



**CAYMAN ISLANDS
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
ELECTRONIC VERSION**

2015/16 SESSION

22 May 2015

*Fourth Sitting of the First Meeting
Throne Speech and Budget Address
(Pages 109-148)*

**Hon Juliana Y O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MLA,
Speaker**

PRESENT WERE:

SPEAKER

Hon Juliana Y O'Connor- Connolly, JP, MLA
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

Hon Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA	<i>The Premier</i> , Minister of Home Affairs, Health and Culture
Hon Moses I Kirkconnell, JP, MLA	<i>Deputy Premier</i> , Minister of District Administration, Tourism and Transport
Hon D Kurt Tibbetts, OBE, JP, MLA	Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure
Hon Marco S Archer, MLA	Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Hon Osbourne V Bodden, MLA	Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports
Hon G Wayne Panton, MLA	Financial Services, Commerce and Environment
Hon Tara A Rivers, MLA	Minister of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Hon Franz I Manderson Cert. Hon., JP	Deputy Governor, ex officio Member responsible for the Civil Service
Hon Samuel Bulgin, QC, JP	Attorney General, ex officio Member responsible for Legal Affairs

ELECTED MEMBERS

GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS

Mr Anthony S Eden, OBE, JP, MLA	<i>Deputy Speaker</i> , First Elected Member for Bodden Town
Mr Roy McTaggart, MLA	Second Elected Member for George Town
Mr Alva H Suckoo, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Mr Bernie A Bush, MLA	<i>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</i> , Third Elected Member for West Bay
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INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

Mr D Ezzard Miller, MLA	Elected Member for North Side
Mr V Arden McLean, JP, MLA	Elected Member for East End

APOLOGIES

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, MLA	<i>Leader of the Opposition</i> , First Elected Member for West Bay
Mr Joseph X Hew, MLA	Sixth Elected Member for George Town

ABSENT

Capt A Eugene Ebanks, JP, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for West Bay
Mr Winston C Connolly, Jr, MLA	Fifth Elected Member for George Town

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
STATE OPENING AND BUDGET
2015/16 SESSION
FRIDAY
22 MAY 2015
10:52 AM
Fourth Sitting**

[Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, Speaker, presiding]

The Speaker: Good morning. I will invite the Elected Member for East End to grace us with prayers today.

PRAYERS

Mr. V. Arden McLean, Elected Member for East End: Let us pray:

Almighty God, from whom all wisdom and power are derived: We beseech Thee so to direct and prosper the deliberations of the Legislative Assembly now assembled, that all things may be ordered upon the best and surest foundations for the glory of Thy Name and for the safety, honour and welfare of the people of these Islands.

Bless our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth II; Philip, Duke of Edinburgh; Charles, Prince of Wales; and all the Royal Family. Give grace to all who exercise authority in our Commonwealth, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us. Especially we pray for the Governor of our Islands, the Premier, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Ministers of the Cabinet, Ex-officio Members, and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that we may be enabled faithfully to perform the responsible duties of our high office. All this we ask for Thy great Name's sake.

Let us say The Lord's Prayer together: *Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.*

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us and give us peace, now and always. Amen.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

READING BY THE SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

APOLOGIES

The Speaker: I have apologies from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, and from the Councillor, the Sixth Elected Member for George Town.

QUESTIONS TO HONOURABLE MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 23(7) AND (8)

The Speaker: I will recognise the Honourable Premier for the suspension of Standing Order 23(7) and (8) in an attempt to have a more efficient question time, seeing that it is a matter of just about five minutes, rather than having another interruption at 11:00.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Order 23(7) and (8) to enable questions to be taken after the hour of 11:00 am.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 23(7) and (8) be suspended to allow question time to continue beyond the hour of 11:00 am.

All those in favour please say Aye. Those against, No.

Ayes.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing Order 23(7) and (8) suspended.

The Speaker: The Elected Member for North Side.

QUESTION NO. 2: SEAMEN'S BENEFITS

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller, Member for North Side: I beg to ask the Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports the following question: Can the Honourable Minister say how many persons are receiving seaman's benefits from Government as of April 30, 2015, and what benefits do they receive?

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden, Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports: As of 30 April 2015, there are 776 recipients of the Seamen Ex-Gratia Benefits. Each recipient receives a stipend of CI\$550 per month. There are no other benefits which are provided by the Ministry of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports as part of the grant.

The Speaker: If there are no supplementaries we will move to the next question.

Elected Member for North Side.

QUESTION NO. 3: VETERAN'S BENEFITS

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: I beg to ask the Honourable Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports the following question: Can the Honourable Minister say how many persons are receiving veterans' benefits from the Government as of April 30, 2015 and what benefits do they receive?

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: The number of persons receiving the Veterans' Ex-Gratia Benefit as at 30th April 2015 is 160. Persons who receive this benefit received CI\$550 per month. There are no other benefits which are provided by the Ministry of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports as part of the grant.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

The Speaker: Elected Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Can the Minister say if any of these 160 veterans are veterans of the Vietnam War or the Korean War?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Community Affairs.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The question was if any of the 160 served in . . .

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Okay.

Madam Speaker, if I could have a moment on that please.

The Speaker: Certainly.

[Pause]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: There is a specified war zone and it is outlined as follows: The North Atlantic, extending as far down as the eastern Caribbean; the Gulf of Mexico; the Caribbean Sea; the Pacific Ocean,

including the areas around Southeast Asia; the Middle East Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea. But I do not have a breakdown on that.

The Speaker: Elected Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Madam Speaker, can the Minister confirm that the veterans of the Pacific Rim zone are receiving US benefits? The reason I ask that, Madam Speaker, is because it is my understanding that the US Government itself provides benefits for Vietnam and Korean War veterans. And I do not see why we should be doing it as a Government.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Community Affairs.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I will have to undertake to get that information for the Member, because in the information I have here, it is not clear to me if there are any of those servicemen on that list.

The Speaker: Elected Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Madam Speaker, can the Minister confirm that in the case of particularly Vietnam and Korean veterans, that the US Government provides benefits for those veterans, and give the House the assurance that we would not be providing additional veterans benefits for those soldiers?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Community Affairs.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I think what would be helpful is if I just . . . I do not have that information on whether these individuals received benefits from the US. But my personal view is that I think they do, but I do not have that here. But I would just like to read the "Qualifying Service" that is outlined here in the eligibility guidelines. It says, "Having served in the armed forces of a country during war time. This should be limited to service during World Wars I and II, the Trinidad Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve, the Home Guard, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, the Armed Forces of Great Britain, during one of the above-mentioned wars and the Merchant Marines during one of the above wars." [UNVERIFIED QUOTE]

So, that is what I have here. Any other information that the Member is seeking I will have to get and provide at a later date.

The Speaker: Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean, Member for East End: Madam Speaker, I was going to ask the criteria. I am glad

the Minister pre-empted me, so to speak, because obviously our criteria extends as far as the Royal Navy, that is, England, and our involvement in World War I in Trinidad Home Guard. It doesn't say anything about American soldiers. Now, do we have a requirement also like we do for the poor relief and seamen, where if you are making over a certain amount—

The Speaker: Means test.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Means test, for the veterans also.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Community Affairs.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It is my understanding, that in 1997 when these individuals started to receive the benefit it was a one-off with no others to be added and the numbers are actually reducing. But there are no such criteria from my understanding, as per a means test. They were put on in 1997, no one has been added since, and it is a reducing number.

The Speaker: Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, if the Minister is saying this is a one-off, can he explain to us how that compares with seamen's benefits and how they are now in a situation where the Government does not have the means to assist the seamen who now qualify, which I remember saying that that should be dropping, but really it is not because it is passed on to the spouses. And how does that compare with that because people who . . . just answer that.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Community Affairs.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I am not quite sure what that question is, but this group is not an increasing number as, indeed, unfortunately the seamen benefits appear to be, because, as the Member correctly outlined, of the extended benefit to spouses and dependents. So, rather than that number declining as we originally envisaged back when it was done, for some reason, it has continued to increase.

This one-off that was done on the veterans side does not seem to suffer that same plight, and it has remained as . . . I do not remember what the original number of individuals was (if my Chief Officer would have that) . . . one moment please, Madam Speaker.

[Pause]

The Speaker: Honourable Minister, do you wish to respond in writing, if you don't have the information?

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Yes, Madam Speaker. My Chief has some information, but she does not have that at hand, so if we could provide that in writing, I would appreciate it.

The Speaker: If there are no further supplementaries, we can move on.

QUESTION NO. 4: UNEMPLOYMENT PERCENTAGES, CALCULATION USED

The Speaker: The Elected Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: I wish to ask the Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development the following question: Can the Honourable Minister state what formula is used by the Government to calculate unemployment percentages?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development.

Hon. Marco S. Archer, Minister of Finance & Economic Development: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The unemployment rate is calculated using data gathered from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS captures labour market information for a specified period: this period is termed the reference week. In the most recent finalised LFS, the reference week was the week ended 4th October 2014. The information gathered during the survey pertains to all persons within the sample who are of working age - that is, persons who are 15 years and older.

The survey had a sample of 1,416 household addresses, and had a margin of error of ± 2.5 percent.

To fully understand how the unemployment rate is calculated, it is important to define the components of the formula, which are: (a) the number of persons in the Labour Force; and (b) the number of persons classified as unemployed.

The definition of these components, which are in accordance with the International Labour Organisation and the LFS manual, are as follows: The Labour Force, otherwise referred to as the 'current economically active population,' is comprised of persons of working age (i.e. 15 years and older) and who worked (the employed), as well as those who at the time of the LFS, did not have a job, but were available and looking for work (the unemployed).

The employed consists of those persons in the labour force who worked for pay, profit or family gain for at least one hour during the reference week. Persons who, for whatever reason or the other, did not work during the reference week, but had a job, are also categorised as members of the employed labour force; such persons are temporarily absent from work.

Based on the International Labour Organisation guidelines, a person of working age is deemed to be unemployed if the person is without a job, but was available for work and was seeking employment during the reference week. Steps taken to find employment during the reference week may include registration at a public or private employment agency; application to employers; checking at worksites; or placing and answering newspaper advertisements.

Given the components defined above, the Unemployment Rate can be expressed by the following formula: Unemployment rate is equal to the number of persons unemployed divided by the number of persons in the labour force and multiplied by 100.

Thank you Madam Speaker.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

The Speaker: Elected Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would agree that the number of persons in the labour force, particularly in the Cayman scenario, where greater than 50 per cent of the work force are on a work permit, and since there should be nobody holding a work permit in the Cayman Islands who is unemployed, that that figure, the number of persons in the labour force needs to be adjusted downward by the number of work permits in the labour force in order to get the number of Caymanians unemployed?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would have to say to the Member that any changes to the way in which the Labour Force Survey has been conducted and statistics reported for, I would say, in excess of 20 years now, would have to be something the Government would have to discuss and decide whether we want to do it that way and what the new statistics would reveal. I am not opposed to what he suggests, but it would be something for the Government to consider.

The Speaker: Elected Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, the Minister has said in his substantive answer that these criteria that we apply are based on the ILO guidelines. Is there any compensation made in those ILO guidelines to reflect our situation here?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I am not absolutely certain, as to whether there is any compensation in the ILO guidelines to our

particular situation in the Cayman Islands. I would have to confer with the technocrats from the Economic and Statistics Office and if they cannot answer at the moment, then I would give an undertaking to provide the answer in writing. But if it pleases you, I can take a minute to confer with them.

The Speaker: Please proceed to consult.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

[Pause]

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development, continuing.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In conferring with the Director of the Economic and Statistics Office, I have been informed of the fact that our statistics are reported for Caymanian and non-Caymanian. In answering the Member's question, that is what creates, or is what recognises the situation that we face in the Cayman Islands, because in other countries they never report the statistics for nationals and non-nationals. Cayman is one of the only countries that reports for nationals and non-nationals.

