First (1st) Sitting of the Fifteenth (15th) Meeting of the First Session of the Thirteenth (13th) Legislature

THE PARLIAMENT OF TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

8 JANUARY 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 want to call this first sitting of the 15th meeting of the first session of the 13th Legislature of the Parliament of the Turks and Caicos Islands to order. Honourable Members, I would now like to call on our Chaplain, Bishop Coleta Williams III, to pray for this Parliament.

OPENING PRAYER AND INVOCATION

Chaplain:

Micah chapter 6 and verse 8. He has shown thee, O mortal man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? As we begin this new parliamentary year, the Lord requires us to act justly, love mercy, kindness, and walk humbly with our God. As stated in the prophet Micah's famous passage, this means living and serving with fairness and showing compassion and faithful love to others and maintaining a humble God-focusedness.

Lifestyle rather than one of self-importance or pride, which serves as a framework for following God's teaching. To act justly is to do what is right, fair in all your dealings, especially towards the vulnerable and the disenfranchised. To love mercy, kindness, to show compassion, loyal and generous love, reflecting God's character. To walk humbly with your God.

To live a life of faith, putting God first and recognizing that his ways is the right way and not seeking self-importance. In essence, God is asking for a heart that seeks righteousness, doing what is right, extend love, and acknowledge him in all aspects of our life, going beyond mere external performance. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we acknowledge you as our Creator, Sustainer, and Savior through Jesus Christ, who is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

We thank you for your many blessings bestowed upon us, and we celebrate your abundant goodness. Your mercies are great and worthy to be praised. As we stand in this Parliament, in this first session, in this new year, great is your faithfulness. As we begin anew our journey to pursue, we pray now for our Speaker.

Bless him and his family and give to him your power to lead and the spirit to discern with fairness and firmness. Bless our Premier and his family. We pray for courage and strength and wisdom, for heavy is the head that wears the crown. Bless our Leader of the Opposition and his family.

Grant him your strength and wisdom as he also leads a people. Bless our Attorney General, her family. Give to her the gift of wisdom and sound legal counsel. We pray, Lord, for all members of this Parliament, your blessing upon them and their family, for your peace and protection.

Give to them patience of cooperation. As they debate, clarity of thought as they decide, courage for truth and fairness. Bless our Clerk and all the staff of the Parliament and their family. Bless this Parliament with a productive year. Bless this country with peace, protection, and prosperity. In Jesus' name we pray.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Chaplain:

The Lord's Prayer. Our Father, which 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 us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

CONCLUSION OF PRAYER AND TRANSITION TO BUSINESS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Amen. Please be seated. Honourable Premier.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 12 TO SIT BEYOND 6 PM

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Yes. Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning to our support staff from the Attorney General's Chambers in the gallery and other support staff from ministries. Good morning, everybody. Gallery, Turks and Caicos, people listening via Radio Turks and Caicos and other streaming media at home and abroad. Good morning and Happy New Year to everyone under the sound of my voice. I have a lot to thank the Lord for.

We have come through a peaceful holiday season. And for those of you who have gone on holiday and back, we have got a lot of work to do in 2026, so I hope you come with fresh ideas and vigour so that we can work hard and deliver for the people of our beautiful Turks and Caicos.

Mr. Speaker, I will have more to say as I anticipate, we will have a 2-minute speech and other opportunities, so I will start now with the business in the front of the House today. That said, Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by reordering the paper.

And so, 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?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Second.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and 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.

MOTION TO REARRANGE ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR GOVERNMENT PRECEDENCE

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 49, I wish to rearrange the business of this honourable Parliament so that government business can have precedence over all the other business. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, I move that item number 6, papers, be taken as item number 4, item number 17, orders of the day, be taken as item number 5.

PAPERS

TRANSITION TO LAYING OF SECOND SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ESTIMATES 2025/2026

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Premier. I want to again welcome all of the members here this morning to this meeting of Parliament, our first meeting for the new year, 2026. And I, along with the Premier, as he said earlier, I want to also wish everyone here this morning a happy new year, seeing that this is our first meeting for the new year.

I also want to welcome persons who are in the gallery and persons who are listening via Radio Turks and Caicos and also on our livestream platforms. I want to send out condolences for persons who we have lost since I was last in Parliament. And also, I want to wish all of our students that were home for the holiday season safe travels back to their respective schools.

I will now return to the order paper. Messages from Her Excellency the Governor? There are none. Number 4, papers. And we'll now have the Second Supplementary Appropriation Estimates 2025/2026 to be laid by the Honourable Premier and Minister for Finance, Economic Development, Investment and Trade. Honourable Premier. Before we start, can I ask persons who have telephones to please put them on silent or vibrate?

LAYING OF SECOND SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ESTIMATES 2025/2026

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to lay on the table of this Honourable Parliament, in accordance with Standing Order 32 and Sections 115 and 116 of the Turks and Caicos Islands Constitution Order 2011, the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands' Second Supplementary Estimates.

REQUEST FOR PRESENTATION ON SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Premier, you have a presentation on the supplementary?

REFERRAL OF SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE 2025-2026 TO APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE AND REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Two things, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Second Supplementary Estimate 2025-2026 be referred to the Appropriations Committee to be dealt with in accordance with

Standing Order 115. On the heel of that, I would like to beg your indulgence for a 15 to 20-minute suspension. My technical team members are late arriving because of flight issues, and after I speak briefly to the supplementary, there's the committee, the business license in the committee that we have to go through, and we have copious amendments that I'm going to need my team to assist with. So I just want to make sure that they are here and I can have an opportunity to liaise with them.

So I would crave your indulgence for a 20-minute break to consult.

CLARIFICATION ON TIMING OF SUSPENSION

Hon. Gordon Burton:

So, Honourable Premier, you would like the suspension now?

CONFIRMATION OF REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Yes, I would like the suspension now.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING FOR 20 MINUTES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, this Honourable Parliament is hereby suspended for 20 minutes.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

RESUMPTION OF SITTING AND TRANSITION TO SECOND READING OF BILLS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable members, this Honourable House now resumes its sitting. Please be seated. Honourable Members, before our suspension, we were on Orders of the Day, and we are now at the Second Reading of Bills, and we'll have the Second Reading of the— Papers.

PAPERS

CORRECTION AND INVITATION FOR PREMIER'S PRESENTATION ON SUPPLEMENTARY

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Oh, sorry, sorry. The Honourable Premier will make a presentation on the Supplementary. Honourable Premier.

PRESENTATION ON SECOND SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ESTIMATES 2025/2026

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks again, our colleague, and thanks to the Ministry of Finance and particularly the Budget Office for the preparation of the Estimates, Supplementary Estimates No. 2. The Supplementary Estimates No. 2 for 2025/2026, I rise to lay before this Honourable Parliament. The Supplementary Budget reflects a Government that is both responsive to emerging national needs and steadfast in its commitment to sound financial management.

It is a measured intervention, one that strengthens our ability to meet pressing obligations while preserving fiscal stability. This Supplementary seeks to increase Government's revenue by $16.5 million, moving from $549.4 million to $567 million. This increase is driven primarily by the formal recognition of revenues already collected, particularly from statutory body excess revenue remittances and shared transfer duties. Correspondingly, expenditure is proposed to increase by $27.3 million, taking overall expenditure from $553 million to $580.8 million.

These additional resources are being carefully directed to areas of critical national importance, including strategic land and property acquisition, urgent social welfare interventions, revenue-strengthening consultancy services, addressing teacher shortages, expanding access to life-saving care under the Treatment Abroad Programme, island maintenance and infrastructure upkeep, and the settlement of legitimate claims against the Government. As a result of these adjustments, the fiscal position reflects a net deficit of $14.9 million.

However, this deficit will be fully financed from prior-year cash reserves, ensuring that no additional borrowing is required. This is a clear demonstration of this Government's disciplined approach to public finance. The Development Fund is also proposed to increase by $800,000, from $48.9 million to $49.8 million. Key recurrent expenditure adjustments include $163,000 in additional operating expenditure for the Judiciary to reduce delays and clear case backlogs; $2.7 million for claims against government; $8.2 million for land acquisition; $1.3 million for professional and consultancy services focused on revenue enhancement and institutional strengthening; $1.5 million to JETISA infrastructure development in Grand Turk.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

This underscores the increase in cruise passenger numbers during this fiscal year. The reinstatement of the Director of Business Transformation, reinforcing public sector reforms; $350,000 for the enhancement of sports infrastructure; and $98,000 to help address teacher shortages; $1.8 million for social welfare interventions protecting our most vulnerable citizens, and $75,000 for faith and religious-based affairs; $1.5 million for maintenance across the islands; a significant $11.4 million for the Treatment Abroad Program, reflecting the government's unwavering commitment to healthcare access.

And $500,000 to support special advisory program and

promote public sector improvement. $655,000 for data center equipment for the Turks and Caicos Islands Government in Grand Turk and Provo. And $250,000 reallocation from the Department Fund to the Ministry of Innovation to continue facilitating community-level micro-projects. I turn my attention briefly to capital expenditure and the Public Sector Investment Programme.

The supplementary also reflects an increase in the public sector investment program for the year-end 2025-2026 from $48.9 million to $49.8 million, an increase of $861,250. These adjustments include new and reallocated projects: $4.5 million for works on secondary roads; $546,000 for upgrades to the Grand Turk Fish Market; $565,000 for fibre optic project supporting digital connectivity.

Projects being temporarily deferred include $500,000 for the Wheeland Enhancement Project and $900,000 for refurbishment and equipment for the aged care home. Projects requiring additional funding include $1.4 million for road and electrification development, including the Causeway and Spine Road; $1.7 million for the refurbishment of the Gustavus Lightbourne Complex; $250,000 for micro projects reallocated to the consolidated fund.

Projects named refinements to better reflect scope and intent including upgrades to community roadworks, consultancy frameworks, and dumpsite infrastructure. A quick comparison of year-to-date financial performance: as at the end of November 2025, aggregate recurrent revenue totals $356 million, approximately 3% below the budget, yet 7% higher than the same period last year. Underperformance was recorded in hotel and restaurant tax, stamp duty on land transactions, import duty and customs processing fees, partially offset by stronger collection from work permits, statutory body contributions, and share transfer duties. Total current expenditure stood at $295.3 million, 13% below estimates but 13% higher than the prior year.

The Development Fund balance at 30th November 2025 stood at $85.3 million, with capital expenditure year-to-date of $15.1 million. This resulted in a year-to-date operating surplus of $57 million and an overall net surplus of $42 million after capital spending. Our cash position remains strong, with a total closing balance of $410.6 million, comprising $225.3 million in the Consolidated Fund, $85.3 million in the Development Fund, $3.5 million in the National Foreclosure Fund, $95.7 million in the National Wealth Fund, and $813,000 in the Destination Enhancement Fund.

These Second Supplementary Estimates reflect a government that is careful, compassionate, and forward-looking, addressing urgent national needs while safeguarding fiscal sustainability. I commend these Estimates to this Honourable Parliament and respectfully seek Members' support for their approval. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

AIRPORT AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - SECOND READING

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Premier, on your presentation of the Second Supplementary Appropriation Estimates 2025/2026. Honourable members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are at Orders of the Day, the second reading of bills, and we'll have the second reading of the Airport Authority Amendment Bill 2025 to be moved by the Honourable Minister for PPID. Honourable Minister.

AIRPORT AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - DEFERRAL MOTION

Hon. Arlington Alexander Musgrove:

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Airport Authority Amendment Bill 2025 be deferred to next sitting of Parliament. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Second.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Minister of PPID and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Education that the bill entitled Airport 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 now at the Committee of the Whole. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - COMMITTEE PREPARATION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I realize we're moving into the committee, but before we move into the committee, I would want to ask, just as a sort of a background or the context for the contributions, to make a short statement given the way the bill has been traveling. Also, I would like members to have additional information in terms of the assessment, the ESIA, the Economic and Social Impact Assessment, of the amendments that are now being made, so that they can have those to consider alongside their examination of the Bill, particularly in relationship to the amendments, additional amendments that will come.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Yes, Honourable Premier, seeing that it's been a while since we first discussed this, I would allow you to make a presentation on the proposed amendments that would be discussed in the committee. So please proceed with that.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in your absence, I did make a statement the last time, so I wouldn't go over, rehash what I've already said, but I think it's important to just highlight the factual salient points of what we're dealing with today. And I promise you that any sort of a political spin is totally neutral. And so, Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members of the House and others listening, when I last stood before this Honourable House in December, just before Christmas 2025, just a short 3 weeks ago, I spoke about an economy that works for every Islander.

One that is resilient, inclusive, and built to last. I spoke not only of growth, but of fair growth; not only of investment, but of opportunity that reaches our people in real and practical ways. Today, we advance that vision with clarity, grounded in evidence, informed by data and consultation, and guided by a responsibility to ensure that economic participation is both meaningful and sustainable. In shaping the amendments now before this House, the Government relied on a Business Licensing Framework Assessment— and that is the document that we have passed around to Members— to examine the economic and social implications of the proposed changes.

That assessment considered ownership structures, sectoral realities, compliance and enforcement challenges, investment impacts, and implication risk. The key features of the revised framework before the House are drawn directly from the findings of that assessment. Entirely for Turks and Caicos Islanders. These are vital entry-level and community-based sectors where full local ownership is both viable and essential to local income generation and entrepreneurship.

The Reserve activities required a minimum of 60% Islander ownership in more capital-intensive sectors. The approach preserves domestic control while allowing partnerships that provide access to capital, expertise, and scale where these are necessary for sustainability. In the General category, we remain fully open, even though it has been significantly reduced, reaffirming the Turks and Caicos Islands' commitment to investment that supports growth, employment, and infrastructure development. This framework does not restrict investment.

It replaces a one-size-fits-all approach with a structure that reflects economic reality. Second, the assessment highlights the importance of strengthening local enterprise development while reinforcing public confidence in the regulatory system. It creates clearer pathways for islander participation at the entry and community levels, protects domestic interests in key industries, and supports sustainable sector development. It is transparent and consistently applied.

It is rules-based and identified as central to legitimacy and trust, reducing perceptions of favouritism and reinforcing confidence in the business licensing environment. Third, the assessment identifies investment stability and fiscal integrity as essential to long-term economic resilience. That is why phased implementation and grandfathering provisions promote predictability for existing operations. Clear licensing categories reduce regulatory uncertainty.

Strengthened beneficial ownership disclosure and expanded audit and investigatory powers help prevent revenue leakage and support a more reliable public revenue base. Fourth, and critically, the assessment underscores that governance and enforcement are decisive factors in whether the framework succeeds in practice. Rules without enforcement do not work. In response, the revised framework placed greater emphasis on substance and control rather than formal or nominal compliance.

