

First (1st) Sitting of the Third (3rd) Meeting of the Second Session of the 13th Legislature of Parliament

THE PARLIAMENT OF TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

24 SEPTEMBER 2026

(Parliament)

Hon. Speaker

Speaker

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PRAYER

OPENING OF THE SITTING

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Good morning, Honourable Members. I now call this first sitting of the 3rd meeting of the 2nd session of the 13th Legislature of the Parliament of the Turks and Caicos Islands, to be held on Thursday, 24 September 2026, at the Honourable N.J.S. Francis Building, Pond Street, Grand Turk, to order. Honourable Members, I now call on our Chaplain, Bishop Coleta Williams III to pray for this assembly.

PRAYER

Chaplain:

We continue our devotion On Habakkuk, visionary leadership, as we continue our 50th celebration of ministerial government. Habakkuk 2:2-3. Then the Lord answered me and said, write the vision, make it plain on tablets, that he may run who read it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie.

Though it tarries, wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not tarry. As a leader in government, you are tasked with navigating complex systems Balancing diverse opinions and making decisions that impact communities and country. In the noise of political debate and daily crisis, it is easy for core mission to get lost. God's instruction to Habakkuk provides a three-step.

Strategy for impactful leadership. One, receive the vision. Seek wisdom. Before a vision can be written, it must be received. True vision for public service look beyond short-term political gain and focus on long-term well-being for its people. It requires seeking higher wisdom to see what could be rather than just managing what is. 2, make it plain. Clarity and integrity.

A vision that is overly complicated or hidden behind bureaucracy cannot inspire change. Leaders are called to articulate goals with transparency and simplicity. When a vision is plain, it builds trust. It ensures that the citizens and public servants alike understand the direction and the why behind the policies. Third and last, Inspire action. That he may run. The ultimate goal of a clear vision is mobilization. When people clearly understand a righteous, noble objective, they are empowered, empowered to move forward with purpose.

Your Role is to set the pace. And standard that inspire others to run towards progress, justice, and unity. Leadership can be wearing, and systematic change takes time. The scripture reminds us that vision has an appointed time. Even when progress feels slow, A plain, well-communicated, honest vision sustains hope and keeps the community and the country anchored. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, God of justice and wisdom, we lift up our leaders to you today. We pray that you grant them clear, righteous vision for the people they serve and for this time that they serve in.

Remove the fog of political distraction and give them the courage to write down policies and goals that promote true justice, true peace, and prosperity. Help them to make the vision plain, to speak with honesty, to act with transparency, and to reject fear. Give them the ability to inspire unity and cause those who hear them to run towards a better, brighter, and more united future. And when Lord, progress is slow.

Challenges are heavy. Grant them the patience and the endurance to wait the right timing without compromising their integrity. Grant their hearts to serve rather than to be served. So Lord, thank you. Thank you yor the new vision that you have put in the hearts of our leaders, for our people and our beloved country. Help them to make a difference in their ministry and in the position that they serve in for the betterment of our country. Gracious Father, thank you for the spirit of discernment and good judgment for our Speaker, the spirit of boldness Creativity and new vision for our Premier. The spirit of wisdom and new vision and courage for our Leader of the Opposition.

The gift of strength and the spirit of her backer for all members of this Parliament. The spirit of Deborah with godly wisdom to rest on our Attorney General. Physical and mental strength for our Clerk and all Parliament staff. Lord, bless this Parliament and its deliberations today. Lord, bless, protect, and prosper this country, for Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory belong to You. It is in the name of Jesus we pray with thanksgiving. Amen.

OPENING OF THE SITTING

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, before sitting, Please allow me to bow with my apologies. Pray be seated. Hon. Premier.

REARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, Turks and Caicos. 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 No. 6, Papers, be taken as Item No. 4, Item number 11, first reading of bills as number 5, and item number 17, orders of the day to be taken as item number 6. Mr. Speaker, I also move that with the indulgence of the Parliament, for item number 15, Oral replies to questions will be taken after item number 6. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to second that motion.

PAPERS

REPORT OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Okay, thank you very much. Good morning again, Honourable Members. I want to again welcome you here to this meeting of Parliament this morning. I also want to welcome those persons who are strangers in the gallery that's with us this morning. I want to welcome persons who are listening via Radio Turks and Caicos and also who are watching via our multimedia streams.

Yesterday when I gave condolences, I was not aware that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, his aunt had passed recently. And so, I want to go on record and give condolences to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition on the passing of his aunt. Honourable Members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are now at papers, messages from Her Excellency The Governor. There are none. And now we are at papers, and we will have the report of the Standing Orders Committee of the Parliament of the Turks and Caicos Islands to be laid by the Honourable Attorney General. Honourable Attorney General.

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

I am grateful, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given that you are the chair of the Standing Orders Committee, I am bringing this report on behalf of the Standing Orders Committee, which report is of course approved by the committee and signed by yourself. And just before the report is laid, I would just briefly outline to the members of the Honourable House the considerations of the Standing Orders Committee to permit the circulation and service of parliamentary documents by electronic means. And so, Mr. Speaker, the report runs for some 7 pages, but I'll just say in summary that it covers the Committee's review of the existing Standing Orders and consideration of the need to modernise parliamentary procedures to reflect contemporary methods of communication and document managing.

In the view of the Committee, the Standing Orders should expressly permit the circulation, delivery, service and transmission of parliamentary documents electronic means. And so amendments would be necessary to improve efficiency, to reduce administrative costs, to enhance accessibility for members, and support the environmentally sustainable parliamentary practices. And this would support as well the change made to the Standing Orders during the COVID-19 times to allow virtual Meetings of the Parliament, but members would know that the Clerk's Office already uses electronic means, and the committee considers it necessary to formalize those arrangements and to modernize the Standing Orders accordingly. So this report recommends the making of amendments to The Standing Orders to recognize electronic communications as a valid method for the circulation and service of parliamentary documents.

It contains also the committee's detailed considerations and recommendations, a review of comparative Commonwealth jurisdictions including the United Kingdom and jurisdictions within our Commonwealth Caribbean environment, and in particular the committee relied heavily on the Standing Orders in Trinidad and Tobago, and the conclusions reached are set out in a draft Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026 document which accompanies this report and which is captured under Item number 17, Orders of the Day, for further handling. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move pursuant to Standing Order 1— to Standing Order— Standing Order 129, that this report of the Select Committee, the Standing Orders Committee, I move for a motion for a resolution to amend the Standing Orders be laid on the table of this Honourable House.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Madam Clerk.

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY BILL 2026

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Attorney General. for laying that report of the Standing Orders Committee on my behalf. Thank you very much. Honourable Members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are now at the first reading of bills, and we will have the first reading of the Health Services Authority Bill 2026, and the Honourable Minister has requested that he be able to say a few words.

Prior to laying the bill, and so I have allowed that to happen. And so, Honourable Minister, you can proceed.

Hon. Kyle Knowles:

Morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to the constituents of Wheeland who again afford me this opportunity to represent them in this honourable House. Good morning to all of those persons listening via radio and internet, and good morning to the Ministry Executive, be it through my PS and the Policy Director. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Health Services Authority Bill 2026 for its first reading.

Mr. Speaker, the introduction of this bill follows Cabinet's decision of August 7th, 2026, which approved in principle the establishment of the Health Services Authority and the development of the necessary legislative funding and institutional framework to support its implementation. Mr. Speaker, the bill represents an important step in the Government's ongoing efforts to strengthen the governance, organization, and delivery of health services in the Turks and Caicos Islands. It seeks to establish the Health Services Authority as a statutory body, corporate, responsible for the management and delivery of the designated health services and facilities. The proposed authority is intended to promote improved accountability, operational efficiency, quality of care, patient safety, and effective management of healthcare resources.

It will provide an institutional framework for the more integrated and coordinated management of healthcare services while supporting government's wider responsibility for health sector stewardship, including policy development, legislation, regulation, strategic planning, financial oversight, monitoring and evaluation public health leadership and governance. Mr. Speaker, the bill also provides for the transfer and management of relevant services, property, assets, contracts, and liabilities, and the transitional arrangements necessary to support the implementation. Mr. Speaker, the establishment of the Health Services Authority forms part of a broader program of institutional and operational reform. The introduction of this bill should not be interpreted as the completion of the process, nor as the approval of future funding requirements or financial commitments beyond those authorized through the established government budgetary and approval processes.

The government recognizes that the establishment and transition of the Health Services Authority is a significant undertaking with financial, legal, human resource, operational and institutional implications. Accordingly, further work will be required to support the responsible and sustainable transition. This work includes financial due diligence, affordability assessments, the identification and costing of transition requirements and contingent liabilities, and the development of a detailed financial and implementation plan through the designated finance framework and the appropriate government approval processes. Consideration will also be given to staffing and employee liabilities, pensions and accrued benefits, assets, contracts, procurement commitments, information technology, infrastructure, and the continuity of healthcare services.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to emphasise that consultation with relevant stakeholders will commence immediately and continue alongside the legislative process. The feedback received through those consultations, together with further legal, financial and operational assessments, will inform the continued refinement of the proposed legislative and implementation framework. The Government remains committed to ensuring that the transition is carefully managed, financially responsible, legally sound, and focused on maintaining continuity and improving the quality of healthcare services provided to the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands. So with that, Mr. Speaker, this bill is therefore being introduced as an important legislative step towards strengthening the governance and delivery of healthcare services while the necessary consultation, due diligence, planning, and implementation work continues.

With that, Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to move pursuant to Standing Order 94, bill entitled Health Services Authority Bill 2026, to be read for the first time. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Second.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, motion moved by the Honourable Minister of Health. And seconded by the Honourable Deputy Premier, that the Bill entitled Health Services Authority Bill 2026 be now read a first time. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

This Act may be cited as the Health Services Authority Act 2026. And shall come into operation on such date as the Governor may appoint by notice published in the Gazette, and different dates may be appointed for different provisions and different purposes.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. The Chair recognizes

the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just for continued knowledge and clarification, this is the first time I'm seeing such a presentation on a first reading. So I'm wondering what will happen with the second reading. Will we get the same presentation, a different presentation? Because, I haven't seen it before. I don't know if this is something available, something new, and I'm always open to learning new things. So I'm wondering just what is the process, the area in the standing orders that allow for such a detailed presentation on the first reading, and what will happen in the second reading if we already had such a detailed presentation with the first reading?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

On behalf of the Opposition, there was not a detailed presentation on the first reading. The Honourable Minister did ask me to allow him to say a few words about laying of the bill, and because of what is happening with healthcare in the country currently. He felt that it was not— he didn't want to just lay a bill and not explain to the people of the country why the bill was being laid. And so I gave him the leeway, which I'm allowed to do in the standing orders, to just say a few words before the bill was laid.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

STANDING ORDERS OF PARLIAMENT AMENDMENT 2026

Hon. Gordon Burton:

But I do not consider that to be a presentation of the bill. A presentation, I would believe, would be much longer and much more detailed than what was said this morning. Okay, let us move on. Honourable Members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are now at Orders of the Day.

And we'll have the motion from the Standing Orders Committee to amend the Standing Orders of Parliament, to be moved by the Honourable Attorney General. Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Members would have in their folders the notice of motion for A resolution as well as to draft Standing Orders of Parliament amendment, and they would— It's a motion, so you just go through it. I think the report would be available to them as well. Mr. Speaker, the motion reads, whereas Section 63 of the Constitution provides that subject to the Constitution and to any instruments under Her— His Majesty's sign, manual, and signet, the Parliament may make, amend, and revoke standing orders for the regulation and orderly conduct of its own proceedings; and whereas the Standing Orders Committee of this Honourable House is responsible for considering all matters relating to the standing orders of the Parliament; And whereas, the Standing Orders Committee has reviewed the Standing Orders and has proposed amendments to include provisions for the circulation of documents by electronic means and to send to electronic devices; and whereas, the Chair of the Standing Orders Committee has laid on the Table of this Parliament the Draft Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026, And has reported to this Parliament on the same; and whereas, Standing Order 129 provides that a report of a Select Committee on a Bill or Resolution or Motion may, on motion made, be referred by the Parliament to a Committee of the whole House; and now, therefore, be it resolved that this Honourable Parliament refers the Standing Orders Committee's report on the Draft Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026, together with this Draft Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026, to a committee of the whole House.

And be it further resolved that this Honourable Parliament approves the making of the Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026 after consideration of a committee— by a committee of the whole House. So, Mr. Speaker, those are— that is the resolution, that is the motion, and may I have a seconder?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

It's the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Can you please second the motion?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

I just was thinking whether or not I should, but Mr. Speaker, I rise to second that motion.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Honourable Members, Motion number— is it 2, Madam Clerk? Motion number 2 of 2026, Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026, moved by the Honourable Attorney General and seconded by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no.

The ayes have it. Hon. Attorney General, do you then make a comment on it, or is it open for debate? Honourable Members, the motion is now open for debate. Are there any contributions? It's pretty straightforward, but are there any contributions? Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, I will now suspend this Honourable Parliament, and I will call on the Honourable Deputy Speaker to chair the Committee of the Whole House. This Honourable Parliament is hereby suspended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Morning, Honourable Members. We are now in the Committee of the Whole for considerations of scrutiny of the Turks and Caicos Islands Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment Bill 2026. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

Clause 1, Citation and Commencement.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that Clause 1 stand as part of the amendment. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Attorney General and seconded by the Member for Grand Turk North. Seconded by Grand Turk North. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Ayes have it. Are there any contributions?

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

Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Chair recognizes the Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. I think it is useful for the members to know that although these changes are being made here to the Standing Orders by the Standing Orders Committee, quite a lot of underlying work has been done by the Clerk and her office to ensure that the modernization work of the Parliament continues. So what is anticipated is that we're not going to just have business as usual, but tablets have been purchased, the website has been updated, and there will be training for members so that the information that is being shared now will be put onto the tablets and Members will be using those as a modern paperless kind of Parliament, but of course the amendments still preserve the ability for documents to be printed in hard copy because of course we have to cater for all circumstances as we had COVID and We might have hurricanes and other things that we need to— the business of the House to continue, but this allows for greater flexibility.

And I must acknowledge, on behalf of the Standing Orders Committee, the tremendous amount of work done by the Clerk and her office. Thanks, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Hon. A.G., and thank you to the Clerk for all of your hard work. Are there any further contributions? Any contributions? The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. I just want to also associate myself with the remarks of the Honourable Attorney General and for the continued work to modernize our Parliament here in the Turks and Caicos Islands. As many parliaments you hear of, paperless parliaments, and throughout the world and what are we doing in terms of that? So I just want to acknowledge the work that has been done so far in our modernization.

