, resident, working in this industry prior to 2024. But then they would have been working from the First Amendment.

He raised the issue of the illegal jitney, a comparison to a total illegal operation. He compared to a legal industry. You tell me, Mr. Speaker, how we could consider legalizing people who are working in an illegal industry. I don't want the public to get it wrong. We have reserved public transportation, fixed to the illegal jitneys with the community cabs, and it's reserved for Turks and Caicos Islanders, period. No BOTCs, PRCs, none of those Cs. Turks and Caicos Islanders. So he is wrong to raise such an issue with this amendment.

One must always look at doing the right thing. There are persons from many areas, not just the so-called fair-skinned people in this industry. There are persons who have been residents here from the Caribbean, our brothers and sisters, North America, Africa, they're all here. This country is a melting pot, and they are residents. They were in the industry, and the proper thing to do in hindsight, those who have made their residency here who's in the industry, is to regularize it. And that's what we seek to do.

This bill hasn't changed. From 2024 going forward, this industry is reserved for Turks and Caicos Islanders only. What it seeks to do is grandfather those who were in the industry and residents, PRC, whatever qualification that they hold to reside in this country. In the industry was regularizing. Grandfathering is normal anywhere in the world you go. If you're in an industry, you change the rules, those who are already in are in. And that's what this bill seeks to do. It has nothing to do with racism, and it has absolutely nothing to do with the jitney operation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do rise to support this bill. It is the right thing to do, so I support this amendment. Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Minister, for your contribution. Are there any further contributions? The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Education for her contribution.

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this bill. The Honourable Member for Kingston and the Islands. Mr. Speaker, I really don't know where to start. I was appalled to hear the Leader of the Opposition speaking to the fact that as a government we must lead by example.

So, Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to speak to how we as a government continue to be intentional in our efforts as we lead by example when it comes to internship and apprenticeship opportunities that commenced about five years ago under this progressive government. Allow me, before I dive into the speech, to speak to what currently exists. Our current apprentice list includes apprentices, and I want to call their names as well as where they are located within government and within the private sector.

We have De'Aja Smith, currently at the Sports Commission, Sports and Exercise Science. Balut Bean at the DECR, marine biology. Dilu Jean, InterHealth Canada, nursing. Dorian Lyburn, Invest TCI, business economics. Katisha Kennedy, InterHealth Canada, nursing. Kamal Cox, Sports Commission, Business Studies. Kendria Gillius, Radio Turks and Caicos, Business Management. Matthew Brooker, Statistics Authority, Mathematics and Physics.

Megan Gardner, InterHealth Nursing. Melo Popo, Paradise Smiles, Biological Science. Rovin Gardner, Law. F. Chambers. Janiyah Glinton, Una Glinton Primary School, teaching. That is our current apprentice list. They have finished their course of studies and they are currently working with us. There are always potential opportunities to transition into the workforce. Let me bring it closer to home to speak to those students who have been engaged in the apprenticeship program and currently found permanent place.

The list of apprentices who have entered permanent roles within their field: Michaela Ellis, Psychology, Department of

Rehabilitation. Mark Smith, Biomedical Science, National Health Laboratory. Psychology, Department of Family and Child Services. Human Resources Directorate. Nursing, Dental Department. Education, primary school. They were part of the apprentice program and transitioned into full employment. I always ask the Leader of the Opposition to do his homework before he comes and speaks, especially to initiatives that he knows we as a government are actively involved in because we believe in empowerment of our young people.

After this, over lunch, I will take the opportunity to speak with our Leader of the Opposition to bring him further up to date. I want to dive a little deeper into these internship opportunities. I am not sure if he heard on social media. We just graduated four students from the special needs program at the STEP Centre, aged 20 to 21. We have been intentional in our efforts because these four students now transition into apprenticeship programs. We have ensured that we partner with our private sector.

Two students will commence work experience, an internship program with Pelican Energy, another with Brother Oscar Talbot at his company. One of our young ladies is interested in cosmetology, so our beloved Nakia under care therapy will be taking that student. We are becoming a more inclusive government. When it comes to internship and apprenticeship, we have also factored in our special needs students. I thought it necessary to bring clarity to that. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of the Real Estate Brokers and Salesman Licensing Amendment Act 2026.

The bill represents a balanced and forward-looking approach to strengthening one of the most important sectors of our economy while ensuring fairness, continuity, and opportunity for our people. At its core, this bill provides two essential pillars: extended transitional provisions for long-serving individuals in the industry and strengthening training, mentorship, and apprenticeship requirements to support the development of Turks and Caicos Islanders. The amendments to Section 5 to Sections 6 and 7 bring clarity and accountability to the licensing process by requiring proof of legal status, proof of ordinary residence, and evidence of longstanding engagement. The bill ensures that those who benefit from the extended grandfathering arrangements are those who have genuinely contributed to the sector over time.