Anti-fronting measures are identified in the assessment as central to protecting the identity of the system, and that is one matter that has been lacking in various iterations of the business licensing regime in the past. These anti-fronting provisions are designed to ensure that ownership structures reflect economic reality. Transparent disclosure, substance-over-form assessments, targeted audits, and clearly defined governance obligations work together to protect fair competition and regulatory credibility. This reform does not operate in isolation.

The assessment also recognized that regulatory reform must be supported by practical empowerment measures. Accordingly, the framework aligns with Government support for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, including cash grants of up to $30,000 for eligible startups. Finally, the assessment considers potential risks, including impacts on competition, public perception, and implementation capacity.

The framework addresses these through mitigation measures such as maintaining a broad general category, applying rules consistently and transparently, and coordinating implementation across agencies. What this framework delivers is balance. An economy that remains open for business while creating greater space for our people. A system that encourages investment and supports inclusion.

A regulatory environment that is transparent, enforceable, and fair.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Mr. Speaker, the assessment has guided this work. The legislation before this House gives it legal effect. Together, they move us toward the future this House has consistently articulated— one of shared prosperity, resilience, and genuine inclusion. I urge all Honourable Members to support these amendments. And again, I wish to thank you and to thank Honourable Members, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you, Honourable Premier, for giving us that brief presentation on the amendments for the Business Licensing Bill 2025. Honourable members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and the Chair recognizes the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Do you have a—

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much and good morning to all. As it is that, besides cabinet members, most of us, this will be the first time we're seeing this document. Is it possible for other members to get just 15 minutes so we can discuss amongst ourselves? And I would want to discuss with the Premier, because as he was talking, I didn't want to be disrespectful and not paying attention. So, one or two questions I may have for him,

I would like to put to him before we move forward, because we all want the best out of this document.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

On behalf of the opposition, I do agree. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Mr. Speaker, since we're moving into committee, what I would suggest is to move for committee, and we can take the break before we actually start the work in committee.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

So, Honourable Members, what we'll do is now we'll suspend and move into committee. But the committee wouldn't start for another 15 to 20 minutes until members have had an opportunity to review the document. This honourable Parliament is hereby suspended, and I would like to call on the Honourable Deputy Speaker to preside in the committee after the break.

This honourable Parliament is hereby suspended. Order!

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - COMMITTEE STAGE

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

With considerations to the Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2025. Madam Clerk. Clause 1, short title and commencement. Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 1 now stands as part of the bill.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Minister of Education that Clause 1 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it. Madam Clerk. Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSE AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - COMMITTEE STAGE, CLAUSE 1

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Minister of Education that Clause 1 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 1 stands part of the bill.

All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it.

BUSINESS LICENSE AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - COMMITTEE STAGE, CLAUSE 2

Clerk:

Clause 2 interpretation.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 2 now stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Clause 2 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 2 stands part of the

Bill.

All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it.

BUSINESS LICENSE AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - COMMITTEE STAGE, CLAUSE 3

Clerk:

Clause 3, Section 2 amended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I move that Clause 3 now stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, that Clause 3 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions?

BUSINESS LICENSE AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - COMMITTEE STAGE, CLAUSE 3 AMENDMENTS

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

There are amendments being proposed under the Business License Amendment Bill 2025. In Clause 3, in the chapeau, by deleting the word three. In paragraph, by deleting the word definition and substituting the word definitions. In Section 1, by inserting the following definition. In the definition of compliance officer, we're inserting 'inland' before the word revenue, so it reads Inland Revenue Department.

After the proposed definition of compliance, insert the definition of compliance officer. We're also introducing a new definition for fronting, which means any arrangement, agreement, understanding, or practice, formal or informal, by which a Turks and Caicos Islander is held out as the owner, majority owner, or controlling party of a business, while actual control or benefit is exercised by a non-TC Islander, and the arrangement has the purpose or effect of circumventing the Act or regulations. Clause 3 also introduces four categories: exclusive, reserved, open, and restricted. In the case of a business carried on by partnership, for exclusive category, 100% of profits must go to Turks and Caicos Islanders; for reserved, not less than 60%.

For a body corporate, exclusive category requires 100% of shares with voting rights to be held by Turks and Caicos Islanders, reserved category not less than 60%. After paragraph B, insert a new paragraph C, stating that for exclusive category, business must be 100% owned by a Turks and Caicos Islander; for reserved, not less than 60%; for restricted, not less than 50%; and for general, no restrictions on ownership.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Sorry, Honourable Premier, you're on to 4 now. We're still in 3, so let's deal with 3 first and then we'll come back to 4.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Okay, all right, thank you.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

So you have a motion? That's your motion? You have a second?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

The motion is that the bill be amended to take account of the changes I have just read. If there are any questions, I'm happy to answer them. Otherwise, I would want someone to second the motion.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Deputy Premier. The date from the original ordinance of June 3rd is now the 8th of January 2026. The motion is in relation to the Business License Amendment Bill 2025. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Ayes have it. Are there any contributions?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Madam Chair, just for clarification, because I have the amendments before me dated the 8th of January, and I'm looking at the June amendments, but I'm trying to relate that to the original bill. Which part in the original bill do these amendments sit?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Section 2 of the original bill.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Section 2, not clause 2.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Section 2 is clause in the bill, section in the ordinance.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Any further contributions?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, just again, what is the heading in Section 2? What is the heading under Interpretation?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

The interpretation section. These are definitions. What the Premier just read out is the insertion of definitions in Section 2, as well as the creation of different categories, which will come further down in that section.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Thank you very much. I was looking at the original bill and I didn't see definitions, I see interpretations. So I was wondering if we just using the word definitions, but it's under interpretation. Thank you very much. I'm there.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you. Are there any further contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 3 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Those to the contrary?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Sorry, Madam Chair, the motion would be Clause 3 as amended stands part of the bill.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Yes, correct. So the motion as amended stands part of the bill. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Clerk.

BUSINESS LICENSE AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - COMMITTEE STAGE, CLAUSE 4

Clerk:

Clause 4, Section 3 amended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 4 now stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Minister of Home Affairs that Clause 4 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Ayes have it. Are there any contributions? There being no

contributions, the question is that Clause 4 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it.

BUSINESS LICENSE AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - COMMITTEE STAGE, CLAUSE 5

Clerk:

Clause 5, Section 4 amended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 5 now stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Minister of Public Safety that Clause 5 amended stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions? Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Madam Chair, this is Clause 5, number 2, where it says no licensee shall carry on a business or a separate or distinct undertaking without obtaining a licence in accordance with subsection 1. Can you clarify what that is saying?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

You'll have to read this in connection with Clause 3, as this sets up the context for the bill.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

It amends Section 4, so Section 4 reads—

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Section 4 of the Act reads: where the business to be licensed consists of separate and distinct undertakings which are not reasonably incidental in nature or degree to the main activity of the relevant business, whether on the same premises or not, a license shall be obtained for each undertaking. This amendment says no licensee shall carry on a separate or distinct undertaking without obtaining a license in accordance with Section 1. The existing license of a separate business in the Act becomes one. Under the new amended Section 4, Section 4 of the Principal Act is amended by changing the existing section to be Section 1.

BILL COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 5 AMENDMENT

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

This amendment provides that no licensee shall carry on the business of a separate or distinct undertaking without obtaining a license in accordance with Section 4. The existing license of a separate business in the Act becomes one. Under the new amended Section 4, Section 4 of the Principal Act is amended by changing the existing section to Section 1. What is 4 now becomes Section 1, and then 2 will be new.

Section 2 validates Section 1, and Section 3 sets the penalty.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Okay.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

So what is 4 now will become Section 1, and then 2 will come in, will be new. And so 2 sort of validates 1, and then 3 sets the penalty.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I follow. Yes.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

You have a follow-up?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

No, I had to open up all three bills at one time, so I see what the Premier is saying and how it follows. Thank you very much.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you. Are there any further contributions? There being no further contributions, the question is that Clause 5 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

BILL COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 6

Clerk:

Clause 6, Section 6 amended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 6 stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Minister of Innovation that Clause 6 stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions?

BILL COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 6 AMENDMENT

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Yes, Madam Chair. In Clause 6, I would like to propose an amendment by deleting the word 'amended' and by repealing Section 5 and substituting the following. In subsection 1, by deleting the word 'if'. This is the original bill. The Act says, if on an application for a license the Permanent Secretary Finance is satisfied that the applicant meets the prescribed requirements, the Permanent Secretary Finance shall issue the applicant with a license. What we are doing is where it says 'if on application', we are removing 'if' and inserting the words 'subject to Section 6B, which we recently amended.

Subject to Section 6B, if—so that will be the new wording. It is also repealing subsection 5 and substituting clause—then it substitutes what is currently in the bill. Under Section 6 of the bill, what follows is: a licensee shall not carry on a business contrary to the conditions of a license. On page 3, section 6 of the bill, a licensee who contravenes subsection 1 commits an offense and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of $10,000 or imprisonment for 2 years or both.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Oh, I was reading the wrong thing. All right. I'm done.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

A motion to amend Clause 6 as read by the Premier and seconded by the Minister of Innovation. All in favor? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Are there any contributions? Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Just an observation in Clause 6: it speaks heavily to the Permanent Secretary of Finance issuing business licenses. Is there any committee or board, or is it just that person acting solo? Do all the applications come to the Permanent Secretary of Finance, or is there a committee to deal with it? Because I'm just seeing Permanent Secretary of Finance in Clause 6 heavily.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Currently there is no board. A long time ago there used to be a board to deal with these things. When this was considered,

the idea was whether business licenses or some of them should come to Cabinet, but we felt that was not the best use of Cabinet's time. Currently, the Permanent Secretary is the authority and signs off.

These new ordinances would tighten the regime. The vetting process is part of the regime, and the final sign-off is the Permanent Secretary. She is the authority.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Premier. Are there any further contributions?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

There being no further contributions, the question is that Clause 6 amended stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

BILL COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 7

Clerk:

Clause 7 Section 6A inserted.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 7 stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Home Affairs, that Clause 7 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The ayes have it. Are there any contributions?

BILL COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 7 AMENDMENT

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, the bill seeks to insert Section 6A and Section 6B, which deal with the duration, renewal, and restricted category approval. Clause 7 inserts a new Section 6A consolidating provisions relating to the duration and renewal of licenses. In January 2026, amendments further inserted a new Section 6B providing that applications for licenses in the restricted category are to be considered and approved by the Minister in Cabinet.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

There was a particular need to produce a particular medical product—oxygen. In the past we used to import oxygen, now we make it. This is an example, and that is made at the hospital. It is highly specialized and could be risky. Before Cabinet issues a license, it is important to do enhanced due diligence. The restricted category is meant to focus on those types of businesses which require a high level of skill or may be sensitive from a national point of view. You may not want a foreign entity fully controlling it, but you may not be able to avoid outside participation entirely. That is the rationale for Cabinet to make the decision as to whether a particular license ought to be granted, irrespective of whether it is local or foreign.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Now that I have explained the rationale, the motion is that in the marginal note, we delete the word 'Section 6A' and substitute 'Sections 6A and 6B'. Secondly, by deleting the word 'section' and substituting 'sections'.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

In the marginal note where we have 6A inserted, that becomes 6A and 6B. On the line immediately below, it says the principal act amended by inserting the following sections after Section 6. By inserting after the proposed Section 6A the following section, which is 6B, captioned 'license for a business in the restricted category'. It reads: 1, notwithstanding Section 5A, 5 and 6, an application for a business license to operate in the restricted category shall be considered and approved by the Minister in Cabinet.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

2, the Minister in Cabinet may, in exceptional circumstances, waive the requirement under Section 3 in relation to the ownership of a business in the restricted category. Ordinarily, it requires 50% ownership by a Turks and Caicos Islander, but depending on the gravity and circumstances, the Minister and

Cabinet will have the right to waive the ownership composition if necessary in the public interest. My motion is that in relation to Clause 7, all of what I've said applies. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Zhavargo Jolly:

Seconded.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

If necessary, I can read. Sorry.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Premier. The motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Tourism, that the motion to amend on page 3, paragraph C, stands part of clause 7. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions? Yes, Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

So everything on the amendments here will be part of the original paragraph, Clause 7?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Yes, sir, correct.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

So 6B—okay. I do agree, Honourable Premier, about exceptional circumstances coming to Cabinet for full discussion, investigation, and input of Cabinet members. That is a good thing to have in the bill. As you have outlined, there are circumstances where Cabinet input to override the 60% requirement may be needed for certain businesses that we have to import and set up here.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Honourable Leader of the Opposition, it only applies to the restricted category.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Restricted category, yes.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Any further contributions? There being no further contributions, the question is that Clause 7 stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

BILL COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 8

Clerk:

Clause 8, Sections 7A and 7B inserted.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

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

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Home Affairs, that Clause 8 stands part of the bill. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions? Honourable Premier.

BILL COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 8 AMENDMENT

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thanks very much, Madam Chair.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I am proposing an amendment to this clause. In Clause 8, we are proposing in the marginal note, by deleting the marginal

note and substituting the words 'Sections 7A, 7B, and 7C'.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

You will find the proposed changes on page 3 of the motion to amend, paragraph D. The proposal is by deleting the marginal note and substituting the words 'Sections 7A, 7B, and 7C', and consequently renumbering the proposed sections 7 as Section B and C respectively.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

In the renumbering, Section 7 by deleting the words '7A' and substituting the words '7B' where it occurs, and by inserting the following new proposed section as 7A. The new Section 7A will be: a business license shall be granted for one of the categories of business activities stated in subsection 2. Business activities shall be assigned by regulations into one of the following categories: exclusive category, reserved category, restricted category or a general category. I so move.

May I have a seconder?

FIRST READING OF BILLS

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 8 AND SECTION 7A CATEGORIES

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

In the renumbering of Section 7, we are deleting the words 7A and substituting 7B where it occurs. Additionally, we are inserting a new proposed section as 7A. The new Section 7A will replace the existing one. Section A1 will read: a business license shall be granted for one of the categories of business activities stated in subsection 2. Business activities shall be assigned by regulations into one of the following categories: exclusive category, reserved category, restricted category, or general category. May I have a seconder?

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 8 AMENDMENTS

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Home Affairs, to make the amendments to Clause 8 as mentioned by the Premier. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any further contributions?

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLARIFICATION ON BUSINESS CATEGORIES

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Madam Chair, I know we have a cohesive set of amendments, but I think it would be beneficial if we effectively identify what these new categories are. I don't think we covered that when the Premier made his earlier amendments to the interpretation stage. Premier, would you kindly break down the categories of exclusive, reserved, restricted, and general?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thanks, Honourable Member, for raising that. The amendment already made to Clause 3, Sub-Clause 4, states: where the business activity is in the exclusive category, the business shall be 100% owned by Turks and Caicos Islanders. The reserved category requires not less than 60% ownership by Turks and Caicos Islanders. The restricted category requires not less than 50% ownership by Turks and Caicos Islanders.