The Speaker: Elected Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can tell us when we apply that uniqueness and the formula we use for that, do we calculate the Caymanian unemployment against the total unemployment? Or to get the percentage in your formula is it against the Caymanians that are in the workforce or the population of those eligible to work as Caymanians?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In response to the question, yes, the Caymanian unemployment rate is determined as a percentage of the overall workforce, as well as a percentage of the Caymanians who are in the workforce, but unemployed.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Marco S. Archer: I am hearing the Member and I am trying to make sure that I understand the question fully, Madam Speaker.

The way the statistics are collected, we have the ability to produce any statistic that the Member is asking for with respect to Caymanians and the unemployment rate as compared to non-nationals. We also have the ability to produce the statistic for even those who are not Caymanian but who have a significant

attachment to the country in the sense of being married to Caymanians, having permanent residency and so on.

The Speaker: I recognise the Member for East End. I will allow two more supplementaries.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I hear the Minister, but why I am asking that, Madam Speaker, is when you do a sample of 1,416, that reflects the percentage to give you the percentage of the entire workforce to give you that margin of error of 2.5 per cent. Now, will that also reflect, or should it be that that reflects the same percentage of error if you just picked the Caymanians out of that 1,416, or should we be looking at getting the sample amount out of Caymanians only? What margin of error do we have once you pick the Caymanians out of that, because if we have 1,416, statistically maybe just 50 per cent of Caymanians who are responding? Does that still reflect properly on the Caymanian workforce?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The margin of error would remain the same, because the margin of error is based on the size of the sample that is drawn from the overall population from which you are conducting the survey. So, whether or not we are looking for just the Caymanians or the overall Caymanians and non-Caymanians, the margin of error will remain the same.

But, Madam Speaker, if I could just add to what I said earlier with respect to determining the Caymanian unemployment rate, I think . . . does everyone have a copy of the . . . has it been distributed?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Marco S. Archer: My apologies, Madam Speaker. I thought that this had been circulated to Members.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Madam Speaker, the Caymanian unemployment rate is determined from the number of Caymanians who are unemployed as compared to the total number of Caymanians who are in the labour force. So, those who are able and available for work, is our labour force. And then those who are seeking but are unemployed, that is, those two numbers would then create the unemployment percentage.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: What percentage is that?

Hon. Marco S. Archer: What percentage is it right now? It is 7.9 per cent unemployment amongst Caymanians.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Marco S. Archer: That is down from 9.4 per cent in 2013.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: I don't know nothing 'bout them old things because they are numbers.

The Speaker: I recognise the Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Madam Speaker, can the Minister say if there are any other countries that subscribe to the International Labour Organization criteria for survey that have the kind of numbers of work permits where more than 50 per cent of your workforce is on work permits that use this formula?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Madam Speaker, I can say with certainty that a significant number of countries would subscribe to the ILO guidelines. What I cannot say with any certainty, and will have to give the Member an undertaking to research that and provide the answer in writing, is how many countries would subscribe to the ILO guidelines, but would also have a significant number of its workforce on work permits. That is something I will have to take some time to research and report on.

The Speaker: Final supplementary, Elected Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: This might be an immigration matter and you might not be able to answer, but how is it possible for people on work permits to be unemployed in the Cayman Islands?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

That is a very good question, but there are also others who are not on work permits who are unemployed.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Marco S. Archer: So, as I said earlier, you could have those with a significant and (for lack of a better word) maybe a permanent connection to the Islands who are not Caymanian. They could be married to a Caymanian with the right to work, or they could have PR with the right to work. And I do not

know all of the various permutations that would be in the Immigration Law, but there are people who have the right to be on the Island with the right to work who are not Caymanian, and would therefore fall in the category of non-Caymanian who are seeking employment and would, therefore, be unemployed.

The Speaker: Elected Member for North Side, I said it was the final, but you look like it's a very pressing matter. Please confine it to a brief question so we can move on. Thank you.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Would the Minister agree, while I agree that there are people who fall in that category, none of those are on work permits. The problem I have is that we are somehow allowing people to be categorised as unemployed when they are on a work permit. I fully accept that there are people here who have other reasons to work, who do not require a work permit. But my problem with this statistic all of my life has been that it includes the work permit people when we calculate it. And I think it is always swift in favour of the Government releasing statistics because it looks better, because if you take out the work permit people the unemployment rate is going to be almost doubled automatically because we have more people on work permits than we have non-work permit people in the workforce.

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Development.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Just to answer the question, the fact that we separate out the Caymanian unemployment rate from the non-Caymanian unemployment rate, shows that there is a distinction between the two, and we are able to determine the Caymanian unemployment rate. So, not calculating the unemployment rate for non-Caymanians would not have an adverse impact on the unemployment rate for Caymanians. It would not increase the unemployment rate for Caymanians, Madam Speaker, if you were not to include the non-Caymanians in the overall unemployment rate, because of the way it is calculated. The unemployment rate for Caymanians is the number of Caymanians who are available and looking for work, as compared to the total number of Caymanians who are in the labour force.

STATEMENTS BY HONOURABLE MEMBERS AND MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Premier.

RESPONSE TO THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION REGARDING THE PREMIER'S SUPPORT OF OMOV/SMC

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, as Premier and leader of the Government, I wish to provide a response to the Leader of the Opposition with regard to his comments during his debate this past Wednesday, when he stated as if it were fact, that I do not support the electoral reform now underway, which was requested by myself on behalf of my Government and the majority of Members of this Honorable House.

Indeed, Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition went so far as to say I should stand side by side with him and oppose the electoral reform process and the move to one person, one vote and single member constituencies.

There is an ancient saying Madam Speaker that goes like this: **“Three things cannot long be hidden: the sun, the moon, and the truth.”** The Leader of the Opposition understands full well that if he can repeat something enough times, however far from the facts he is straying, there will be those who may start to believe him; and if unchallenged then myth can be thought of as fact. But his wandering around the facts will not go unchallenged and I will return both him, as well as the media who report these myths, to the facts.

I will start Madam Speaker by reminding the Leader of the Opposition that one person, one vote and single member constituencies has been a position of the Peoples Progressive Movement for many years. It was the PPM that led the charge for this during the UDP's first term in Office. It was also the PPM who ensured that the provision to bring about electoral reform was included in the new Constitution; as were several other protections that are now taken for granted, including limiting the Premier to two consecutive terms in that office; and the ability to initiate a People's Referendum. All of these we fought tooth and nail with the UDP on, and because we succeeded this country is the better for it today.

So on this issue, I and my Progressive colleagues, past and present, are on solid ground, Madam Speaker.

In more recent times I helped to draft the one person, one vote and single member constituencies Referendum Petition and was amongst the very first to sign it. I, together with the Progressives, worked to assist the one man, one vote movement and indeed hosted a strategy weekend where we brought in individuals knowledgeable in such things to give advice on how to move this forward and to organise at the grass roots level so as to have a chance of success with a People Initiated Referendum. And it was the Progressives, Madam Speaker, and our Members who worked on the ground prior to the UDP hijacked one man, one vote and single member constituencies

referendum polling day to bring out the troops and get people to voting stations.

So yes, we played our part over many years in promoting one man, one vote and single member constituencies. But despite this, Madam Speaker, over time, I and others on this side, did hear from some individuals in the public their concerns around having constituencies that are deemed too small and that could lead to individuals getting elected on a few hundred votes. That concern is a real one, Madam Speaker, and I have to say that this needs to be recognised. But a concern is not a self-fulfilling prophecy, but a concern is worth noting. And so because of this concern it is true, Madam Speaker, that in February 2014, in response to a Private Member's motion, I stated that the Government and I had heard these concerns and suggested support for a hybrid system that included one man, one vote and single member constituencies with a fewer number of single member constituencies but ones with a larger number of constituents, combined with the concept of "At Large Candidates" where a certain number of individuals, say three or four, would be elected on a national or 'at large' basis.

I gave my reasons at the time, namely to allow for the ability to have individuals elected at the local, single member constituency level with each elector having one vote, and to then allow for candidates to run and be elected on a national level, but also based on the electorate voting once for the 'at large' candidate of their choice. The Hansard of February 26, 2014, will show that I stated: **"The benefit and attraction of that is that it provides a balance where constituency interests get properly represented but also you wind up with a cadre or category of representative in your Legislative Assembly that is less concerned about parochial constituency issues, having been elected on a national mandate, and are then able to put forward a perspective, which is not limited in the way that a representative from a very small constituency would be."** [page 650]

I went on to add that: **"...we are absolutely committed to equality of franchise and to having a system in place which represents that in time for the 2017 elections."**

I did go on to re-iterate that perhaps we should consider a hybrid system, but at no time did I ever indicate that I did not support one person, one vote or single member constituencies. But I added that this is a matter for the entire House and, indeed, more broadly, for the entire country to think about and to talk about.

In the months that ensued, this option was discussed in the press and elsewhere and truth be told, the proposed hybrid 'at large' candidate option did not seem to find wide favour in the country and there remained a strong preference in many quarters for strict one person, one vote and single member

constituencies. So, the idea of 'at large' candidates was dropped.

Madam Speaker, I will add that I also said early last year that a mere eight months after taking office, this Government's focus was on improving the economy, improving peoples' lives, and improving Government finances—these over and above any considerations regarding electoral reform.

There are some who will pretend that we said during the Campaign that electoral reform was our first priority. But this would be very untrue, Madam Speaker. We did say that it would be introduced in good time for the elections, but the economy and Government finances had to be the focus and we are where we are today, in such a good position, because of this disciplined and sensible focus.

Hence, Madam Speaker, in September last year, after charting the course for improved Government finances and with the 2014/15 budget approved, we felt comfortable in announcing that the time had come to move forward on the reform process, and that in doing so, we in the Progressives stuck to the position that we have held for a decade—to introduce one person, one vote and single member constituencies. I would add that the Independent Members of Government, Madam Speaker, had previous to that, also confirmed their support in a letter to the press. So, in my caucus, Madam Speaker, we had full support to progress the issue. And of course we know that the two members from the Eastern Districts also supported it.

And so, on behalf of the Government, on September 10, 2014, I presented a motion to ask this Honorable House to consider moving to one person, one vote and single member constituencies. Madam Speaker, the resolve clauses in that motion reads as follows:

"BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT: the Legislative Assembly agrees that the Governor should be invited, in accordance with section 88 of the Constitution, to appoint an Electoral Boundary Commission;

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: following the making of an Order by the Governor, pursuant to section 89(6) of the Constitution, for the determination of the boundaries of the electoral districts of the Cayman Islands, the Government thereafter submits to the Legislative Assembly a Bill to make the necessary amendments to the Elections Law (2013 Revision) in accordance with the said Order to enable the establishment of single member electoral districts in the Cayman Islands, with each elector having one vote;

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: the process be completed in good time so as to ensure that the General Elections due in 2017 are conducted on the basis of single member electoral districts with each elector having one vote."

That motion Madam Speaker, as everyone in this House knows, was passed by an overwhelming

majority, and the Governor was asked to appoint an Electoral Boundary Commission. That Commission is now a long ways down the track and proposes to deliver its report in the next few months. Apparently, the Leader of the Opposition is now gravely concerned at the prospect of facing an election based on single member districts. I feel sorry for him, but that is a reality to which he must reconcile himself.

As I said during my Policy Statement contribution, this Government is one that has a plan and is disciplined and is delivering on that plan. We are delivering on improving the economy. We are delivering on restoring stability and confidence. We are delivering on a national minimum wage. And I can reassure the Leader of the Opposition and the Country that we are also delivering on our plan for electoral reform. And no amount of myth making by the Leader of the Opposition will change that fact.

Thank you Madam Speaker.

CUSTOMS TARIFF LAW AMENDMENTS

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Minister for Finance & Economic Development, for whom I approved a statement for this morning as well.

Hon. Marco S. Archer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I want to inform the Parliament and the country as to amendments we are making to the Customs Tariff Law.

On 5th April 2012, the Legislative Assembly passed the Customs Tariff Law (2012 Revision). The primary effect of the Law was to implement the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System commonly referred to as the "Harmonized System."

Madam Speaker, the Harmonized System of tariff nomenclature is an internationally standardised system of names and numbers for classifying traded products. The Harmonized System comprises of 5,000 tariff codes and is organised into 21 sections and 96 chapters, accompanied with general rules of interpretation and explanatory notes.