And we see the need, those who live through periods of hurricanes, periods of pandemics, we see the need to have systems upgraded, modernized, but also have redundancy inside of the system, fallback measures inside the system. So thank you very much for all the work that has Thank you.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Are there any further contributions? Any contributions? Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that amended Clause 1 stands part of the amendments. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

Clause 2, Standing Order 2 amended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that Clause 2 now stand as part of the amendment. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honourable Attorney General and seconded by the Minister of Education. That Clause 2 stands part of the amendments. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions to Clause 2? Any contributions? Any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 2 stands part of the amendments. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no.

Ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

Clause 3, Standing Order 41 amended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honorable Attorney General.

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

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 3 now stand as part of the amendment. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Honorable Attorney General and seconded by the Honorable Minister of Education that Clause 3 stands part of the amendments. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions to Clause 3? Any contributions? Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 3 stands part of the amendment. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it.

Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

Clause 4, Standing Order 71 amended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honorable Attorney General.

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

Grateful, Madam Chair. I move that Clause 4 Now stand as part of the amendment. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The motion has been moved by the Honourable Attorney General, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Education, that Clause 4 stands part of the amendments. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions to Clause 4?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The Chair recognizes the Minister of Home Affairs.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you, Madam Chair. So, Madam Chair, this clause For me, needs practical explanation because as it reads, it says a member shall avoid running commentary, including reading from electronic device, when another member is speaking. So I don't want to fall afoul of the rules of the House if the bill that we are debating is on my actual tablet and I'm reading it, following along what comments are being made by other members, so I'm head down reading from the tablet.

So I just want to make sure that inserting E as drafted will not relegate any of the members of the House falling afoul of the

rules, because as it is presently, if you look around the room, devices are open and persons are working on the devices. Could very well be researching the bill, reviewing matters that will come later in the day. We don't want to get in trouble by inserting this clause and then finding ourselves in a position unable to work as we normally do in the chamber. So through you, Madam Chair, to the Honourable Attorney General, will we get a bly, as the young people say, in this regard?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair, and it's a very good intervention. In the discussion in the committee an example the Honourable Speaker gave, an example from another jurisdiction where a colleague of his indicated that a member in the chamber was reading commentary from a publication on an electronic device, but reading it aloud. And perhaps what can be inserted here is including reading aloud from. And so that captures the concern raised by the valid concern raised by the Honourable Member, because this is about using electronic devices to disturb the flow of the proceedings of the House.

So perhaps that can address the Honourable Member's concern.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Great. Grateful, Madam Chair. So I'm happy to second. I move the motion by the Honourable Attorney General inserting the words a loud after the word reading in Clause 4 in the second sentence. Grateful.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Okay, Honourable Attorney General, would you make the motion?

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move That in Clause 4, the proposed insertion of paragraph E in Standing Order 71, that the word allowed be inserted after the word reading so that it reads, including reading aloud from an electronic device when another member is speaking. I so move, Madam Chair.

Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Okay, so the motion has been moved by the Honourable Attorney General and seconded by the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs that in Clause 4, Standing Order 71 amended, we are going to insert the word allowed after reading. All in favour? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. The ayes have it. Are there any further contributions to Clause Any contributions? Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 4 stands part of the amendments. All in favor, aye.

Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

Clause 5, Standing Order 91 amended.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Hon. Attorney General.

STANDING ORDERS OF PARLIAMENT AMENDMENT 2022026

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

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 5 now stand as part of the amendment. Do I have a seconder?

STANDING ORDERS OF PARLIAMENT AMENDMENT 2026

Hon. Kyle Knowles:

Second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Motion has been moved by the Hon. Attorney General and seconded by the Hon. Minister of Health that Clause 5 stands part of the amendments. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions to Clause 5? Any contributions? Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 5

stands part of the amendments. All in favor? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. The ayes have it. Madam Clerk.

Clerk:

Standing Order 131A inserted.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honorable Attorney General.

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

Madam Chair, I move that Clause 6 now stand as part of the amendment. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The motion has been moved by the Honourable Attorney General, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health, that Clause 6 stands part of the amendment. All in favour, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Are there any contributions to Clause 6? Any contributions?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Yes, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The Chair recognizes the Minister of Home Affairs.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Grateful, Madam Chair. This is really a stylistic question through you to the Honourable Attorney General. The circulation of documents headnote being placed in the miscellaneous provisions of the Standing Orders, I'm inquiring as to why it's 131A And not just a standalone provision maybe later on through the actual document? Because it reads funny when you compare it to what Standing Order 31A identifies. It deals with the absence of members, the regular 131, and now we're introducing 131A, the circulation of documents.

So I'm just trying to understand the flow of the drafting in this regard.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, thank you, the Honourable Member, for her question. And so one of the pieces of work which the Standing Orders Committee has undertaken to do is to have a holistic review of the Standing Orders post the 2024 amendment to the Constitution. And those proposals will be brought forward to the House. When that occurs, then any inserted renumbering will be dealt with so that whatever has been inserted in as an A or B or C will then have the subsequent number.

So if it's 131 and it follows that, then it'll be 132, etc. So that will be tidied up. When the more holistic review is undertaken of the Standing Orders. But thanks to the Honourable Member for her question.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Attorney General. Are there any further contributions to Clause 6? Are there any contributions? Any contributions? There being no contributions, the question is that Clause 6 stands part of the amendment. Sorry, the Chair recognizes the Minister of Tourism.

Hon. Zhavargo Jolly:

So just out of curiosity, do we know what electronic device that we will be using and the security protocols attached to those electronic devices?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Hon. Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Hon. Chair, and to the Hon. Member for his question. Madam Chair, if you could just give me a, we crave your indulgence. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, for your indulgence. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, for your indulgence. Having consulted with the Clerk, To the Parliament, Madam Chair, I am assured— I can assure the Honourable Member that the device is an electronic tablet. It's a tablet that has been cleared by DICE, our Department for Information, otherwise known as the Computer Unit, now with

the sexy name of DICE. And they have covered these with their security protocols, and the information is going to be stored within the government's secure network, and it is compatible with the newly installed system that we have here in the Parliament, Telemac system that we have. And so I have— I was shown one of the tablets.

And they're very well equipped in a case that is branded for the House of— for the Parliament, and will also be engraved with the names of the members. And the devices are very smart-looking, very sharp, modern-looking devices, which of course we'll need to have training on. But the Clerk has indicated as well that training will be arranged through DICE for members in the use of these, these devices. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you. Honorable Attorney General, are there any further contributions to Clause 6? Chair recognizes the Minister of Tourism.

Hon. Zhavargo Jolly:

Madam Deputy Speaker, Madam Chair, through you, this is more a suggestion than a question. As opposed to replicating assets as Is there the possibility of utilizing these same tablets for the cabinet, the cabinet operation, the executive operations as well? Just out of curiosity.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you. Are there any further contributions? The Chair recognizes the Member for South Caicos.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Madam Chair, just one question through you. The storage and the security of these devices— so my device in question will have my uniform password. Should I misplace that password, how would this device be unlocked? And then secondly, Is this device just to hold Parliament papers, or would it be holding members' speeches or questions?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Very good question. Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Honourable Chair, and to the Honourable Member for his question. Honourable Chair, if I could once again crave your indulgence. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, for your indulgence. Madam Chair, the very good question from the Honourable Members, the Honourable Minister and the Honourable Madam Chair, I am informed that the devices are solely for the use of Parliament.

And in respect of the Honourable South Caicos member, because they are included in the security framework from DICE, if that occurs, if the loss of a person's password or misplacing occurs, it can be reset by them. So there is a secure way to ensure that that happens. And then finally, they will be used in accordance with a policy that will be established, and it will be rolled out at the time that these devices are brought live on the 8th of October.

Okay, thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Attorney General. You have a follow-up question? Chair recognizes the Member for South Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Through you, Madam Chair, I note the policy that the AG mentioned. The policy that controls the devices, who would be making this policy and how does this policy come about?

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

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and to the Honourable Member for his question. Madam Chair, in this amendment, there is power that is given to the Clerk to make a policy as to how these devices are to be used. That power would be exercised in consultation with the Standing Orders Committee and DICE.

And so it will be a proper policy that will help members to safely use these devices. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Attorney General.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Are there any further— okay, the Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition. Thank you for staying right there, Mr. Tracey.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, thank you very much, Madam Chair. Just following on from the member for South Caicos inquiries here, being as we will receive information by email, will information from outside Parliament come to that email? Will it be a different email from the one that we have, that @hoa.gov.tc? Because many of us receive other information on that email, not just parliamentary information, from other government Thank you.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair, and to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition for his question. So while the device allows a member to access their email, the email continues to be a secure email that only is only accessible to the member. So the member is given a device to use for the purposes of the House, and the information on the device doesn't only come through email.

The Standing Orders allows for the revision to the Standing Orders allows for the information to be transmitted to the device. So through the Microsoft suite, which the government uses, there's Smart, there's SharePoint, there's Teams, there's so many other ways. In which information there's OneDrive, there's so many other ways that information is being stored.

So that's a part of the training as to which is the best way for that information to be accessible from the device. But email is only one way, and so the there's no change to the email arrangements. It'll still be a secure email, but the email will be accessible from the device as well, which is your secure device. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The Chair recognizes the Minister for Home Affairs.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you again, Madam Chair. And just to support the Honourable Attorney General's intervention a moment ago, if we go to page 2 of the draft, it identifies the means in which information would be stored and/or shared. So we have electronic mail, also known as email, the Secure Parliamentary Information System, the Electronic Document Management System, and online members' portals.

And as the Honourable Attorney General, when during her presentation of not only the motion, the report, and this draft amendment indicated that our Parliament's website has also been updated Which would include a members portal. And so the understanding that I have from reading the report and the purpose of the amendments today is that there will be several mechanisms that the Parliament can utilize to provide us as members the information, whether it's a draft bill, a report, a motion, questions, etc.

And further in the draft, it also indicates how questions can now be delivered electronically and/or in hard copy. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you. The Chair recognizes the Eighth All-Island Member.

Hon. Sharon A. Simons:

Thank you, Madam Chair. To the AG, would each member device be specifically identified to that member? And say, for instance, the Honourable member from South Cay gets a device and wants to do something on it, then they will know that I'm using his device.

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

Thank you very much, Honorable Chair. To the Honourable Member for her question, I'm informed that that is correct, that each device is identified to each member, and if a member needs to access information on it, they would have to log in and as themselves as opposed to the relevant member. So those are details which I'm sure will come up in the training.

Okay, I see the Honourable Minister for Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Would you like me to help her?

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

Yes, happy for you to help her.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Chair recognizes the Minister for Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Okay, I mean, just in case, thank you, Madam Chair. And just in case anyone have any technical questions, I may be able to answer them. The, uh, the tablets is just going to be like your laptop computer. It's not, it's no different. It's just the form factor is different, so you don't have the, the keyboard with it, but it's just like a laptop computer.

And it will have a user server. User is logged into it, it will create a profile for you, and they give you that device. So every time you log in You would log into your profile. I believe, and I'm almost certain, that it'll be a device per person. So every time— so if somebody tries to log into your device, they will not be able to log in.

But even if they were able to, that will create a brand new profile, so you couldn't see the other person's profile. So just like how a laptop can have multiple users on it and you don't see each other's desktops and each other's information. The tablets will be the same way. And I know that you had asked an earlier question, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, about emails. Your email will be synced from within the cloud, so your email will be in your cloud, your Microsoft 365 cloud inbox, and that will sync with the inbox on your device.

But once you— if you delete your user information, that will delete all of your emails, so it won't be accessible to anyone else. It would just be just like your government-assigned laptop right now. So there shouldn't be any issues. So it's just going to be a second device for— Well, third device.

No, I was going to say second device provided by the government, because they may provide you with a laptop and then the parliamentary tablet. And I know that the Minister of Home Affairs said third device in terms of your phone. But those devices are just going to— are going to sync with each other, and once you delete the profile off of one, it will delete all of the information.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Tourism.

Hon. Zhavargo Jolly:

Thank you, Madam Chair. So this is more of a technical question, going back to the point the Minister of Home Affairs mentioned in Clause 2, the amendment to Clause 2, the online member portals. I guess it's more to the Minister of MITE. Is that referring to remote access? If you don't have your physical device, you'd be able to go to the House of Parliament website and enter your information and access that, I guess, from another device to a secure portal?

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

No, I don't think it's going to be a remote desktop. I think the Members Portal is going to be just a storage area to put information in for members. So, for instance, if you have bills, if you have audit papers and stuff like that, they will put into the members portal so when you go into it, you'd be able to find that information there.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

I think you can access it from a third-party device.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Wouldn't be the portal though. The Minister of Home Affairs was saying that if you can access it from a third-party device, yeah, you'd be able to access the portal from a third-party device, but the portal won't be a remote desktop where you log into your emails and everything. It will just be more like a library where there's going to be information stored that everyone can access. And yes, it will be browser-based and you can go to any browser device to be able to log into that portal, but it's not going to be like logging into your laptop or the tablet where your emails and everything will be on.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Okay, thank you. Are there any further contributions to Clause 6? Okay, the Chair recognizes the Member for South Caicos.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Being as we have the Minister for MITE and he's answering questions, I just have a technical question on the device and if the device is storing any information that is important And I know some time ago we had a situation where we lost a lot of information and we couldn't recover this information, and sometimes it left us in

limbo. So these devices, are they protected enough that should we have any cyberattacks, this information can be found and it wouldn't just disappear and go away?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Member. Chair recognizes the Minister of Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Now, as I said before, the tablets are just your laptop. It's a different form factor. And so you will be able to save files directly to the tablet. It's just an iPad. I'm not sure which models they got. It could be a Samsung tablet, it could be an Android tablet, it could be an iOS tablet. And you would be able to store files locally on the device and you'd be able to store files in the cloud.

And there are going to be some files that if you're working on things bills and— What is it? It's a Surface. It's a Microsoft tablet. So it's just going to be a Windows laptop. So you'll be able to store files locally on the device You'd be able to store it in your OneDrive if you're using OneDrive or you're using Dropbox or something that.

You'd be able to store it on that. You'll be able to store it on any flash drives, your thumb drives that people call them, and then they're going to be parliamentary stuff that will be stored in the parliamentary cloud information. So it will be all of the bills and everything.

The parliamentary files that are in the cloud will be backed up. On a daily basis. On a daily basis. So in case there is any hacking or any— something happened with the drive for whatever reason, the drive goes down, any damage to it, we will be able to restore the parliamentary files.