The general category has no restriction on ownership.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 8 CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP PROVISIONS

Hon. Willin A. Belliard:

Honourable Premier, I want some clarity on clause 8, the change of ownership provisions. We had said that the license should not be transferred, but the proposed new owner should apply for a license under this section. Is that section still applicable? Has that section remained within the amendment bill? Also, is 7B previous 7? If it helps, let me read the section as it is in the current bill: Where a licensee has changed ownership of a business licensed under this Act, the license shall not be transferred, but the proposed or new owner shall apply for a license under Section 5.

Does that section remain?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

What is the question?

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 8 ADOPTION

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Are there any further contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 8 stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 9 INTRODUCTION

Clerk:

Clause 9, Section 10 and 11 substituted.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 9 ADOPTION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 9 stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 9 ADOPTION AND CLAUSE 10 INTRODUCTION

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Public Safety, that Clause 9 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? Ayes have it. Are there any contributions? Being no further contributions, the question is that Clause 9 stands part of the bill.

All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Clause 10, suspension of license. Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 10 ADOPTION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 10 stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Clause 10 stands part of the bill. All in favour, aye.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 10 STRUCTURE CLARIFICATION

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

The next headnote is in Clause 10. Clause 10, suspension of license, fell under Clause 9. The next headnote should read Section 17A. Suspension of license fell under clause 9, as those terms would be inserted by repealing old section 10 and 11 and replacing with new section 10 and 11. Suspension of license and revocation of license. So the next clause is now clause 10, which starts sections 17A, 17B, C, and D, inserted in the middle of page 6, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Member, for that observation. Madam Clerk. Clause 10, sections 17A, 17B, 17C, and 17D inserted. Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 10 ADOPTION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 10 stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Honourable Deputy Premier, that Clause 10 stands part of the bill. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no.

Hon. Willin A. Belliard:

Aye.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The ayes have it. Are there any contributions?

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 10 AMENDMENTS

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I'd like to move in Clause 10, in the proposed Section 17, that in paragraph C, by deleting the word section 7 and substituting Section 7. And by renumbering clauses 11, 12, and 13. In paragraph E, by deleting subsection 4 and

substituting subsection 2. By inserting after paragraph I, the following: J, Section 19E.2.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Otis Chuck Morris:

Second.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - CLAUSE 10 AMENDMENTS AND CLAUSE 11 INTRODUCTION

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Public Safety. The amendments to Clause 10, referring to the changes in the amended version, Section E, page 4. All in favor? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 10 stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it.

Clause 11, Section 23A inserted. Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - RENUMBERING CLAUSES

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I would like to make a further motion to renumber clauses 11, 12, 13, and 14 as 12, 13, 14, and 15 respectively. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

So the motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, to have Clause 11 renumbered in paragraph F, 12, 13, 14, 15. All in favor? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions? Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Madam Chair, we've been focusing so much on the amendments, we are forgetting to ask questions about what is actually inside the bill. This part on enforcement deals a lot with enforcement. Our people are always saying that we have laws, but the enforcement of the laws is lacking. Is there any plan on strengthening enforcement coming up in the budget? Will we see anything to strengthen enforcement in this year's budget that the people should look out for? Because all this deals with enforcement here.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Honourable Premier, just dealing with enforcement in this section, what are we doing to ensure that we can achieve what is inside of the bill? Because all this is very ambitious. But can we achieve it?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

It's a very good question. I believe the bill overall imposes tougher sentencing, and that's why when I spoke I mentioned it is not just in form, including information as to whether there's been any change of ownership. You will see when we get to penalty.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

There are issues, administrative penalties, and criminal penalties. There are also provisions for licenses to be suspended. The regulations are meant to be smart. Part of our problem in the past with regulations is that we have to find people, hunt them down, and drag them before the court.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

So essentially what this package of regulation does is to penalize people at the source. If you don't have a business license because you've falsified information or are criminally fronting, then you will be stopped and unable to operate. That's where the difference lies.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - RENUMBERING CLAUSES

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The motion to amend by renumbering clauses 11, 12, 13, and 14 as 12, 13, 14, 15 respectively. All in favor? Those to the contrary? No. The ayes have it. Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE - NEW CLAUSE 11 (SECTIONS

19A-19H)

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I'd like to make a further amendment by inserting a new Clause 11 as Sections 19A to 19H. The Principal Act is amended by inserting the following sections after Section 19: test of effective control, substance over form, which partially speaks to what the Leader of the Opposition was referring to. The amendment is that the Act is amended by inserting the following sections after 19. Test of effective control, substance over form.

In determining whether a business is genuinely owned or controlled by Turks and Caicos Islanders, the Permanent Secretary of Finance shall have regard to substance over form, including voting rights and quorum requirements, composition and control of the board of directors or management committee, authority over strategic decisions including financing, hiring, expansion, and disposal of assets, entitlement to profits, dividends, and distributions, and rights attached to shares or partnership interests; existence of shareholder, loan, management, consultancy, or nominee agreements; sources of capital and repayment terms, and whether the local shareholder bears genuine commercial risk. There is also mandatory board and voting control in the Reserve Category. In any licensed business operating in the Reserve Category, Turks and Caicos Islanders shall hold not less than 60% of the voting rights, appoint a majority of directors or controlling managers, and quorum for meetings shall require the presence of at least one director or partner who is a Turks and Caicos Islander.

Any agreement or arrangement that transfers effective control to a non-Turks and Caicos Islander, notwithstanding compliance with equity thresholds, shall be void for the purpose of this Act. Restrictions on share transfer and exit rights: No share, partnership interest, or beneficial interest in a licensed business operating in the reserve category may be transferred to a non-Turks and Caicos Islander without prior written approval of the Permanent Secretary of Finance and compliance with prescribed ownership thresholds. A Turks and Caicos Islander shareholder shall have a statutory right of first refusal on any proposed transfer to a non-Turks and Caicos Islander, exercisable within a prescribed period at fair market value unless the transfer is made as a result of the death of a shareholder through the administration of the estate to the shareholder's spouse or child.

Limits on debt loans and control through financing: A licensed business operating in the exclusive or reserve category shall not enter into any loan, debenture, security, or financing arrangement that grants a non-islander effective control over the business, provides veto rights over ordinary business decisions, or allows conversion of debt into equity in breach of ownership thresholds. The Permanent Secretary of Finance may require disclosure of all loan agreements, guarantees, or security arrangements as a condition of licensing or renewal. Disclosure and ongoing reporting obligations: A licensed business operating in the Reserve category shall disclose its full ownership and beneficial ownership structure, file annual declarations confirming continued compliance with ownership and control requirements, and notify the Permanent Secretary Finance of any material change in ownership, control, or financing within 14 days.

A person who fails to disclose or provides false or misleading information commits an offense and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of $2,000 or to imprisonment for 12 months or both. Powers of investigation and enforcement: The Permanent Secretary of Finance, in collaboration with the Inland Revenue Department, may require production of documents, agreements, and financial records, conduct compliance audits, and share information with other competent authorities. Where fronting is established, the Permanent Secretary of Finance may suspend or revoke the business license, impose administrative penalties, declare the license void ab initio, or disqualify any person from holding or applying for a business license for a period of 3 months. Offenses and penalties for fronting: A person commits an offence if that person knowingly participates in a fronting arrangement, provides false or misleading information, or assists another person to circumvent ownership restrictions.

A person who contravenes this commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of $20,000 or to imprisonment for 2 years or both, or on conviction on indictment to a fine of $50,000 or to imprisonment for 3 years or both. Where an offence is committed by a body corporate, any director, officer, or agent who consented to or conspired in the offence commits an offence. The Permanent Secretary Finance shall prepare and submit quarterly reports to the Minister of Finance of all business licences granted.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMITTEE STAGE - BUSINESS LICENSING ACT AMENDMENTS (SECTIONS 19A-19H)

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

As Section 19A to 19H inserted. The Principal Act is amended by inserting the following sections after Section 19 as a test of effective control, substance over form, which partially speaks to what the Leader of the Opposition was referring to. The amendment is that the Act is amended by inserting the following sections after 19. Test of effective control, substance over form. 19A, in determining whether a business is genuinely owned or controlled by Turks and Caicos Islanders, the Permanent Secretary of Finance shall have regard to substance over form, including the voting rights and quorum requirements, composition and control of the board of directors or management committee, authority over strategic decisions including financing, hiring, expansion, and disposal of assets, entitlement to profits, dividends, and distributions, and rights attached to shares or partnership interests; existence of shareholder, loan, management, consultancy, or nominee agreements; source of capital and repayment terms, and whether the local shareholder bears genuine commercial risk.

There is also mandatory board and voting control in the Reserve Category. In any licensed business operating in the Reserve Category, Turks and Caicos Islanders shall hold not less than 60% of the voting rights, appoint a majority of directors or controlling managers, and quorum for meetings

shall require the presence of at least one director or partner who is a Turks and Caicos Islander. Any agreement or arrangement that has the effect of transferring effective control to a non-Turks and Caicos Islander, notwithstanding compliance with equity thresholds, shall be void for the purpose of this Act. Restrictions on share transfer and exit rights: no share, partnership interest, or beneficial interest in a licensed business operating in the reserve category may be transferred to a non-Turks and Caicos Islander without prior written approval of the Permanent Secretary of Finance and compliance with prescribed ownership thresholds.

A Turks and Caicos Islander shareholder shall have a statutory right of first refusal on any proposed transfer to a non-Turks and Caicos Islander, exercisable within a prescribed period at fair market value, unless the transfer is made as a result of the death of a shareholder through the administration of the estate to the shareholder's spouse or child.

Limits on debt loans and control through financing: a licensed business operating in the exclusive category or the reserve category shall not enter into any loan, debenture, security, or financing arrangement that grants a non-islander effective control over the business, provides veto rights over ordinary business decisions, or allows conversion of debt into equity in breach of ownership thresholds. The Permanent Secretary of Finance may require disclosure of all loan agreements, guarantees, or security arrangements as a condition of licensing or renewal. Disclosure and ongoing reporting obligations: a licensed business operating in the Reserve category shall disclose its full ownership and beneficial ownership structure, file annual declarations confirming continued compliance with ownership and control requirements, and notify the Permanent Secretary Finance of any material change in ownership, control, or financing within 14 days.

A person who fails to disclose or provides false or misleading information commits an offense and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of $2,000 or to imprisonment for 12 months or to both. Powers of investigation and enforcement: the Permanent Secretary of Finance, in collaboration with the Inland Revenue Department, may require production of documents, agreements, and financial records, conduct compliance audits, and share information with other competent authorities. Where fronting is established, the Permanent Secretary of Finance may suspend or revoke the business license, impose administrative penalties, declare the license void ab initio, or disqualify any person from holding or applying for a business license for a period of 3 months. Offenses and penalties for fronting: a person commits an offence if that person knowingly participates in a fronting arrangement, provides false or misleading information, or assists another person to circumvent ownership restrictions.

A person who contravenes subsection 1 commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of $20,000 or to imprisonment for 2 years or to both, or on conviction on indictment to a fine of $50,000 or to imprisonment for 3 years or to both. Where an offence is committed by a body corporate, any director, officer, or agent who consented to or conspired in the offence commits an offence. The Permanent Secretary Finance shall prepare and submit quarterly reports to the Minister of Finance of all business licences granted and—

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

That's it.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Oh, sorry. Right, I still move.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Second. Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Deputy Premier, that we are inserting a following new Clause 11 from 19A to 19H. All in favor, along with all of the amendments and what was read? All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any further contributions? Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Honourable Premier, I'd just like to ask you to summarize those sections, the importance of it, so the general public would know why that is being introduced at this time as an amendment. Thank you.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

All right. Sorry.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Sorry, Honourable Premier. One second.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Honourable Premier, just before you summarize, through the Chair, just one question before you summarize. 19F2D. Disqualify any person from holding or applying for a business license for a period of 3 months. So when I look at these other penalties and I look at if I did anything wrong, I can just sit out 3 months and apply again?

Like this is 19F, the Parliament Secretary in collaboration with the Inland Revenue may and all the requirements. And under 2, we'll say where fronting is established by the Parliament

Secretary of Finance. So they establish that this person A is fronting. And the only thing she can— he or she can do is disqualify the person from holding or applying for a business license for 3 months.

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

19G. It's in the digital.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

See 19F2D.

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

But if you also look at 19G2, you would see further penalties, a fine of $20,000 or 2 years imprisonment, or $50,000 or 3 years imprisonment if you are convicted of fronting in the Supreme Court. If you're convicted of fronting in the Magistrates Court, it's a $20,000 fine or 2 years imprisonment or both. So the Permanent Secretary of Finance has 5 options that could be levied on a party who has been found to be fronting.

They can suspend or revoke the business license. They can impose administrative penalties, which doesn't seem to have a cap based on how it's drafted in the bill. They could declare the license void ab initio from the beginning, meaning that the business never existed. Or they could disqualify the person from being able to apply for a further business license.

Or they can bring a claim for fronting in the magistrate's court, and if the person is convicted, it's a $20,000 fine or 2 years imprisonment. Or they can bring an action in the Supreme Court, and if the person is convicted, it's a 3-year sentence of imprisonment or a $50,000 fine. So there are levels to the options provided to the permanent secretary.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

So what will it be for 3 months? Because 3 months look kind of low to me for the severity of the act, of the offense. So what if I'm just fronting a little bit, half? I mean, not fronting as much, why 3 months? That's what I want to know. What is the significance of only 3 months?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Okay, Honourable Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Madam Chair, just to touch on the query on—

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Sorry, Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Sorry, Madam Chair, just to touch on the Section F2, 19F2, that's being introduced. The gist essentially is those are all of the options at the fingertips of the Permanent Secretary of Finance because it says, A, they can— let me read the first two— where fronting is established, the Permanent Secretary may suspend or revoke the business license, impose administrative penalties, declare the license void ab initio from the beginning, or disqualify any person from holding or applying for a business license for a period of 3 months.

So those are the options. They could simply just hold them out for 3 months, but they could do all that other stuff on top of it—suspension as well as impose administrative penalties. So they potentially could go beyond that 3 months if they so choose.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

So in determining how grievous the offense might be, then they have the flexibility to do those things. So that's where the either/or—so it isn't an and, that it's a minimum of 3 months only will be the option once fronting is noted or recognized. Hopefully that helps to clarify a little piece.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, through the Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you for the explanation, Honourable Deputy Premier. Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. It is just that I'm trying to wonder if there are levels to front-end, why there's an option for just 3 months. So if you say person A only receive $1,000, or person A only have 49% or person A really didn't intend to front, what is the penalty?

What is the act, the fronting act that will give you only the option of 3 months that the PS can say, okay, well, Person A didn't front as much or Person A didn't intend to front, so we're only going to suspend them from—bar them for 3 months from applying for a license?