The bill also defines ordinary resident as being physically present in the island for at least 183 days in 12 consecutive months. This simply means you must actually live here most of the year to be treated as a resident for licensing purposes. The 183-day rule ensures that the people benefiting from these transitional arrangements are genuinely part of our society, not just passing through it. It is a safeguard to ensure fairness and integrity.

The extended grandfathering provisions— in Clause 8— strike the right balance between fairness and regulatory integrity. Individuals who have been actively engaged as salesmen for at least five years as of December 30th, 2024, may continue for a further two-year period, provided they apply within the required timeframe and meet the documentation requirements. This ensures continuity while the sector transitions fully to the standards set out in the Principal Act. As Minister responsible for Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, I particularly welcome the introduction of Section 7A, which mandates structured training, mentorship, internships and apprenticeships within every licensed brokerage.

This is a transformative step. It places a legal obligation on brokers to invest in the development of Turks and Caicos Islanders and bear the associated costs. This is how we build competence, confidence, and long-term professional capacity. The enabling amendment to Section 33 allowing regulations to prescribe the terms and procedures for these programs ensures that the framework will be detailed, enforceable, and in line with national workforce development goals.

I must say that I had the opportunity to visit our high schools as our students transition from secondary into the workforce or to tertiary education, and when asked the question, What are your plans for the future? I was pleased to hear that some of the students were interested in real estate. There we go, Mr. Speaker, providing that opportunity. This bill is not simply an administrative update. It is a strategic investment in our human capital.

It creates structured pathways, and as Minister of Education, that is what we are doing— solidifying our pathways to success for our students. As this creates structured pathways, Turks and Caicos Islanders are now able to enter into this lucrative industry. It strengthens professional standards, supports practical learning, and ensures that the industry continues to evolve in a way that is inclusive, transparent, and sustainable. For these reasons, I fully support the bill.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMAN LICENSING AMENDMENT ACT 2026 - SECOND READING

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Minister, for your contribution. Are there any further contributions? There being no further contributions, I will ask the Honourable Deputy Premier to wrap up the debate and to commit the bill to the committee.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks for the support from my colleagues and the contribution from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Even though it's a straightforward bill with narrow provisions, as he mentioned, he's stepping down from leadership and wanted to make one last contribution. For clarity for the listening public, the grandfathering provisions we are making now are nothing unusual. It is a simple modification of the 2004 grandfathering provisions.

Previously, whether you were a work permit holder, PRC, or otherwise, once you were operating, you could be there. But this narrows it to British Overseas Territory citizenships with a

connection to the islands and a permanent residency certificate. That means you would have been living here at least ten years in one instance, and maybe five plus, but you definitely have a connection to the island. These aren't people we don't know.

The Leader of the Opposition is suggesting that rather than making things Turks and Caicos Islander only, he and his party would prefer us to open it up and let everybody continue to operate as they would, which we do not support. Generally, I can wrap up quickly, but I want the Leader of the Opposition and those listening to take on a little bit of Kenny Rogers' song: Sometimes you got to know when to hold them, know when to fold them, know when to walk away, and know when to run. You never count your money while you're sitting at the table; there will be time enough for counting when the dealing's done. That's a metaphor of prudence and good governance.

Don't think the fight is in this government, but we know we have more fights to fight. You don't get in a battle you may lose and give others confidence they can beat you. It's better to retreat and save your men, figuratively speaking, to have a better outcome in future battles. While the Leader of the Opposition mentioned industries and parties receiving funding from these industries over time, we are not a preferred party from those industries because everything we are pushing is Turks and Caicos Islanders first and empowerment of our people.

We know what we are up against, so we are picking our battles. We've got our legal advice, and we took it. We are going to prepare for the next battle, because there will be more. Maybe others have the money to drag us into court to find out whether what we're doing meets the constitutional test. That can happen.

But the will is there, and we'll continue, because this is a great bill overall. The amendments and the direction are solid. Change is hard. For the last twenty years, since the introduction of the 2004 bill, persons were able to operate with impunity. Before then, it was the wild, wild west. We tried to do something twenty years ago, it didn't stick. We do a little more now, so we can make grants for the next twenty or fifty years.