Madam Speaker, including the 5,000 tariff codes in the 2012 Law, increased the Law from 24 pages to 232 pages. Since the commencement of the Law on 1st March 2014, the Customs Department and the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development have found a number of instances where, as a result of the exercise of inserting the 5,000 tariff codes into the Law, some of the duty rates were incorrectly transcribed, or excluded from the Law altogether.

Madam Speaker, the Law is being periodically reviewed and Cabinet, pursuant to its authority under sections 7 and 8 of the Law, has been making amendments to the Law in order to regularise and correct the errors and anomalies identified in the Law.

An example of where the Law is being amended to correct a tariff code, Madam Speaker, is for Netting and fencing (tariff code 7314.20.10). The

import duty was incorrectly placed into the Law as 22 per cent when the correct duty rate should have been 17 per cent. Cabinet will therefore amend Schedule 1 of the Law to reflect the correct duty rate of 17 per cent as opposed to the 22 per cent that was inadvertently or incorrectly put there, Madam Speaker.

Another example of where the Law is being amended to correct a tariff code, Madam Speaker, is for mowers for lawns, parks or sports-grounds: Other (including self-propelled mowers) (tariff code 8433.19.00). Madam Speaker, the import duty was incorrectly placed into the Law as 29.5 per cent when the correct duty rate should have been 22 per cent. Cabinet will therefore amend Schedule 1 of the Law to reflect the correct duty rate of 22 per cent.

A third example of where the Law is being amended to correct a tariff code is for fork-lift trucks; other work trucks fitted with lifting or handling equipment (tariff code 8427.00.00). Madam Speaker, the import duty was incorrectly placed into the Law as 29.5 per cent when the correct duty rate should have been 22 per cent. Cabinet will therefore amend Schedule 1 of the Law to reflect the correct duty rate of 22 per cent.

Madam Speaker the Law is also being amended to properly assign specific tariff codes to goods. For example, Tequila is classified as "Undenatured ethyl alcohol of an alcoholic strength by volume of less than 50 percent vol.; spirits, liqueurs and other spirituous beverages" (tariff code heading 22.08). However, "Tequila" is not listed with a specific tariff code under this heading. Cabinet will therefore amend Schedule 1 of the Law to add "Tequila" with a specific tariff code of 2208.90.15. Madam Speaker, although there will be a separate tariff code for Tequila, the duty rate will remain the same at CI\$11.85 per litre.

Another example of where the Law is being amended to properly assign a tariff code to a good, Madam Speaker, is for lubricating oils. Lubricating oils are classified as petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals, other than crude; preparations not elsewhere specified or included, containing more of petroleum oils or oils obtained from bituminous minerals, these oils being the basic constituents of the preparations; waste oils: (tariff heading 27.10). However, "Lubricating Oils" is not listed with a specific tariff code under this heading. Cabinet will therefore amend Schedule 1 of the Law to add "Lubricating Oils" with a specific tariff code of 2710.19.30. Madam Speaker, although there will be a separate tariff code for Lubricating Oils, the duty rate will remain the same at 22 per cent.

Madam Speaker, I want to emphasise and assure the business community and the public that the amendments to the Law, as described above, are solely being made to regularise and correct the errors and anomalies that have been identified in the Law by the various people who have asked us to look at these things.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS

SECOND READING

APPROPRIATION (JULY 2015 TO JUNE 2016) BILL, 2015

DEBATE ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS AND THE THRONE SPEECH TOGETHER WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT

[Continuation of debate thereon]

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Second Elected Member for George Town.

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart, Second Elected Member for George Town: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and good morning. Good morning, colleagues.

Madam Speaker, I rise this morning to give my contribution to the address by Her Excellency the Governor, the Policy Statement by the Premier and also the Budget Address so capably delivered by the Minister of Finance last week, Friday.

Madam Speaker, what was delivered last week, Friday, is what I would term the final leg of our three-year plan to bring the country back in compliance with rules that were agreed back in 2011 and finally provide compliance with the Framework of Fiscal Responsibility that has helped us to stabilise Government's finances and bring a sense of fiscal responsibility back into Government's budget and the spending of public funds.

Madam Speaker, it goes without saying that Members are well aware that when this Government took office in 2013, from a financial standpoint Government's reserves were depleted, did not exist. We had been for a couple of years running a deficit. In short, Madam Speaker, we could say they were a bit of a mess. But this Government knew what had to be done to restore confidence and stability. And believe me, Madam Speaker, being a part of the financial industry at the time, confidence was at a low. Stability was lacking. There was no certainty with regard to Government's finances. To the credit of the Government, and particularly the Minister of Finance, the Government set out by developing a three-year medium-term fiscal plan to restore stability to Government and its finances and to promote economic growth.

We are at the cusp of achieving compliance. We are, as I said, on that final leg in bringing the country's finances into compliance. When I was elect-

ed in 2013, it was but a very distant desire and aim for our Government. And I had some doubts whether we would ultimately achieve what we set out to do. But I learned very quickly, even within the first year of our term, that discipline, commitment and a vision go a long way to restoring confidence and bringing that stability. And that is what this Government has brought.

Madam Speaker, we have done what we promised. And we have delivered on the plans we have set, by being disciplined and by prioritising. Madam Speaker, I can stand here today and say I am confident now that we are going to achieve compliance, we are going to deliver. But not only are we going to deliver on that, Madam Speaker, but along the way we have reduced taxes! We are also going to be giving our hardworking civil servants a cost of living adjustment, and they had a bonus last year. All these are good things. And to be honest, Madam Speaker, it is no wonder that the Leader of the Opposition stood here on Wednesday and spent most of his time taking credit for what we have achieved.

Madam Speaker, from stability our desire is to push forward to deliver strong, sustainable growth and to ensure that all Caymanians benefit from that growth. Cayman has returned to a period of growth, but we know that, like the majority of the rest of the world that has emerged from this deep recession, the growth to which we have returned is not of the magnitude that we enjoyed prior to the recession. So, while we have achieved much, the growth is not as strong. Therefore, we have to approach things with caution, because it would not take much economically to upset the apple cart. We only need one worldwide event, it might be the collapse of a financial institution, or it might be a war somewhere that curtails tourism, has some disastrous effect on our economy and sends us into a tailspin.

So, we cannot lose sight of where we are and where we want to continue to be, Madam Speaker. But we must do it and approach the future with caution and confidence that we can achieve what we want to do. I am grateful and proud to be part of a Government that has such discipline and foresight and commitment to achieve the things it has set out to do for the benefit of the people of the Cayman Islands.

Madam Speaker, for the remaining time I have, I would like to turn my attention to presenting to the House a lot of the activities, and to report on the activities of the Ministry of Health and Culture over this past fiscal year and its plans for the coming fiscal year.

Madam Speaker, Members of this House will be aware that in January I was asked by the Premier to assist him in fulfilling his duties and role as the Minister of Health, which I readily accepted, and thank him and the rest of his Government for the confidence in me to enable me to do that. Madam Speaker, I cannot tell you how honoured I feel to be here and to

be able to assist in such an effective way and direct way in the work of the Government. So, as I report this morning on the activities of the Ministry over the past fiscal year, I recognise that I am just the bearer of the news. I have to give credit where credit is due, and must remember and give credit to the former Minister because much of what I will be reporting on was started during his time in the Ministry. I wish to publicly acknowledge that and the work that he achieved while he was there.

Madam Speaker, looking first at the achievements of the 2014/15 budget year, the Ministry of Health and Culture and the agencies under the Ministry have been working tirelessly, to deliver their outputs with the resources allocated to them, despite the constraints that have been placed. I am pleased to advise that the Ministry's department and agency heads have been very dedicated to expenditure monitoring and control and have continued to find creative and intelligent ways to ensure that the usual outstanding level of service delivered, despite the financial constraints under which they have operated.

Madam Speaker, I am sure it is no secret that our Deputy Governor has stated publicly many times, his vision for the civil service is to exceed expectations. Madam Speaker, looking back over the last financial year I want to take this opportunity to thank the team at the Ministry and the agencies for their efforts to do just that.

I turn my attention to reporting on health, including environmental health, and talk a bit about the Ebola virus and Chikungunya. I begin in the area here. The Ministry had a very busy year in 2014/15, including managing the response to the threat of the Ebola virus and the Chikungunya virus. Government officials from 13 agencies worked together over the past year to mitigate the threat of the Ebola virus disease which had reached the United States by September 2014. It does not take much to think back and remember how scared we were when we learned of those events.

These stakeholders met regularly to coordinate a joined-up approach that involved refining existing preparedness plans and procedures to satisfy the protocols necessary for successful containment of the virus, if it should ever arrive on our shores. Some of the areas under consideration by the Ebola planning committee entry screening protocols; personal protective equipment; contact tracing; and contingency plans that cover issues such as transportation, isolation/quarantine, case management and infection control measures

The Medical Officer of Health, heads the committee, and includes representatives from the Public Health Department, the Health Services Authority, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Home Affairs, Hazard Management, Environmental Health, the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service, the Airports Authority, the Port Authority, Department of Immigration,

Customs, the Department of Tourism and Government Information Services.

The Ministry of Health is most grateful for the committee's work to date. This certainly is a great example of inter-ministerial and inter-governmental agency cohesiveness and cooperation and I thank them all.

The Ministry is also impressed with the work of the **Mosquito Research and Control Unit (MRCU)**, which managed to prevent the Chikungunya virus from taking hold in the Cayman Islands by providing what we call extra boots on the ground and stringent mosquito control measures as soon as the virus was declared to be a regional concern. It is of note that the Deputy Director of MRCU recently presented at a regional conference on the topic of how we manage our Chikungunya containment so well. MRCU is truly a national treasure to us. It is a credit and a leader in the region of mosquito control.

Turning next to the **Integrated Solid Waste Management System (ISWMS)**: Members might now be aware that a lot of work has been done in the past year with regard to the work towards the integrated solid waste management system for the Cayman Islands. It was late last year 2014 that a multinational engineering company AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure was awarded the contract to prepare a national policy and strategy to determine the direction of solid waste management in the Cayman Islands for the next 50 years.

In this agreement, AMEC will also prepare an outline business case and provide procurement support for an integrated solid waste management system project that will be based on the strategy. Together with KPMG, AMEC has commenced work on assisting the Ministry on this strategic engagement in creating a financially feasible and sustainable plan to enhance the environmental health of our community.

Madam Speaker, in the past year, a senior project manager has been hired to oversee the delivery of the project for Government. He is based in the Public Works Department. In addition, the integrated solid waste management steering committee continues to meet regularly with the project manager and the consultants to ensure that the project stays on track.

In April 2015, AMEC representatives worked at the existing landfills of all three Islands. The group looked at sediment samples from the North Canal in George Town and out into the North Sound, took water and biological sampling, as well as landfill gas, hydrogen sulfite and dust sampling. The findings will be compiled into a landfill site environment review report which will be made available to the public when the report is completed.

Madam Speaker, installation of new monitoring wells and groundwater sampling were also completed in George Town and Cayman Brac locations. Environmental investigations and a risk assessment of

existing facilities must proceed with the development of a strategy, which, in turn, will provide the basis for the procurement of a waste management system for all three Islands. This process will adhere to the FFR guidelines that require the proposed project to undergo a thorough assessment, be open, transparent and will require upfront consideration and assessment of the financial, environmental and legal feasibility of the preferred and recommended solution.

Madam Speaker, there will shortly be opportunity for public input into the process and there is also a serious educational thrust in developing an integrated system of waste management.

Recently students throughout the Cayman Islands were invited to enter and participate in a Waste Pyramid Essay and Poster Competition held recently by the Ministry in conjunction with the Department of Environmental Health. The purpose of the competition is to raise awareness about the waste management hierarchy of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover, and Dispose in the Cayman Islands. This hierarchy adopted in many developed countries internationally will be incorporated into our new integrated strategy for the Cayman Islands that is under development.