What act would be deemed for 3 months?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The differentiation on which parts of the legislation will be used will be further teased out in the policy to support this document. It wouldn't be spelled out in the actual legislation itself, but there is rationale that would support that, that would be teased out to give guidance to the Permanent Secretary of Finance. Hopefully that gives enough explanation as well.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Let me see if I can help out here because we have to be careful not to use a sledgehammer to kill a fly. Remember we're talking about all businesses, including MSMEs. Somebody who is running a small business with a couple of hundred thousand dollar turnover, if you shut them down for 3 months, it could mean the end of them making a livelihood. The permanent secretary has to be given some discretion. I think the gravity of the case will determine the penalty.

If somebody is operating a quarter-billion-dollar water business through their construction company, for example, having an option to send them to jail for 3 years or $50,000 is appropriate. On top of that, if I'm not mistaken, they can still have their license suspended.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

But the little guy selling some fish on the side of the road or in a small place, if he's found foul of the law, you have to leave some space there because a lot of small businesses find themselves on the wrong side of the law because they don't have the technical skills or administrative ability to make sure that they're on top of things. There has to be some space to ensure that they don't lose their livelihood by inadvertently, albeit negligently, falling foul of the law. That is what has been taken into consideration in setting those penalties.

BUSINESS LICENSING ORDINANCE - PENALTIES AND SMALL BUSINESS COMPLIANCE

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, through the Chair. Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Premier. Let me get to the Leader of the Opposition.

BUSINESS LICENSING ORDINANCE - DEFINITION AND REGULATION OF FRONTING

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

I wanted to follow on Leader of the Opposition's question. So, fronting, as we've established, is defined, but I just want to rehearse it again for clarity. Fronting means any arrangement, agreement, understanding, or practice, whether formal or informal, by which a Turks and Caicos Islander is held out as the owner, majority owner, or controlling party of a business, notwithstanding that the effective ownership, control, management, decision-making power or economic benefit of the business is exercised directly or indirectly by a non-Turks and Caicos Islander, and the arrangement, agreement, understanding, or practice has the purpose or effect of circumventing this act, the regulations, or any ownership or licensing restriction made under them. What will follow from this ordinance will be the new regulations, which may identify the levels of fronting you asked about. It wouldn't be captured in this amendment to the principal act, but in the regulations.

In those regulations, the various levels may determine the guidance for the Permanent Secretary of Finance if a fronting scenario is discovered by the Inland Revenue Department in the course of their receipt of reporting information. This section is focused on the reserve category for all the amendments we're making in this regard. In the earlier amendment to this clause, we've put a positive obligation on disclosure and ongoing reporting obligations for the reserve category. If you look at 19E, it gives the Permanent Secretary and the team at Inland Revenue annual review of those categories where there is the requirement for Turks and Caicos Islanders to genuinely be the majority business holder.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Member. Yes, Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, I thank you very much. I want to thank the Honourable

Member of Leeward and Long Bay and the Deputy Premier for trying to clear it up, and the Premier. I have an understanding now, but I was wondering if there were truly levels to fronting. For example, if someone is working in a barber shop and just gets something from that business with the person cutting hair, we cannot hit him with a big fine. You can tell him he won't get his license for three months. But also, I'd like to see in the regulations, as we know there are a number of stores run by persons who are not Turks and Caicos Islanders.

When you go in the store and look at the license, you'll see Jim Brown, John Blow. So I'm wondering if—

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

That's fronting.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, that's fronting. What level they'll be headed. Thank you very much.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you so much. Mr. Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Premier. Can I have the Honourable Member in the back, All Island Number 9?

BUSINESS LICENSING ORDINANCE - PENALTIES FOR REPEAT FRONTING OFFENCES

Hon. Willin A. Belliard:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Honourable Premier, is it possible to have suspension and disqualification for a second time around? If you commit your first offense and the Permanent Secretary decides to disqualify you for three months and you go on and commit a second fronting, I think there should be a higher penalty than the three months of the initial contravention of the ordinance. I think that will send a clear message.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I believe that is automatically possible, but she can then choose any one of the other options to the suspension that would be harsher. My view is if a business license is suspended and the person continues to trade, then they are committing another offense under the business licensing, and so they automatically can have a whole string of offences, which could probably lead to permanent revocation of the licence.

I don't know whether the law speaks to that now. Does it speak to revocation?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

It says yes, revocation, suspend, or revoke.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Right, so the PS now has the ability to revoke the licence. So I don't know that you need to tier it to add a first or second offence. I think that is automatically built in.

Hon. Willin A. Belliard:

Thank you.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Premier, for that explanation. Are there any further contributions?

BUSINESS LICENSING ORDINANCE - PROVISIONS AND ENFORCEMENT AGAINST FRONTING

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

Yes, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. That's a good question raised by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, and I'll respond to the question raised by the Honourable Deputy Premier at the request of the Honourable Premier. The Honourable Premier has asked to remind the House that in respect of the provisions in this entire section that has been inserted, 19A to 19H, these provisions together establish a comprehensive framework to prevent the circumvention of the ownership and control requirements inserted in the ordinance, in the Act. They are designed to address what is referred to as fronting, which is efforts to undermine the ownership and control requirements.

Together, they seek to establish a strengthened compliance, monitoring, and enforcement mechanism in respect of business licensing. These sections give legal effect to the principle that ownership and control requirements must be assessed by reference to the substance of a business arrangement rather than its formal structure. For example, in the proposed Section 19A, the test of effective control, substance over form, introduces a statutory test that requires the Permanent Secretary of Finance to assess whether a business is genuinely owned or controlled by Turks and Caicos Islanders by having regard to the substance over form. It's a non-exhaustive list of factors that may be considered, including voting rights, board composition, control over strategic decisions, entitlement to profits, contractual arrangements, sources of capital, and whether local shareholders bear genuine commercial risk.

The provision addresses arrangements where legal ownership appears compliant on paper, but effective control or economic benefit lies elsewhere, undermining the policy position of the legislation. The proposals provide decision-makers with clear statutory authority to look beyond formal shareholding structures and assess the true nature of control and ownership. Section 19B establishes a minimum governance and control requirement for businesses operating in the reserved category, requiring Turks and Caicos Islanders to hold not less than 60% of the voting rights, appoint a majority of directors or controlling managers, and be represented for quorum purposes at meetings. Any agreement or arrangement that transfers effective control to a non-Turks and Caicos Islander, despite apparent compliance with equity thresholds, is void for the purposes of the Act.

The purpose is to ensure that ownership thresholds are accompanied by corresponding decision-making authority, preventing arrangements where equity compliance is achieved while control is ceded contractually. There are also restrictions on share transfers and exit rights, restricting the transfer of shares, partnership interests, and beneficial interests in reserved category businesses to non-Turks and Caicos Islanders without prior written approval of the Permanent Secretary of Finance and continued compliance with the ownership threshold. It creates a statutory right of first refusal in favor of Turks and Caicos Islands shareholders, exercisable at fair market value, with a limited exception for transfers arising from death to a spouse or child through estate administration. The purpose is to prevent the gradual erosion of local ownership through exit arrangements and ensure changes in ownership are subject to regulatory oversight while protecting legitimate succession.

There are prohibitions on financing arrangements that effectively transfer control of a licensed business to a non-islander, including arrangements that confer veto rights over ordinary business decisions or allow debt to be converted into equity in breach of the ownership thresholds. The Permanent Secretary of Finance is authorized to require disclosure of all relevant loan, guarantee, or security arrangements as a condition of licensing and renewal. This addresses fronting mechanisms implemented through financial instruments rather than equity ownership, closing a regulatory gap and ensuring financing does not undermine ownership and control requirements. There are ongoing disclosure and reporting obligations on licensed businesses operating in the reserved category, including full disclosure of ownership and beneficial ownership structures, annual declarations of continued compliance, and prompt notification of any material change in ownership, control, or financing.

Failure to disclose or the provision of false or misleading information constitutes an offence and is punishable on summary conviction. This ensures compliance is not assessed only at the point of initial licensing but is maintained on a continuous basis, supporting effective monitoring and enforcement. Section 19F confers investigative and enforcement powers on the Permanent Secretary of Finance, acting in collaboration with the Inland Revenue Department, including requiring production of documents, conducting compliance audits, and sharing information with other competent authorities. Where fronting is established, the Permanent Secretary may suspend or revoke a license, impose administrative penalties, declare a license void from the outset, or disqualify persons from holding or applying for a business license for the prescribed period.

The anti-fronting regime is practically enforceable and equips regulators with the tools necessary to respond proportionately to non-compliance. Section 19G creates a criminal offense for knowingly participating in a fronting arrangement, providing false or misleading information, or assisting another person to circumvent ownership restrictions. Penalties are provided on summary conviction or conviction on indictment and extend liability to directors, officers, or agents of a company who consent to or conspire in the offence. The purpose is to elevate fronting from a regulatory concern to a serious criminal offence, reflecting the deliberate and deceptive nature of the conduct.

Finally, Section 19H provides reporting requirements for the Permanent Secretary to the Minister of Finance, with reports submitted quarterly in respect of all business licenses granted, allowing cabinet oversight of the business licensing regime and supporting transparency and ministerial oversight without interfering in individual licensing decisions. The entire regime is set out in these new provisions introduced. Thanks, Madam Chair.

BUSINESS LICENSING ACT - COMPLIANCE AND ANTI-FRONTING PROVISIONS

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. I will respond to the question raised by the Honourable Deputy Premier at the request of the Honourable Premier. The Honourable Premier has asked to remind the House that the provisions in this section, 19A to 19H, establish a comprehensive framework to prevent the circumvention of the ownership and control requirements inserted in the Act. These provisions address fronting, which seeks to undermine ownership and control requirements, and establish a strengthened compliance, monitoring, and enforcement mechanism for business licensing.

The sections give legal effect to the principle that ownership and control must be assessed by the substance of a business

arrangement rather than its formal structure. For example, Section 19A introduces a statutory test requiring the Permanent Secretary of Finance to assess whether a business is genuinely owned or controlled by Turks and Caicos Islanders, considering factors such as voting rights, board composition, strategic decisions, entitlement to profits, contractual arrangements, sources of capital, and whether local shareholders bear genuine commercial risk. This provision addresses arrangements where legal ownership appears compliant on paper but effective control or economic benefit lies elsewhere, undermining the policy of the legislation. The proposals provide decision-makers with statutory authority to look beyond formal shareholding structures and assess the true nature of control and ownership.

Section 19B establishes a minimum governance and control requirement for businesses in reserved categories, requiring Turks and Caicos Islanders to hold at least 60% of voting rights, appoint a majority of directors or controlling managers, and be represented for quorum purposes. Any agreement that transfers effective control to a non-Islander, despite apparent compliance with equity thresholds, is void for the Act's purposes. This ensures ownership thresholds are accompanied by decision-making authority and prevents arrangements where equity compliance is achieved while control is ceded contractually. Restrictions on share transfers and exit rights require prior written approval for transfers to non-Islanders and continued compliance with ownership thresholds, creating a statutory right of first refusal for Turks and Caicos Islands shareholders, with exceptions for transfers arising from death to a spouse or child.

This prevents erosion of local ownership and ensures regulatory oversight of ownership changes while protecting legitimate succession. Financing arrangements that transfer control to a non-Islander, such as those conferring veto rights or allowing debt to be converted into equity in breach of ownership thresholds, are prohibited. The Permanent Secretary of Finance may require disclosure of all relevant loan, guarantee, or security arrangements as a licensing condition. This addresses fronting mechanisms through financial instruments and ensures financing does not undermine ownership and control requirements.

Ongoing disclosure and reporting obligations require licensed businesses to disclose ownership structures, declare continued compliance annually, and promptly notify material changes. Failure to disclose or providing false information is an offence. Compliance is assessed continuously, supporting effective monitoring and enforcement. Express investigative and enforcement powers are conferred on the Permanent Secretary of Finance, including requiring documents, conducting audits, and sharing information with authorities.

Where fronting is established, the Permanent Secretary may suspend or revoke a license, impose penalties, declare a license void, or disqualify persons from holding a license. This anti-fronting regime is practically enforceable and equips regulators to respond proportionately to non-compliance. Section 19G creates a criminal offence for knowingly participating in a fronting arrangement, providing false information, or assisting circumvention of ownership restrictions, with penalties on summary conviction or indictment, extending liability to directors, officers, or agents who consent to or conspire in the offence. This elevates fronting to a serious criminal offence.

Section 19H provides reporting requirements for the Permanent Secretary to the Minister of Finance, with quarterly reports on business licenses granted, supporting transparency and ministerial oversight without interfering in individual licensing decisions. The entire regime is set out in these new provisions.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 11 DECISION

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable AG. Are there any further contributions? The Leader of the Opposition, no contribution? Any further contributions? There being no further contributions, the question is that Clause 11, the new 11, stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 12 INTRODUCTION

Clerk:

Clause 12. Section 23A inserted.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 12

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 12 MOTION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 12 now stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 12 MOTION AND CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Home Affairs, that Clause 12 stands part of the bill. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions? Any contributions? Are there any contributions?

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 12 CONTRIBUTIONS

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

There being no contributions—

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, ma'am.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Oh, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, you go ahead with your contribution.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Looking at the Act, Section 23 says the governor may, by publishing in the Gazette, exempt any class or classes of business activities from requiring— oh, we haven't reached there? Okay, sorry, I'll wait.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 12 DECISION AND CLAUSE 13 INTRODUCTION

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Are there any contributions to Clause 12? Any contributions? Are there any contributions? There being no further contributions, the question is that Clause 12 stands part of the bill. All in favor? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it. Madam Clerk. Clause 13, Section 24A inserted. Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 13 MOTION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thanks, Madam Chair. I move that Clause 13 stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Second.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 13 DECISION AND CLAUSE 14 INTRODUCTION

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The bill has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Honourable Deputy Premier, that Clause 13 stands part of the bill. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions? Any contributions? I believe the opposition— any contributions? There being no further contributions— you have a contribution, Honourable Leader of the Opposition? No contributions. Thank you. There being no further contributions, the question is that Clause 13 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye.

Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Madam Clerk. Clause 14, Schedule 1 and 2 inserted. Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 14 MOTION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Clause 14 stands part of the bill. May I have a seconder?

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 14 MOTION AND DECISION

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs, that Clause 13 stands part of the bill. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions? Any contributions? Are there any contributions? Honourable Leader of the Opposition? No contributions to 13. The question is that Clause 13 stands part of the bill. 14. I'm sorry, so it's a new 14.

The question is that the new 14 stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 15 INTRODUCTION

Clerk:

Clause 15, savings provisions.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 15

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 15 MOTION

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Clause 15 now stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 15 MOTION AND CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, that Clause 15 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions, Madam Chair? Honourable Member for Leeward and Long Bay.