It's about the future while trying to correct as much of the past as we can. Grandfathering isn't anything new. Lastly, in the 2024 version, we did not have the requirement for mentorship, training, internship, and apprenticeship. That is groundbreaking. Anyone who knows real estate knows that in most instances, salesmen only worry about themselves, brokers worry about the bottom line. Whoever can get the sale done, that's who they go with. This requires them to implement training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship programs. It's a must.

I understand the Leader of the Opposition's concern about enforcement, which is an overall challenge in this country, but we must turn the page. As part of the licensing requirement, which will be included in the regulations, they will have to show proof of these training programs if they want to continue to be licensed. That is what the law will say once passed. You could try to bluff, but you'll have to show receipts on what you've been doing, the cost, the hours, and how those in the programs are benefiting.

We're trying a new thing, and we believe it will work. So, Mr. Speaker, I move pursuant to Section Order 93 that the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be referred to the Committee of the Whole. Do I have a seconder?

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks for the support from my colleagues and the contribution from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. For clarity, the grandfathering provisions we are making now are nothing unusual. This is a simple modification of the 2004 grandfathering provisions. Previously, whether you were a work permit holder, PRC, or otherwise, you could operate.

Now, this narrows to British Overseas Territory citizens with a connection to the islands and permanent residency certificate holders, meaning you must have lived here at least 10 years, or 5 plus, but definitely have a connection to the island. These are not people we don't know. The Leader of the Opposition suggests making things open to all, but we do not support that. We are putting Turks and Caicos Islanders first.

We have taken legal advice and are preparing for future challenges. The amendments are solid and about the future, while correcting as much of the past as we can. Grandfathering is not new. Importantly, the 2024 version now requires mentorship, training, internship, and apprenticeship for brokers—this is groundbreaking. Enforcement will be addressed in the regulations, and proof of these programs will be required for licensing. We are trying something new that we believe will work. Mr. Speaker, I move pursuant to Section Order 93 that the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be referred to the Committee of the Whole. Do I have a seconder?

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMAN LICENSING AMENDMENT ACT 2026 - SECOND READING DEBATE AND REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks for the support from my colleagues and the contribution from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Even though it's a straightforward bill with narrow provisions, as he mentioned, he's stepping down from leadership and wanted to make one last contribution. For clarity for the listening public, the grandfathering provisions we are making now are nothing unusual. It is a simple modification of the 2004 grandfathering provisions.

Previously, whether you were a work permit holder, PRC, or otherwise, once you were operating, you could be there. This now narrows to British Overseas Territory citizenships with a connection to the islands and a permanent residency certificate. That means you would have been living here at least ten years in one instance, maybe five plus, but you definitely have a connection to the island. These aren't people we don't know.

The idea of making things Turks and Caicos Islander only, as the Leader of the Opposition suggests, is not something we support. We are for Turks and Caicos Islanders first and empowerment of our people. We know what we are up against, so we are picking our battles. We've got our legal advice, and we took it. We are going to prepare for the next battle, because there will be more. Maybe others have the money to drag us to court to test whether what we're doing meets the constitutional test. That can happen.

But the will is there, and we'll continue to do what is needed. This is a great bill overall, and the direction is solid. Change is hard. For the last twenty years, since the introduction of the 2004 bill, persons were able to operate with impunity. Before then, it was the wild west. We tried to do something twenty years ago, it didn't stick. We do a little more now, so we can make grants for the next twenty or fifty years.

It's about the future while correcting as much of the past as we can. Grandfathering isn't anything new. In the last, the 2024 version, December 30th version, we did not have the requirement for mentorship, training, internship, and apprenticeship. That is groundbreaking. Anyone who knows real estate knows that in most instances, salesmen only worry about themselves, brokers about the bottom line. This now requires them to implement training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship programs. It's a must. Enforcement is a challenge, but we must turn the page.

As part of the licensing requirement, which will be detailed in the regulations, they will have to show proof of these training programs if they want to continue to be licensed. That's what the law will say once passed. You will have to show receipts and evidence of what you've been doing, the cost, hours, and how those in the programs are benefiting. We're trying a new thing, and we believe it will work.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move pursuant to Section Order 93 that the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be referred to the Committee of the Whole. Do I have a seconder?

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks for the support from my colleagues and the contribution from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. For clarity, the grandfathering provisions in this bill are not unusual; they are a modification of the 2004 provisions. This narrows eligibility to British Overseas Territory citizens with a connection to the islands and permanent residency certificate holders, meaning those with at least 10 years' residence or a strong connection. The Leader of the Opposition suggests opening up the industry further, but we do not support that.