The files that you're storing locally on the machine will be your responsibility because DICE will not have access remotely to those files. So just— let's just— I'm just going to make it up, an example. Let's just say we were having an event here and you took pictures with your phone and you saved them to your computer, and the, they won't have those pictures backed up. It will be up to you whether or not you want to back up your tablet. Now, the quickest, the easiest way to do this, just use a thumb drive because these drives are so big, the thumb drives are so big that you could copy things to it, or an external drive.

But the parliamentary things that are going to be in the cloud Those things, those will be backed up by DICE. And just so for the public's sake, these are the devices and they're going to be— and it appears to be running Windows 11. So it's actually a computer, just the form factor is different.

It's a tablet form factor. And so you will be— my recommendation is to back them up That's pretty. To back them up, the files that are on the device themselves, to back them up using, using a flash drive. And then this is what they— this is what they would look like. And leather case, branded Turks and Caicos, Parliament of Turks and Caicos. Now I just have to let the Ministry of, Home Affairs, the Minister of Home Affairs know, we usually like to do these things with a bang, and have an event around it.

She's already unveiled This is a question. But that said, yes, my recommendation is to back up your local files with a flash drive or with an external hard drive. That's the ones that you could plug into portable drives.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Okay, thank you. Are there any further contributions to Clause 6?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, thank you very much.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, thank you very much, Madam Chair. Thank you, Your Honour. Thank you, Your Honour. Just one recommendation. Is it possible that all the devices be loaded with the laws of the Turks and Caicos Islands, those general things, Handbook of the Civil Service, those general information that instead of a card, they be loaded on all devices for members to access at their fingertips?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Attorney General— or sorry, Honourable Minister of Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

I would say yes, the devices could be loaded with anything, but from a design point of view, those are the things that you'll normally find in the members portal. So when you log into the portal, you'd see the laws of the Turks and Caicos. So you don't have to update everyone's devices with it, because invariably what's going to happen is that somebody is going to say, oh, I can't find my own on my device, so I deleted my own, or you want to update the laws.

So you just finish a bill and you want to update the laws of the Turks and Caicos, you need to get access to everybody's device to make sure they have their latest copy. But if you do it in the portal, whenever it's updated to the portal, everyone gets it. So that would be my recommendation.

And then you can download them from the portal to your device if you want them locally. I don't know if Madam AG wants to say something.

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

Yes, I just wanted to say, Madam Chair, and thanks very much to the Honourable Minister for Innovation, that members would recall that we are working on a revised set of laws for the Turks and Caicos Islands. And of course, those laws will be available again to the members. And of course, it would be preferable to have these things available through One of these mechanisms, the portal, the SharePoint, the OneDrive, all of these different mechanisms that are currently available to us in our Microsoft suite that you don't have to have take up all the space on your individual device. But of course, members can design that how they want.

The answer to your question Thank you, Honorable Attorney General.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The Chair recognizes the member for Grand Turk North.

Hon. Otis Chuck Morris:

Yeah, just coming— I'd like to comment on commendable how this has finally come to fruition, because as you know, as from 2021, I remember, always that from then, cabinet has been trying to do the same. And to see that this happened to come on now, it's really— and I look forward to the training and the urgency of this being due so that us as members can be better informed and be better utilized going forward, doing the— being able to be representing the people of the nation.

And I said, it is very commendable that this happened, and I would like to— my congratulations to the Clerk and the staff for the hard work that they have been doing to get this carried through.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Honourable Member. Are there any further contributions to Clause 6? Any contributions?

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

Madam Chair.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

The Chair recognizes the Honourable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have any further contribution to Clause 6, but I want to signal that I would like the committee to please return to Clause 5 when you have finished with Clause 6. Thank you.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you. Any further contributions? Any contributions? Are there any contributions? There being no contributions, The question is that Clause 6 stands part of the amendments. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Okay, so honorable members, we are going to go back to Clause 5 so that the Attorney General can make her contribution.

Honorable Attorney General.

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

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the Chief Parliamentary Counsel is not with me in person today, but she is actually online with me and has drawn to my attention that in Clause 5 in the proposed new subparagraph 3 under Standing Order 91, that for clarity purposes based on the interventions in the committee, that it is useful to add the words assigned for parliamentary purposes at the end of that proposed new paragraph so that it would read, as soon as practicable after a bill has been printed, the Clerk shall Send the bill together with any explanatory memorandum proposed by the member in charge of the bill electronically, or by placing a copy of the bill in each member's desk, or sending it to the member's electronic device assigned for parliamentary purposes.

So, Madam Chair, I move that the words assigned for parliamentary purposes be added after the word device. Do I have a seconder?

Hon. Otis Chuck Morris:

Second.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Okay, thank you. So the motion has been moved by the Honourable Attorney General and seconded by the Member for Grand Turk North that after the word device on section— sorry, clause 5 We're going to add assigned for the parliamentary purpose. All in favor, aye. Those to the contrary, no. Okay, so assigned for the parliamentary purposes.

Assigned— okay, sorry. So assigned for the parliamentary purposes. Assigned for parliamentary purposes. Great. Okay, all in favor? Aye. Those to the contrary? No. The ayes have it. Okay, honourable members, we have reached the end of our scrutiny to the Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026, and I'm going to suspend the session to call the Speaker to take his chair. This session is hereby suspended.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, this Honourable Parliament now resumes sitting. Pray be seated. Honourable Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the committee has completed its considerations for the Bill—Considerations for Turks and Caicos Islands Standing Order of Parliament Amendment 2026 with Amendments. And I now turn this proceedings over to you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Members. I want to thank the Honourable Deputy Speaker for overseeing the passage of the Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026. Honourable Members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we now have to pass this motion. And so, Honourable Members, the question put is Motion No. 2 of 2026, Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026 be hereby passed.

All in favour say aye. All to the contrary, no. The ayes have it. Honourable Members, Motion No. 2 of 2026, Standing Orders of Parliament Amendment 2026, is hereby passed. Thank you very much for that. That is I want to congratulate all of you for passing that motion, because we now will be much more modernized as we conduct Parliament going forward.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

That's your first bill, Speaker.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

QUESTION ON COMMERCIAL CROWN LAND ADMINISTRATIVE AND RECORD DEFICIENCIES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you. Honourable Members, I will now return to the Order Paper, and we are on oral replies to questions. We will have the first parliamentary question to be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for The Bight to the Honourable Premier. Honourable Member.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Good afternoon and thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Honourable Premier please state the specific administrative and record deficiencies identified before the 6-month moratorium on new commercial Crown land applications in Providenciales was imposed. Identify when each deficiency was discovered and lay on the table of this Honourable Parliament the corrective work programme, responsible officers, milestone, and completion date.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Honourable Member for his question. Mr. Speaker, The record of all Crown land parcels and related transactions is maintained within the Electronic Land Registry Operating System, ELROS, which is administered by the Land Registry. Information comprising the Crown land inventory is generated from the index of property proprietor name, IOPN, which is extracted from the ELROS database. A review of the 2017 Crown Land Inventory indicates that approximately 3.52 million acres of Crown land were identified as available across the TCI at that time. However, only 7,119.12 acres were recorded as available in Providenciales, compared with 44,000 acres held in private ownership on the island.

This stark contrast highlights the limited extent of the remaining Crown land resources in Providenciales and underscores the importance of ensuring their prudent and strategic management. Given the increasing demand for Crown land in Providenciales, careful consideration must be given to balancing public demand with the need to reserve sufficient Crown land for current and future government purposes. In this regard, the Crown Land Act expressly provides that Crown land required for government purposes must be given priority. ELROS was originally designed to automatically update the IOPN whenever a transaction

resulted in a change of proprietorship.

However, around 2019, it was discovered that a technical malfunction had rendered this automated function inoperative, resulting in updates no longer being processed. The issue remained undetected until 2022, when corrective measures were initiated to restore the automatic systems update. The Land Registry team also initiated a complete review of the Land Registry for South Caicos and Salt Cay and Grand Turk, North Caicos, and the Middle Caicos. The review of the Land Registry for Providenciales are ongoing but remain incomplete to date. Although system enhancements have since been implemented to restore functionality, historical Deficiencies within the IOPN database persist.

As a result, extensive data cleansing and validation exercises are required before reliable Crown land information can be accurately generated and extracted. To address these deficiencies, the Registry of Lands and Deputy Registrars the Registrar of Lands and the Deputy Registrar are undertaking a comprehensive review and update of all Crown land records contained within the IOPN through the manual examination of individual land registers. This exercise is projected to be completed by the end of December 2026. It is anticipated rather that information relating to what is believed to be about 7,000 Crown land parcels will be reviewed and updated with the objective of producing a complete and accurate Crown land inventory. Additionally, the next step in the process would be the scanning of all land registers for each island.

And just I would just like to add that the rate at which Crown land had been disposed of in the past, both in very large parcels in the early days of the land rush and then more recently in the disproportionately large lots that have been made available, some of them as large as football fields, means that potentially we can end up with a generation of landless proletariats in a couple of years or a couple of decades or two. And so it's very important to take Also, I think it is no—I think everybody in this country would—if we would be objective and observe what has been happening over the years—the indiscriminate.

Releasing of Crown land, particularly around government facilities, have actually resulted in the inability of government to expand its infrastructure or estate for accommodation. In many, many cases, government have to Have been now, have we been buying property back? Because in many cases we have been very narrow, sort of short-sighted, where we've—and I say we collectively as a country— have given away or disposed of Crown land immediately around government compounds and therefore the ability to extend these places. or expand as the economy grows and the government requires space and they're unable to do so.

So I think it's a very necessary exercise for us to be able to do this so we can once determine once and for all exactly what the sort of inventory of Crown land that the government Thank you very much, Honourable Premier.

FOLLOW-UP ON PREVIOUS QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I saw your light was illuminated. Do you have a point of order or a point of clarification?

Hon. Jameka L. Williams:

I don't know if it's a point of order or clarification, Mr. Speaker, and it's not related to this series of questions, but it was related to, I believe, Some sessions ago, I had asked a series of questions in reference to the special prosecutor, Ms. Andrea Mitchell, and the Attorney General had to provide some information on the questions that I had asked to the Parliament. So I'm just following up to see if those questions—the answers are available, or when can she say it will be available?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Attorney General, you have nothing further at this time?

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would have to be reminded of that. This is not on the Order Paper, so I have not been given notice, but if I could be reminded, I would be happy to assist.

QUESTION ON PROVIDENCIALES COMMERCIAL CROWN LAND APPLICATIONS UNDER THE MORATORIUM

Hon. Gordon Burton:

All right, thank you very much, Honourable. Second parliamentary question. Actually, a lot of what the Honourable Premier said covered a lot of what you have in these questions, so can you look at them to see whether they were answered and whether we need to ask all of these questions?

So, Parliamentary Question number 2, to be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for The Bight to the Honourable Premier.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. He covered a lot, but there are still some areas that need answering. Will the Honourable Premier be pleased to say the number, total acreage, and proposed use of Providenciales commercial Crown land applications received before the moratorium that remain undecided, the criteria and timetable for the determination, and whether any application or project may be exempted, identifying every

exemption granted and its acreage, valuation, and written justification?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Premier.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Will the Honourable Premier be pleased to say the number Total acreage and proposed use of Providenciales commercial Crown land applications received before the moratorium that remain undecided. The criteria and timetable for the determination and whether any application or project may be exempted. Identifying every exemption granted and its acreage, valuation, and written justification.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Mr. Speaker, looking at the answers that have been provided to me, I don't have an answer for this question at the moment. I will have to revert to the Parliament and to the member for this question number 2. I don't have the answer to that question at the moment.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

The question could be deferred to the next sitting, depending on the answer.

QUESTION ON THE CROWN LAND INVENTORY IN PROVIDENCIALES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Okay, parliamentary question number 3, to be asked by the Honourable Member for The Bight to the Honourable Premier.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Will the Honourable Premier lay on the table of this Honourable Parliament The present inventory of Crown land in Providenciales, identifying the acres classified as available, reserved, leased, under application, or otherwise committed, and state the acres designated for affordable housing, agriculture, public infrastructure, and commercial development.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Again, Mr. Speaker, these questions require significant investment in time to generate the reply, and the information will be provided to the member As it is available.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Okay, and he did ask for it to be laid on the table of Parliament, so please provide it to Parliament when you have it available. Thank you, sir.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you.

QUESTION ON THE 2026 COST OF LIVING RELIEF PROGRAMME IN PROVIDENCIALES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Question number—parliamentary question number 4, to be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for The Bight to the Honourable Premier.

QUESTION ON THE CROWN LAND INVENTORY IN PROVIDENCIALES

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Sorry, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

The Chair recognizes the Honourable Leader of the Opposition

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Will that question be deferred to the next sitting.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Which one? Number 4?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, I think we have to defer it to the next sitting also so it could remain on the agenda for reply or for the information to be given. That one that he just finished.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

You mean number 3?

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Okay.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, it has to be deferred to the next sitting.

QUESTION ON THE 2026 COST OF LIVING RELIEF PROGRAMME IN PROVIDENCIALES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

All right, I'm talking about number 4 now, to be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for The Bight to the Honourable Premier. Honourable Member.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier be pleased to say, for Providenciales, the number of persons assessed and eligible for the 2026 cost of living relief program, the number of applications received, approved, rejected, corrected, and outstanding, the number and value of payments issued and the date by which every approved but unpaid recipient will be paid.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you, Hon. Member. Hon. Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you Mr. Speaker. Thank the Member for his question. Mr. Speaker, a total of 15,557 persons applied for the Cost of Living Relief Program. Of these applicants, 12,125 indicated that they reside on Providenciales, representing 77.6% of all applicants. A total of 11,350 Providenciales applicants were approved representing 93.6% of applications received from Providenciales. These approvals resulted in a total of $5,675,000 for Providenciales. Overall, 775 applicants were declined.

Of the declined applicants— applications from Providenciales, 217 were identified as duplicate submissions where individuals applied more than once. Checks for applicants from all islands have been prepared and are now available for collection. Applicants must collect their checks by the 28th of February 2027, or within 6 months of the cheque printing date, whichever comes first. The Ministry of Finance released the cheques in 4 batches and informed applicants through press releases each time a batch was ready for collection.

These notices include— included the relevant island and references Reference numbers for the approved applicants. All checks are now available or have been paid. For payments, it is the responsibility of each applicant to collect their check. Number of applicants for Grand Turk, 2,272. Number of them approved, 2,168. Number declined, 104. And duplicates, Declines, 46. Approval applicants percentage, 95.4.