BUSINESS LICENSING BILL - CLAUSE 15 AND 16 TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you to the Honourable Premier or the Honourable Attorney General, I'm a bit confused about what new 15 is seeking to achieve. It reads, a license issued under the Business Licensing Act immediately before the coming into force of this Act continues to be in force after this act comes into force, and the changes made in Section 2 of the act shall not affect that license. But then I see we have a new 16, which provides a period of 12 months for existing licensees to comply or face an annual surcharge.

Honourable AG, can you help bring harmony to new 15 and new 16?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thanks to the Honourable Member from Leeward and Long Bay for her question. These provisions provide both savings and transitional provisions for existing licenses. The savings provision recognizes that businesses operating under licenses granted under the existing legislation will not require relicensing until their current license expires. The transitional arrangement addresses changes to ownership requirements and additional categories of licenses.

Some businesses will be grandfathered in by the provisions in Section 16, giving them 12 months to comply with the new legislation. If they do not comply within 12 months, they will face a 100% surcharge, which is an incentive to bring themselves into compliance. This allows ongoing businesses to be grandfathered in while encouraging conformity with the new requirements. I defer to the Honourable Premier if I have missed anything.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

CLAUSE 15 - SAVINGS AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

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

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thanks to the Honourable Member from Leeward and Long Bay for her question. These provisions provide both savings and transitional provisions for existing licenses. It recognizes that businesses operating under licenses granted under previous legislation will not require relicensing until their current licenses expire. The savings provision allows these licenses to continue until expiry, even if not issued under the new legislation.

The transitional arrangement addresses changes to ownership requirements and new license categories. Some businesses will be grandfathered in under the new provisions and will have 12 months to comply with the legislation. If they do not comply within 12 months, they will incur a 100% surcharge as an incentive to comply. The intention is to recognize ongoing businesses and allow them to transition accordingly.

I will defer to the Honourable Premier if I have missed anything.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable AG, for that explanation. Honourable Premier?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

There are four different categories of business. Some are currently 100% owned by persons other than Turks and Caicos Islanders. It would be bad law to require them to sell to a Turks and Caicos Islander, so they have a choice. If they adjust their ownership proportions, there is no recourse. If they continue as is, I see the surcharge not as a penalty but as a contribution to the economy. For those already partnering with locals, the law will reflect their current arrangement. For example, a 50/50 partnership will be allowed to continue but will attract a proportionate doubling of the licence fee to support local MSMEs.

The intention is not to penalize but to encourage compliance and support the local economy. We want legislation that empowers Turks and Caicos Islanders while creating opportunities and avoiding unintended consequences.

Hon. Sharon A. Simons:

Thank you.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I don't know if it's expressed correctly, and maybe we should look at that. At 16, it says a license— are we there yet?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Premier, for that explanation. Any further contributions to 15?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. This section allows, for instance, if I have a 50/50 partnership with someone from outside, I have one year to adjust the arrangement to comply with the new ordinance. My company will have one year to become compliant, either by buying extra shares or making other arrangements if in the restricted category.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

You have a choice to adjust to 60/40, in which case the license cost remains, or if you stay at 50/50, you pay an extra 50%. Also, if you decide to sell the business, you must give the right of first refusal to your Belonger partner or another Turks and Caicos Islander, unless it's transferred due to death or to a spouse or child.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Premier. Any further contributions to 15? Any contributions? There being no further contributions, the question is that clause 15, the new 15, stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

CLAUSE 16 - TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Clerk:

Clause 16, transitional provisions.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Could I go ahead? Madam Chair, I move that Clause 16 now stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Clause 16 stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Yes, Madam Chair. Grateful, Madam Chair. I appreciate the clarifications on the savings provisions and new 15. In this new 16 transitional provision, existing license holders have 12 months to comply with the act or pay an annual surcharge equal to 100% of the license fee. My question is, is there a sunset clause on the annual surcharge? Is there a point where the Permanent Secretary of Finance may refuse to renew the license?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

As I explained earlier, Honourable Member, it's not a penalty but an additional revenue measure. There is no sunset clause. As long as you operate under those conditions, you pay the different licence fee. That is the proposal.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Madam Chair. Just to follow up, if someone has a 50/50 arrangement for a business and decides it's cheaper to pay the doubled license fee every year and continue the arrangement indefinitely, is that what the provision allows?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Yes, that is correct.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Premier, Honourable Deputy Premier. I will take the Honourable 8th All-Island elected member after.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Madam Chair. We need to allow the Premier to read the transition provision into the motion and set a motion so we can debate it, as it is a motion to amend. We haven't proposed the amendments yet. Please proceed.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I move that there be a transitional provision. Section 16 will be inserted to read: A licensee of an existing licensed business shall be granted up to 12 months to comply with the Act or pay an annual surcharge equal to 100% of the license fee applicable to the business category. During the transition, the Permanent Secretary Finance may impose conditions to ensure compliance. Nothing in this section validates an existing fronting arrangement.

I so move. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Deputy Premier, that Clause 16, the new 16, stands part of the bill. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. The ayes have it. Honourable 8th All Island elected member.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Based on the question raised by the Honourable Member for Leeward—

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I don't have any amendments to make to the proposed amendment.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Premier. Honourable 8th All Island Member.

Hon. Sharon A. Simons:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I wanted clarification following up on the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Member from Leeward and Long Bay regarding the sunset on the transitional clause. If I am a business owner with a multi-million dollar business and my license fee is $5,000, paying an extra $5,000 would not hurt my bottom line. Are we considering increasing business license fees?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Yes, the schedule of fees relating to business licenses is under review. Whatever the fees end up being, any business in that category will have their fee doubled.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Just one further clarification. If my business license is $500 in year 1, in year 2 I pay $1,000. What happens in year 3? Do I pay $2,000 or still $1,000? Is it always 100% of the original fee, or does it keep doubling?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to point out to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that license fees do change from time to time as they are set in regulations. The starting point is the established license fee, but these fees may be adjusted. The surcharge is not meant to be a penalty but applies because you are grandfathered in. The policy is not to make it punitive, but to apply a surcharge for those grandfathered in.

BUSINESS LICENCE BILL - TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS AND SURCHARGE

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to point out to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that from time to time licence fees do change. It's in regulations and so on. The starting point is the established licence fee, but from time to time these fees are adjusted. That would be the mechanism for that. We also want to avoid a situation where it becomes excessive and turns into a penalty, which the Premier has indicated is not the policy. It's a surcharge because you are grandfathered in, and so there is a surcharge.

That's what it is.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable AG. Any further contributions? Yes, Honourable Member for Leawood and Long Bay.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Clauses 2 and 3. I just want clarification from Honourable Premier or the Honourable Attorney General on what sort of conditions the Permanent Secretary of Finance can impose to ensure compliance, and if it's only in relation to the transitional provisions since it's under this clause. Subsection 3 reads, nothing in this section shall be construed as validating any existing fronting arrangement.

What does that mean? Grateful. Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

If it is voluntary transition, it may not be necessary. I'm not sure. If I can get some advice on that, I'd appreciate it.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Attorney General.

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

I'm grateful, Madam Chair, and to the Honourable Member from Leeward and Long Bay. That was a great question. To the second question first, these are grandfathering provisions in Clause 16. It recognizes that there are ongoing legitimate businesses that must be recognized and allowed to continue to operate in accordance with the legislation.

The provisions introduced in relation to fronting relate to businesses that may be ongoing fronting businesses. The language is there to make it clear that this provision does not defeat the anti-fronting provisions. This is not seeking, nor can it legitimate, a business which is in effect a fronting business that may be existing. If it is established that it is a fronting business, they cannot rely on this provision because it is only to ensure that legitimate businesses can continue to operate.

As to the conditions, this is not the only provision in the Act where the Permanent Secretary of Finance can impose conditions. In the existing Act, there are provisions that allow the Permanent Secretary authority to impose conditions on the grant of a licence, etc. We don't define what those are because they might be unique to the particular circumstances, but it empowers these additional conditions to ensure compliance. It may be possible to include regulations as to the kinds of conditions that could be included.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you, Honourable AG. Madam Chair, I have one more question. I have a business license. I am 51% majority shareholder, my expat partner is 49%. We are an existing licensed business and have decided to pay the annual surcharge rather than change the shareholding to the new 60/40 split. When it comes to April 1st this year, or March 31st, what provisions do I have to comply with when I renew my current license—the new rules or the old rules under which I originally obtained the license?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

They would have to apply to the new rules to prove that there hasn't been any change in the ownership. There will be some documentation to return to the IRD. You will have to prove that you still own the same portion, because once this goes into effect, you can't do anything to dilute the interests of the local partner.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Yes.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

The only way the IRD will know that is if a provision is made on the annual application to provide proof that the proportion of ownership remains the same, or if there's any change, it doesn't go below the 60/40. Premier, I'm prepared to—

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

So I'm not changing. So I'm wondering which rules would I now apply because I won't fall—sorry, Madam Chair, I won't fall in the 60% because I'm prepared to keep it 51/49 because I'm prepared to pay the surcharge. When I renew the license, do I follow the 2025 rules for the renewal or the 2026 rules, since this transition allows me to opt to remain the same?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

That remains for the purpose of paying the fee, but if you dilute the interest, then the law already says you can't do that.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

But that's what I'm saying, Premier. I'm not diluting the interest. Right now I'm 51/49, and come April 1st, I want to stay 51/49, I just want to renew my existing license.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Nothing changes, but you still pay a surcharge. In terms of providing proof that nothing has changed, you still have to make a certain declaration. That's the only thing that changes.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Okay, so is the prescribed license—because I don't see those changes in the bill—are those forms going to change in the regulations?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Madam Chair, thank you, Honourable AG. Let me get the Deputy Premier, please.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thanks for the question and clarity provided. To add to what the Premier said, the reason why the 2026 version is important to follow, even though the person in the scenario is staying at 51-49%, is because the IRD and the PS Finance have to verify through documentation that this isn't a fronting arrangement. You have to verify that the control is actually 51% local and 49% non-local. The only way to do that is to subject you to the new standards in your application.

It wouldn't interfere with your arrangements from a percentage standpoint, but we have to ensure it isn't a fronting situation. So it wouldn't be the previous rules, which are more simple, compared to the more thorough application process being introduced with these amendments. Thank you.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Deputy Premier, for that explanation. Are there any further contributions?

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

Excuse me.

Hon. Sharon A. Simons:

Okay.

BUSINESS LICENCE BILL - CLAUSE 16 AMENDMENTS

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Honourable Member for Leeward, thanks for your question. We've had another look at this 16. I move an amendment to the new transitional provision to delete the words 'provisions of' in 1, which now says 'a licensee of an existing licensed business shall be granted a period of up to 12 months to comply with the provisions of.' 'Provisions of' is deleted and substituted with 'ownership requirement under.' It will now read, 'a licensee of an existing licensed business shall be granted a period of up to 12 months to comply with the ownership requirements under this Act, or alternatively, pay the fee.'

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

So, because of everything else I've said before, there's no obligation, right?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Second, Madam Chair. So this would make an existing business have to comply with all the other provisions of this bill now.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

What that does is limit it to the ownership provision and nothing else.

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Okay, 15.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

In the bill itself where ages 40 and older, but they wanted to add 2, 3, and 4. She did mention that there.

Hon. Shaun David Malcolm:

Yeah, so they have to move.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Yes. And 4, where's 4? No, you just write in 2, 3, and 4. What does 4 relate to?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Member for Leeward and Long Bay, that the new Clause 16 should read, 'a licensee of an existing licensed business shall be granted a period of up to 12 months to comply with the ownership requirements under'—and the rest that reads on the clause. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it.

Honorable Premier.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Madam Chair, I have a motion.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Member of Leeward and Long Bay, sorry.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Grateful, Madam Chair. Just to tie a bow on 16.1, the motion is to delete the word 'businesses' in the first sentence which reads 'a licensee of an existing licensed businesses' and replace 'businesses' with 'business.' May I have a second?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Second. Motion has been moved by the Honourable Member for Leeward and Long Bay, seconded by the Member for Cheshire Hall, that the new clause 16 should change from 'businesses' to 'business.' All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Before Honourable Premier, can I take the Honourable Member for Blue Hills?

Hon. Randy Dexter Howell:

Thank you, Madam Chair, but it was the Honourable Member from Leeward and Long Bay who picked it up.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Under the new 16, there's an amendment called I. This is a new—

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

That's new?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Yeah, it is. Was that a schedule?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Okay, so she has to— you want to—

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

She wants the question.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

You have to put the question, Vena. I think you have to put the question, Schedule 2.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Any further contributions to 16?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Oh, I thought we finished.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Any further contributions? Honourable Leader of the Opposition, any contributions? Any further contributions to item 16? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 16, the amended version, stands part of the bill. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Madam Clerk, Schedule 1 ticket.

BUSINESS LICENCE BILL - SCHEDULE 1

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Yes, Madam Chair, I move that Schedule 1 stands part of the bill. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, that Schedule 1 stands part of the bill. All in favour? Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

The schedules should be 'schedule' and refer to both schedules. So we'll delete the S in the motion so that the motion that I put earlier remains but without the S.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

No, that's correct. It's schedule.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

The schedules should be schedule and refer to both schedules. We'll delete the S in the motion so that the motion remains but without the S.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Minister of Innovation that we remove the S from schedules, page 9 of the bill, so that it reads schedule. All in favor? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. Ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

BUSINESS LICENCE BILL - SCHEDULE 2

Clerk:

Schedule 2.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I think Schedule 2 has to be amended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Schedule 2, yes.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I move that Schedule 2 stands part of the bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - COMMITTEE STAGE AMENDMENTS

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I move that Schedule 2 stands part of the bill. There's a motion that in Schedule 2, by inserting after the words 200 the following: fails to disclose or provide false or misleading information, and that is in relationship to 19E, and the amount is $1,000. It will be an addition at the bottom of Schedule 1. The item will be 'Fails to disclose or provides false or misleading information', reference 19E to the bill or the Act, with a fixed penalty of $1,000.

This is part of the ticketable offences. And so I so move. There's a further amendment typo on Schedule 2, where it says 'Signature'. It should read 'Parliament' instead of 'House of Assembly', and the date should be 2026 because the passage is today. Those are the two final amendments. I think there's one other amendment we need to address.

Okay, so in Clause 15, there's a final minor amendment. In Clause 15, Sub 3, where it reads, 'the amendments made under this Act shall apply to a license save under subsection 1, except for the amendment made to sections 2, 3, and 4.' I'll ask the AG to explain in case there are questions. Thanks. I finished.