This is about prudence and good governance—knowing when to pick your battles. We are focused on Turks and Caicos Islanders first. We have taken legal advice and are preparing for future challenges. The bill overall is a strong amendment and the direction is solid. Change is hard, but necessary. For decades, the industry operated with little regulation. Now, we are correcting the past and planning for the future. Importantly, the 2024 version introduces mandatory mentorship, training, internship, and apprenticeship programs for brokers, which is groundbreaking.

Enforcement will be part of the licensing requirement, and proof of these programs will be needed for license renewal. We are trying something new, and we believe it will work. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move pursuant to Section Order 93 that the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Shaun David Malcolm:

Second.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Deputy Premier and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Public Safety that the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 now be referred to the Committee of the Whole. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it.

Honourable Members, we have passed the 1 PM hour, so we will take our break now. But I would like to call on our return from break the Honourable Member for Cheshire Hall and Richmond Hill, to preside in the Committee of the Whole. This Honourable Parliament is hereby suspended. All rise.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE

Speaker I:

Clause 6, Section 7A inserted.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Clause 6, Section 7A inserted.

Speaker C:

Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Honourable Deputy Premier.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 6

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Mr. Chairman, I move that Clause 6 now stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Speaker C:

Moved by Honourable Deputy Premier, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Clause 6 stands part of the Bill. All in favour, aye. All to the contrary, no.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Moved by Honourable Deputy Premier, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Clause 6 stands part of the Bill. All in favour, aye. All to the contrary, no.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 6

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Aye.

Speaker C:

Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 6 now stands part of the Bill. All in favour, aye. All to the contrary, no. Madam Clerk.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 6 now stands part of the Bill. All in favour, aye. All to the contrary, no. Madam Clerk.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 7

Clerk:

Clause 7, Section 33 amended.

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move that Clause 7 now stands part of the bill.

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Moved by Honourable Deputy Premier. Seconded by Honourable Minister of Public Safety. Are there any contributions? Elected Member for the Bight.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Good afternoon. Through the Chair, to the Deputy Premier, the bill requires brokers to provide these programs, but it does not clearly explain how they will be monitored, measured, or enforced. What happens if a broker fails to establish an internship program? Who will inspect compliance and what penalties will apply?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the member for the Bight for the question. These terms will be prescribed by the Ministry of Finance and Regulations regarding how the training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship programs are administered and managed. The requirement in the law is that these programs must happen as a condition of licensing. On each licensing period, which is renewed annually, the application process will require demonstration that these

programs exist and are being utilized.

You cannot be licensed unless you operate and run these programs. The penalty is the inability to be properly licensed if you do not have these programs as part of your commitment.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the member for the Bight for the question. These terms will be prescribed by the Ministry of Finance and Regulations regarding how the training, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship programs are administered and managed. The requirement in the law is that these programs must happen as a condition of licensing. Each licensing period, renewed annually, will require demonstration that these programs exist and are utilized.

Failure to comply will result in inability to be properly licensed.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 7

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

How many islanders are expected to be trained each year?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Those standards and minimums will be considered as part of the regulation development, which we do not have in front of us today, so I would not venture to say specifically how many will be proposed annually.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Those standards and minimums will be considered as part of regulation development, which we do not have before us today, so I cannot specify annual targets at this time.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 7

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Honourable Deputy Premier, my question is if one should apply under this new Amendment and the evidence is rejected, is there a formal appeal process for those that are rejected based on this amendment? Who do they appeal to or where do they appeal?

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Honourable Deputy Premier, my question is if an application under this new Amendment is rejected, is there a formal appeal process? Who do they appeal to?

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 7

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Just give me one second. Just want to confirm.

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Okay.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you for the question. The ability to appeal a decision, including in relation to producing proof of compliance with the training, mentorship, etc. program, is found in the amendments from 2024-13B. That appeal would be to the Magistrates Court for licensing purposes.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you for the question. The ability to appeal a licensing decision, including compliance with training and mentorship requirements, is found in amendment 2024-13B. The appeal would be to the Magistrates Court.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 7

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Any other contribution? Honourable Member for the Bay.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Just for clarity, I know you said it's a part of the requirement to have the license to do the mentorship, but who will do the inspections for compliance, or would they have to report every year that they did so much training and apprenticeship programs to ensure they keep their licenses and our people are benefiting?

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the member from the Bight for that question. Those provisions will be prescribed in the ordinance. We have not finalized those, so we will reach out to members for feedback in finalizing the parameters under which they will have to operate. This will be captured in the regulations that will come shortly after this bill is passed.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the member from the Bight for that question. The specifics of compliance and reporting will be prescribed in the ordinance and finalized in the regulations after this bill is passed. We will seek input from members in developing these parameters.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 7

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Any further contribution?