It is imperative for disposal to be the very end of the line with waste management. We must all take individual and collective responsibility efforts to make every attempt to first reduce our consumption, reuse items, recycle (once they cannot be reused any longer), and recover any energy of further use from them. And only then should we take steps to seek to dispose of them.

Madam Speaker, the public consultation for the proposed Cancer Registry Law was concluded a few months ago. A report on the results of the consultation process is being prepared for consideration by Government. Assuming that the draft Bill receives the approval of Cabinet, it will be brought to this honourable House for consideration in the upcoming financial year. This legislation will make it mandatory to report cancer on the National Cancer Registry Bill and will assist Government in getting the valuable data we so need to be able to target our education, prevention and treatment investments.

Looking next at **Mental Health**: Madam Speaker, mental health is an issue, I believe, that has touched every one of us in this Chamber, and, indeed, everyone in the Cayman Islands. Global statistics show that one in five people suffer from mental health issues and we in the Cayman Islands are facing a similar level of incidents.

The Mental Health Commission has been meeting on a regular basis to address the many important issues around mental health in the Cayman Islands. Established under the Mental Health Commission Law, 2013, the nine-member Commission is headed by Dr. Marc Lockhart.

The Commission has also commenced training to accompany the Mental Health Law 2013 for frontline personnel and others who, in the performance of their duties, may interact with mental health patients.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Health and Culture have also commenced implementing recommendations of the World Health Organization Assessment Instrument for Mental Health Systems in the Cayman Islands (the WHO-AIMS report). That report was released to the public about three weeks ago. It was used to collect information on the mental health system in the Cayman Islands. The study, which was completed in late 2014, was carried out by the Mental Health Commission appointed by the Ministry of Health, with technical support provided by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). It is a testament to the work of the Ministry of Health, the Commission and the HSA and other stakeholders in the provision of mental health services that there are significantly more strengths than weaknesses within the mental health system in the Cayman Islands.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to advise that the Ministry of Health has begun work to implement the recommendations of this report.

Madam Speaker, this past year saw a steering committee of public and private sector stakeholders convene and work closely with the Ministry of Health to formally address the requirements and cost involved in establishing a long-term residential mental health facility in Cayman. Such a facility is badly needed and will allow for individuals suffering from a mental illness to receive treatment and a continuum of care from a multidisciplinary team of experts. At the long-term residential mental health facility, patients will engage in various activities and structured programmes depending on their needs, in an effort to achieve wellness and recovery, thereby allowing them to return to independent living and reintegration back into our community.

As we know, Madam Speaker, there is currently no such facility existing in Cayman, yet, the number of patients needing this type of care ranges between 30 and 40 persons. Approximately half of these patients must be treated abroad, usually in Jamaica and the United States, due to a lack or absence of a local facility.

In addition to those patients overseas, there are a number of patients living here who would benefit from such a facility. Many of the patients here are unable to access care overseas because of a criminal history that prohibits them from being able to travel, thus the urgency.

The steering committee will ensure that the FFR process for procurement is adhered to, while at the same time ensuring that the best project is identified, the right model adopted, and at the same time

receive value for money in the proposal or establishment of such a facility.

Madam Speaker, while there is a National Health Policy and Strategic Plan 2012-2017, for Cayman, the Ministry of Health has commenced work with the assistance of PAHO on the operational plan that accompanies the policy. Several stakeholder meetings and workshops have taken place in this fiscal year to develop and implement this plan. The Ministry is grateful for the continued effort and support of all stakeholders who are working with us to help achieve our national vision of health and wellbeing for all in the Cayman Islands.

Madam Speaker, Members will be aware that the Ministry of Health recently released to the public the Pan American Health Organization Adolescent Health and Sexuality Survey Report for the Cayman Islands. This survey was developed with the technical support of PAHO and with financial support from the European Commission through the regional project "Strengthening the Integration of British and Dutch Overseas Caribbean Territories in the Regional Response to HIV."

Given the critical importance of strategic information to facilitate targeted programme planning and development for young people, it was decided to support the implementation of a health study among adolescents, focusing on sexuality and HIV, in the participating territories.

The aim of the survey was to conduct a holistic assessment of adolescents' health, with emphasis on HIV and sexual and reproductive health, to inform the development of targeted interventions and to serve as a baseline. The target population for the study in the Cayman Islands was young people in the school age group, 15 to 19 years of age. Out of the 1,186 potential participants, 955 youth participated in the survey, representing an 80.5 per cent participation rate; very impressive.

The report is expected to be used widely across both public and private sector stakeholders including the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Youth Affairs, a committee that serves to enact the National Youth Policy and Plan, as well the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Youth and the National Youth Commission.

Madam Speaker, our National Healthcare Conference in October 2014 focused on the battle with chronic non-communicable disease, or CNCDs. The conference was another success and it was attended by well over 800 local and international delegates. One of the greatest contributors to our healthcare costs, CNCDs is a global epidemic. I am certain that the lives of everyone here today have been impacted by at least one of these four largest CNCDs, that is, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease and cancer. The burden of these chronic non-communicable diseases on our healthcare system cannot be understated. With every

passing day it becomes more and more clear that the key to winning the war against these non-communicable diseases is prevention and education.

Madam Speaker, another highlight of this past fiscal year was that our own Public Health Department received an award and was recognised for excellence in Public Health Surveillance from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA). The award acknowledges excellence performance by countries through their contribution to the CARPHA regional surveillance system, which must meet the criteria of being timely, relevant and responsive to health aberrations.

In presenting the award, CARPHA noted that the Cayman Islands should be congratulated for winning the Award for Public Health Surveillance by demonstrating a high standard among the Caribbean countries that will redound to the benefit of the people and community.

Government, through the Department of Environmental Health, once again has invited bids from qualified tenderers for the prompt processing and disposal on-site or off-site at an approved local facility and removal of all the used tyres accumulated at the Grand Cayman landfill. Government, this time around, may consider paying a nominal fee for removal. I have some hope, that this being the fifth tender, that we will finally find a solution and a satisfactory tender. The removal involved used tyres. Some of these tyres may require special technical capabilities to cut, transport and remove from the sites. The majority used tyres are located at the Grand Cayman Landfill and are a serious fire hazard.

This tender period has only just concluded. The Ministry is hopeful that there will be a viable and successful bidder at this time.

This past fiscal year, the Ministry of Health has established a Cemetery and Burial Review Committee. The role of the committee is to review the local cemeteries and current burial practices to determine how effectively and efficiently they are managed. The committee will also be tasked with making recommendations for the development of any policies, legislation and regulation required to improve or update cemetery management and burial practices in our country.

Turning now to the matter of culture— **National Heroes Day:** The annual Heroes Day nomination process awards and celebration is under the remit of this Ministry, along with the Protocol Office. It takes a tremendous amount of effort by a small dedicated committee to bring to bear this aspect of our cultural heritage annually. The subject Health Services was the focus in 2015 with awardees significant contributions to health and wellness noted, including the diagnosis and treatment of diseases, as well as the promotion, maintenance and restoration of human health.

Some 114 professionals ranging from doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists, pharmacists, lab technicians, emergency response service workers, medical

assistants, counsellors, environmental health workers, and therapists were recognised for outstanding contributions made over the course of the Islands' history.

Turning next to the film arts: The Ministry is pleased to see the flourishing of cultural activity with the film arts in the Cayman Islands and was proud to support the film "The Devil You Know" which was locally written, directed and produced. Everyone involved in the film production lives and works in Grand Cayman, making the completed project all that more special to us locally. These local film makers plan to distribute it in all of the major international film festivals, including the Sundance Film Festival, Cannes, Toronto International and South by Southwest with a hope that it will be picked up by one or two of these festivals.

Initiatives such as the film festival and the independent films and videos made locally are ensuring the rapid growth and development of this industry in our country.

Madam Speaker, the Caymanian music scene continues to expand and evolve. As my colleague the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town reported, singer Cotterell was supported by the Ministry to represent Cayman at the Best of the Best Concert in Miami's Bay Front Park. This up and coming Caymanian musician, filmmaker and designer will feature among other well-known Caribbean stars, such as Beenie Man, Capleton, Sanchez and others. Indeed, a wonderful opportunity for this young man to show his talent.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry is pleased to partner with the Ministries of Education and Tourism in supporting Cayman Traditional Art, a company which takes the traditions which were once a way of life to Caymanians and organises a method for these trades and teachings to be passed on in the Government schools in Cayman. With this programme, children learn from Caymanians who are rated Cayman's best in their trade doing visual arts, traditional crafts, cooking, fishing and all the traditional activities that are native to Cayman, while learning and experiencing the Islands' heritage.

The Ministry believes that it is imperative to continue to use our educational institutional setting to provide a link to our cultural heritage for our younger generation, otherwise it may be lost.

Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to outline some specific achievements of the departments and agencies under the ambit of the Ministry of Health and Culture.

The Health Services Authority: Madam Speaker, the HSA will continue the implementation of their strategic plan and the aims of continuing to improve the quality of patient care, empowering staff and improving their financial sustainability. In 2014/15 they have achieved the following: The completion of renovations to the MRI wing and the opening of a new service, which now offers and provides a 3.0 Tesla MRI

machine, is available to the people of the Cayman Islands.

The DNA and Toxicology lab at the HSA has had a successful international assessment to retain its accreditation. And work on a replacement backup generator for the George Town Hospital is nearing completion. They have researched the potential future development of an affiliation agreement with an accredited overseas provider. This would have allowed for enhanced training opportunities for staff, the ability to access supplies, medicine and equipment through a larger procurement network and assistance and advice regarding possible enhancements in the way the HSA does business. Due to budgetary constraints, the RFP was cancelled and other avenues to achieve some of the outcomes will be explored in the future.

Madam Speaker, having to abandon the RFP does not mean that we have given up on the hope of entering into this strategic agreement and partnership. It is something that we do intend to pursue once more funds become available.

The HSA has also explored the feasibility of acquiring additional space for the expansion of the specialist services clinics. They have also commenced a review of their master facility plan to help address issues, such as space for clinical services, storage, parking and changing rooms with a goal to ensuring the facilities are there to continuously improve the delivery of sustainable, high quality healthcare.

They also launched a patient portal recently in an effort to increase patient engagement allowing patients to see the results of their tests, schedule appointments and communicate with their clinicians. They implemented new pharmacist software with streamlined inventory and add improved functionality to the HSA's pharmacy services.

They acquired a non-emergency transport vehicle through a donation which will reduce the demand on the emergency ambulance. And finally, they achieved JCI (Joint Commission International) accreditation for the lab at the George Town hospital.

Looking next at the **Department of Health Regulatory Services:** The public education programme regarding health insurance and the Health Insurance legislation continued. The Commission researched possible public/private partnership with the approved insurers to provide access to health insurance for retirees, elderly persons and persons with high risk medical conditions. They implemented the administrative fines provided for in the Health Insurance Law and Regulations, as well as enhanced enforcement strategies.

They developed and implemented guidelines for the processing of applications relating to clinical trials and experimental research. The department also continued its registration of all healthcare practitioners and inspections of the healthcare facilities, ensuring that all 108 plus licensed facilities met the necessary

standards to maintain public and patient safety throughout the Cayman Islands. Site visits to approved insurers and the audits of their records, and finally, collection of the contribution from the approved insurers for the segregated insurance fund.

Mosquito Research and Control Unit: In 2014/15 they have achieved the following: Expanded the aerial BTI trials to combat the dengue mosquito expanding the field trial to a full scale aerial operation treating an area of 400 acres on a weekly basis for a period of six months. This work included the monitoring of the *Aedes aegypti* population, including trapping and monitoring of egg-laying behaviour. They carried out three to four island-wide large scale larviciding operations including Cayman Brac and Little Cayman to prevent mosquito emergence. And they also expanded the physical control efforts, namely the hatch and strand programme, with more frequent operations being carried out throughout the season. The programme focuses mainly on the Yacht Club, Salt Creek, and Barkers area of the western end of Grand Cayman.