Can someone second the motion, please? Any other amendments? No other amendments.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

We have too many people over now. Sorry, Honourable Premier? Okay, Schedule 2. Motion moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, that in Schedule 2, after the words 200, the following be inserted: fails to disclose or provides misleading information in relation to 19E. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. So the motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Home Affairs, that on the bill page 10, Schedule 2, we remove 'House of Assembly' and replace it with 'Parliament', and the day of 2025 removed and replaced with 2026.

All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Motion has been moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, that in the short titles and commencement number 1, we remove the year 2025 and replace it with 2026. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Honourable AG.

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

And 4.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

And 4. No, the conjunction, and 4 in brackets.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable AG.

Hon. Kyle Knowles:

We need a second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

He said he wanted an explanation, wanted the AG to explain.

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

Just to explain the motion that the Premier is putting on the floor, the current provision reflects the definition that there must be compliance with the defined fronting provisions set out in the new 2. In the new 2, there are also provisions related to the now four categories of business license, which have been introduced: exclusive, reserved, restricted, and general. We should include a reference to 2 as well so that it's clear that also has to be complied with.

That is the purpose of the motion which the Premier is moving. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion moved by the Honourable Premier, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, that Clause 15 Number 3 be amended and we insert 'and 4', so it will read 'except for the amendments made to Section 2, 3, and 4.' All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable members, we have reached the end of the considerations for the Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2025. I'm going to suspend for 5 minutes to ask the speaker to take the chair.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2025 - THIRD READING

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, this Honourable House now resumes its sitting. Please be seated. Honourable Deputy Speaker, thank you very much. I want to thank the Honourable Deputy Speaker for chairing the Committee of the Whole and overseeing the passage of the Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2025 with plenty amendments. I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are still at Orders of the Day. We will have the third reading of bills, and the third reading of the Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2025, to be moved by the Honourable Premier. Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I move pursuant to Standing Order 99 that the bill entitled Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2025 be read for a third time. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and by the Honourable Minister for Education that the bill entitled Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2025 be read a third 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 Business Licensing Amendment Act 2025 and shall come into operation on such day as the Governor may appoint by notice published in the Gazette.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Member for Leeward and Long Bay. Before we move on, I just want to remind members that they have 10 minutes. I said members.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe we're at third reading, so I'm able to contribute to a debate during the third reading. Sorry, she forgot to read 2025. Grateful, Mr. Speaker, as if I need reminding. The Queen of the Standing Orders. Just making sure. I see you all eating into my 10 minutes, and we know I could speak a million miles per hour if needs be, but I'll try not to because the only reason I'm standing, Mr. Speaker, is my WhatsApp message is inundated by persons who are trying to follow us in the committee asking if I would lend some clarity to what the notice of motion of amendment we've just gone through in the committee stage has sought to do. Again, Mr. Speaker, our strangers in the gallery, including our team from the Attorney General's Chambers, I want to wish a Happy New Year to the amazing people of Leeward and Long Bay whom I may not have seen since the year has come in.

So just for the sake of tying a nice ribbon around the work that we have just completed, the notice of motion to amend, which we have now approved, provides a clear definition to the colloquial term of fronting that has plagued many businesses throughout our islands. For some reason, persons find a way to arrive on our shores and maybe exploit Turks and Caicos Islanders because the country is ripe for business development and growth, especially in the last 25 years where we've seen an explosion of inward investment. Persons who are not from these islands see that as well and look at opportunities in which they can obtain a business license in a category that was deemed reserved. We have now created four categories of business licenses: exclusive category for businesses 100% owned by Turks and Caicos Islanders; reserved category, now requiring a minimum 60% Islander ownership; restricted category, minimum 50% Islander ownership, with Cabinet review possible for specialized areas; and the general category, with no restriction. The amendments today provide greater ability for the Permanent Secretary of Finance and the Inland Revenue Business License team to test the actual effective control of a company, including shareholder agreements, quorum, voting rights, and board composition.

This ensures that ownership is genuinely Turks and Caicos Islander where required. The amendments also address situations where a minority shareholder is also a major lender, closing loopholes that allowed further shares to be issued to secure funding. Finally, the transitional provisions require existing companies not meeting the new ownership definitions to comply or pay an annual surcharge, and if the Permanent Secretary of Finance determines a fronting arrangement, the license can be suspended or revoked, with criminal penalties.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I wish the people of Leeward and Long Bay a pleasant afternoon.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Okay, okay, okay.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Oh, sorry about that. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

This act may be cited as the Business Licensing Amendment Act 2026 and shall come into operation on such day as the Governor may appoint by notice published in the Gazette.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you again, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon or early evening to you members. Grateful, Mr. Speaker, as if I need reminding. The Queen of the Standing Orders. Just making sure. I see you all eating into my 10 minutes, and we know I could speak a million miles per hour if needs be, but I'll try not to because the only reason I'm standing, Mr. Speaker, is my WhatsApp message is inundated by persons who are trying to follow us in the committee asking if I would lend some clarity to what the notice of motion of amendment we've just gone through in the committee stage has sought to do. Again, Mr. Speaker, our strangers in the gallery, including our team from the Attorney General's Chambers, I want to wish a Happy New Year to the amazing people of Leeward and Long Bay whom I may not have seen since the year has come in.

So just for the sake of tying a nice ribbon around the work that we have just completed, the notice of motion to amend, which we have now approved, provides a clear definition to the

colloquial term of fronting that has plagued many businesses throughout our islands. For some reason, persons find a way to arrive on our shores and maybe exploit Turks and Caicos Islanders because the country is ripe for business development and growth, especially in the last 25 years where we've seen an explosion of inward investment. Persons who are not from these islands see that as well and look at opportunities in which they can obtain a business license in a category that was deemed reserved. We have now created four categories of business licenses: exclusive category for businesses 100% owned by Turks and Caicos Islanders; reserved category, now requiring a minimum 60% Islander ownership; restricted category, minimum 50% Islander ownership, with Cabinet review possible for specialized areas; and the general category, with no restriction. The amendments today provide greater ability for the Permanent Secretary of Finance and the Inland Revenue Business License team to test the actual effective control of a company, including shareholder agreements, quorum, voting rights, and board composition.

This ensures that ownership is genuinely Turks and Caicos Islander where required. The amendments also address situations where a minority shareholder is also a major lender, closing loopholes that allowed further shares to be issued to secure funding. Finally, the transitional provisions require existing companies not meeting the new ownership definitions to comply or pay an annual surcharge, and if the Permanent Secretary of Finance determines a fronting arrangement, the license can be suspended or revoked, with criminal penalties.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I wish the people of Leeward and Long Bay a pleasant afternoon.

BUSINESS LICENSING (AMENDMENT) BILL - COMMITTEE STAGE AMENDMENTS AND SUMMARY

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Mr. Speaker, my WhatsApp has been inundated by persons following our proceedings, seeking clarity on the notice of motion of amendment we just addressed in committee stage. For the benefit of the public and our guests, including the Attorney General's Chambers, and to the people of Leeward and Long Bay, Happy New Year. To summarize, the notice of motion to amend, now approved, provides a clear definition of 'fronting'—a practice that has affected many businesses in our islands. The amendments create four categories of business licenses: exclusive (100% Turks and Caicos Islander ownership), reserved (minimum 60% Islander ownership), restricted (minimum 50% Islander ownership, with Cabinet discretion for specialized industries), and general (no restrictions).

The reserved category now requires at least 60% Islander ownership, and the restricted category allows Cabinet to review applications for specialized businesses. The amendments also empower the Permanent Secretary of Finance and the Inland Revenue Business License team to test the effective control of companies, including reviewing shareholder agreements, board composition, and ensuring genuine Islander ownership. The legislation addresses situations where minority shareholders are also major lenders, closing loopholes that allowed non-Islanders to gain control through loan defaults. Transitional provisions require existing companies not meeting the new ownership definitions to pay an annual surcharge unless they adjust their ownership structure.

If the Permanent Secretary determines a fronting arrangement exists, licenses can be suspended or revoked, and criminal penalties apply. With these changes, we strengthen genuine Islander participation in business. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and pleasant afternoon to all.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, member, for your contribution. Are there any further contributions? The Chair recognizes the Honourable Deputy Premier for his contribution.

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, guests in the gallery, and those listening over social media and RTC. Before my brief contribution to the bill, I wish everyone a Happy New Year, and extend birthday and anniversary greetings, as well as condolences to those who have lost loved ones. I support these amendments; it has been a long and constructive journey. I am proud to be part of a progressive, people-centered government.

We have created a fourth category exclusively for Turks and Caicos Islanders, with over 120 businesses in that category. The redefined reserved category now requires a minimum of 60% Islander ownership and includes over 60 business categories. The restricted and general categories remain, with general open to all. These categories will be reviewed over time, allowing future governments to adjust as needed.

Fronting is a significant issue, and these amendments address it. The extended committee process allowed us to perfect this bill and resolve outstanding issues. Now, we must resource the Ministry of Finance to enforce these provisions. Turks and Caicos Islanders should seize this opportunity to lead in every sector of our economy.

The passage of this bill marks the beginning of that journey. I thank everyone involved, including the Leader of the Opposition, who fully supports this bill.

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT ACT 2025 - THIRD READING

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, Members of

Parliament, strangers in the gallery, and those listening over social media, and of course the nation's number one station, RTC. Before I give my brief contribution to the bill, as the member for Leeward Long Bay, I would like to wish everybody a Happy New Year.

I also pass on condolences to all those who might have lost loved ones since we last met. Mr. Speaker, I support these amendments because it is a big deal. It's been a long and constructive journey. It pleases me to be a part of this progressive, people-centered government.

On this side of the aisle, we have differing opinions and experiences, but one common goal: to empower the people of these beautiful-by-nature Turks and Caicos Islands. We have created a 4th category exclusively for Turks and Caicos Islanders. There are over 120 businesses in that category. The redefined reserve category, previously 51% minimum Turks and Caicos Islander-owned, now has over 60 categories.

We have adjusted, improved, and refined the restricted category, and the remaining are in the general category, open to all. These categories will be reviewed over time, and future governments will have the opportunity to add more to the exclusive category if needed. Fronting is a big issue in this country, and we must make it a thing of the past. The time spent in committee allowed us to perfect this bill.

All outstanding issues have been resolved. Now is the time to resource the Ministry of Finance properly to handle enforcement. Turks and Caicos Islanders should take advantage of this opportunity, as we want to see them leading in every category of our economy in the next 5 to 10 years. The opportunity starts today with the passage of this bill.

I thank everyone involved in this process, including the Leader of the Opposition, who fully supports this bill. This is a bipartisan bill because it's good for the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands. As the Leader of the Opposition has said for many years, anything good for the people, he supports. He's giving me the thumbs up to confirm that.

This is a historic day for this Parliament and for our country. In 2026, there are many things we will fix. So, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Premier for his patience and leadership in getting us to this point. He has shown great wisdom and statesmanship throughout his tenure in TCI politics. I support this bill on its 3rd reading. Good afternoon, Turks and Caicos Islands. Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for your contribution. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Education for her contribution.

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Good evening, Mr. Speaker, and to those in the gallery and those listening via RTC or streaming live. Happy New Year to the constituents of Electoral District 9 and the people of this country. I also pay condolences to the bereaved families of Josephine Ferguson and Tare Davney Garvin Gaskin. May their souls rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, I may not have the opportunity for my 2-minute speech today, but I wish all within my ministry a Happy New Year. I rise to support the Business Licensing Amendment Act 2025, an Act that goes to the heart of fairness, integrity, and opportunity in our national economy. This Act confronts a longstanding reality: ownership on paper has not always meant ownership in practice. Where fronting exists, Turks and Caicos Islanders appear to benefit while real control and profits lie elsewhere.

This bill says that practice ends here. For the first time, this Act gives a clear statutory definition of fronting, focusing on true ownership and control. Fronting arrangements undermine local entrepreneurship and public confidence in our licensing system. Other Caribbean countries, like Jamaica and the Bahamas, have strong measures against fronting, and this bill places us among serious, rules-based economies.

I congratulate the Premier and his team for bringing this bill. The introduction of four licensing categories is one of the most important reforms. The exclusive category is 100% Turks and Caicos Islander-owned. The reserved category is at least 60% owned, and the restricted category at least 50% owned. The general category is open to non-Turks and Caicos Islanders. This brings clarity and predictability. Foreign investors know where they can invest, and local entrepreneurs know where they are protected and supported. As Minister for Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, I emphasize that if we invest in training our people, we must allow them to own and lead in the sectors they are trained for.

Many activities in the reserved and restricted categories are where young entrepreneurs start businesses. The Act introduces a clear test of effective control, looking at voting rights, board control, who makes strategic decisions, who receives profits, and who carries commercial risk. This prevents situations where a local partner holds shares but no voice. The Act also introduces mandatory board control by Turks and Caicos Islanders, voting thresholds, restrictions on share transfer, and a right of first refusal to protect local ownership.

These provisions ensure that reserved truly means reserved. The requirement for a report on existing licenses ensures orderly transition, transparency, and accountability. This Act is about meaningful ownership, growth, fairness, and opportunity. It supports foreign investment but refuses to sacrifice local participation. It encourages partnership but ends pretense. It prepares our young people to own, lead, and build. An open economy must also be a fair economy, and this bill helps achieve both. Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for your contribution. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Home Affairs.

Hon. Shaun David Malcolm:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening to you, my colleagues, those in the gallery, and all the people across these Turks and Caicos Islands, including those in the diaspora. Happy New Year to all. I rise to make a brief contribution to this 3rd reading. As I said in the initial debate in the 2nd reading, this bill is not just historical but transformational for the people of these Turks and Caicos Islands. Over the past few months, we have rethought and amended this bill. As we celebrate 50 years of ministerial government, this amendment will go down in history as one of the most profound pieces of legislation for the benefit of our people. This government has made a commitment to the people, especially young professionals between 18 and 50, to look out for their needs.

As this country grows, we cannot fix everything from the past, but we will do our best for our people. The amendments to this bill do exactly that for the next generation. Never before in 50 years has a bill so effectively protected the rights and economy of Turks and Caicos Islanders.

This is a historical moment. We have done our best to protect our people, and this law gives them a real, tangible piece of the economic pie. I salute the leadership of our Premier, who has added another remarkable achievement to his legacy. We see the benefits of his work in the community college, the NIB, Invest TCI, and now this bill.

I support this bill, like the Leader of the Opposition. Anything good for the people of these Turks and Caicos Islands deserves support. The majority of business people, especially belongers, must be rejoicing tonight. I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support this bill and its third reading with all the amendments because it is good for the people of this country. Thank you.