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Mr. Chair, I just wanted to confirm, I heard a moment ago there was a discussion about conditions and enforcement, which the Honourable Deputy Premier responded to. In terms of appeals, there are suspension provisions in the 2024 amendment. Clause 7 has a heading, Conditions of License for a Broker. It may be useful to add language into the substantive provision to make it clear that this is a condition of the licence and would trigger the enforcement provisions in the principal legislation.

May I have a minute to confer with the Honourable Deputy Premier?

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

This honourable committee is suspended for 5 minutes.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Attorney General.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 7A AMENDMENT

Hon. Rhondalee M. Braithwaite-Knowles, OBE, KC:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for your indulgence and the committee. To address the concern raised in the debate, I move that in Clause 7A, at the beginning, before the words 'a person', there be inserted 'as a condition for a license, a person'. The capital A becomes a small a. It would read: 'as a condition for a license, a person, company, or partnership licensed as a broker shall.' I so move, Mr. Chair.

Do I have a seconder? In clause 7A, on page 4, the words 'as a condition for a license' would be inserted at the start.

AMENDMENT TO CLAUSE 7A - REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Motion moved by the AG, seconded by the Deputy Premier, that in Clause 7, page 4, at the top, as a condition for a license, small 'a', a person, company, or partnership licensed as a broker shall— All in favor, aye. All to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Any further contributions? There being no further contribution, the question is that Clause 7 stands part of the bill.

All in favour, aye. Clause 7 stands.

COMMITTEE STAGE - REAL ESTATE BROKERS

AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Rhondalee M. Braithwaite-Knowles, OBE, KC:

That's Clause 6.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Oh, we're introducing Clause 6. Yes. That the amendment in Clause 6 stands part of the bill. All in favour, aye. All to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Clause 7, we finished. Are there any further contributions in Clause 7? There being no further contributions in Clause 7, the question is that Clause 7 stands part of the bill.

All in favor, aye. All to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

COMMITTEE STAGE - REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - CLAUSE 8

Clerk:

Clause 8, transitional provisions.

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Clause 8 now stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Second.

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Moved by the Deputy Premier, seconded by the Minister for Education, that Clause 8 stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. All to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

I have an amendment, Mr. Chair. Do you have an amendment?

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Honourable Deputy Premier.

AMENDMENT TO CLAUSE 8 - REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. If we all look to the motion to amend, and to save some reading because it's going to be Clause 8B that I'm looking at, I'm going to summarize the provisions for the listening public, and then make the motion to amend in accordance with what is outlined on the paper in front of us. Essentially, in Clause 8, the amendment is to ensure that the transitional period for persons ordinarily resident also applies to those with the 2-year window if they don't qualify for long-term continuance in the industry. This is being added in terms of the passport, utility bill, etc.

Also, to have a clearer definition of 'ordinarily resident in the islands', meaning being physically present in the islands for 183 days in consecutive years, etc. So that's what that provision does, but it lays it out in greater detail. With that, Mr. Chair, I move that the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 is amended in Clause 8 as given in the motion to amend. Do I have a seconder?

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE CLAUSE 8 AMENDMENT

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Referring to the motion to amend, focusing on Clause 8B, I will summarize for the public and then make the motion to amend as outlined on the paper before us. The amendment ensures that the transitional period for persons ordinarily resident also applies to those with the 2-year window if they do not qualify for long-term continuance in the industry. It also provides a clearer definition of 'ordinarily resident in the islands', meaning being physically present for 183 days in consecutive years.

With that, I move that the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 is amended in Clause 8 as given in the motion to amend. Do I have a seconder?

AMENDMENT TO CLAUSE 8 - REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Motion moved by our Deputy Premier, seconded by our Honourable Minister for Education, that the complete amendment in Clause 8 as listed here stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. All to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions? Honourable DP? Honourable Member for South Caicos.

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS - REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is for the Honourable Deputy Premier. How many persons are expected to benefit from the transitional provisions?

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you very much. The first thing in this transitional provision is in relation to persons that don't meet the minimum of 5 years in the industry or any of the others to be long-term. We wouldn't know specifically because they have to apply. Some persons might want to transition out altogether, but based on the numbers we are aware of, in terms of all the transitional persons, it's no more than about 10 to 15 that might fall in the BOTC/PRC or that would fall out of meeting the minimum 5 years.