And then the numbers for Salt Cay is 44, 4 declined, 90.9% approved. South Caicos, 457, with 22 declined. 95.4. 12 duplications, resulting in 95.2% approved applicants. Middle Caicos, 67 with 2 declined, resulting in 97% approval. North Caicos, 23 declined out of 592, resulting in a 96% 93% approval. And Provo, as I said earlier, 775 declined out of 12,175, duplication of 217, at a 93%— roughly 94% approval rate. Total overall The number— total overall, the number declined was 930 and the duplication was 291.

Overall approval rate was 94%. In terms of payout, Grand Turk? Was $1,084,000. Salt Cay, $20,000. North Caicos and South Caicos, $217,500. Middle Caicos, $32,500. North Caicos and Parrot Cay, $284,500. Providenciales, $5,675,000, for a total of $7,313,500.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Premier. You have a follow-up? The Chair recognizes the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, thank you very much. Quick supplement, may I ask I would ask the Honourable Premier if the information is in a form where it can be laid on the table of the House, if he may be pleased to do so.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Premier, are you able to lay that information on the House?

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I am willing and able to lay all of the information that I have on the table of the House, if so desired.

QUESTION ON CONSULTANCY CONTRACTS AWARDED BY GOVERNMENT SINCE APRIL 2021

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much. Parliamentary Question number 5, to be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for The Bight to the Honourable Premier.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister of Finance lay on the table a list of consultancy contracts valued at $50,000 or more awarded by the Government Since April 2021, showing the consultant, procurement method, purpose, original value, approved variations, payments made, completion date, and measurable deliverables received under each contract.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if someone could help me with this question because this, I think, will have to be answered within the context of the Standing Order because a lot of this information would be available through the— would have been available through a process of examination by the P-Public Accounts Committee. Administrative Committee. So the member have the ability, where possible, to interrogate existing statistics and information.

It is at this stage entirely, entirely time-consuming and an inappropriate application of public service time to go back from 2021 to provide detailed examination of every contract over $50,000. And procurement method, because again, contracts are awarded based— the procurement method are set out in policy or the procurement ordinance. So, the methodology cannot be changed.

The methodology for the procurement is set. So this particular question, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the member to use other avenues, including the CPA and the Expense Committee, of which I think he's the chair, if I'm not mistaken. You're the chair, the member. So I would say that you used That avenue to obtain the information that you require.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Member, do you have a supplementary?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

I'm going to assist the Premier in that.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Oh, you're going to assist the Premier? Okay. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Grateful, Mr. Speaker, to assist the Premier and highlighting so that those also listening in— the 2 committees that would be able to review requests and have a detailed dive into the information that's being requested is the Expenditure Committee, where there shall be an expenditure committee constituted under the Constitution for the examination of expenditure of the sums granted by the House or otherwise allocated to ministries to meet the public expenditure.

So the question as framed would fall neatly in the work of the Expenditure Committee, and it would also give the committee more opportunity to ask detailed, pointed questions to the procurement department, as well as any ministerial questions about the consultancy, which would, in our view, assist in really getting to the crux of the matter that you're investigating.

But further to that, I think that's a good point. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, there's also the Administration Committee, which is charged with the responsibility of monitoring the conduct of the business of the government. And so that committee as well would be well placed in providing the

context in which the questions have— in which this question is framed, because it asks for at least 7 items of information related to consultation, and that way it wouldn't be rushed in a parliamentary question.

And from this angle, I'm encouraging both committees, if this is the work that they want to undertake, to meet and conduct that work, because that level of scrutiny is in the power of the House to have this review and report to the House on the administration of this work and/or the expenditure related to this work. And so I just wanted to assist the Premier in that regard and then neatly wrap it up at the end of the year.

The Public Accounts Committee also has a scrutiny mechanism provided to them to review the overall government accounts at the end of the year to see again if the expenditure and the appropriation of the funds for the work that is being provided has been done in accordance with the rules of the House. So there are 3 bite-sized of the cherry that can give you adequate time and review mechanism and scrutiny as a member of Parliament, and we would encourage it in that vein.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for that explanation and clarification. Are there any supplementary?

QUESTION ON PROVIDENCIALES COMMERCIAL CROWN LAND APPLICATIONS UNDER THE MORATORIUM

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

I would like to because my pages aren't numbered, I was unable to answer the question 2 and 3. I am now finding some information, so if the member wishes to ask the question again, I can speak to it.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Member, do you want to ask questions, the ones that we deferred earlier, questions 2 and 3? Do you want to ask those again?

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Honourable Premier be pleased to say the number, total acreage, and proposed use of Providenciales commercial Crown land applications received before the moratorium that remain undecided, the criteria and timetable for their determination, And whether any application or project may be exempted, identifying every exemption granted and its acreage, valuation, and written justification.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in response to the Member's question, a total of 74 commercial applications representing approximately 677.617 acres 74 commercial applications representing approximately 677.61 acres were received prior to the commencement of the moratorium on August 7th, 2026. It's a lot of land. And remain under consideration. The majority of these applications are requests for commercial leases intended to facilitate various commercial development projects. Followed by applications for licenses relating to beach nourishment activities and the installation of swim decks. 5 of the applications were submitted by various government departments.

Of the total applications received, 31 comprising approximately 175 acres qualify for exemption under the categories listed in the Cabinet Action Joint dated August 7th, 2026. As residential applications, including amnesty program applications, applications that have received cabinet approval, easements, rights of ways, repostulations, encroachment, and formal settlement demand. Sorry. Sorry, sir. Okay. So, let me a second him.

I believe these pages— And it goes on, I believe, to say that The current inventory of Crown land parcels available in Providenciales indicates approximately 29,000 acres are available, while 1,268 acres are presently held under lease. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the information presented should be regarded as provisional, as known systems deficiencies stemming from the 2019 data integrity issue may have adversely affected the accuracy completeness and reliability of the records. Additionally, information relating to the exact acreage of Crown land designated for affordable housing, agriculture, public infrastructure, and commercial development is not readily available.

This underscores the urgent need for the development of a comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date Crown land inventory to support effective land management, planning, and decision-making. There's a table here which provides additional information. Again, I'm happy to lay this information on the table of the House.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Okay, thank you very much, Hon. Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

So I think it would probably be more beneficial to the member if I provide these.

QUESTION ON GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT PIPELINE AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN PROVIDENCIALES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Yeah, because question— parliamentary question 3 has asked for the information to be laid on the table. Okay, so that will be done. Okay, so question number 6 to be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for The Bight to the Honourable Premier.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier be pleased to say the value of proposed, approved, financed, and actively constructed projects in Providenciales within the Government's investment pipeline and lay on the table of this Honourable Parliament the corresponding funded infrastructure plan, project costs, and completion dates for fire protection, health services, Potable water, roads, drainage, waste management, and emergency services required to serve that development.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

So, question 6.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Premier, can you highlight your mic for me, please? Okay, it's done.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Question 6, the Minister--Member is asking me to say the value of proposed approved financial actively constructed projects in Provo, within the Government's investment pipeline and to lay on the table of this Honourable Parliament the corresponding funding infrastructure plan, project cost, and completion date for— Fire protection, health services, potable water, road, drainage, waste management and emergency services required to serve that development? So I will make an attempt to answer this, but let me say that this information would require volumes.

And I don't know that if there are questions about the requirements for huge or major infrastructure Programs or requirements, then I believe maybe there's a different approach to take to determine that information. And it would seem to me that that would be— not to give the member ideas, but that probably better achieve Through some kind of a motion requiring the House to examine whether certain things are adequate. Well, let me say that a total of 20 projects valuing $90 million has been approved for Provo, and it should be noted that multi-year ongoing projects Multi-year ongoing projects has been approved for Provo.

It should be noted that multi-year ongoing projects such as South Dock port development, national ID and digitization of border services has commenced. So again, it's best for me to lay this on the table of the House, but relocation of 911 office, $450,000 approved, appropriated for '26. Total project cost is $450,000. Community parks, recreational facilities development and refurbishment. That includes works to Jubasan Baseball Court, Jubasan Providenciales, $435,000. Overall project cost is $1.5 million.

Safe space projects for the various high schools across the islands, $500,000 out of a total project cost Of $2.2 million. Construction of 10 classrooms at Clement Howell High School, $3.6 million total project cost. Expenditures for '25-'26 is $1.2 million. Artificial turf and fencing at Downtown Ballpark, $500,000. Total cost of $1.5 million. Let's see how we get this. Upgrade of primary healthcare clinics, all islands, $50,000, this is 26, so a total of $3 million.

Refurbishment of halfway house and the purchase of furniture and equipment for it, $1.3 million. South Dock Port Development, $11.4 million out of a $53.5 million overall project cost. Drainage Improvement Works, $3 million for this year out of a total project cost of $3.8 million. Community Center, The Bight, $500,000 out of a cost of $1.5 million.

Refurbishment of Gus Lightburn, $1.7 million out of total project cost of $1.7 million. Sidewalks for Chalksound, $300,000 out of a total project cost of $300,000. And Blue Hills signage project, $150,000. Wheeland enhancement project, $600,000. Road, all islands, out of a total cost of $2.6 million. The amount allocated is $439,000. Secondary roads, $887,000 out of a project cost of $4.5 million. And secondary roads phase 2, $3 million out of a total Project cost of $6 million.

And then renovation of the Fuller and Clementina Walkin Park, $6.5— sorry, $650,000 out of a total project cost of $650,000. And the Sapodilla Bay development, $850,000 out of a project cost of $850,000. And, Mr. Speaker, Radio Turks and Caicos TV studio project refurbishment works, Lot 1 and studio and equipment Lot 2, $300,000 out of a total project cost of $500,000.

Total expenditure of $28 million out of a total cost, project cost of $90 million. Second All-Island Elected Member.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Hon. Premier. Are there any supplementary or follow-up questions? No? Honourable Members, before we move on, we are now at the 1 PM hour,

so I think it is now time that we could take our midday break. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

DEFERRAL OF PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Minister is not absent, but which the next questions— I think it's only one or two more questions that need to be asked and we'll be finished with question time because the Acting Minister I don't think have received the answers, so it'll be unfair to her to answer them.

So we want those questions 7 to 11 to remain on the order paper for the next sitting?

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

7 to 13.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

7 to 13.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Okay, so what you're saying is that you would like to finish? Let's finish the questions before taking our break. Okay, so questions number 7 to 13 will be deferred until the next meeting of Parliament because the substantive minister is currently not in Parliament to answer those questions, unless persons have the answers.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

The average figure, the average.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

I was just waiting for the light to get on. Sorry, my apologies. There were some questions posed to the Minister of PPID that looked suspiciously like they were questions meant to be for my ministry, and so I've got the answers here and I'm okay to answer them if it's okay with the question.

Yeah, so I'm more than happy to answer them. I think they were actually mistakenly posted to the Minister of PPID.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Member, can you say which question that is?

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

13.

QUESTION ON ESTIMATED ELECTRICITY BILLING AND PELICAN ENERGY TCI METERING SYSTEMS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

13? Okay, so let's say that questions 7 to 12 will be deferred until the next meeting, and Hon. Member, you could ask question number 13. So question number 13 will be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for The Bight, but rather than to the Honourable Minister of PPID, it will be to the Honourable Minister of Innovation.

Honourable Member, proceed.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Mr. Speaker, I want to withdraw question 12, being that the Minister answered that yesterday during his ministerial statement. Minister of PPID answered that question as well. I'll withdraw that one. Because he answered it during his ministerial statement yesterday. Then I'll go to question 13. So it will be 7 to 11 to be deferred.

To the Minister of Innovation, will the Minister be pleased to say the circumstances in which an electricity provider is permitted to issue an estimated or average bill, how much a bill must be identified to the customer, the date and findings of the most recent regulatory audit of Pelican Energy TCI metering and billing systems, and whether any further independent review of those systems has been commissioned or is proposed.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Minister.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's just that the representative for The Bight asks all 4 questions and one goes. So I'm just going to go through them one by one, if that's okay?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Yes, please do.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Okay. So the first question that he said was that the circumstances in which an electricity provider is permitted to issue an estimated or average bill. That's the one I'm going to speak to. And I'm sorry that I don't have it printed out because I wasn't given it to it as the Minister here, but I'm going to pick it up from my emails, the answers to it. The electricity regulations provide for estimated billing in limited circumstances. Regulations 12 provides that where a person authorized by the public supplier is unable to gain access to the premises or to the electricity meter, the supplier may issue a bill calculated on the basis of the customer's previous electricity consumption.

Once the next regular meter reading is obtained, the customer's account is required to be adjusted accordingly. The regulations also provide that where a meter fails to register the quantity of electricity consumed, the amount payable for the period of the meter failure may be calculated using the customer's average electricity consumption during a similar period. It is therefore important to distinguish between an estimated bill issued because a meter could not be read and an adjustment arising because a meter has malfunctioned.

In either case, estimation is intended to provide a reasonable basis for billing where an actual reliable meter reading is temporarily unavailable. It does not replace the general requirement for consumption to be determined through a properly functioning meter. Now, that's question 1. I can stop in case you have any supplementary questions.

No, thank you. So if you would like for me to go right into question 2, I can go into it. Okay, thank you.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Wait, hold on, you have a supplementary.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Member for South Caicos, do you have a supplementary question?

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is as it relates to the estimated cost of electricity. My question to the Minister is, who determines the amount of that bill when it's estimated? Which portion do they use? The last month bill? The second month bill? The average over 6 months? How do they come up with the estimated cost? Is there a formula to come up with the estimated cost? And who approves that they can send the customer that bill to be paid because we know if you don't pay it, you'll be disconnected. So who approves that I have to pay this bill when I am not confident that I use that energy?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Minister.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, and through the Speaker, there was a few questions asked there in terms of who approves the bill. For estimated bills, if you have an issue with your estimated bill, you can raise it. My recommendation is to raise it with the supplier first and foremost. If the supplier is insisting that the bill is correct and you're insisting that it is wrong from the consumer, I would say then to raise it with the Energy and Utilities Department.

Now, the thing about estimated billing is this. I'm not speaking for Pelican, but I just want to show the logic behind it. If you're using, let's just say, 1,000 kilowatt hours per month as an example. So if your bill is at 2,000, if your usage is at 2,000, so let's just say at the end of September your meter reading is showing 2,000.