THIRD READING OF THE BILL - GENERAL DEBATE AND SUPPORT

Hon. Shaun David Malcolm:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening to you, my colleagues here, those in the gallery, and to all the people across the Turks and Caicos Islands whom I am proud to represent, from Gibbs Cay to West Caicos. I also want to say Happy New Year to you, to my colleagues, and to all the people of these islands and those in the diaspora across the globe.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a brief contribution to this third reading. As I said in the initial debate in the second reading of this bill several months ago, this bill is not just historical, but transformational for the people of these Turks and Caicos Islands. Over the past few months, we have rethought this bill and made many amendments, as you and the people of this country would have witnessed today. When I said several months ago that this would be historical, I meant it, and I reiterate this evening, as we as a country and as a parliament are on the eve of celebrating 50 years of ministerial government in these Turks and Caicos Islands, this amendment will go down in history as one of the most profound pieces of legislation with great effect and benefit for all our people.

This government has made a commitment to the people of this country, especially the young professionals between the ages of 18 and 50. We will look out for their needs. As this country grows, we cannot fix what happened before our time, but we are here now to improve the life of our people to the best of our ability. The amendments to this bill do exactly that for the next generation, because never before in the 50 years of ministerial government has any bill, as it relates to protecting the rights of Turks and Caicos Islanders and our economy, been done like we are experiencing tonight.

This is a historical moment. We have done our best to protect our people, and we hope they will be responsible and protect what they have. This law gives them a real, tangible piece of the economic pie. I also want to salute the leadership of our Premier, who has added another remarkable achievement to his legacy for the advancement and welfare of our people.

We see it in the community college, the NIB, Invest TCI—real benefits to the people of this country. This bill does exactly that. I support this bill, like the Leader of the Opposition. Anything that is good for the people of these Turks and Caicos Islands—I know the business people, you can't always get it 100% right, but the majority of the business people, belongers, must be rejoicing tonight, and rightfully so.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support this bill and this third reading with all the amendments because it is good for the people of this country. Thank you, sir.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, member, for your contribution. The chair recognizes the Honourable Deputy Speaker for her contribution.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to Turks and Caicos and all those listening. Mr. Leslie, thank you for still being here with us today. I would like to start by congratulating all of those who worked on this bill. This has been in the making for some time. I recall when the Minister of Innovation was the Minister of Finance, he first picked the bill up, then the Deputy Premier had a go at it, and the Premier is now wrapping this up and bringing this bill to the people. I am so happy this is finally over with.

I think the Premier will sleep really well tonight because he had a lot of pressure on him, not only from the public but from us here as well. We're all human and won't always have the

right answers all the time. Sometimes you have to go back and perfect things, and that's what happened here today. What we are passing here today is significant for the people of Turks and Caicos.

I want to tell you a quick story. Everyone knows I have a restaurant, and I sometimes cater at villas. One time, I went to set up a day before an event. As I was leaving, a lady came banging on my vehicle. I didn't know where the banging was coming from.

I was in reverse and almost ran over her, but she was so short. Without naming her or her nationality, I guess we can all suspect, because the majority of the villas are controlled by one subset of people. What happens is, a lot of the time, not only in that situation but with property managers in general, this is a domino effect. If we want to do catering, or they need a caterer, a dancer, or a decorator, they aren't calling us, Mr. Speaker. They are not calling Turks and Caicos people.

They are calling their people, who often have permits to work but are still doing second jobs in our country. Our people pay licenses for these businesses and don't get the opportunity. That is the reality. That day, when she told me off, I was lost for words. But then I remembered who I was and who I was related to. Good morning this morning. And I got a little Bexelina and salt cakes in me, so I went back, slammed it in reverse, and told her some things.

It was no fight, but she was nervous, almost to tears. I told her, this is Turks and Caicos, this is my country, and you will never speak to me or anyone else like that. There are plenty of people who don't have the courage to stand up to those kinds of people. We've seen videos of Turks and Caicos Islanders going about their business and being told to mop the floor before they leave.

That is the reality. Today is historic for this country and its people, and I am happy to be part of this government that ends those things. We will have to deal with issues of the past, but going forward, we won't have any more of that. People must not be fearful; they must report these incidents.

If they feel fronting is still happening, report it. This is our country. I have nowhere else to go. I'm not married to anyone foreign, not going to live in their country. I can live here, and I will fight for what I am supposed to have. Today I am happy that areas like water sports and property management now belong to us. Turks and Caicos people, I went to church on Sunday, and my bishop told me, this is the year we run them out. We are running them out this year.

I am happy we can finally address this issue of fronting. People come here because they talk to their people already here, who tell them what can happen, how to pay a lawyer and get things done with side agreements. They come and pay our people a few pennies to keep them quiet while they collect millions off us. I am here today to remind my fellow Turks and Caicos Islanders to know their worth. We are not secondary placeholders in our country.

This country belongs to us, and we must not settle for crumbs. I want big things. I want big money wine. I am not settling for crumbs. This is about national pride and being patriotic, because when you front and do these things, you sell yourself and your country short. Turks and Caicos, we must do better. People blame the government for everything. If you walk outside and the sky is purple, you blame the Premier.

We must do better and be responsible and make sound decisions. My small business in Provo does well. I remember when I went to banks for assistance, they told me they couldn't help me because of the kind of business I wanted to do. I ended up with some coins and help from family and others, and they helped me build my business.

Now the bank wants to lend me money, but I had to start before, when I had a wheelbarrow.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

No representation.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Nobody care.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

We got to do better. We got to be responsible and make sound decisions sometimes. I could— listen, Mrs. Regal, my business, my small business in Provo does well. I remember when I went to banks and whatever else looking for assistance, they told me they couldn't help me because of the kind of business I wanted to do.

I ended up with some coins and other family members and people who could help me, and they helped me build my business. Now I'm in a position where the bank wants to lend me money, but I had to start before, when I had a wheelbarrow.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2025

DEBATE

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

We have to do better. We must be responsible and make sound decisions. My small business in Provo does well now, but I remember when I went to banks for assistance, they told me they couldn't help because of the kind of business I wanted to do. I ended up with a couple coins and help from family members, and they helped me build my business.

Now, the bank won't lend me money, but I had to start before, and you all saw it, when I came there before I had a

wheelbarrow. I put a couple of chairs there, but the food was good and people kept coming. Sometimes we have to start from nothing to get to where we are. We have to remember that's how we were raised.

My grandma told me, if you don't have it, do without it until you can do better. Our people have to understand that everything can't come fast. We're doing the best we can with what we have, but we need our people to help us too. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for your contribution. The Chair recognizes the 8th All Island member for her contribution.

Hon. Sharon A. Simons:

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, colleagues, Members in the gallery, and the great people of the Turks and Caicos Islands listening via Radio Turks and Caicos and watching on social media. I stand in support of this bill and this amendment. I was watching the great Mia Mottley give a speech at the Social Development Empowerment in Barbados. She said the fundamental differences between the two parties in Barbados are not much philosophical but more tactical in how things are done.

She also said we live in a world where people expect instant action and results, and if governments don't respond instantly, they are seen as incompetent. I'm here to tell the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands it took a long time for this process to come to fruition, but we are here with this business licensing amendment bill to protect the interests of the people. I congratulate the Honourable Premier, his team, and all who worked on this bill. Like the Honourable Seventh All Island Member said, we need to realize it's a process to get to where we want to be.

Sometimes it takes a long time for the government to do that, and like the Honourable member, I had my issues with it too, but we are finally here, and I think we can be proud of this bill for the legacy of the Honourable Premier. I am in support of this bill and congratulate all who worked on it. Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you, Honourable Member, for your contribution. I think you were referring to the 6th all-island member. Are there any further contributions? The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Innovation, Technology and Energy.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in support of the Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2025. I'll be brief because my colleagues have already touched on the details. These things are done not by luck but by design. This took a long time to get here. When you go around, you see and hear about opportunities for Turks and Caicos Islanders, but it's often difficult to get into business and do well. There are many obstacles. The bill was picked up in 2022 to correct that, to strengthen Turks and Caicos Islanders' ability to not just survive but thrive in business.

This is a continuation of what we've done before, like the MSME enhancement bill, expanding categories and amounts to create entrepreneurs. This bill does the same. We looked at categories and said, can Turks and Caicos Islanders do these businesses? If so, and the capital requirement isn't high, let's move those into exclusive categories.

For those with higher capital requirements, we made it so Turks and Caicos Islanders have a minimum of 60%. We're making it easier for Turks and Caicos Islanders to do well in business and own the private sector. Our people shouldn't have to go abroad to be successful. Based on this bill, we should be welcoming the diaspora back to invest. I want to encourage people not to front.

Hold on to your license, be on the board, and ensure more of you are on the board in reserved categories. You're now in control—exercise that control. This is a great bill, but it's a living bill. We'll keep coming back to make it stronger, because the other side will always try to find loopholes.

I encourage Turks and Caicos Islanders to become entrepreneurs. As I said during the campaign, we are going to be creating millionaires. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for your contribution. The Chair recognizes the Honourable All Island 9th Member for his contribution.

Hon. Willin A. Belliard:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening, colleagues, and happy New Year to everyone. This bill took a lot of work, not only from the Premier but from the entire team, and we all deserve to be commended. It wasn't easy to get here, but everyone stood their ground. What we have today is a bill that will protect the interests of Turks and Caicos Islanders for years to come. When you look at the clause that deals with change of ownership, once ownership changes, the license is likely to revert back to a Turks and Caicos Islander. So generations to come—our grandchildren, our great-grandchildren—the impact of this bill will be felt for years.

We must be proud of this moment. We've finally addressed the issue of fronting in legislation. Fronting is a lack of loyalty, because not only are you selling your birthright, but also your

family's and your generation's. Nothing comes easy. Like the All Island 6th elected member mentioned, she started her business from the ground up. I started my law firm from the ground up with a local partner, and that will continue to be my principle, because now my son is an attorney-at-law and can be a partner.

Every Turks and Caicos Islander must take pride in what is given to them and the opportunities provided. It's pointless to create exclusive or reserved categories if you try to find a way to front and give away what we're trying to protect. This has to stop. Sometimes as a government, we have to help you protect yourself.

That's why I'm happy with the fronting provisions. If you're not willing to do what's right, we will step in to ensure everyone does what's right for this country. I support this bill. It is a proud moment for Turks and Caicos and its people, and the benefits will be felt for years to come.

Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - THIRD READING AND PASSAGE

Hon. Willin A. Belliard:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening, colleagues, and happy New Year to everyone. This bill took a lot of work from the Premier and the entire team, and we all deserve to be commended. It was not easy to get here, but everyone stood their ground. What we have today is a bill that will protect the interests of Turks and Caicos Islanders for years to come. The clause dealing with change of ownership ensures that, once ownership changes, the license is likely to revert back to a Turks and Caicos Islander. Generations to come will feel the impact of this bill. We must be proud of this moment.

We have finally addressed the issue of fronting in legislation. In my view, fronting is a lack of loyalty, as it sells not only your birthrights but those of your family and future generations. Nothing comes easy. Like the All Island 6th elected member mentioned, she started her own business from the ground up, and I did the same with my law firm, choosing to build it with a local partner. That was a principled decision, and today my son is an attorney-at-law, so if I want another partner, I have my own generation going forward.

Every Turks and Caicos Islander must take pride in and protect the opportunities given to them. It is pointless to create exclusive categories if we allow fronting to undermine them. This has to stop. Sometimes, as leaders, we have to help people protect themselves, which is why I am happy with the fronting provisions.

If you are not willing to do what is right for your country and people, we will step in to ensure it. I support this bill. It is a proud moment for Turks and Caicos Islanders, and the benefits will be felt for years to come. Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for your contribution. Are there any further contributions? There have been no further contributions. I'll call on the Honourable Premier to move for passage of the bill. Thank you.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Ministry of Finance, Permanent Secretary Mr. Fareek Bruce, Ms. Foster, the Premier's and Ministry of Finance team, the members of the IRD, and particularly the Attorney General and the Attorney General Chambers, including the drafts person Miss Janetta Ramsahai, for their assistance.

This bill has had a journey and has been crafted with input from my ministerial colleagues, the Deputy Premier, and the Minister for Innovation and Technology. I want to thank the entire cabinet, including the executive members, the Attorney General, the Governor, and the Deputy Governor. We all operate collectively and collaboratively with the best interests of TCI at heart. I believe the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has demonstrated his commitment to support anything good for TCI, and I want to thank him.

Creative friction and criticism are good if taken in the right light. Sometimes, in an effort to deliver quickly, we make mistakes, and it takes courage to admit that. As leaders, we should not be afraid of criticism, as it makes us better. Some criticism is harsh, but much of it is genuine.

As a result, we have ended up with a better bill. Legislation is a work in progress, and we must respond to the times. There is more to fix and new ground to cut, and there will be other bills and policies coming to this House. I appeal to my colleagues and public servants to serve honestly and with dedication, not to be dissuaded by harsh criticism when we act on principle. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, I now move that pursuant to Standing Order 99.5, the bill entitled Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 do now pass. Do I have a seconder?

TWO MINUTE SPEECHES BY MEMBERS

BUSINESS LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2026 - PASSAGE AND TRANSITION TO TWO MINUTE SPEECHES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable members, motion moved by the Honourable Premier and seconded by the Honourable Deputy Premier, that the bill entitled Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2026

do now pass. All in favor say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Honourable Members, the bill entitled Business Licensing Amendment Bill 2026 is passed. I'll now return to the Order Paper. We are at 2-minute speeches. Are there any contributions?

IMMIGRATION BILL CONSULTATION - PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to encourage the general public to seek out the immigration bill, the repeal and replace bill, which is circulating on social media and the government website. Please provide your feedback to immigrationrepealbill@gov.tc. Any other entity asking for your comments is illegitimate; only the Turks and Caicos government collects your information for this bill. Anything else is fake news. Good night.

IMMIGRATION BILL CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY UPDATES FOR LEEWARD AND LONG BAY

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also encourage all Turks and Caicos Islanders to read the immigration bill and take part in the consultation, as other groups will be expressing their views on the proposed amendments. TC Islanders are a minority, so we must not rely on others to make submissions.

I endorse the Deputy Premier's sentiments. Depending on scheduling, I may not be present for the supplementary appropriation, but my colleague, the Minister of Health and Environment Services, has advised there will be increased expenditure for verge cutting and road maintenance in Leeward and Long Bay. The tenders will go out once the supplementary appropriation is approved, and we look forward to improved roadways. Before 2026, we had a fire in our community.

I send best regards to the affected families and encourage residents to help where possible. As a community, we should assist those affected by the fire. With that, I wish you and colleagues a restful evening.

IMMIGRATION BILL CONSULTATION AND LEEWARD/LONG BAY COMMUNITY ISSUES

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you again, Mr. Speaker, and to the Deputy Premier. I also support and ask all Turks and Caicos Islanders to take some time out and read this immigration bill and take part in the consultation, because you can rest assured other groups will be taking that opportunity to express themselves in relation to the proposed amendments. As we already established, TC Islanders are a minority in our own right, and so we must not sit back and hope that our neighbour or friend will do it.