Turning next to the **Department of Environmental Health:** Madam Speaker, this fiscal year, the department further enhanced and improved the operations at the George Town Landfill, as well as carrying out other important work to maintain and bolster the health of the environment. They procured some much-needed replacement equipment. With new equipment and the hiring of additional staff will serve to enhance the operations of the solid waste section of the department. With the replacement equipment the operations at the George Town Landfill are now significantly enhanced. Waste collection is another area where the department has seen additions to its fleet with seven new trucks in service. The department has been able to further enhance its service efficiency in this area.

Ten garbage trucks were purchased to replace old vehicles for the residential and commercial collections operations. Services have improved significantly since the acquisition. A waste compactor was also acquired for landfill operations to compact the waste at the landfill. The new equipment immediately improved the operations at the Grand Cayman Landfill and the waste management operations are now much better controlled. The department aims shortly to install new security cameras at Cayman Brac and Little Cayman landfills and improve the existing cameras at the solid waste dispatch locations in Grand Cayman.

In addition, the department will increase the applications of cover materials to the landfills and maintain a smaller working face at the sites while also continuing to improve and expand the department's recycling programmes. The DEH introduced a small battery recycling programme for household primary and secondary cell batteries to all three Islands and it has been a huge success so far. Within the first three months of operations, almost 1,000 pounds of batteries were shipped for recycling overseas. This is in ad-

dition to the existing programmes for aluminum cans, lead batteries, used motor oils, used cooking oils, used tyres, scrap metal and the annual Christmas tree mulch recycling initiatives.

The department also installed three additional fire wells at the George Town Landfill site for a total of 10 to improve efficiencies as part of a risk mitigation programme. A new fire pump was purchased and commissioned for use at the landfill as part of the overall improvements.

In Cayman Brac the DEH started construction of a staff facility, equipment wash area and the installation of all recycling storage pad to improve the overall operations at the landfill site. They have also transported eight 40 foot shipping containers of used tyres from Cayman Brac. This process will continue in the next fiscal year in Little Cayman. The tyres are being shipped to Grand Cayman for further processing by a successful tenderer. Some 4300 gallons of used oils were also removed from Cayman Brac to Grand Cayman for further processing and recycling.

They also baled the scrap metals on the Cayman Brac site to improve operations and make provisions for the new structures for the landfill. It is planned to also bale all scrap metals on Little Cayman in the near future.

Madam Speaker, turning now to **Culture:** The three main national cultural organisations demonstrated robust programming throughout the fiscal year. All three of these cultural organisations have a diverse myriad of ongoing programmes and events that enrich the life of our society and ground our people in awareness and celebration of our cultural heritage. Examples include libraries, lecture series, tours, courses and workshops, apprenticeships, internships and scholarships. These national cultural organisations are a delight for locals and visitors alike.

The National Gallery: In the last fiscal year the National Gallery conducted a full audit and review of the National Art Collection, including condition reports and suggestions for restoration considerations, storage requirements, and the funding plan for new acquisitions. They also completed a national strategic planning exercise resulting in a new Strategic Plan 2014-2019. They developed a three-year fundraising plan, including a strategy to broaden the demographics and increase annual membership, developed and published the first National Collection Guide with an introduction to the history of Cayman Islands art and scholarly catalogues for each major exhibition. They strengthened research partnerships with academic and institutional partners and developed related materials for school and college level use. They developed a revenue-generating cultural tourism programme and created a new collections based school programme which was shortlisted for the Joanna Clark Award of Educational Excellence.

They forged new regional strategic partnerships resulting in increased visibility for the Gallery

and Cayman in the Caribbean, including the Jamaican Art Show. They also mounted a number of temporary exhibitions, including, an Homage to Open-Air Painting by Teresa Grimes, Our Story of Art, a Public Art - Sculpture Competition Display, Images of Yesteryear, Art of Assemblage, and Metamorphoses.

Madam Speaker, the **Cayman National Foundation (CNCF)** has been extremely busy promoting the arts in Cayman. Often its work comes to fruition in the international arena, such as when Hollywood actress, Caymanian Grace Gealy acknowledged her early workshops with this organisation.

In 2014/15 CNCF produced the 21st annual Cayfest, Cayman National Arts Festival, comprising several events, including the ever popular Red Sky at Night. It is working towards the publication of a book of three Caymanian plays. They further developed the Cayman Islands Folk Singers, the National Theatre Company and the National Dance Company.

October 2014 marked 30 years of achievements for the CNCF in preserving our cultural heritage and developing the arts in Cayman. Madam Speaker, the CNCF was extremely busy and much of the activity, which is annual, will be outlined when I speak of their plans for this next fiscal year.

The National Museum: During this past fiscal year the museum continued to preserve, conserve and manage over 9,000 artefacts that were entered into a digital management system and area available for display and research. In addition, the Caribbean Kitchen at the Old Gaol Café, which is leased, is open and is serving excellent and popular Caymanian and Caribbean food in central George Town on a daily basis for locals and visitors. They provided complementary tours and outreach to primary, secondary and high schools, tourism and other partners. They have worked towards a succession plan with one senior staff member completing the new two-year Leicester University Distance Learning Master of Arts in Museum Study Programme in 2015.

The museum also mounted six changing exhibits, "Voyages", a sea captain's legacy; "Sporting Stars", play from the collection art, and "Towards 2050", "Reduced", "Reuse", "Recycle".

Turning attention now to the coming fiscal year: While much has been achieved, looking forward to the 2015/16 financial year, there is still much to be done. I would like at this time to briefly outline some of the Ministry and Agency plans for the fiscal year.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: He is doing the presentation on behalf of Health for me.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: National Health Policy: While the Ministry has made great progress in the ar-

ea of mental health, the Ministry recognises that there is still need for a separate mental health policy, and, in conjunction with the Mental Health Commission, will later this year start work on the development of a National Mental Health Policy.

Nursing legislation: Madam Speaker, nursing legislation will be developed in order to expand the role of the Nursing Council to enable it to accredit educational institutions offering a degree programme in nursing, thereby supporting the programmes approved for nursing education. With the legislation, registration and indexing of students, this will give each student a unique identifier number once the admission criteria is met. The legislation will also cover offences, disciplinary measures and the appeals process. It will be an important step in the nursing profession in the Cayman Islands.

Madam Speaker, in the coming year the Ministry will also seek to review and recommend necessary amendments to the Health Practice Law and the Pharmacy Law for consideration.

In terms of policy developments and updates, Madam Speaker, the Clinical Trials Committee will be reconvened to provide policy advice to the Ministry regarding the regulation and formalization of the processes for clinical trials and medical research in the Cayman Islands. Better health is achieved through medical research and results in increased life expectancy and improved quality of life. Clinical trials serve to ensure that a product, whether it is a drug, device, or otherwise, meets the required standards, is effective and safe. The Cayman Islands, with its sound infrastructure, close proximity to the US, safety and excellent climate presents a unique opportunity for research companies to conduct business here.

The Ministry will also continue work on updating the existing HIV policy and plan.

In the coming year the Ministry will commence work on regulations in support of the Human Tissue Transplant legislation. This law was passed by this honourable House to allow for human organ and tissue donation and transplants to be performed in the Cayman Islands. And the legislation makes provision for the establishment of a Human Tissue Transplant Council for the purpose of monitoring compliance with the provisions of the legislation.

Madam Speaker, once the regulations have been completed the law will be commenced. And the legislation will potentially allow any resident of the Cayman Islands who may be in need of an organ tissue transplant in order to survive or to have a better quality of life to be given a second chance. It will also create the opportunity for the establishment of an organ donor registry for the first time, giving people the opportunity, should they wish to do so, to have their organs and tissues donated to someone in need, thus saving other people's lives.

Madam Speaker, health laboratory services. They are essential to the delivery of quality healthcare

and should be made available to everyone. The service should be accessible, affordable, and of the highest quality. Accurate and reliable diagnosis is the foundation of disease management and prevention. Some of the forces driving laboratory change and encouraging the development of national laboratory policies are the increasing customer expectations on the demands of health services, focus on quantity and quality assurance and re-emerging infections.

Madam Speaker, this policy will aim to provide a framework for ensuring that the laboratory services medical public health are strengthened so as to adequately support the effective and efficient delivery of care and appropriate response. In addition, work will be done towards the development of a structure that includes a national laboratory plan and a national network of laboratories supported by regulations and policies.

Madam Speaker, this next area is regarding e-cigarette policy which is an emerging area, but the Ministry will review the existing tobacco legislation and precedents set globally relating to electronic cigarettes with a view to developing a local policy. The World Health Organization is currently reviewing existing evidence around e-cigarettes containing nicotine. The organisation recommends that smokers who use e-cigarettes to help them quit smoking should first be encouraged to quit smoking and nicotine addiction by using a combination of already approved treatments.

In the USA, Madam Speaker, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) did not originally set out to regulate the e-cigarettes using the Tobacco Control Act. However, with the emerging and fast developing industry of e-cigarettes advertising and marketing by the manufacturers, the FDA decided that it would propose regulations to extend its tobacco product authority to cover e-cigarettes. This process is ongoing and, as I said earlier, is developing. No final decisions have yet been made.

Madam Speaker, due to the evolving specific evidence on the risks and benefits of e-cigarettes, legislation and regulations related to e-cigarettes must be and should be evidence based and in the interests of overall public health. Our legislation currently does not address the issue, distribution or restriction of e-cigarettes, as they do not contain tobacco, but they do contain nicotine.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry has undertaken to do an actuarial study on the costs of inclusion of requiring health insurance policies to cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders. In particular, the treatment called "applied behaviour analysis" is considered the standard of care for autism treatment.

As mentioned earlier, Madam Speaker, a committee has been formed to review the management of cemeteries and burials in the Cayman Islands. In the coming fiscal year we expect the resultant Cemetery Management Plan and report to form

the basis of cemetery management regulations to be developed, which will cover both public and private cemeteries.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry will appoint a committee in the 2015/16 year to review the DEH's food inspection process to address issues such as unwholesome food, poor temperature control, cross contamination, poor personal hygiene, unsatisfactory cleaning and disinfection, pest infestations, lack of knowledge of food handlers, unlicensed food vendors and unhygienic slaughter of local animals. The Ministry will then seek Cabinet approval to prepare drafting instructions on the proposed legislation and regulations to improve these areas and introduce a more effective food inspection system for local restaurants and any other businesses licensed to sell or handle food.

Looking at our **Strategic Plan for Culture and Heritage** next: Our country's culture has experienced steady growth and exposure over the years. Government recognises that there have been many calls over the years for the drafting and implementation of a national culture and heritage policy. This document is not only necessary to align ourselves with global standards, evolving standards, it is most important to establish what we call a right of passages which focuses on what it is to be Caymanian and everyone's role, including this and successive Governments, in the self-actualisation of our people. It is in this context, therefore, that Government intends to bring together the finest minds from all cultural and arts disciplines in the country, including NGOs and independent arts and culture practices to establish the framework that will inform and become integral in a final policy document.

Madam Speaker, the National Policy on Culture and Heritage is not a document aimed at stifling the creative process. Government recognises that with or without legislation, artists will create, because creation is their unique gift to the world, and culture will manifest itself because it is our response to the act of being unapologetically. This is who we are. The National Culture and Heritage Policy is to be a document which sets out a national vision for the self-actualisation of our people with the assurance from Government that the arts, culture and heritage are integral to our lives and will be treated as necessary to our inward strength as citizens, as well as our outward reach as members of a global community of nations.

Madam Speaker, it is now time to harness the work of our cultural organisations along with the achievements of the Cayman Islands independent artists, musicians, producers, filmmakers, writers, and other cultural animators, both locally and abroad to research and develop such a cultural and heritage policy.

Madam Speaker, the heritage of our Islands should be the subject of active public reflection, discussion and engagement. Some of the questions

about the development of this policy we will ask ourselves are: What is worth saving? What can we, or should we, forget? What memories can we enjoy, regret or learn from? Who owns the past? And who is entitled to speak for past generations? Culture and heritage are contemporary and active fields of activity with far-reaching effects. Given our large expatriate population, combined with the youth of the Cayman Islands, it becomes even more crucial for us to protect and promulgate our heritage and celebrate and support aspects of our culture. Heritage and cultural activity can be a medium for intercultural dialogue, a means of ethical reflection and a potential basis for local economic development, in particular now with the growth of the creative industries of film, music, acting, visual arts, culinary arts and others.