So anywhere between there, that's what we know from the assessments. If there are other persons operating outside of what we became aware of, then once they meet the requirements as laid out, they would be eligible. Our numbers are looking like 10 to 15 would fall in these categories.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE CLAUSE 8 TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you very much. The first thing in this transitional provision relates to persons who do not meet the minimum of 5 years in the industry or other requirements for long-term status. We would not know specifically because they have to apply; some may choose to transition out. Based on our knowledge, there are about 10 to 15 who might fall in the BOTC/PRC or not meet the minimum 5 years.

If others have been operating outside our awareness but meet the requirements, they would also be eligible. Our numbers suggest 10 to 15 would fall in these categories.

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS - REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the Deputy Premier, why is another extension necessary?

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE CLAUSE 8 TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Thank you. To the Deputy Premier, why is another extension necessary?

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS - REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you very much, and great question. Given that this was an ongoing matter and we were actively in negotiations, looking at the prospect of court, the matter wasn't settled. Now that it's settled, it's only prudent to allow those persons that would not qualify for long-term ability to continue in the industry to have a period to transition out, wrap up their affairs, and move on. So it's just a normal transitional period.

Thank you.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - COMMITTEE STAGE CLAUSE 8 TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you very much. Given that this was an ongoing matter and we were in negotiations, including the prospect of court, the matter was not settled. Now that it is settled, it is prudent to allow those not qualifying for long-term status to have a period to transition out, wrap up their affairs, and move on from the industry. It is a normal transitional period.

Thank you.

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS - REAL ESTATE

BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Great. Mr. Chair.

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Honourable Deputy Premier.

FURTHER AMENDMENT TO CLAUSE 8 - REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Just one amendment to my amendment, on number 5, for the purpose of this section, that the words 'any year' be deleted in the last line, so it reads: 'ordinarily resident in the islands means being physically present in the islands for at least 183 days in 12 consecutive months of the preceding year.' I so move.

Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Shaun David Malcolm:

Second.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Amendment moved by Honourable Deputy Premier, seconded by Honourable Minister of Public Safety, that in the last paragraph, an amendment to remove 'any year', so it would read: 'ordinarily resident in the island, meaning being physically present in the island for at least 183 days in 12 consecutive months of the preceding year.' All in favour, aye.

All to the contrary, no.

CONCLUSION OF COMMITTEE STAGE - REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Ayes have it. There being no further contributions, the question is that Clause 8 stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. All to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Honourable members, we have come to the end of this committee, and this committee is now suspended to allow the Speaker to take the chair.

HOUSE RESUMES SITTING AFTER COMMITTEE STAGE

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable members, this Honourable House now resumes its sitting. Please be seated. Honourable Member.

REPORT ON PASSAGE OF BILLS FROM COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Hon. Samuel Ernest Been:

Mr. Speaker, we have concluded the deliberations on Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026, and I am pleased to say it has passed without amendments. The Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 has passed this House with amendments. With that, Mr. Speaker, I hand it over to you.

THIRD READING OF BILLS - INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much. Honourable members, I want to thank the Honourable Member from Cheshire Hall and Richmond Hill for presiding in the Committee of the Whole and overseeing the passage of these two bills. I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are still at Orders of the Day, and we are now at the 3rd reading of bills. We'll have the 3rd reading of the Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026, to be moved by the Honourable Premier.

THIRD READING OF INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move pursuant to Standing Order 99 that the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 be read for a 3rd time. Do I have a seconder?

FIRST READING OF BILLS

INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026 - THIRD READING

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Second.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Education that the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 now be read a 3rd time. All in favor say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

This ordinance may be cited as the Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Act 2026 and shall come into operation on publication in the Gazette.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. Honorable Premier.

INVEST TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS AGENCY VALIDATION BILL 2026 - PASSAGE

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Mr. Speaker, I move that pursuant to Standing Order 99.5, that the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 do now pass. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Second.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - THIRD READING

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Deputy Premier that the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 do now pass. All in favor say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Honourable members, the bill entitled Invest Turks and Caicos Islands Agency Validation Bill 2026 do now pass. I'll return to the Order Paper, and we are still at the 3rd reading of bills. We'll now have the 3rd reading of the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026, to be moved by the Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move pursuant to Standing Order 99 that the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be read a 3rd time. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Deputy Premier and seconded by the Honourable Minister for Public Safety that the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 be now read a 3rd time. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it.

Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

This act may be cited as the Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Act 2026 and shall come into operation on publication in the Gazette.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. Honourable Deputy Premier.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND SALESMEN LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - PASSAGE

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that pursuant to Standing Order 99, that the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 do now pass. Do I have a second?