We must make a note and actually make these submissions. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, I also endorse the sentiments from the Deputy Premier. Very quickly, it is likely, depending if I can get my matter moved next week Wednesday, that I may not be here in the chamber for the supplementary appropriation, but I want to confirm with Leeward and Long Bay that my colleague, the Minister of Health and Environment Services, has advised there will be an increase in expenditure in the budget proposed for verge cutting and road maintenance.

As anyone who's visited Leeward and Long Bay knows, with all the increased rain, it's a very fertile constituency. The bush is meeting in the middle of the road. The minister has pledged that we will get our necessary works done once the supplementary appropriation is approved and uploaded. The tenders will go out so that we can have our roadways safe again from the verge cutting.

Also to confirm that we see in the budget that our roadworks for Leeward and Long Bay is being maintained. It's under another title, but it's still in the upcoming supplementary. We look forward to those tenders finally closing and the works beginning to improve our roadways. Before 2026 came in, we did have a fire in our community, and we want to send our best regards to the families affected. I met with the president of the homeowners association for Leeward Palms over the weekend, and we discussed some of the plans and ideas for the upcoming year. I encourage all residents to be mindful and help our neighbors where we can. A fire, when it's being put out, the water creates as much damage as the fire.

Those families are probably still affected, and whatever we can do to assist, we should do so as a community. With that said, Mr. Speaker, I bid you and colleagues a restful evening.

CHAIR PROCEDURAL REMARKS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for your contribution. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Public Safety and Utilities. Honourable Minister, press your mic again.

NEW YEAR ADDRESS AND COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

Hon. Otis Chuck Morris:

Thank you. Good evening, Mr. Speaker. Good evening, Honourable Members. Distinguished colleagues, esteemed members of this Honourable House, people of the Turks and Caicos Islands, friends and family joining us from near and far, a very happy New Year to you all. Let us begin our walk in this new year by grounding ourselves in a timeless truth: Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with

gladness. Come into his presence with singing. For the Lord is good.

His steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generations. The promise of enduring love and faithfulness is the foundation upon which we build our hopes for the year ahead. As we embrace 2026, I extend my heartfelt wishes for a year filled with peace, prosperity, and unity for every person across our nation. To the dedicated public servants of the Ministry of Public Safety, Utilities, Telecommunications, and Civil Aviation, my profound gratitude.

Your work is often unseen, ensuring our public is safe, our water is flowing, our skies are safe, and our businesses are secured. You are the steadfast keepers of our public trust, and I am honored to serve alongside you. To my family in Electric District 1, thank you. Your confidence, your conversation at your doors, and your unwavering support are the bedrock of my service.

I pledge to continue honoring your trust with diligence and dedication. To my fellow Turks and Caicos Islanders across this beautiful archipelago, your resilience and spirit define us. Whether on Providenciales, Grand Turk, or every community in between, you are the heartbeat of our nation. Our shared journey continues, and I am committed to working for the safety and well-being of every single one of you.

I extend a special welcome to the strangers in the gallery today. Your presence enriches our democracy, and to the thousands listening by radio or streaming via social media. You are not just spectators. You are essential participants in this process. Welcome to each and every one of you. As we gather in hope, our hearts also turn to those among us who are mourning. This Parliament and the wider community extend our deepest condolences to all who have experienced losses. In particular, we hold in our prayers the family of Ms. Wendy Seamer on the loss of her sister, Captain Harold Williams and his family circle on the loss of their mother.

In times of grief, we are reminded of our shared humanity and the preciousness of community. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in eternal peace. The dawn of 2026 is not merely a change of the calendar. It is a call to action, a summons to build upon our progress and to face our challenges with renewed unity.

The scripture instructs us to be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. This is our guide. Joyful in hope for the future we are shaping for our children. Patient in affliction, knowing that complex challenges require steadfast, principled work. Faithful in prayer and purpose, dedicating our labor to the service of the common good. In this spirit, let us move forward into this new year. Let our debates be vigorous but respectful, our disagreements principled but never personal. Let us replace bitterness with constructive dialogue, remembering the call to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving to one another.

This is how we will govern effectively for the people. As we embark on the work of this new parliamentary year, let us do so with courage, compassion, and a collective commitment to uplift every community in these islands. May the blessing of the Almighty guide our deliberation and our deeds. I close with this benediction for our nation in this new year: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and may God bless our beautiful-by-nature Turks and Caicos Islands with health and a prosperous new year.

CHAIR PROCEDURAL REMARKS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for your contribution. The Chair recognizes The Honourable Minister for Health.

WHEELAND AND WEST CAGARS CONSTITUENCY ISSUES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Hon. Kyle Knowles:

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. Good evening to those listening via radio and internet, and to those in the gallery. I'm going to be quick because I was hoping my colleague didn't take up any of my time, but nonetheless, Happy New Year to all of my constituents of the wonderful ED10 Wheeland and West Cagars constituency.

It's always a pleasure and an honor to rise to represent them in this Honourable Parliament. I'd like to pause to offer my condolences to many within my constituency on the loss of their loved ones, especially the family of Miss Cleola Morris Ward. She lived in the same area that I reside in, and I had an opportunity to have a conversation with her daughters prior to the election, and I need to reach out to them again during this time. I'd also like to say happy birthday to one of my strong support systems, Miss Renee Lewis.

Today is her special day, and I told her that if the opportunity made itself available, I would say her name on the mic so the whole nation would know. I want to thank the Ministry of PPID for their response. Over the last few days, there was a lot of torrential rain causing road flooding. My colleague, the member for Blue Hills, would also understand what we were plagued with during that time. Now that the roads have been cleared, we hope all necessary maintenance is being organized so we don't find ourselves back in the same dilemma.

We are grateful for the work they are continuously doing. I also want to make it known to my constituents that I am aware of the areas prone to flooding. This rain has opened our eyes to areas I had no idea were prone to flooding. We have to do a greater assessment of those areas due to the level of construction we're facing. The incidents have happened, but we need to plan forward. I am aware that the road condition and lights for the Wheeling constituency are in need of greater maintenance, whether from the ministry or private sector

entities.

As of this week, I will be reaching out to them to remedy some of these problems and hopefully provide greater details to my constituents in a town hall in the near future. It's always a wonderful opportunity to stand here to represent the constituents of Wheeland and Westgate, because they have afforded me a second opportunity to be here. I will do my best to make sure all their needs and concerns are stressed not just in a minute way, but on a national stage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIR PROCEDURAL REMARKS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for your contribution. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Education.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT 9 INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY PRIDE

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I heard the Honourable Member behind me say, be short. I promise to be short, Mr. Speaker. I just want to once again express how pleased I am for some of the works underway for Electoral District 9. I went to church on Sunday and one of my strong PDMs touched me on the shoulder and said, Honourable Taylor, where are the sidewalks? So

I want to say to him and many others that the sidewalks are on the way. The Minister of PPID sits next to me, and although he had to leave, and you always remind me of those sidewalks, it's on the way because it's 2026. Things will happen this year. I noticed that the Minister for Health mentioned the collective efforts, and I want to thank PPID for their continuous efforts.

Very soon, within the next month or two, we will be looking at improved work for the entrance of Five Keys, Chalk Sound sidewalks, Chalk Sound new sign, ECS playground renovations, ECPS basketball court renovations, garbage receptacles, and ECPS drainage. Some may be saying, all of that? I didn't get it last time. So honorable members, this is my time now.

And of course, I want to say clearly that I sometimes question the pride we have in ourselves as people of the Turks and Caicos Islands, because you continuously hear me speak about it. We need to stop dropping our garbage on the side of the roads. The Minister of Health has assisted me tremendously over the Christmas break. I can guarantee you that we must do better as a country. I also want to say to those who receive small contracts to clean the side of the road, to encourage them to remove their garbage bags in a timely manner.

I said that and I say no more. I also want to say to the residents of Electoral District 9 that by the end of this month, the final works to the Felix Morley Community Centre will be completed. Member for Long Bay, I was so pleased I saw some of your students, your children, all the way in Five Keys, just utilizing Five Keys playground area.

Amen.

DISTRICT 9 CONSTITUENCY UPDATES AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor:

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I heard the Honourable Member behind me say, be short. I promise to be short, Mr. Speaker. But Mr. Speaker, I just want to once again express how pleased I am for some of the works that are on the way for Electoral District 9.

I went to church on Sunday and one of my strong PDMs touched me on the shoulder and he said, Honourable Taylor, we are the sidewalks. So I want to say to him and many others that the sidewalks are on the way. The Minister of PPID sits next to me, and although he had to leave, you always remind me of those sidewalks, it's on the way because it's 2026. Things will happen this year. I noticed that the Minister for Health mentioned the collective efforts, and I want to take this opportunity to say a special thanks to PPID for their continuous efforts.

Very soon, within the next month or two, we will be looking at the opportunity for improved work for the entrance of Five Keys, Chalk Sound sidewalks that I mentioned, Chalk Sound new sign, ECS playground renovations, ECPS basketball court renovations, garbage receptacles, and of course the ECPS drainage. I didn't get it last time. So honourable members, this is my time now.

And of course, I want to say clearly that I sometimes question the pride that we have in ourselves as people of the Turks and Caicos Islands, because you continuously hear me speak about it. The people of the Turks and Caicos Islands, whomever they may be, we need to stop dropping our garbage on the side of the roads. The Minister of Health has assisted me tremendously over the Christmas break. I can guarantee you that we must do better as a country. But I want to say this too, to those persons who receive those small contracts to clean the side of the road, to encourage them to remove their garbage bags in a timely manner.

I said that and I say no more. I also want to say to the residents of Electoral District 9 that by the end of this month, the final works to the Felix Morley Community Centre will be completed. Member for Long Bay, I was so pleased I saw some of your students, your children, all the way in Five Keys, just utilizing Five Keys playground area.

Amen. Just to say that yours is in the next budget. Amen. But Mr. Speaker, I, like the Minister for Health, also want to say to the residents of Electoral District 9 that I had the opportunity to visit my constituency, the entire constituency, just to assess the flood-prone areas.

I have really reached out to DECR, and they will be assisting us in regards to the query that they are requesting for some of the flooded areas. That definitely will take place throughout the month of January. On a more positive note, I want to say that I am so proud of our little musician, Mr. Brenton Henfield.

That is the son of Tamika Henfield and Brentford Henfield. Actually, he has encouraged his team from the University of Miami. Actually, they have an outreach. So because of his persuasion, they are here. They arrived today. Therefore, they will be on the lawn of the Ritz-Carlton at 6:30 PM tomorrow.

It's the Frost School of Music. I want to encourage as many persons as possible. It's free of charge. The only thing you have to pay for is your snacks. So come out and support the music, the Frost School of Music, and we will see our very own Mr. Brenton Henfield in performance.

With that being said, I just want to take this opportunity to wish my team at the Ministry and, by extension, the Department of Education all the best in our endeavours, because we did a lot last year, but our aim is to do more in 2026. I thank you.

CHAIR RECOGNIZES NEXT SPEAKER

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you. Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for your contribution. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Member for Blue Hills.

DISTRICT 8 BLUE HILLS COMMUNITY UPDATES AND TRIBUTES

Hon. Randy Dexter Howell:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening to you. Good evening to my colleagues here in this honourable House. Good evening to visitors and friends in the gallery. Everyone almost gone. Good evening to the listening public across the Turks and Caicos Islands via Radio Turks and Caicos or social media. And a very special greeting to the wonderful people of District 8, Blue Hills. Good evening, Mr. Speaker.

Let me say it now, Happy New Year to each and every one of you. As we gather once again—well, this is the first time for this year—it is fitting to pause and acknowledge those families who have suffered loss since we have last met in this Honourable House. So I join with my colleagues and extend sincere condolences to every household that is grieving.

In particular, I wish to highlight the Parker family from the eastern end of Blue Hills on the passing of Mr. Hopeland Parker. He was a true pillar of the Blue Hills community, an elder who helped raise a generation during a time when the village raised the child. I stand here today as a product of that era. To all the bereaved, I offer comfort from scriptures. John 16:22 says, ' Therefore you too have grief now, but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.' May that promise bring peace and strength during this difficult time.

We also celebrate life, and to those with birth and weddings, anniversaries, or other milestones, I celebrate with you. And this evening, once I leave this place, I will tip a glass in your honour to your continued joy and good health. I want to join my colleague from the Ministry of Health and the District of Wheeland and Vasquecos, and say thank you to the Ministry of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development, along with Team A1 or Team A-Team, Public Works, and other departmental stakeholders for their swift response to the flooding caused by the heavy rains over the weekend.

The waters have receded, drains have been repaired, potholes along Millennium Highway have been fixed and motorists can now travel safely without hazard. To the people of Blue Hills, I am pleased to inform you that during the month of November, there were a few tenders posted for several district projects, namely the completion of the timber cabanas at the Fuller and Clementina Walk and Park, repairs and extension to the restrooms, the creation of a beach volleyball pitch, walkways, and addition to the parking, the removal and replacement of the clinic fencing, the demolition of the existing building that the clinic is currently in, to take away the old one and replace it with a new facility, and the demolition of the old Smokey's on the Beach structure.

These tender submissions were closed early December, but currently evaluations are underway and hopefully contracts billed by the end of the month and work will commence. Also, prior to Christmas break, we began the removal of derelict vehicles across the district, and once we returned from our celebrations of the New Year's, we began that again. So if you see me with a spray paint can, I'm spraying cars to be removed.

Above all, I give thanks to Almighty God for His goodness, His mercy, and His everlasting love. For He has brought us safely through '25, and has allowed us to see the beginning of 2026. May He continue to turn His face towards us, granting us the strength and wisdom to achieve the goals set before us. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the time allowed.

May God continue to bless these Turks and Caicos Islands, and may He continue to bless us, its peoples. Thank you.

PETITIONS

TRANSITION TO NEXT ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much. Thank you, member, for your contribution. Are there any further contributions? There being no further contributions, I will now move on with the order paper. Petitions? There are none.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

ENQUIRY ABOUT GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Government notices?

SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION MADE SINCE MARCH 2026

COMPLETION OF ORDER PAPER AND SUMMARY OF AGENDA

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Government notices? There are none. Private Members' Notices, there are none. Notices of Questions, there are none. Report from Committees, there are none. First Reading of Bills, there are none. Statements by Ministers, there are none. Personal Explanations, there are none. Motion for Leave of Absence, I did receive one request for Leave of absence today, which was granted to the Honourable Seventh All Island Member.

Oral replies to questions: there are none. Notices of motions for the adjournment of the Parliament on matters requiring urgent attention: there are none. Subsidiary legislation made since December 2025 is Legal Notice 51 of 2025, which is the Revised Edition of Laws Order 2025. Honourable Deputy Premier, we have now completed the agenda for today.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the House be adjourned sine die.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE SINE DIE

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, this Honourable House is hereby adjourned. Sine die.