The reading actually on the meter is 2,000, and then you use another 1,000. It should show 3,000, but however, the electricity provider came to your house, can't read your meter for whatever reason, and they put down 1,500. Okay, so you see it and you go, wait a minute, it can't certainly be 1,500.

It's wrong. My bill is wrong. That's higher than it should be. And you dispute it. But let's say you haven't been able to solve it. By the time— so that would be your bill at the end of October. But by the time— so if you're using consistently on average $1,000 a month, by the time they get there to the end of November, they should— your bill should have another $1,000 put on it.

So it should go from $2,000 to $3,000, and then by the end of November it should have $4,000. So the bill that they give you in November—

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Is that the same bill?

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Even if they estimated the first bill wrong at $1,500, the bill in November should catch up because once they read the meter, the meter would then be able to show exactly what your reading is. So one bill will be higher than normal and the other bill would be less than average.

So by the time you catch it, the final 2 years would be averaged out. That's the logic to me. I'm not speaking on behalf of Bellican, but that would be the logic how meters would work. So by the time you see the meter, are you able to get to the meter, you and I, it should catch up and show the correct reading.

So as I said before, one would be higher than normal, the other one would be less than normal. But the issue in terms of if Fortis, not Fortis, Pelican, in a sense the electricity supplier, would be the one who estimated the bill initially, so they wouldn't have to come to the electricity utilities department and say, can you approve this bill?

They would be the one who would send you the bill initially. And you would be the consumer to look at it and say whether you think it's correct or not. And if you're disputing it, I would say again to raise it with them immediately, and if you still have an issue with it, then to raise it with the EUD department.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much. Is there another supplementary? The Chair recognizes the Honourable Member for South Caicos.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister, because I have seen on social media where a lot of Turks and Caicos Islanders are complaining that something is fundamentally wrong with the cost of electricity, even when they were on vacations and come back and the electric bill is this high. So I'm asking the minister, how is it That Fortis can estimate a bill— Pelican, sorry.

How often does this happen, and who is the authority that ensures that this is something that is not happening on a regular basis?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me go to the Minister, Representative for The Bight, to say I'm still going to go through your questions as asked. And so while I'm taking the supplementary questions, based on what I know and gather from the Electricity Commissioner and what we've gathered from speaking with the electricity provider, being away on vacation doesn't mean that your bill is estimated, because more often than not they can still get access to the metre.

So I don't want it to conflate it that when someone is away on vacation that the bill is estimated. But let's assume that while they're away on vacation, they have a pretty good idea of their usage. So let's just say they're gone for the entire month and they came back and their bill is higher than they expected.

So I think that's what normally happens. They're away The electricity supplier can get access to the meter. They come with the meter. They send out a bill, and then the person who receives the bill goes, wait a minute, I haven't been there for most of the month. My bill is higher than it should be.

My recommendation again is to raise it and go to the electricity provider because they're not going to come in there and say, wait a minute, because the electricity provider isn't going to say, The person is away, because they may not know that the person is away, and we believe that the electricity utilities department should approve the bill. They would send the bill out. So as the consumer, if you see the bill and you've got a pretty good eye that, wait a minute, only my refrigerator has been on, or some minor other things, this bill should not be this high, again, I would say take it to the electricity provider, in this case Pelican, raise a complaint with them, and if they are insisting that the bill is correct and you certainly believe that the bill is wrong, then raise that dispute with the Electricity Utility Department.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

The Chair recognizes the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Edwin Andre Astwood:

Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member from South Caicos for raising that, as a lot of people have that concern. However, What is the Role that the regulator plays? Why not take it to the regulators and voice that concern and not to the provider? Why do you recommend taking it to the provider and not to the regulators of the provider?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister of Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think what you're saying is instead of going to the supplier first -- Because I'm recommending going to the supplier first. I'm recommending that if you have an issue with your bill, to take it to the supplier first, the person who is giving you the service, and then if there's a dispute, take it to the regulator. Now, I think what you're asking me now is to say, why don't go directly to the regulator? I wouldn't recommend going directly to the regulator in any case.

Now, and not just even in electricity case, is because one, if there is something wrong, Then immediately the supplier would be able to identify it. If it's something with their billing system or something with the printer, if the wrong bills went out, they would be able to identify it right away. If you take it to the regulator, the regulator wouldn't have any oversight of what would have happened. So let's just say there was just a minor issue why you got the wrong bill.

The supplier to you would be able to figure it out right away what happened. And then, so with anything, like I said, not just electricity, My thing would be always to raise your dispute with the provider first. If you're going on an airline, if you're at a hotel or whatever, if you have a dispute, you go to the person who provides you with the service first. Say, I have a dispute with my bill, and then see what they say. And then if they don't clear it up properly, then you start to go to the trades department or the complaints department for the country or whatever, or for that industry. In our case, it's the Electricity Department with the Commissioner.

So I would say, but to try to sort it out first with your supplier on anything, and then only when you can't sort it out, there's still a dispute, then you raise it to the regulator or the relevant department that deals with complaints. If you— you see it even on your tickets, if your airline tickets, if you have an issue with an airline ticket, a dispute, you don't go directly to the authority that's responsible for it. You go to the airline first, try to resolve it. And then only when you can't resolve it, then you go to the authority that regulates the industry. That would be my recommendation on why.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member. If we keep going this, we're going to have to take a break. Okay, so this will be the last supplementary. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Member for South Caicos.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know we hungry, but sometimes it's the only way you get answers. So my contribution to the same item is that from experience, when your power bill is low, you often receive a knock on your door or a call from somebody in Fortis inquiring why your bill is so low.

Maybe that's your summer home, or you switch and you're not living in that unit no more. So if they could call you when your power bill is low and send inspectors out to inspect your property with you not even being home, because that's their money, how is it okay for us to allow them to take our poor people's money on an estimate or a guess.

Now, I know we was talking about the renewal of their business license. I would suggest to the minister that this clause be taken out during the renewal process of this business license. I don't subscribe to Estimating a customer's bill when the electricity rate is so high. It's just my opinion. Pelican, sorry.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

The chair recognizes the Honorable Minister of Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you. As a representative, through the Speaker, the representative for South Caicos, I'm going to say that contrary to any— to the popular belief, the government As I know, it has not added into any negotiations of any license with this electricity provider. So I hope the Leader of the Opposition takes note of that.

Despite this thing over and over again, it hasn't happened. It's nowhere yet, and I want the press to hear that. The government has not, has not added into any negotiations. And I'm more than happy to go into the details about it at some other time since we're going to break for lunch, but just for the record, Thank you.

It has not happened. So this matter that many times they tell the press over and over and over that it has, it has not happened. But anyway, the issue around estimating a bill, the— and I'm more than happy to, if we ever get into any negotiation, looking at it. The issue though is this. Let's just say you are away all month and your meter is running, your refrigerator is running. And the, and for some reason, let's say your meter's in your yard and you need to open the gate up and you're not there and they can't open the gate, because I describe in the unquestioned one and the times in which they are allowed to estimate the meter.

If they don't estimate the reading, what happens is that when you come back and you get your next reading, you're going to have something that's double your normal usage. I use the example of 1,000 kilowatts per month. So they are not able to read your meter. Let's just say at the end of September, you use 1,000 in September. When they come back for the reading in October, if you're using 1,000 a month, by the time you see your bill, your bill will have the difference usage between August and October because they wouldn't get the reading for September and you would have had double the

reading because the meter keeps running and so it keeps adding up and the way a bill is calculated, it's calculated between The difference between your current reading and your last reading.

That's how they calculate the usage, and then they multiply it by the base rate and the fuel factor and everything. And so again, just as an example, if you get a bill at the end of January and then you get a bill at the end of February, the way it's calculated is that it takes the total reading on the meter in February minus the reading from January, and that's the difference, that's the usage for that month, and then they multiply it by the rate.

And so if they're not able to get it for 1 month and you only get it for 2 months, it will show that big difference over the 2-month span. And so all of a sudden, the customer will be getting a bill 2 months later that's twice as high as what they would normally have.

And so that would cause one of those problems. And then the other problem would be also, I don't want to speak with the electricity supplier, they're going to— then they're going to be carrying receivables for 60 days versus 30 days. 30 days. So if they're supposed to send out bills every month but they can't estimate the bill while you're away for whatever reason, they can't get access to the meter, then they would be sitting on receivables for 60 days when they're able to read the meter.

So those are the sorts of things that would pop up. And that's probably why they're allowed to, if they can't get access to the meter for whatever reason, to be able to estimate it, which I covered under the conditions in which they are able to. to estimate a reading. But I'm more than happy to have them look into the conditions and reasons and ways in which they can do it. But if you completely remove estimating bills, that's what would happen if they can't get access to the meter.

You'll get bills shot that are representing 2 months or multiple months. I hope that answers your question.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Now, I can go into question 2 now.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

No, we're going to take a break now.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Okay.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

You're pretty long-winded, Honourable. So I think it's best that we take our midday break and we come back to these questions because I think they can take a while to answer properly. This Honourable Parliament is hereby suspended until 2 PM.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honourable Members, this honourable Parliament now resumes its sitting. Pray be seated. Honourable members, prior to our break, we were going through questions or replies to questions, and we were on question number 13, and we will now continue with the replies. And I'll call on the Honourable Minister.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the second question— I just have to go and repeat the first one. First question, I'll go to the second one because it feeds off of the first one. So the first question was the circumstances in which an electricity provider is permitted to issue An estimated or averaged bill.

And then question 2 says, how such a bill must be identified to the customer. Well, the electricity regulations do not prescribe a particular word or notation that must appear on the bill to identify an estimated bill. However, as a matter of transparent billing practices, the EUD's position is that a customer should be able to clearly determine whether the consumption shown on the bill is based on an actual meter reading Or an estimate.

So I think what it's saying is that there is nothing in the regulations that require it, but the ministry's and the EUD's position is that the supplier should have a way of letting the consumer know whether that the bill that they received was based on an estimated or average reading versus one that was an actual reading.

I'm going to go into question 3. Question 3 says, the date and findings of the most recent regulatory audit of Pelican Energy's TCIs and metering and billing systems. The electricity ordinance established a statutory process for the testing and certification of electricity meters before they are placed into service. This includes testing by the utility— that's the energy supplier— and independent regulatory verification through the meter examination— examiner process, including the testing of appropriate samples of meters.

The ordinance also provides a mechanism for meters to be tested where their accuracy is disputed and for customer accounts to be adjusted where meters found to be operating outside the permitted limits of error. So specifically to the

questions asked, based on all the records available to the EUD, the department is not aware of any regulatory audit having been conducted Specifically on Pelican Energy's metering and billing systems.

So as we said again, if there is— I'm going to read over one and say, because I want to stress this point. The ordinance provides a mechanism for meters to be tested where there is an accuracy dispute and for customer accounts to be adjusted where a meter is found to be operating outside the permitted limit of error. And that goes back to what I was saying earlier, Mr. Speaker, that if there is a dispute If there's a dispute, that there is a mechanism for the consumer to go to the EUD and raise it and then have the meters tested. But based on it, the answer is that we don't— our records don't show where they were audited, their billing system or the meters have been audited. Going on to question 4, whether any further independent review of those systems has been commissioned or is proposed.

The answer is no independent review of Pelican Energy TCI's metering and billing system has been commissioned to date. However, the EUD is progressing the establishment of a multi-sector regulatory authority as part of government's wider utility sector reform programme. The new regulatory framework is intended to strengthen oversight of metering and billing practices, including clearer requirements for meter accuracy and testing. Estimated billing, customer notification, reconciliation of estimated bills, record keeping, and consumer dispute resolution. These reforms are intended to provide greater transparency, consistency, and consumer protection across the electricity sector. So to sum up, we have all— Cabinet has already approved the creation of a multi-sector regulatory authority as Part of our regulatory reforms to the sector, and we're going to be standing up that agency to be able to provide strengthening the oversight and building practices of the electricity supplier.

So those are the things we're looking to, and I think— I hope that answered all of your questions, all of the questions of the member from The Bight, and I will open to answer any supplementary questions. Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Hon. Minister, for the answers to those questions. The Chair recognizes the Hon. Member for South Caicos.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Thank you, Hon. Speaker. Hon. Speaker, through you, my question to the Minister, I understand the Minister spoke to the Question 4 about the metering. My question is, we know that Pelican Energy uses a device to read meters, and this is a twofold question. We know they use devices to read meters.

Which authority regulates these devices to ensure That what these devices are reading is actually what the meter is saying? Who cross-referenced these devices? And not just who monitors the meter, but who cross-referenced the device that they're using to read the meter? And that goes back to the estimate where the Minister said that they cannot enter your property. So, I believe they wouldn't have to enter your property if they're using a device, but— Being as it may, who regulates these devices that frauditors are using to read the meter, and are these devices reconciled with the meter reading and the device?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister of Energy.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the devices, I'm going to say something that I've heard, okay, so, and then I'm going to speak to it. The supplier didn't tell me this, but I've been told in the past that the devices that you may be speaking to, and I stand to be corrected, where they only have to drive within a certain area and then the device scans within a certain area and all of the meters that are within range, it could get the readings from. So I'm assuming you may be talking to a similar device that They don't have to come onto your property.

They can just speak to the meter wirelessly. Again, Pelican didn't tell me this, but that's what I heard, that they may have such a device. But regardless of the device, regardless of the tools that they're using, your question is who would regulate it, who would look at it, who would monitor it, who would calibrate it to make sure that— not calibrate it, but who would ensure that it's calibrated and is giving the correct reading? Again, I stand to be corrected. I believe that it would fall under the Energy Utility Department, again, because that would form a dispute.

So even if they were coming and doing it the old way and reading it and writing it down in a book, that book would form part of the dispute if people are saying that their readings are wrong. So whatever the devices are, my recommendation would be that if there's a dispute around the device, it would come to the Energy Utility Department under the leadership of the Commissioner Arthur.

And then we would look at that. And then again, if there's a— if we feel that the consumer is correct, we would raise it with the supplier. But again, I try to recommend that the consumer and the supplier— the consumer raises any issue with the supplier. And I'm stressing it again, if the consumer feels that the bill is wrong for whatever reason, raise it with the supplier.

And if they still don't have any— if they're still not comfortable with the supplier's answer, then bring it to the electricity Thank you very much, Honourable Member.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Any other supplementaries? No? Oh, the Chair recognizes the Honourable Seventh All-Island Member for her contribution.

Hon. Sharon A. Simons:

I'm number 8. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The question I have for the Minister He says if you have any dispute with your bills, you must take it to the supplier. However, my question is, who regulates the electricity regulator regulates the Pelican or the electricity, but for the estimation and the averages of your bill, who has the oversight of that to say that Pelican isn't overestimating or underestimating?