Madam Speaker, I believe that now is the time for us to place culture and heritage at the forefront of our lives. It is an essential part of the present we live in, and of the future that we will build.

Madam Speaker, there is a gap that has been identified in the Health and Culture Portfolio. Cayman needs an overarching guiding policy that outlines what the vision, goals and objectives are for culture and heritage in the Cayman Islands. Accordingly, the Ministry intends to embark on this policy and the development of it, and a strategic plan and is set to convene a steering committee for this exercise shortly.

Madam Speaker, in line with the development of a Culture and Heritage Policy, the Ministry has undertaken to strengthen, modernise and develop the management of boards for the cultural organisations under its remit. The Ministry will ensure that board memberships reflect the expertise of the various national leaders of the arts and heritage fields, as well as have a strong fund raising component. Since the existing boards were convened, there has been incredible growth in various cultural sectors. Sectors that were either non-existent or immature, are now key players in the cultural sphere in Cayman, and have organised themselves into specialist associations and organisations to represent their respective fields, such as the newly formed Cayman Islands Performing Arts Company, the Cayman Islands Friends of Film, and the old Cayman Drama Society, Cayman Music and Entertainment Association.

The Speaker: Honourable Councillor, is this an appropriate time for a lunch break?

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Yes, Madam Speaker. We can take the break at this time. I would welcome it too. Thank you.

The Speaker: We will now break for lunch and reconvene at 2:15 pm.

Proceedings suspended at 12:50 pm

Proceedings resumed at 2:30 pm

The Speaker: Please be seated. Proceedings are resumed.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS

SECOND READING

APPROPRIATION (JULY 2015 TO JUNE 2016) BILL, 2015

DEBATE ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS AND THE THRONE SPEECH TOGETHER WITH THE GOV- ERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT

[Continuation of debate thereon]

The Speaker: Before we took the lunch, the Second Elected Member for the district of George Town was debating and I will invite him to continue his debate.

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, when we broke for the lunch break I was in the midst of giving Members and reporting to this honourable House the plans for the Ministry of Health and Culture for this upcoming fiscal year.

Just for my own knowledge, Madam Speaker, how much time do I have left?

The Speaker: One hour.

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Thank you, Ma'am. I certainly won't be that long, but I appreciate that.

Madam Speaker, I would like to begin the afternoon debate by reporting next on the plans for the National Collections and Storage Facility. As I mentioned earlier, the National Museum intends working towards the acquisition of either a purpose-built or a purchase facility to better house the national collection of artefacts.

Madam Speaker, stewardship is the careful sound and responsible management of that which is entrusted to a museum's care. A possession of collections incurs legal, social, and ethical obligations to provide proper storage, management, and care for the collections and the associated documentation, as well as the proper intellectual control. Collections are held in trust for the public and made accessible for the public's benefit. An effective collections stewardship ensures that the objects that the museum owns, borrows, holds in its custody and/or uses are available and accessible to present and future generations.

They are, Madam Speaker, an important means of advancing its mission in serving the public.

And to that end, the museum will this year commence the process to procure a storage facility to house its artefacts. The strategic outline case will be undertaken to identify the preferred project options and the outline business case assessing the preferred project will be done in the coming financial year.

Briefly, Madam Speaker, on National Heroes Day 2016, the theme is Agriculture. The Ministry is looking forward to working closely with the Ministry of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure and the Protocol Office to ensure the entire process leading up to, and including the National Heroes Day 2016 ceremony, is a success.

I would like to turn now, Madam Speaker, to specific department and agency plans for 2015/16. They are as follows, Madam Speaker. With regard to the **Department of Health and Regulatory Services [DHRS]**, the DHRS plans to conduct a review of the standard health insurance fees with the aim of updating the current procedural terminology codes, descriptions, and fees. In consultation with key stakeholders, they plan to revise and update the guidelines relating to the coordination of benefits and precertification. They also plan to conduct a study of the premium rates for the standard health insurance contract, the SHIC, and other supplemental, medical and health care benefit plans.

For the Health Services Authority, the HSA's overall goal is to partner with patients and employees to improve the quality of care, patient safety, customer satisfaction, and healthcare economics. To this end, the key strategic goals and objectives of the HSA for 2015/16 are as follows:

- to continue to work to enhance revenue capture policy and procedures;
- to enhance collection policy and procedures;
- to expand the patient portal to enable patients to have better access to their medical records, reduce storage needs through the implementation of document scanning, develop a drug formula based on the World Health Organisation's recommendations to ensure patients with chronic illnesses have access to essential medications;
- plan to strengthen communicable diseases surveillance programmes;
- to develop a phased implementation plan for hospital accreditation; and
- to enhance the accessibility to primary health care for all persons in the Cayman Islands.

The **DEH, Department of Environmental Health, for 2015/16**: In the Sister Islands the DEH will install an additional fire well at the Cayman Brac landfill site. They will operationalise the fuel depot and facilities in Little Cayman to improve landfill operations,

revise improvement plans for the Sister Islands landfill operations to minimise the risks and nuisances, and finally, will implement improved security measures including opening and closing hours at the landfill sites.

On Grand Cayman, the DEH will continue to improve the operations and waste management practices at the landfill site to reduce the types of waste being disposed.

- The acquisition of a D6 [dozer] and excavator for the use at the Grand Cayman landfill to replace old equipment and to improve overall management of the landfill site.
- Enhance public education programmes to inform the public about waste management plans and recycling, along with other environment health matters.
- Proceed with setting up the mechanism to have the DEH laboratory accredited for food sampling and testing to international certification standards.
- They will continue to provide training for food safety handlers and persons working in the cosmetologist sector on aspects of hygiene.
- They will also work on the promulgation of environment health laws and regulations to manage effectively environmental health functions, inclusive of food safety, solid waste management, recycling, and waste facilities.
- After the approval of the report from the review committee, develop a cemetery management plan to address gaps with all public and private cemeteries.
- Plan to apply soil cover on the entire exposed working face of the George Town landfill to improve management and reduce the incidents and likelihood of fires from eruption.
- They will also tender for the processing and removal of the remaining scrap metal at the landfill.
- Commence a contract after CTC tendering for the processing and removal of all used tyres stored on the landfills.
- Commence a process for the installation [of] public recycling drop-off sites in various districts in partnership and in conjunction with private sector entities.
- They will continue to facilitate and to work with the integrated solid waste management system's plans for waste management in the Cayman Islands, with a view to delivering on that project.

Turning to the **Mosquito Research and Code Control Unit [MRCU]**: Madam Speaker, the MRCU plans liquid Bti [*Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*] aerial operations against *Aedes aegypti*, following the successful six-month trials in 2014/15, not previously

being done using fixed-wing aircraft, they may incorporate this new technique into an operational programme and expand it from 400 acres treatment to targeted operational areas.

They also plan to implement novel mosquito traps against the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. They will evaluate over a three-month period a new type of trap that is highly attractive to egg laying *Aedes aegypti* females. These traps have been tested quite successfully in laboratories and they have had good results to date and they are going to conduct operational field trials in the coming year.

They will also continue with their ground crews against the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. They will continue the work of inspection, treatment teams in targeted residential areas, work crews will inspect for larvae and adults, collect samples, map information, and treat yards accordingly with larvicide granules. They will respond to information and observations gathered. They may conduct ground fogging as needed and flag for further treatment. Also note that these teams will be in readiness and preparedness for any chikungunya or dengue outbreak that may occur.

And, Madam Speaker, just [to] mention, that we are now getting into the wet season of the year and this is when the incidence of these types of mosquito-borne diseases tend to increase. But from all I have been told and understand MRCU is ready for the season.

Aerial larviciding: They will conduct three large-scale applications of pellets throughout the mosquito season on all three Islands, targeting the main pest, or the nuisance mosquito. Pellets can be applied to dry or flooded areas. They can kill mosquito larva and give control for several weeks. Each operation will treat, in Little Cayman, 490 acres; in Cayman Brac, 411 acres; and in Grand Cayman, 11,400 acres. There will be targeted aerial larviciding with short-term pellets. And we will for the first time introduce the use of one-shot larvicide pellets in contrast to the residual pellets. Operations will be a valuable addition to complement use of residual pellets and conventional aerial spraying.

They will also do field trials comparing the larvicides that they have available. These field trials will compare efficacy and longevity of different types of larvicide pellets granules with different modes of action. Results will allow the fine-tuning of MRCU's operations in the battle.

The **Cayman National Cultural Foundation [CNCFF]**: Madam Speaker, the CNCFF plans a very busy year and their activities will include tours of the Cultural Heritage Site, Mind's Eye, the Visionary World of Gladwyn K. Bush, [also known as] Miss Lassie. The Mind's Eye school tours and public tours programmes offer a variety of cultural educational product intended to inspire future generations, share cultural traditions, celebrate Caymanian heritage, reconnect local residents with Cayman's rich arts and cul-

tural past and future, and encourage community involvement in the arts and culture.

During the tours, Madam Speaker, participants will learn valuable lessons about traditional Caymanian architecture, Caymanian shipbuilding in the community, daily life in a Caymanian household, traditional life in the South Sound community, the activities of a seafaring family, provide pivotal moments in Cayman's history, such as the 1932 hurricane, Miss Lassie's inspiration and evolution as an artist, religious and secular themes in Miss Lassie's paintings, and art as a medium for self-expression and national identity.

The National Arts and Culture Awards in February, at which the recipients in the fields of cultural heritage, preservation and creativity nominated by the public or bi-cultural organisations were recognised and presented with gold, silver and bronze metals and certificates.

They will produce three separate major art festivals, including Gimistory, which is an international storytelling festival; Cayfest, Cayman [Islands] National Festival of the Arts, which includes the popular event Red Sky at Night; the National [Arts and] Culture Awards, Dress for Culture Day, are also separate items that are featured and are at specific elements of the festival; and also the traveling Caribbean-filled showcase, which represents film-makers from the Caribbean, Africa and its Diaspora.

Youth programming, including the second annual Young At Arts [YAA] Summer Theatre Arts Intensive, and an introduction of a Junior Cayman Islands' Folk Singers Group with representatives from Cayman public and private schools is planned for the upcoming school year. They will also organise cultural exchange opportunities during the coming financial year. These are expected to include Cayman representation at the Inter-island Artist Lock-in, which will coincide with Jersey's hosting of the 2015 NatWest Island Games.

Also, a Shakespeare in Paradise designed to expose Bahamas' residents and visitors to the best in World Caribbean, African, and African American theatre. The University of South Florida School of Theatre and Dance presentation of the play *Pantomime* and CARIFESTA, and a Caribbean Festival of the Arts in Haiti in August 2015.

Looking next at the **Cayman National Museum**: Madam Speaker, the National Museum plans the following work events in the coming year:

- complete and adopt a National Museum Strategic Plan;
- undertake more fund-raising activities;
- strategise, plan, and fundraise to acquire and move into a purposed collection storage facility that will be owned rather than rented to ensure good fiscal practice and a permanent home for the Museum collection;

- continue to assess, preserve, conserve, manage, and house a collection of over 9,000 artefacts and a collection of archaeological materials;
- enhance entering supporting data into the PastPerfect collections management programme;
- carry out Museum exhibits, education, and programmes and maintain the Museum, the Museum Shop, and the Old Jail Café for the public.
- develop traditional art classes for the public;
- revitalise archaeological programme;
- relaunch land-based Maritime Heritage Trail;
- complete repairing signage;
- revitalise and relaunch the programme in cooperation with our partners, being the DoE, the Archives, and the National Trust;
- develop one or two Shipwreck Preserves as “Museums in the Sea” for the aquatic public;
- work with the Ministry to consider bringing underwater cultural heritage legislation into agreement with international instruments, such as the 1996 ICOMUS Charter best practice and the 2001 UNESCO Convention.