STATEMENT BY MINISTERS

TRANSITION TO MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable members, motion moved by the Honourable Deputy Premier and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Education that the bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 do now pass. All in favor say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. The bill entitled Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 do now pass. I'll now return to the order paper, and we are now at 2-minute speeches. Are there any contributions? There are no 2-minute speeches. I move on with the order paper.

The Ministerial Statements come after the 2-minute speeches.

Petitions? There are none. Government Notices? There are none. Private Members' Notices? There are none. Notices of Questions? There are none. Reports from Committees? There are none. Statements from Ministers? Honourable Members, we have a statement from the Minister of Public Safety, Gender and Religious Affairs and Social Welfare for his Ministerial Statement. Honourable Minister.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY, GENDER AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Hon. Shaun David Malcolm:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to bring a brief ministerial statement on the works of the Ministry of Public Safety, Gender and Religious Affairs, and Social Welfare over the last three months. The future is not something we wait for. It is something we build with courage, unity, and purpose.

I rise this afternoon with profound pride and a deep sense of responsibility to update this Honourable House and this nation on the transformative work unfolding within the Ministry. These initiatives represent more than policy decisions; they embody our national commitment to hope, healing, and meaningful progress. I turn first to the 50th anniversary of ministerial government. This year marks the 50th anniversary of ministerial government in the Turks and Caicos Islands—five decades of growth, resilience, and democratic achievements.

Our people have demonstrated that nation-building is not a single event, but an enduring journey shaped by the hands, hearts, and sacrifice of those who came before us. As we commemorate this milestone, we renew our solemn promise to build a safer, stronger, and more prosperous Turks and Caicos Islands for generations yet to come. I turn to our National Prayer Breakfast. As part of these celebrations, the Ministry is honoured to host the 6th Annual National Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, July 18th, 2026, under the theme 'Faith in Our Journey, Hope for Our Future.' This year's gathering carries special significance as it forms an integral part of our national observance of 50 years of ministerial governance.

We are deeply honored that Her Excellency the Most Honourable Dame Cynthia Alexandra Pratt, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, has graciously accepted our invitation to deliver the keynote. The National Prayer Breakfast remains a powerful symbol of unity, bringing together leaders from government, the church, civil society, and the wider public to seek divine wisdom and guidance for our nation. I turn to the Caribbean Postal Union Conference. I also wish to highlight a recent regional engagement that underscores our commitment to excellence and collaboration.

I had the privilege of attending the 28th Conference of the Caribbean Postal Union in Nassau, Bahamas, accompanied by our Acting Deputy Permanent Secretary and the Postmaster General. The conference focused on building a modern, resilient, and customer-focused postal network in the Caribbean. It reinforced a truth that extends far beyond postal services: regional cooperation strengthens us all. The gathering brought together policymakers, postal administrators, and regional stakeholders to discuss modernization, innovation, digital transformation, operational resilience, and enhanced cooperation amongst our Caribbean nations.

The lessons learned—innovation, resilience, and shared best practices—are equally vital to our public safety agenda in the Turks and Caicos Islands, where partnership and coordination are essential to our lasting success. I turn to the works we are doing in rehabilitation. My government remains steadfast in our commitment to progress compassionate and evidence-based approaches to crime prevention and rehabilitation in this country.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY, GENDER AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Hon. Shaun David Malcolm:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to bring a brief ministerial statement on the works of the Ministry of Public Safety, Gender and Religious Affairs, and Social Welfare over the last 3 months. The future is not something we wait for; it is something we build with courage, unity, and purpose. I rise this afternoon with profound pride and a deep sense of responsibility to update this Honourable House and the nation on the transformative work unfolding within the Ministry.

These initiatives represent more than policy decisions; they embody our national commitment to hope, healing, and meaningful progress. This year marks the 50th anniversary of ministerial government in the Turks and Caicos Islands—five decades of growth, resilience, and democratic achievements. As we commemorate this milestone, we renew our promise to build a safer, stronger, and more prosperous nation. As part of these celebrations, the Ministry will host the 6th Annual National Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, July 18th, 2026, under the theme 'Faith in Our Journey, Hope for Our Future.' We are honored that Her Excellency Dame Cynthia Alexandra Pratt, Governor-General of the Bahamas, will deliver the keynote.

The National Prayer Breakfast is a symbol of unity, bringing together leaders from government, the church, civil society, and the wider public to seek divine wisdom and guidance. I also wish to highlight the 28th Conference of the Caribbean Postal Union in Nassau, Bahamas, which I attended with our Acting Deputy Permanent Secretary and the Postmaster General. The conference focused on building a modern, resilient, and customer-focused postal network in the Caribbean, emphasizing regional cooperation, innovation, and resilience. These lessons are vital to our public safety agenda, where partnership and coordination are essential.