Where do you go to ask questions about that and if they are being honest? Because if something happens in your house to your equipment, equipment or your appliances, when you go to Pelican, they come up with all sorts of excuses not to pay for it or not to replace it. So who do you turn to to get your justification?

And who is regulating that?

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Minister of Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, through the Speaker, and I apologize to the All Island Member Number 8 because I feel I've got my back to her, but I apologize for having to turn around. Mr. Speaker, as I said before, it's not just a case of turning to the electricity supplier, Pelican, if you have a problem. I'm saying you should start it there. I'm not saying that's the only place.

And so I'm saying if you have a dispute, if you pick up a bill and you think that the bill is wrong, start with going to the supplier and saying, I think my bill is wrong. So start the conversation with them first because you don't want to, if there's a dispute, But if you disagree with the answer and then you come to the regulator and the regulator says, what did the supplier say?

And you say, well, I haven't gone to them. So again, I'm stressing, go to them first. However, if you're not happy with the outcome, the resolution, then bring it to the electricity utility department and say, we went to— I went to— I'm going to call the name of the company— Pelican.

I think my bill is wrong, or my equipment got damaged. These are the things that happened. I've told them they don't want to take responsibility for it. They don't want to reduce the bill. I think the bill is too high. And then we can then go through the process of trying to resolve it. And I don't want to speak for the process right now, but it may come to a point where the EUD, the Electricity Utility Department, may bring a representative from the supply into the same room with the consumer and go through it and then be able to help them decide on the best course of action. And so again, my recommendation is to start, if you have an issue with the electricity supplier, and then if you still have a dispute or it isn't resolved to your satisfaction, to come to the EUD and we will help you come to a resolution.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honorable Minister, for your response. Do you also have a question, Honorable Member? Yes. Okay, the Chair recognizes the Honorable Member from South Caicos.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to speak to the regulator because the minister has oftentimes related to the regulator being The one that you take your queries to. But a small island like South Caicos don't have access to the regulator, and it's difficult to get access to the regulator. So I will challenge the minister to try to find a way to ensure that these issues that we face in

South Caicos, when the regulator is based in Provo, that there is, there is a mechanism for us to get to the regulator to bring our problems, because we have a lot of those problems. Thank you.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much. You want to respond to that? I think that was just a comment. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Innovation.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

I will just take it as a note, Mr. Speaker, and just let the representative of South Caicos know that as part of the digitization of government and 24/7 government is to be able to— is setting up the websites and the portals and the feedback forms so when consumers have issues that are outside of Providenciales and Grand Turk, that they are able to go onto the government's website and raise a complaint.

So we're moving to the point where citizens in Salt Cay, South Caicos, and Middle Caicos, if they have a complaint relating to anything, but relating to electricity, they would be able to go to that particular form and raise a complaint, and it will go directly

to the relevant department of the EUD. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to address that.

QUESTION ON DISASTER RELIEF POLICY FOR RESIDENTIAL FIRES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Hon. Minister. Member, did you withdraw question 14 as well? So question 14 is withdrawn. Pardon? Education and leisure. No, he withdrew the question. Yeah, it was withdrawn. Okay, question number 15, parliamentary question number 15, to be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for The Bight.

Hon. Kimbule A. Skippings:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Attorney General lay on the table of this Honourable Parliament the disaster relief policy applied to residential fires, including the eligibility criteria, categories and maximum levels of assistance, decision-making authority and payment deadlines, and the stated total funds presently available to meet arising from major residential fires in Providenciales.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Attorney General.

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

I'm grateful, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this question does not fall within my portfolio of responsibilities. It is really for another minister, sorry. It may be that it is for Public Safety, or it may be for PPID, because it talks about domestic fires, but it seems to be focused on disaster relief.

So then that would fall under PPID. So I'm unable to answer the question because it doesn't fall under my responsibilities.

QUESTION ON COMMERCIAL CROWN LAND APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BEFORE THE MORATORIUM

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Okay, Honourable Member, the Minister for PPID is not present today, so we'll have to defer that question. Okay, question number 16 to be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for Blue Hills to the Honourable Premier. Honourable Member for Blue Hills.

Hon. Randy Dexter Howell:

Good afternoon and thank you, Honourable Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with reference to the Government's moratorium on commercial Crown land, which took effect on August 7th, 2026, last month, and the Government's statement that commercial applications not yet considered by Cabinet will be reviewed against the updated Crown land inventory and any revised Crown land allocation policy. Will the Honourable Premier be pleased to say what is the status of commercial Crown land applications which were submitted prior to the moratorium and which have remained under consideration by the Crown land unit for 2 or more years. Secondly, whether such applications will be determined under the Crown land policies, procedures, and criteria in effect at the date the applications were submitted, or under any revised Crown land allocation policy introduced during the moratorium.

Third, where an applicant has complied with all requirements requested by the Crown Land Unit and the application has remained outstanding through no action or omission of the applicant, what transitional arrangements, if any, will apply to ensure that the applicant is not disadvantaged solely as a consequence of the time taken by the unit to process the application. There's a 4th section which— what criteria— D. What criteria Cabinet will apply in determining whether an existing application or proposal is of strategic national importance or otherwise in the overriding public interest for the purpose of exemption from the moratorium; and, whether longstanding applications submitted prior to the moratorium, including applications relating to parcels referenced 6050335, 60503318, are eligible to be considered by Cabinet for such an exemption?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for those 5 questions. Honourable Premier.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, the Honourable Member, for his question. I think some of this might have been answered earlier in a previous question asked by the Member from The Bight. The response, Mr. Speaker, is that the records indicate that a total of 34 commercial applications were submitted prior to the implementation of the moratorium and were under processed by the Crown Land Unit.

Of these, 19 applications remain outstanding pending the submission of required supporting documents, and the respective applicants have been notified accordingly. Of the remaining applications, 4 applications were approved by Cabinet. Additionally, Cabinet papers have been prepared for 11 applications. Whether such applications will be determined under the Crown Land policies, procedures, and criteria in effect at the date the applications were submitted, or under

any revised Crown Land application policy introduced during the moratorium? That's the question. Second question. The answer to that is applications that qualify for considerations during the moratorium will not be determined solely on the basis of the policies and procedures that were in effect when they were submitted. Consistent with Cabinet's direction, applications that have not yet been considered by Cabinet will be evaluated against the updated Crown Land Inventory and any revised Crown Land Allocation Policy to ensure alignment with the Government's strategic and use priorities, infrastructure needs, and long-term development objectives.

Accordingly, where a revised Crown Land Allocation Policy is introduced during the moratorium period, Cabinet may have regard to that policy when determining such applications. Part C of the question, Is where an applicant has complied with all requirements requested by the Crown Land Unit and the application has remained outstanding through no action or omission of the applicant, what transitional arrangements, if any, will apply to ensuring that the applicant is not disadvantaged solely as a consequence of the time taken by government to process the application? That was the question. The answer: there are no specific transitional arrangements within the Crown Land Act governing applications affected by the moratorium. However, where an applicant has satisfied all applicable requirements of the Crown Land under prior, of the Crown Land Unit prior to the implementation of the moratorium, the application may continue to be processed in accordance with the procedures prescribed under the Crown Land Act and any policy directives or decisions of Cabinet that apply during the moratorium period.

It should be emphasized that the Crown Land Act vests the Governor with sole discretion regarding the disposition of Crown land. Consequently, the submission or consideration of any application Does not create any entitlement to the land, as the Act imposes no obligation on the Crown to dispose of any Crown land and reserves the ultimate decision to the Governor to dispose of Crown land in respect— in the best interest of the Government and the people of the TCI. And the question, Part D: What criteria Cabinet will apply in determining whether an existing application or proposed one is of strategic national importance or otherwise in the overriding public interest for the purpose of exemption under this moratorium? Cabinet will assess any request for exemption on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the purpose of the moratorium and the particular circumstances of the proposal.

In undertaking that assessment, Cabinet may consider whether the proposal supports a critical national development objective or essential public service, delivers significant social, economic, or infrastructure benefits to the TCI, is consistent with government's strategic land use priorities and long-term development goals; and fourth, would be materially prejudiced by delay pending completion of the moratorium. Any exemption will only be granted when— where Cabinet is satisfied that the public interest in allowing the proposal to proceed clearly outweighs the policy reasons maintaining the moratorium, and whether longstanding applications submitted prior to the moratorium, including applications relating to parcels 60503385 and 60503318, are eligible to be considered by Cabinet for such an exemption. In considering the introduction of the moratorium on commercial Crown land applications, Cabinet was mindful that a number of existing applications would be affected.

Accordingly, the exemption categories were carefully defined to ensure that any exceptions would not undermine the purpose and policy objectives of the moratorium. Any longstanding applications that met the approved exemption criteria could continue to be considered by Cabinet during the moratorium period. However, the applications relating to parcels 60503385 and 60503318 do not fall within any of the exemption categories approved by Cabinet and are therefore subject to the moratorium.

That's the answer. Thank you.

QUESTION ON THE BLUE HILLS MEDICAL CLINIC RELOCATION AND REDEVELOPMENT

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honourable Premier, for your response to those questions. Are there any supplementaries? Honourable Member, any supplementary? No? Okay, thank you very much. So, final question, parliamentary question number 17, to be asked by the Honourable Elected Member for Blue Hills to the Honourable Minister for Health and Human Services.

Hon. Randy Dexter Howell:

Thank you once again, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the residents of Electoral District 8, Blue Hills, and surrounding subdivisions depend heavily upon the Blue Hills Medical Clinic for accessible primary healthcare. Given the deteriorated condition of the existing Blue Hills Medical Clinic building, And the issuance of a tender for the proposed demolition works in November 2025, last year. Will the Honourable Minister of Health and Human Services advise whether a temporary location has been identified for the relocation of the medical clinic, and if so, whether that location has been secured.

Part B, where is the proposed temporary facility located and what works, if any, are required to make it suitable for the delivery of services provided by the current medical clinic? Part C, the anticipated date for the relocation of the clinic to the temporary facility; and Part D, the anticipated commencement date for the demolition works of the existing structure and construction of the new public clinic as promised. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Hon. Minister.

Hon. Kyle Knowles:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to the Honourable Member and the questions posed. To question A, the Ministry of Health and Human Services has been working in collaboration with the Ministry of PPID in relation to the proposed location. Where a walkthrough would have been carried out some time ago, the minister and the Ministry of Health and Human Services is working along with PPID to bring that to fruition.

As per question B, further details in relation to the proposed facility will be disclosed later following further consultation with the Ministry of PPID. Question C, based on the Ministry of Health knowledge, the proposed location requires retrofitting works, and at this stage the ministry cannot state the exact date And the Ministry will continue to work with PPID to finalize the aspects of the proposed location. And question D, in terms of the commencement date and demolition works, the question should have been submitted to the Ministry of PPID where the responsibility lies in relation to the work, work spending. Also noting that the There has been no date set for the commencement of the new polyclinic because, of course, based on the first part of the question, one would teeter on the other based on the scope and responsibility of works necessary to be carried out.

So I hope that would answer the question. If there are any follow-ups, I'm able to answer them as well.

TWO MINUTE SPEECHES BY MEMBERS

TWO-MINUTE SPEECHES BY MEMBERS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Okay, thank you very much for your response, Honorable Minister. Honourable Members, I think that is the final question. So I will now return to the Order Paper. Government notices? There are none. Private members' notices? There are none. Notices of questions? There are none. Report from committees? There are none.

Statement by Ministers? There are none. Personal explanation? There are none. Motions for leave of absence? I did receive a notice of leave of absence from the Honourable Minister of PPID. And finally, subsidiary legislation made since August to September 2026, as listed in the Order Paper. Oh, sorry, I did skip over the 2-minute speeches. Sorry about that. We have 2-minute speeches by members. Are there any contributions? The Chair recognizes the Honourable Deputy Premier.

TWO-MINUTE SPEECH BY HON. JAMELL RAYAN ROBINSON

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues. Good afternoon, those that are listening. Across the Turks and Caicos Islands this morning. I intend for my 2-minute speech today to be actually 2 minutes. Surprising. Don't do it, don't do it. It's a figure of speech, figure of speech. Don't do that, don't do that. I'd like to wish all those that have celebrated birthdays and anniversaries since our last time being here, happy birthday and happy anniversary. I'd like to also I would like to give my condolences to all those persons who have bereavement since we last met, not yesterday but previously, that we haven't— I hadn't gotten an opportunity to say yesterday when I did lay my bill and gave my short presentation.

Wasn't as prepared as others, but for my laying of my bill. I'd like to wish those persons condolences. Thank you. Also, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to reiterate the fact that the 50th celebrations, from the introduction of ministerial government continues. And I know Honorable Taylor would have mentioned that, but as the co-chair, I would want to reiterate that one more time so persons know that we are not done.

There is the Youth Parliament that Well, even before I get to Youth Parliament, this whole week, which is Youth Week, it's around the 50th celebrations as well. And of course tomorrow is Youth Day, so happy Youth Day to all everybody celebrating the young people across the Turks and Caicos Islands.

So go to the various festivities on your island on your holiday and participate. Also, again, on the 5th is the Youth Parliament. debate and session here that persons would want to tune in. And of course, if you're on the island of Grand Turk on October 5th, the Monday, please do join us in the chambers. Then I believe the Youth Parliament has a youth project the following day.

And of course, on the 8th is the special sitting where Parliament will be out in their full numbers and doing all of the things that Parliament would do for 50 years of ministerial government. And to, the Speaker's point during lunchtime, it is more than just the 50 years of ministerial government. The way we have our Legislative Council, House of Assembly, and now Parliament is involved in that 50 years as well. So all of that will be highlighted and celebrated, and of course it will No, not culminate.

We also have the Heritage Month holiday because all October is Heritage Month. On the 12th, which there'll be celebrations linked to the 50 years as well, and culminating after that would be the gala, the 50-year gala where we're going to recognize 50 nation builders, leaders and nation builders of the Turks and Caicos Islands. And during this period. And of course, I'm not sure if persons have heard yet or whether any official communiqué has gone out, but for the entire month of October, we want everybody to wear your national colors on Friday.

So starting from next week, get your regalia, go out to the registered vendors and those not registered vendors, and on Fridays, come out in your colors. So your red, your white, your blue, your gold, etc., etc. Get your TCI. So just whether it's casual, whether it's formal, whatever the case may be, on Fridays let's show the world how we do it and how stylistically

we can be.