The National Gallery for the Cayman Islands: Madam Speaker, the ever-active National Gallery plans the following work in the coming year:

- launch the tri-island Art in the Streets programme and related community and school outreach initiative, which will see iconic works of art from the National Collection reproduced and mounted in public spaces across the Cayman Islands;
- launch a new online learning initiative via the National Gallery’s website to provide educators and students access to Caymanian cultural education materials on a continuous basis—24/7;
- partner with key stakeholders to launch the facilitation and establishment of secondary and tertiary level arts education in the Cayman Islands in order to encourage the development of local artists, art appreciation, and careers in or related to the creative arts;
- host 12 exhibitions promoting Caymanian arts and culture, including a celebration of Caymanian craft, partnering with CTAC [SOUNDS LIKE], and the Maritime Art and History Exhibition, partnering with the CICC SFA and the National Archives,

providing cross-cultural learning guides for each;

- publish the first National Art Collection Guide with an introduction to Caymanian art history and related schools activity guide;
- plan to travel a temporary exhibition of work by Caymanian artists to key strategic regional partners in an effort to increase dialogue for those locally and overseas to critically engage with Cayman Islands art and culture;
- work to increase commercial opportunities for local artisans and creative entrepreneurs via the National Gallery Gift Shop, a new online site;
- work to develop and strengthen the National Collection by creating opportunities for acquisition and commission of artwork while ensuring its care and conservation via an art fund campaign;
- continue to run 25 education and outreach programmes per month—a very active group.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I am indeed fortunate to work with such a dedicated group of professionals, and through the heads of departments and the Ministry itself, who are very much committed to working together to help our Ministry achieve our goals. The Ministry too is equally fortunate to have a group of professional and dedicated staff.

Madam Speaker, I know you will probably appreciate this, but I find it very heartening that within the Ministry, with the exception of the projects supervisor, every Member of staff within that Ministry is female. [It is] a very progressive Ministry, and I like it—thank you very much.

[Laughter]

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues in this Honourable House for their support, and I look forward to continue to work with them for the benefit for the Cayman Islands. I would also like to thank the hard-working heads of departments and Ministry staff for their efforts and support in delivering the services and programmes of the Ministry.

I am sure you will agree, Madam Speaker, we have had a very productive year and we have a lot of great work planned for the coming financial year as well. The work is just beginning. I am confident that if we all work together, then, we can all do great things for the people of the Cayman Islands.

Before I do wind-up my debate, Madam Speaker, there is just one matter I would like to mention and that is with regard to the current Boundaries Commission review that is ongoing with a view to es-

tablishing the single-member constituencies with one person, one vote.

Madam Speaker, my support for this initiative has been known now for many years, but I am proud to be a part of a Government that I can work with and can be a part of, that will see this brought to fruition. I think this country has long wanted change, and I think very ably expressed that desire for change when the referendum was held in 2012.

Madam Speaker, I have spent countless hours researching and studying various forms of voting systems that exist throughout the world. I have to say publically [that] there isn't a single one of them that is perfect. There isn't one that doesn't have some issue or problem, or potential issues associated with it. But there is one thing that I hold very near and dear to my heart and that is the principle of equality of suffrage or vote. I believe everyone should have the same rights.

As much as I live and enjoy and work in George Town, vote in George Town, and have been one of those who have been privileged to have six votes, I consider it in many ways to be something that is inequitable and unfair in the current system that we have. I am really looking forward to the time when we can set these things straight so that no one is disenfranchised just because they choose to live in another district where there is only one vote or two votes, or three or four [votes]. I am really looking forward to it.

So, with those comments, Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to share with this honourable House, Members, and with the wider public who might be listening in and watching on TV and listening by way of radio, the plans and aspirations of the Ministry of Health and Culture. And, again, I thank my colleagues, and not just within the Cabinet, but my colleagues in all of the caucus as well. I have to say it truly is a delight to work with them all, and I say that with the sincerest of heart. I am looking forward to a very successful 2015/16 and even the year after that.

Thank you once again, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Honourable Minister responsible for Community Affairs, Youth and Sports.

[Pause]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden, Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I would like to start off by congratulating my colleague who just wound up his debate. I think it is quite fitting. It is almost like a relay that he now has control of some of the stuff that I used to oversee as Minister, and it is quite fitting that I follow behind him here, to some extent. I would like to

congratulate him on the job that he did of minding a lot of the plans that are in place and the plans for the future under a very exciting Ministry.

Now I have the privilege of outlining, as a new Minister since January, for the Ministry of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports, our plans and aspirations for 2015/16. But before I do so, Madam Speaker, let me congratulate also Her Excellency the Governor on her Throne Speech, the Premier, on an excellent Policy Statement and Minister Archer and his team on a budget that I think the public has seen to be a very prudent and creative one, under the circumstances, because we have to understand that we are functioning still under the restrictions of the FFR, the Framework for Fiscal Responsibility.

It has not been easy the last couple of years, and 2015/16 certainly will be no easier in terms of what we had to do to get to this point to continue to have a country function, a country that is demanding more and more services, its people need more care, Government is expected to do more, but as we keep telling the civil servants who work so hard with us, we have to do more with less. We are praying for the relief of this in 2016/17. I think the United Kingdom will have seen a prudent management of this Government, and we will benefit from that in the years to come.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to be a part of a Government that has restored fiscal responsibility to this country, and that has shown that we have control of finances. I think it is safe to say that investor confidence has been revived in this country. People are excited about doing business here again. They know they can come; they are welcome. They play within the rules. You don't have a Government that is looking to get a commission off what they are trying to do. This Government is an honest, hard-working, transparent one. And I think the coalition Government that it is, has proved that it is working well because everybody has a voice. Everybody knows that this is not just the Premier running the show. Everybody sits at the table. Yes, we disagree. Sometimes we have major differences, but at the end of the day we come together with one voice and we put forward a unified position and everybody respectfully agrees to disagree, if so be the case.

So, Madam Speaker, I am proud to be a Member of such a Government. I am proud to know that . . . in fact, I refuse to be a part of any other type of Government. I have that much that I owe myself. My integrity is beyond question, and I have no reason to join a Government that I have to go to sleep at night and wonder what my colleagues are up to and what I will face in the morning. I like the certainty. I like to know that I can trust who I am with. That is very, very important to me.

So, Madam Speaker, as I said, it is a pleasure to be delivering on the Budget as presented, and the Throne [Speech], and Policy Statement under this

very exciting new Ministry that I am in charge of, the Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports. The combining of these subject areas marks a new beginning in the efforts of this Government to holistically address the many social issues which face our children, youth, and families, and, indeed, our communities.

Madam Speaker, the primary aim of this Government is to improve the quality of life for all persons in these Islands. And my Ministry aims to assure this by keeping human development at a forefront of the national agenda. The Ministry will achieve this through continuing to develop policies and legislation and providing services that enable people to enjoy the highest possible standard of physical, emotional, and social wellbeing. A healthy community is one that is inclusive, Madam Speaker, offering opportunities on an equal basis, productive and creative in maintaining its wellbeing. Such a community takes care of all of its members, especially the elderly, the youth, and the disabled, or otherwise vulnerable.

So, Madam Speaker, this Ministry, as I see it, is the safety net that surrounds these Islands, and when we talk about all of our projects and all of our other ambitions, it is so important that this safety net is not pierced, is not full of holes. Because if it is, Madam Speaker, no matter what we do in terms of brick and mortar, when those are all up and we have social unrest, or people who are disenfranchised seeking to put food on the table, to do what everyone else is doing, and they can't do it in the proper manner, then, we know what happens.

So, Madam Speaker, investment in social protection and support networks contributes to a more productive society, stronger families, reduction of the prevalence of crime and higher life expectancy as a result. The work of this Ministry and the social grants it provides play a critical role in healthy communities as well, as I said, in minimising the hardships faced by some of our poorest households. And make no doubt about it, Madam Speaker, if I didn't know before, I certainly know now, we do have those among us who are experiencing severe hardship. We have those among us who simply, for whatever reason, their lot in life is not as it should be. And, therefore, I take this responsibility extremely seriously. I have the privilege now of having a bit more experience by, in one term, having experience with, as it were, two ministries (although I still have Youth and Sports). But it has broadened my perspective and I think, you know, out of every negative comes a positive and I think that my political career and my experience now is certainly that much broader because of what has happened.

Over the past six years, Madam Speaker, the Cayman Islands, like the rest of the world, experienced a downturn in the economy. This had negative and severe impact upon the lives of many of our Caymanian people. In the 2015/16 Budget year, the allocation of my Ministry represents 8 per cent of the

core Government operating expenditure budget. This includes all outputs to be purchased from departments, statutory authorities and government companies, non-governmental organisations and transfer payments. You will notice that the Ministry's overall budget has increased by approximately \$9.9 million above the 2014/15 original budget allocations. However, that is a direct result of the recently transferred subject areas of Youth and Sports.

Madam Speaker, over the past two years through my Ministry's policies and programmes offering a range of target interventions, the vulnerable members of our society have benefited. The Ministry is committed to ensuring that supportive mechanisms are in place to ensure that every Caymanian citizen has access to the same opportunities and that every individual, if given the opportunity, can make a contribution to this country. During the past financial year, agencies such as the Department of Children and Family Services and the Department of Counselling Services worked diligently on addressing child protective matters and building healthy families. There was an increase in the demand for services for children and their families and we believe that this is a result of the increased awareness about the protection provided to children via the Children Law.

Madam Speaker, when children can regrettably no longer remain in an unhealthy home, or have been or are involved in criminal activities, my Ministry has worked tirelessly along with the board and staff of the KEYS Foundation to provide and enhance therapeutic residential care programme.

In terms of Sports, we know how important sport is to the physical and mental well-being of our citizens, Madam Speaker. And in these days when diabetes and hypertension are increasing each year, it is important that we encourage everyone to keep active. Madam Speaker, I must thank the many volunteers who have given much to the development of our youth and community through sports. They play a crucial role in assisting the Government to meet its broad outcome goal of a fit and healthy population. Of course, from all of the activities which I will go into later, our youth benefit tremendously from the [National] Youth Policy and implementation of that through the newly constituted, or should I say, renewed National Youth Commission, because this was lying dormant for some time and now we do have it up and going, as well as the Youth Services Unit, provide tremendous services to our youth. I will go into a lot more of that.

So, Madam Speaker, let me touch now on some of the 2014/15 achievements of the Ministry. I would like then, to go on from that to elaborate more on our 2015/16 plans, and thereafter I will review some of the plans for my district, as a representative of the district of Bodden Town. And I will touch on some national issues, and that should get me through about two hours of debate.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry's agencies, despite the increase in demands for services and a strain on its human resources during the 2014/15 financial year, was able to accomplish major milestones in addressing the needs of the vulnerable in our society. Some of these include, and I will list them. These first ones which I will list, fall under the auspices of the Department of Children and Family Services and the [Department of] Counselling Services, and KEYS Foundation, and the Needs Assessment Unit.

- Training and suicide prevention and prevention of sexual harassment;
- Reopening of the current Caribbean Haven Residential Women's Centre (which was closed);
- In partnership with the justice system, the provision of parenting mediation for couples with children going through divorce and development of a parenting contract;
- Adolescent substance abuse groups;
- Construction of a greenhouse at Caribbean Haven Residential Centre which provides horticultural training experience for clients;
- Fresh produce as used at the facility, as well as sold to local retailers and restaurants;
- Implementation of the card system for food, which provides greater convenience for clients to purchase food and supplies. That is now they have a food voucher which is the form of card and can be topped up.
- Restructuring of clinical services to allow for a more effective implementation of the various obligations under the Children Law.

On the Youth side of things, Madam Speaker, we have hosted a mini seminar for youth workers which offered a renewed awareness of the importance of soft skills, (that is, enhanced communication and interpersonal skills in youth development work).