My government remains steadfast in our commitment to compassionate and evidence-based approaches to crime prevention and rehabilitation.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON PUBLIC SAFETY, GENDER AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that the Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility remains on schedule to become operational in September 2026. This facility represents a major investment in the future of our young people and forms an important pillar of my government's wider crime prevention strategy. Let me be absolutely clear, this is not a prison.

Rather, it is designed to provide a safe, structured, and rehabilitative environment for young persons who are considered at risk and who cannot be appropriately managed within the community setting. We recently welcomed consultants from the Carey Group who worked closely with local stakeholders to develop the policy and operational framework that will guide the facility's work. Our goal is simple but profound: to intervene early, uplift early, and restore early, reducing the likelihood of future offending and empowering young people to become productive. Our halfway house is also advancing in plans.

The invitation to tender documents has been completed and is now under review by the Public Works Department. Once finalized, I will be forwarding those documents to the procurement departments for publication. The halfway house will provide accommodation, treatment, supervision, and support for individuals in the criminal justice system who are battling substance abuse and addiction. By addressing the root causes of offending, we're not only strengthening public safety, we are restoring dignity, rebuilding families, and renewing hope.

We are excited as a country because for the first time, this country will be hosting the Caribbean Association of Probation and Parole Conference. Another major milestone on the horizon—the third conference, which will be held from the 2nd to the 4th of September, 2026, at the Ritz-Carlton Turks and Caicos Islands. Under the theme 'Leveraging Probation and Parole as Effective Crime Reduction Strategy in the Caribbean,' this conference will bring together delegates from across the Caribbean, the United States, and the United Kingdom. This gathering will provide an important platform for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and the development of innovative strategies aimed at strengthening probation and parole systems throughout the Caribbean region.

These initiatives I have outlined today are not isolated efforts. They form part of a unified national vision—a vision of a modern, compassionate, and effective public safety system that protects our communities while uplifting those who have fallen behind. In the ministry, we are building these Turks and Caicos Islands where families are being strengthened, vulnerable individuals are being supported, rehabilitation is prioritized, communities are becoming safer, and every person in this country has the opportunity to rise. I close today and admonish the public to focus on the ministry and my government as we continue to work for them to make this country safer through the Ministry of Public Safety.

May we continue to work together, steadfast, united, and inspired in pursuing justice, rehabilitation, public safety, and national progress. I thank you for your time. Good afternoon.

SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION MADE SINCE MARCH 2026

PROCEDURAL BUSINESS AND SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Minister of Public Safety, for your ministerial statement. I will now return to the Order Paper. Personal explanations—there were none. Motions for leave of absence—I received applications from the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs, the Honourable Minister of MITE, the Honourable Minister of Immigration—pardon? Sorry, PPID, former Minister of Immigration.

The Honourable Deputy Speaker, and the Honourable 7th All Island member. The 9th? Oh yes, the Honourable Knight and also the Honourable Minister of Health. I will return to the Order Paper. Oral replies to questions, there were none. Notices of motion for the adjournment of the Parliament on matters requiring urgent consideration, there were none. Subsidiary legislation made since May 2026: Legal Notice 5 of 2026, Business Licensing Extension of Time Regulations 2026, and Legal Notice 6 of 2026, Beach and Coastal Zoning Amendment Regulations 2026. Honourable Premier, we have now completed the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN AND CONDOLENCES

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just before I call for an adjournment, I'd like to add my voice to the chorus of sympathies that have been expressed in the House today to the various families, some of which may not have been mentioned, and some of which I may not mention, because it just seems that things are happening so rapidly.

But in particular, I would like to express deepest condolences to the family of Dada Bain, Francis, to Mrs. Max Smith and her family, to Elaine Bain's family, to Ivy Hanfield's family. And then I believe there were some others that were mentioned. So I would just say again that we sympathize with you, we empathize with you at this time, and know that you are in our thoughts and prayers, and that the good Lord doesn't lay more on us than we can bear.

So in that respect, we hold hands and we mourn with you. I would also like to express congratulations to those students who have been successful in the ARN exams, and congratulations to those who are graduating and to those persons who are celebrating happy times in their lives, whether it be a christening, anniversary, a birthday, wedding, or anything else that is significant. With that said, Mr. Speaker, I move that this House now stands adjourned sine die.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, this Honourable House now stands adjourned sine die.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

All rise.