So I just want to encourage everybody to participate and continue because again, 50 years is a Milestone. So we want to make sure that that is celebrated properly. So we've had months and months and months and months of these celebrations, and it continues because again, we do it in fine style here in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TWO-MINUTE SPEECH BY HON. TAMELL SEYMOUR

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Honorable Member, for your 2-minute speech. Are there any contributions? The chair recognizes the Honorable Member for South Caicos.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Good afternoon again, and thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand today with gratitude and also challenges to the government of today. Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, I'd like to say good afternoon to the great people of South Caicos, and also I'd like to announce that Bermuda Air has just landed in South Caicos as a chartered flight. So we're moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, my gratitude is for the new port building that the Minister spoke about in his ministerial statement, the new Cedar Park building that the Minister spoke about as well. I am thankful for that, and the people of South Caicos are thankful, thankful for these buildings. But, Mr. Speaker, the challenges that we face as a community in South Caicos cannot be overshadowed by 2 buildings. Mr. Speaker, South Caicos community has long awaited for some presence from the government in South Caicos.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of days ago I listened to the Honourable Member for Home Affairs, and she spoke, and it made my heart beat faster. I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing, but I was so happy to hear her speak to a hybrid office where people can go and access the relevant documents that they need.

However, Mr. Speaker, I would like to challenge the Minister to ensure that this is not just another pipe dream and that this will come to fruition, at least during my time in office. Because, Mr. Speaker, now the challenges faced from having to come to Grand Turk Just to pick up a document with the airline situation that we have. We don't have an airline that comes directly to Grand Turk. The airline that now halfway comes to Grand Turk is speaking to discontinuing that service. So, Mr. Speaker, the people of

South Caicos will be left in limbo until we can find some sort of way of getting to Grand Turk. So that we can access the, not just documents, we have to come to our medical visits. And Mr. Speaker, I must say, I spoke with the Premier earlier today about the medical visits.

I spoke with the Minister as well as the PS, and they have assured me that they will make sure that the people of South Caicos wouldn't be lack of service. One of the options is to choose to go to Provo instead of Grand Turk. However, time is of the essence in these decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here to talk about the housing program, the program that people's houses would have been fixed by now. I recall my first time in office, there was a $500,000 allotment for The fixing of the houses in South Caicos that were damaged by a hurricane. I spoke to that and I was assured, because it was during the supplementary where the money was taken back, but I was assured that we would get $1 million in the following budget. We got the $1 million in the following budget, but nothing has happened, not one nail Not one sheet of plywood, not one paintbrush has happened yet in South Caicos.

The people are still waiting to have their homes fixed. If the money was there, the tender was out, the tender was awarded or not awarded, we would just like to know what are the next steps as it relates to people's houses. We are now in hurricane season. We do not know When? When a hurricane will show up.

But these people are still in this position. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the government to please, please do what is right by the people in South Caicos, because I tired of lying for them. And I just give my life to the Lord. I don't want to go down that road just for them. I'm tired of making up excuses.

I'm tired of deflecting the questions. So please, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Prime Minister, can you— As we, as we go on, obviously we know we have an issue with the water in South Caicos. I know the minister who has just taken on the portfolio of water. We spoke candidly about it, and he's assured me that he will ensure that we have adequate water. He's making signs that it's fixed.

What he's talking about is a problem we had a couple of days ago with the RO plant. And I call him, and I said to him jokingly, said, we got a problem with the RO plant. You better fix it before I call Hon. Doug Parnell. The water reach.

The water reach. So, the filter reach. So, Mr. Speaker, the minister has assured me that we will fix the water problem. I know there's some dialogue around city water that has yet to come to fruition. That's something that the minister and I has talked about over and over again, so I'm sure that that will be fixed.

Mr. Speaker, not in no particular order of importance, I know the Minister of Health will be happy to hear me say that I have some confidence that the dump situation will be fixed in short order. I know we just got a new environmental officer, so I'm looking for good works from him.

If anything changes, he will be the first to know. So we're looking, we're looking forward to that. Mr. Speaker, I also want

to speak to the library. We have relocated the library, we have selected a location for the library, but every time we ask when would this location be filled, when will we be able to access the library, there's always it going to cabinet, it going to cabinet, it going to cabinet. Mr. Speaker, I think So, Mr. Speaker, I call on whomever— and let me make this clear, I believe that the Minister of Education is doing everything possible to get

South Caicos a library, but for some reason we can't get this library. So I call in on whoever responsible for getting this library, whether it's the cabinet or the PPID. We need to get this fixed. Because me personally and the people of South Caicos, we tired of hearing we don't select the building, we just waiting on this one, we just waiting on that one, we just waiting on the other one. And it ain't fair to the ministers because for me to sit here now and say we ain't get our library yet when the Minister of Education has done everything— she even has books, too much of them. So it's not our fault.

We have to be fair. PPID, which is the ministry responsible for government infrastructure, needs to give the people government infrastructure. It's that simple. So, Mr. Speaker, all I'm saying is give unto Peter what is due to Mr. Speaker, I am wrapping up now.

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Yes, please wrap up. Thank you.

Hon. Tamell Seymour:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am wrapping up now, but I can't go without giving a shout out to some of my favorite people in the world because they tell me every time you're in Parliament, we be listening. And that's Hon. Michael Misick, Hon. McAllister Henshaw, and Mr. Chalmers Thomas. They always tell me I should be listening. So making sure, because I know they're listening, I just want to tell them have a good afternoon.

Thank you.

TWO-MINUTE SPEECH BY HON. RANDY DEXTER HOWELL

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much for your 2-minute speech. The chair recognizes the Honourable Member for Blue Hills.

Hon. Randy Dexter Howell:

Good afternoon once again, Mr. Speaker. A pleasant good afternoon to my colleagues here in the House, to the listening public, and especially the wonderful people of District 8, Blue Hills, whom I represent here. Mr. Speaker, I want to convey condolences to families who have lost loved ones Over the past weeks, and

I want to share some comforting words with them from Isaiah 41:10. Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to draw attention to Section 24 and 25 of our Public Environmental Health Act. And to a matter that may appear simple, but it speaks directly to the pride we have in our country. We proudly call these Turks and Caicos Islands beautiful by nature.

But Mr. Speaker, as we drive through certain communities and along certain roads throughout our islands, we must ask ourselves a serious question. Can we duty say that we are beautiful by nature if we are not also beautiful by the way we care for our surroundings? Section 24 of the Act is clear. It places responsibility upon occupiers and, in certain circumstances, property owners To keep the areas adjoining their properties free from high grass, underbrush, broken bottles, refuse, and other offensive matter. Section 25 goes further by requiring roadside walls and fences to be properly maintained.

Mr. Speaker, the law exists. Our challenge is ensuring that these laws do not simply remain written words in a booklet or digitized. They must be communicated, they must be implemented, they must be enforced. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I encourage the Environmental Health Department to complete the proposed policy and operational framework for ticketing and enforcement so that there is a clear, consistent, and practical system for addressing these violations.

But enforcement alone, Mr. Speaker, cannot solve the problem. The government has responsibility, has a responsibility. Environmental health has a responsibility. But we the people have a responsibility as well. There is a saying, these islands didn't fall on us, we fell on them. Therefore, we must take care of them so that they Can sustain us.

Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to call upon every citizen, every resident, every business owner, every property owner. Let us take responsibility for our little piece of Turks and Caicos Islands. Let's keep our properties clean, cut the overgrown grass and bush, remove the garbage, maintain our fences. Keep the roadside adjoining our properties clean and tidy.

Just imagine the difference if each of us simply take responsibility for the area immediately around us. Mr. Speaker, beautiful by nature should not only be a slogan we advertise to the world, it should be a standard By which we live. By which we live. Let us enforce the law we already have, complete the necessary ticketing policy, educate our communities, and most importantly, let each of us do our part.

A cleaner Turks and Caicos Islands begins with each, each one of us.

TWO-MINUTE SPEECH BY HON. KYLE KNOWLES

Hon. Gordon Burton:

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

Hon. Kyle Knowles:

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to those persons listening via radio and internet. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin again, being that this is the second time I have stood up to speak to thank the wonderful residents of Wheeland and West Caicos for again always providing me or allowing me the opportunity to serve them in this honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to also thank my constituency committee and my team for always supporting me, understanding that the pressures of the Ministry of Health are much, and there's always a need for a support system, a very strong support system To help you guide the work in our constituency. I'd like to thank— start off, Mr. Speaker, by congratulating my parents, actually, for a belated anniversary, which is the 21st of September. So I think that gives them about 40 years.

It's quite some time. And then my most proudest moment, Mr. Speaker, is my daughter had a little, I would call, election in her class for— well, not— okay, not little, that's a big deal. Had a small election cycle in her class, and of course, in true fashion, she came out on the higher side. So I guess the trend in politics in my family has now taken off.

So Mr. Speaker, I also want to say to my constituents, knowing or understanding the business of my schedule, we are going to be having a town hall, coming in the next few months. So that is just to keep them informed. Again, happy Youth Day to all the youth across the Turks and Caicos Islands, especially those young men and young women of ED10 who I tend to run into as I move around my constituency. Mr. Speaker, To the member for South Caicos, I, time. All I can say is time got away from us, but it was our intention even before we got here to go to South Caicos, to spend time in South Caicos, to address the needs of South Caicos. Because if there's one person who knows how much I'm trying to deal with the matters of Caicos, is the member from South Caicos.

And the intention was to bring the whole team from the ministry, primary healthcare, dental, environmental health, even NHIP, because those are some of the challenges that they are facing in South Caicos, Mr. Speaker. And I want him to be reassured that we are aware of it and we're going to do everything within our power to make sure that his concerns, which are our concerns, are addressed and are not just lip service. Mr. Speaker, I also want to concur with my colleague, from ED8 that we know the challenges we have from an environmental standpoint.

And if I can be quite blunt, Mr. Speaker, people are just nasty. Okay, and abuse has been taken of the contract system which we are trying to manage, but it is a responsibility of us as residents of this Turks and Caicos Islands to do our part. So I was quite pleased when he read the, the part from the legislation Because many people believe that we make these things up when we try to point them in the right direction and we try to chastise them for not taking care of their own property, that they want the government to take taxpayers' money to pay somebody to come clean it up for them, which is wrong.

And that would be irresponsible for us to continue in that fashion. But what I will say to my colleague's response is that the, the legislation around ticketing It's currently being worked on with chambers. So it isn't that we haven't— that we aren't dealing with it. It's just that with all that we have going on with health, there's competing priorities, if I can say the least. But now that he has brought it to our attention, we'll do our endeavor best to see how quickly we can get that ticketing system in place. But more— but Mr. Speaker, again, it's always an honor to be here to speak to our fellow countrymen. You know, many times they, they see us moving around, but they— but we— but it's important for us to come here and to explain and to, and to debate and to give them a greater understanding of what we are trying to do in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank you again for the opportunity. Thank you to my wonderful people of Wheeland and West Caicos. I must Again, shout out Vincent Parker, Moon Giant, who's always listening and giving me feedback. It's also Mr. Charlie Palmer, who always is listening, and providing me with good advice whenever I have an opportunity to be in his presence. So, Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity, and good afternoon, everyone.

TWO-MINUTE SPEECH BY HON. SHARON A. SIMONS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you for your contribution, Honourable Minister. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Eighth All-Island Member, for her contribution.

Hon. Sharon A. Simons:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to my colleagues, persons in the gallery, those persons that are listening to us via Radio Turks and Caicos and viewing via our social media platforms. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all those persons who have celebrated birthdays during the week and upcoming birthdays, a happy birthday, and may God continue to bless them with good health and long life. I especially like to say a happy belated birthday to Dudu, who celebrated his birthday day before yesterday.

Yes, so happy belated birthday to Dudu. I'd also like to wish condolences to those grieving fallen, those grieving families,

especially the family of the late Laura, who is a— was a staunch Anglican, to the Leader of the Opposition and the family. My deepest condolences to those persons who are grieving. I think the last House I wasn't Hear, the Francis family, Jason and his wife, also on the death of their son. Mr. Speaker, I will start off by where the member from Blue Hills ended, where there's 2 sides to a coin, where he said we are beautiful by nature, but the other side is we are dirty by choice.

The government has been doing its part in regards to issuing contracts to persons to continuously clean up this country. However, we the people continue to dirty up the country, and so the cycle continues over and over. When are we going to take pride in our own self and decide that we need to keep it clean for us who live in this country. Also, Mr. Speaker, the member from South Caicos— I sometimes I stand and I listen to him, I sit and I listen to him, and I think I get kind of jealous because South Caicos is getting some things that Grand Turk is not getting. I'm Waiting for the day when I can see a cabinet paper which is approved for a hotel for Grand Turk. I saw the release where it was approved for another cruise terminal.

So we the people in Grand Turk sitting and waiting patiently until we see a cabinet paper comes out with approval for a hotel In Grand Turk. And other things, I think, Mr. Speaker, we're still waiting. I know that the contract has been awarded for the demolition of South Base, the derelict buildings at South Base. We're waiting patiently to see that started. We are still waiting patiently to see The roadwalk getting done.

I'm still sitting down, we're still waiting patiently to the Minister of Health, Environment and Health, to see what's going to happen with removing the animals off the street, the donkeys from roaming the streets, little things like that that we talk about, the ponds. That needs to be cleaned. There are much challenges, Mr. Speaker, here in Grand Turk, but we talk about it all the time. I don't know when we're going to see some things getting done.

Grand Turk— the residents of Grand Turk continuously frustrated about things that are not happening, but there are one or two things that So I'd like to say we will patiently wait 3 more years, 3 years. We are patiently waiting. 3 and a half. 3 and a half, yes. We are patiently waiting, Mr. Speaker.

And I also, Mr. Speaker, would like to speak about Salt Cay. I can't forget Salt Cay. But the representative, he's over there sitting down. We have 2 representatives, one from— for Grand Turk and one for Salt Cay. 10? Well, in my book it's like 3, so— but Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say on behalf of the residents of Salt Cay to the Minister in regards to the situation with the Mr. Speaker, I see if you notice that situation has calmed down.

Once action is taken, you don't hear any noise in the market. So I think that's a lesson we learned. Once you do something, then you won't hear the noise in the market. If we continue not to do anything, the people will continue to speak. about their issues and concerns. We are drawing near to the— this is the weekend eve.

Tomorrow is a holiday. I'd like to wish everybody a happy— I think it's the Youth Day holiday? National Youth Day. National Youth Day to all the youth out there. Young people, be careful, stay focused, Be disciplined and enjoy your Youth Day holiday. And to the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands, be safe. Have a good weekend. And to everyone in here, have a blessed and safe weekend. Thank you.

TWO-MINUTE SPEECH BY HON. AKIERRA MARY DEANNE MISSICK

Hon. Gordon Burton:

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

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've been trying to get on my feet for a little while, but to the tech team in the back— my terminal here has a shortage and I keep getting kicked out. But nonetheless, it allowed me to hear further contributions and provide adequate updates on it.

So to my colleague, Member of Parliament for South Caicos, I just want to confirm, I don't talk, I exact. So your documents from my ministry will be processed and produced at the District Commissioner's Office. And I want to confirm we have now recruited an Assistant DC who commences work on October 19th.

And as indicated during the last few sessions, Mr. Speaker, The Ministry of District Administration, which falls under Home Affairs, actually every quarter will work in our DC's offices. So next week we have 3 days in Salt Cay where we'll be working with our DC, available for the community to come make inquiries about any of the products that we have, whether it's passport, PRC, naturalization, but also further information from central government that we can provide to to the residents.

We had a great reception in South, Middle and North Caicos was amazing, so we expect to see the same in Salt Cay. And next week in Grand Turk, we will have an open-door policy where persons in Grand Turk can just come. You don't need an appointment. You may have to wait if the line is long, but just come in, sit with the minister, and we can give you updates on whatever it is we're working through in our ministry. And that is something that we will continue.

Thank you. We've already committed to it. Our DCs are very excited about it because it shows that the ministry not only supports the work they're doing, but it allows them to now, knowing that we have these quarterly working sessions, to have issues and topics that we can research, bring the answer, and they can almost have their breakout groups to address those matters. So instead of it just being the minister's here, blah blah blah.

It's like, okay, the ministers will be here along with the

executive team because I don't have all the answers, and we can address this issue, address that issue. For North Caicos, we want to confirm that the DMV operating system is just about complete with the works that needed to be done. We learned that when we were in Middle and North that it was difficult for persons to obtain their driver's license without having to come to Providenciales in order to take their photos. The camera system has worked, the signature pad is in Turks and Caicos, and now we're just waiting for the DICE team to head over, finish the system so that persons in Middle and North can apply for their driver's license in Middle and North, have the picture taken, have the card prepared, sent down for them.

What we're seeking to do and what we will continue to work towards, Mr. Speaker, as we said, is decentralizing the citizenship products that we offer in our ministry. The purpose is that at your local District Commissioner's Office, you can make your applications for your passport renewal, registration, naturalization, birth certificate, death certificate if needs be, updated marriage certificate, because those products rest within Home Affairs. And we can ensure that our team members in the district commissioner's offices are trained on spot-checking the product, ensuring that the applicant for the product qualifies for the product, and then send the products on to one of our 2 processing centers, whether that's Grand Turk or Providenciales. So those are practices and procedures that are in place.

Our new spend request has captured The actual increase in funding because we need 2 more human capital, aka people, in 2 of the islands to make sure that that one person is solely responsible for ensuring the ministry products are being dealt with in those communities and tracking them through the system. As indicated, we will be in Salt Cay next week. I'll actually be attending cabinet virtually from Salt Cay. But nonetheless, we're already committed to our visit and the DC has made the arrangements, and so we don't want to cancel last minute because of any sort of changes.

And again, that just shows our commitment as a ministry to the communities in which we have our district commissioners in, that we are sticking to our word and our schedule. And so I'm fingers crossed the LTE data, whatever, is up and running, but if not— I'll deputize the Deputy Premier as my voice in cabinet next week Wednesday if I can get on virtually.

Also, I believe a concern was raised by— or I wanted to support the concerns raised by the member for Blue Hills about the state of our island. It is one thing to stand up proudly and put on our Turks and Caicos Islander flag shirts or Turks and Caicos Islands flag shirts. It's another thing to say we're Turks and Caicos Islander proud, and then we see our neighbors— because of course, Mr. Speaker, not a single soul in this chamber would ever throw or dispose of their waste products in an inappropriate manner. So I know it ain't us in here, but we know we got some neighbors who are not treating the environment And our areas as cleanly as they should.

And so I want to commend the Minister of Education through her ED9 Council who are having a community-wide cleanup this Saturday and supporting their communities. Now, we've tried these in Leeward and Long Bay, and people up there say they know they ain't make the mess, but we can try again. We'll see if we can get some sort of— Thank you. We have a partnership with some of the hotels in our areas to assist with cleanup, but just to reiterate that it's a privilege to be able to live in these islands, and it is an honor to be able to identify as a Turks and Caicos Islander. And whilst we do have our challenges throughout the communities, the wider world, some people in certain corners will say AI is going to destroy the planet.

Within the next 4 years, I don't know. Hopefully the Minister of Might will make sure that Turks and Caicos is protected from that with some sort of— not Skynet, because that's what the Terminator had. Listen, Mr. Speaker, the aliens— Will Smith told us about the aliens, he tell us about the I, Robot, and the Terminator tell us about Skynet. All I can say is we have been warned.

Now, I am not a conspiracy theorist, but I'm beginning to think I might need to build that little bunker. Down in my yard just to be on the safe side. But all jokes aside, Mr. Speaker, taking pride in our home environment is something we all should do, whether we're Islanders, visitors, work permit holders, whatever category that the new immigration bill is going to give you rights to, to be in these islands. We see people dumping Whilst we don't have ticketing powers as individuals, we know who's doing some of this stuff.

Let's report it. Because at the end of the day, the constant use of resources to clean the same stretch of road is taking funding away from other departments, other projects, other key initiatives we have as a people. Because it is as if no matter how much we do and move and clean and clean, 2 days later, it's as if we had never been there. I don't know how we're gonna get beyond that.

Maybe we get the ticketing officers in, I don't know. But it starts from young, and I wanna commend the schools because a lot of the schools have had their environmental clubs, their key clubs, their recycling clubs, but maybe, maybe they've fallen by the wayside. We can kinda bring them— Thank you. Back up to speed because if the child in the home tells the parent, you need to throw that in the garbage bin, and they nag about it, you tend to kind of follow that behavior.

So children are a very powerful tool for motivation in homes. Obviously the Minister of Education is not here, but we can probably look at greater avenues and partnership between environmental health community-wide in the schools of getting the message inside the home, about keeping our surroundings updated and clean. As it relates to South Caicos, well, we touched on South Caicos and, and we were there, and the minister and his team are getting ready to head down. We'll be attending— that's what it was, because it completely slipped me. So the district board meetings that will be taking place in the month of November in Middle, North,

South, and Salt Cay, the ministry will be in attendance too, because we want to work with not only the respective MPs of the area but the boards in ensuring that the boards feel supported, trained sufficiently to conduct their duties. And so we'll have more information about this in due course.

Now I remember, Mr. Speaker, I was killing time with that one. I want to say— And I was talking about myself, you know. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, you've seen over the last few weeks the administration is making a concerted effort to get into all of our communities.

Border Force has started their island round with their executive team. Health has indicated the same. I want to encourage all my cabinet colleagues, we have already worked with our district commissioners. They are ready to welcome you and your team members. They will give you the space. You can You got to pay for your own ticket and you got to pay for your own transportation, but we will provide the space and the advertising for you to come to our communities so that you can bring central government to the people.

And that's what I wanted to say, Mr. Speaker. This is not a trend. It's not something we're just doing today. It's something that we will continue, because while central government is great in Provo, great in Grand Turk, it is unfair to the other communities that we are not as accessible as we are in those 2 main islands, and that we want to rectify.

So with that said, Mr. Speaker, good afternoon.

TWO-MINUTE SPEECH BY HON. ERWIN JAY SAUNDERS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honorable AG, when we have that review of the standing orders, we're going to have to rename this 10-minute speeches. I was telling the Honorable AG, when we have that Comprehensive review of the Standing Orders. We're gonna have to rename this section 10-minute speeches. The Chair recognizes the Honourable Minister for Innovation for his 2-minute speech.

Honourable Minister, please put your mic back on.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Akierra Mary Deanne Missick:

You got a short 2 minutes.

Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders:

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I noticed that you stressed 2 minutes with me and everybody else got a little bit more, but I promise I won't be as long. First of all, I'd like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the time. I'd like to thank the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands for allowing me to be here to represent them.

Like the Leader of the Opposition says, he said that Salt Cay has 10 representatives. I think that he feels that 9 large candidates represent all of the entire Turks and Caicos Islands. So it makes me proud to be able to stand here today, and I want to thank the people of the Turks and Caicos for allowing me to do that.

And then while I'm here, I want to be able to give any, send special greetings out to those who are having great and happy times right now, and condolences to all of those who are going through sad times. A few things I want to touch on very quickly, Mr. Speaker.

I know they brought it up about the The water situation in South Caicos. There was an issue with the filter there. We had the filter replaced pretty quickly, learning from the issue that we had in Salt Cay, and we are hoping to move to a much longer solution for water around the country. I'm going to speak more about that at that point in time.

I will let the public know is that we have We're bringing a paper to Cabinet to make some amendments to the Water Undertaking Bill, which is a water undertaking for Grand Turk, Salt Cay, and South Caicos. But one of the things, and I don't like to pre-announce things, but one of the things I'm going to be asking Cabinet is to allow us to also be responsible for water in North Caicos and Middle Caicos. The situation in Salt Cay, Mr. Speaker, I would like to first of all

So apologize to the people of Salt Cay. We should not have gotten to the position where Salt Cay went thirsty. We solved it and I believe that we've solved it for all time and I believe that we've learned now how to get water to islands in an emergency. We figured out now how to get it, how to charter barges, how we can get water from island to island very quickly. I do believe that if If it happens to South Caicos, we can get South Caicos water very quickly.

If it happened in Grand Turk, we can also do the same thing. But we shouldn't allow it to get there. We shouldn't allow our islands going thirsty. And it happened under my watch, so I apologize for that to the people of Salt Cay. We have a long-term solution. One of the things is that we, like I said, we replaced the RO plant. We're going to put into the budget, next year's budget, for a second RO plant. And what about the water supply? I believe for the people of Salt Cay, we are going to— it's important that we repair the million-gallon tank, even though that's an older style storage tank, that the world has moved to above-ground fiber— Above-ground steel tanks.

Above-ground steel tanks as well as fiberglass tanks, and we're going to be trying to repair the old one because I believe It's an icon of Salt Cay and it shows the craftsmanship of the people of many years ago and we're going to do some things where we're going to repair that tankard and maybe one other. So we think we've solved the problem in Salt Cay going forward, but again,

I want to apologize to the people of Salt Cay for it happening in the first place. While I'm here, Mr. Speaker, I want to be able to— I want to let the people know about the continuing

issue with the war between the United States and Iran. It doesn't seem to be going away, and it seemed to keep going and going, which means that fuel prices, fuel prices are still being up. I remember when I spoke about it the last time, there was, there was the, the opposition who laughed at me, who said that fuel prices was $97, and they act— then the joke was almost as if it was going down, because I did and I said during COVID it was, this was one price of fuel, and today it's It's over $120. And it was like, oh no, today it's like $97. But I wanted to say that to the public, that's now $104 and it's going back up.

So even though at that time it was $90-some dollars, now it's $104 and it looks like it's going up. So it's not going away. And I'm not criticizing the opposition that said— I'm just putting it out there to say it hasn't gone away. It hasn't gone away. It's going up. It's a problem that— The— it's like I said, because of the war, it's a problem that it's going to be a chronic problem. So I want people to be diligent in making sure that they do the things to keep their electricity consumption, particularly consumption down, and maybe even fuel at the pump.

Maybe even doing things where now we have to look at the fact that if you don't need to drive, maybe we should not drive. You mean like don't go out, cut back on going out and using our vehicles for a while. Because it— unless we have to use it because of the fuel prices around the cross. So I'm throwing it out there that fuel per gallon today is $104, and that's the gallon barrel.

That's a barrel of fuel, sorry. The global price for a barrel of fuel is $104, and the per gallon of diesel in the United States is $6.50, the highest it's ever been. And just last week it was $6, the highest it's ever been, and that seemed to be going up. And because of that, because of that, the President of the United States, that I'm certain most people in here know, is considering, considering an export ban on diesel for 90 days. And all of the, the big companies in the United States are trying to talk him out of it, to say that don't do it because they think it's going to drive fuel prices up. I'm sure they are. up even higher, but it may cause us in the Turks and Caicos to run low on diesel and may not be able to get access to it.

And even though the island falls under me, the electricity company produces electricity by diesel. And so one of the things we could be facing is possibly a shortage of diesel coming to the Turks and Caicos. And I hope we don't get there, and I believe that we won't by the grace of God. But we could get to a point where we're starting to not only go— where prices are going up for it, but we may not be able to get our hands on it. So I want persons to be diligent about that.

So again, Mr. Speaker, basically I wanted the public to know that we're looking at things to keep prices down, but if anything that you can do to preserve and not utilize electricity as much as you can to try to do so. One, it will keep your bill lower, but two, I think we may face a case, worst-case scenario, where we may face an export ban on diesel and we're going to have to try to conserve it. But we're watching it and as usual, as I always say, we're planning for the future and we're hoping that we don't get there. And if we start to get there, we'll put in mitigating factors, I mean mitigating solutions in place to be able to address it. But I just want everybody to be aware of it.

I don't want it to catch them by surprise. So with that, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I know I used up almost my 2 minutes, but I should be done by now. So thank you very much. I would like to wish everyone a happy Youth Week.

PETITIONS

PETITIONS

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much, Hon. Minister, for your contribution. Are there any further contributions? Are there any further contributions? Are there any further contributions? There being no further contributions, we will now move on. The last is the petitions. There are none. Hon. Deputy Premier, we have completed the agenda.

COMPLETION OF THE AGENDA

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and apologies for overstepping. Just quickly, because I didn't have a chance to mention it, aligned with what Hon. Minister of Home Affairs would have said, With the number of ministries moving around for working visits, we were in North Caicos on Monday, Immigration and Border Services. We will be—

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Honorable DP, you can't have 2 bites of the apple.

Hon. Charles Washington Misick, OBE:

2 bites? No, just close enough.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT SINE DIE

Hon. Jamell Rayan Robinson:

But check out your notices. With that, social media and all that good stuff. With that, I move to have us adjourn sine die.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT SINE DIE

Hon. Gordon Burton:

Thank you very much. Honourable members, this honourable

Parliament is hereby adjourned sine die.