- There was a two-day spring event held in (and you would know this, Madam Speaker, of your good Island) Cayman Brac, to allow an opportunity for youth in that community to participate in fun, wholesome activities that were novel and educational, and geared to attract unattached youth to organise positive peer group activities present in our community;
- researched and wrote two position papers by the Cayman Islands Youth Assembly [CIYA];

- celebrated Youth Flex [Radio] Show's 13th year of being on-air and offered opportunity for training for young people with an interest in the field of broadcasting; and
- the provision of an internationally recognised four-star Cadet Corps programme to develop discipline and leadership qualities.

This programme, Madam Speaker, has eight detachments engaging 110 young people. They are heavily involved in a number of community projects through the year, thereby creating a very real connection for these youth to their community.

On the Sports side of things, we had the provision of funding for our elite athletes in the name of Kemar Hyman, our 100 metre runner; Ronald Forbes, our 110 hurdler; and Brett Fraser, our swimmer who is extremely good at the backstroke, the 200 backstroke. In addition, we have assisted other athletes and taken advantage of scholarship opportunities that they were offered because of their athletic ability. These include college athlete Troy Long; and high schools athletes Tyra McField, Asana Hudson, Chelsea Greene, Zachary Scott, and Sebastian Martinez. A lot of those names will be known to the listening public. Many of them are footballers and, in fact, that group is all footballers. Sebastian is the young man who has got the attachment to a professional club now in the UK. And Zachary is with Chelsea—everybody knows Chelsea from the premier league, Chelsea Football Club—he is there as well after the Digicel promotion that was held here on Island.

We have developed new reporting requirements for National Sports Associations which will be implemented in the new financial year. We have provided grants to sporting associations for sports development and the hiring of technical directors for the focus sports. This has resulted in improved performances in a number of sports, as I will outline here.

Football: In 2014, four teenaged Caymanian footballers featured prominently in the Digicel Caribbean Kick Start (That is the programme I was talking about that Zachary Scott came out of.) with Kameron D'Hue of the Futures Sports Club being selected as the MVP from 42 youths across the region. That was excellent because, Madam Speaker, those young men had an opportunity to go . . . there were a number of them selected in each island, and then, they all met up (I think it was in Barbados) as one group. And out of that, this young man, Kameron D'Hue, was selected as the MVP, so that was quite an accolade for him to receive.

In addition, we had the Grasspiece Promotions [Tournament] of the Cayman Invitational tournament and the Cayman Airways Youth Cup. And they are both under 15 football tournaments, which are put on by local coaches and local stakeholders and they are extremely successful, and Government

was pleased to support all of those in the form of sponsorships.

Swimming: The Learn to Swim and Developmental programmes continue to thrive with many hundreds of children engaged at the Lions Aquatic Centre and a promising new crop of young swimmers are emerging. This was demonstrated by the strong showing at this year's CARIFTA Games in Barbados where we garnered some 15 metals made up of five golds, five silvers, and five bronze.

I must pause to highlight the feat of young Ali Jackson who returned with four gold, three silvers, and a bronze. So, that young lady brought home eight metals out of the total of 15. So, I think she deserves special mention.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Funding was also provided, as usual, for the upcoming Flowers Sea Swim which is a huge event and actually one of our largest sports tourism events. I think last year there was some 900 people (if I am not mistaken, in that region) that have come into the island for that event. I am sure it will hit the 1,000 mark this year, and it is becoming more and more a featured swim on the tour.

I must pay accolades to the Flowers family that since inception, have, over the years supported this heavily. Government has played its part. And the proceeds from the swim meet usually go to Feed Our Future, I think is its name. But this year the proceeds are going to go to the Special Olympics, if I am not mistaken, for their big trip to Los Angeles [California] to compete in the Summer Games in July of this year. So we want to thank the Flowers family for what they do and the attention and spotlight that they have brought to these Islands, and we continue to support them heavily through my Ministry and the Ministry of Tourism, and, of course, the Department of Tourism which falls under that.

On the athletic scene, we have seen just recently completed, last weekend, the Cayman Invitational Track Meet. And, again, Government continues to fund that to the best of our ability. This has grown from strength to strength in terms of the calibre of athletes and we are looking to have next year, the main promotor of that event, Ms. Cydonie Mothersill is hoping to have another big name on the card to make sure that we get the kind of support and to ask the public to get behind it, for the corporate community to get behind it, because she can only do this with sponsorship. And Government has limited means, but the corporate community does play its part. We are asking for more to do so.

Sailing: We have the Sailing Programme which has seen tremendous growth in the participation and competition levels in recent years. The programme has been expanded at Frank Sound to accommodate the Edna Moyle, Clifton Hunter, and East

End schools. Schools taking part in this programme are Red Bay Primary, Bodden Town Primary, George Town Primary, Prospect Primary, Savannah Primary, John Gray High, Cayman Prep, and St. Ignatius.

I was a bit disturbed because I was just signing off on our commitment to them, our last commitment for this Budget year, and I was reading a report that came in with it and I realised that their facilities were recently burgled and they lost a lot of equipment (that is up on the east side) and they, as a result, it really handicapped the programme. And when we have people that go and do things like this, you know, steal the craft or damage them or steal equipment, I don't think they fully understand the impact that they are having on the people that this benefits, which are our young people. As a result, they were handicapped for some time with what they were able to do. Now, they are having, to take the extra expense of security and cameras and the like to protect this. I just ask the public to be vigilant and as a community, as a people, to try and do better when it comes to things like that. We really do not need. . . and at the end of the day you're hurting the last people you want to hurt. They are our young people and, you know, some of the people who did that, who knows, they may have family benefiting from that programme.

Boxing: We have the after school programme that continues to grow. The Government has supported the hiring of a part-time coach to assist Coach Anglin. We all know about young Tafari Ebanks who is an excellent prospect for the Olympic stage one of these days. And right now he is overseas preparing to represent the Cayman Islands at the upcoming Pan-American Games in Canada in July. My colleague from Bodden Town, the Fourth Elected Member, Counsellor Suckoo, spoke at some length about the boxing programme, something that is very near and dear to him and where he gives me some great support as Counsellor.

Volleyball: In March or April—was it April? I think it was early April. We hosted the annual NORCECA [Beach] Volleyball Tournament. That is an extremely good event; again, Sports Tourism. A lot of people come in. We had some 20-plus teams here. We have a new organising committee. They are doing some real exciting things and the event went off without a hitch, at least in terms of anything major. It was well attended and the quality of volleyball [is] extremely high. And as a result, of this beach volleyball getting so popular, we are seeing our own young people taking a liking and we have our own pairings of volleyball players who are starting to benefit from this exposure to high-quality teams.

When you look at the Cubans and the Canadians and the Americans, where they have reached with this sport, we have a lot to learn. Of course, the only way you can learn is to compete against them and to put programmes and coaching in place that will take you to that level. But it is the type of sport, be-

cause it is only two people on a team, that is the kind of thing that we can excel in, and I am sure that one of these days we will. We will continue to see, you know, and who knows where the Cayman Islands will reach.

We certainly have the facilities and all it takes is a net and a beach, so we are not short when it comes to that. But, certainly, the coaching aspect of it is very important to get the level of volleyball to where we would like see it.

Of course, just to mention, we had our very first American football game on-island. That was held at the Truman Bodden [Sports] Complex. That was, again, something that was supported by our Ministry and the Ministry of Tourism and was a historical event. We were pleased to partner and see once again the benefits of Sports Tourism and hopefully that will be an ongoing calendar event.

So, Madam Speaker, after that fairly brief synopsis of what we have been up to in terms of broad achievements, I would like to go in more now and drill down to some of what we hope to do and achieve in the 2015/16 Budget year.

I will start off with the Department of Children and Family Services and the Department of Counselling Services and the Needs Assessment Unit. To a lot of people that is the original Social Services, as we used to know it. Now it is a lot broader and more focused in many areas.

So the focus of those agencies, Madam Speaker, will be on the training and support of parents to prevent the unnecessary separation of children through parenting initiatives. We will also conduct effective monitoring for children placed in residential care; the provision of therapeutic services for children and their families; and support vulnerable children in the school system. Most importantly, Madam Speaker, the Ministry will continue to foster cross-ministry collaboration as we recognise that in order to holistically meet the needs of our children and families, it can only be achieved through inter-agency collaboration. Collectively, as a Government, we have to continue to advocate on behalf of the vulnerable members of our society, ensuring that we protect their innate human rights, and ensure that they have access to basic needs and services that would improve their lives.

Madam Speaker, through inter-agency collaboration and working with non-governmental organisations, or NGOs, as we know them, we have made significant strides in improving the lives of vulnerable children and families and such initiatives include Feed Our Future, which I mentioned earlier with the Flowers Sea Swim, the Rehoboth Ministries, After School and Meals on Wheels programmes, Cayman Islands Crisis Centre, and the NCVO [National Council of Voluntary Organisations] which operates a preschool and foster home. Working across ministries and with the private sector we will be able to provide easier access to services and programmes, increase the quality of case monitoring, and reduce the likelihood of duplication of

services which will lead to the identification and addressing of gaps in services.

Furthermore, during the year the Minister will continue to build upon the strategies of the past year. Our priorities for the upcoming year will entail achieving the goals of broad outcomes such as a work-ready and globally competitive workforce; a more secure community; a fit and healthful population; and equity and justice in a society that values the contribution of all. While these are specific broad outcomes, Madam Speaker, that my Ministry is integrally involved in achieving on behalf of Government, our services and programmes will all be guided by the principles that all public services are efficient, accessible, affordable, and most importantly ensuring that a culture of good governance is the underlying philosophy for all our efforts.

Importantly, Madam Speaker, this coming fiscal year the Minister will be bringing legislative measures for Poor Persons (Relief) Regulations to improve the distribution of poor relief. The Ministry will also work closely with the Strategic Sports Advisory Group [SSAG] to develop action plans for the National Sports Policy and strategic plans for the Cayman Islands for the years 2013 through 2018. The key objectives for the strategic directions of the policy that I would like to see developed for the 2015/16 financial year as Minister, are to improve the overall coordination and structure of sports and to improve the quality and increase the quantity of physical education in schools through the implementation of a PE curriculum in line with the long-term athlete development principles; establish a sports funding model which successfully capitalises on multi-sector funding sources.

So, one, was to improve the overall coordination and structure of sports. Two, was to improve the quality and increase the quantity of physical education in the school system. And, three, was to establish a sports funding model which successfully capitalises on multi-sector funding sources.

Madam Speaker, far too many of our young people are entering high school with challenges relating to weight and inactivity. And I can say this from being Health Minister, as well, that we saw this obesity as a real issue for us here in terms of our health. And when the health surveys were done, you know, this information was quite staggering. And, therefore, continuing on from the sports side of things where I can influence and assist whatever initiatives come from the health side, we definitely have to take this matter in hand and do what we can to look at diets, look at the amount of exercise of our young people . . . You know, school sports is so important and I keep saying that, for some reason, I don't know whether it is from the top or whether it is from the teachers or where it is, but we don't place enough emphasis, in my humble opinion, on sports. I think that we have to

realise and I keep saying, *a healthy child, a healthy body, is a healthy mind.*

You know, we allow the kids to come to school and they eat a lot of junk and they go home and they eat a lot of junk and you watch them get bigger and bigger. We watch them skip . . . with what PE there is, we watch them skip, we watch them skip sports days and all that, and as a result we are naturally doing the wrong thing by these children. When they become 16-, 17-, 18-years old, there is very little we can do then to get them back in shape. They are already on that slippery slope. So it is very, very important, Madam Speaker, and it is something we are working closely with the Ministry of Education on.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: I was just reminded that within the schools, the canteens that operate within the schools, their menu and their diets have been tailored and there is no longer any of the junk food that I referred to available on campus, as it were. So, you know, big measures have been made and big steps have been taken there to avoid that and to try and assist in what I am talking about. But, you know, we know that these young people are very creative of getting what they want to get and they have ways and means of still accessing stuff when they are ready.

Madam Speaker, Sports Tourism is really developing, I think, in these Cayman Islands more than ever and I am certainly not standing here to say it is all because what we have done, but we have encouraged and we have fostered, I think, the model that is in place and myself and the Minister of Tourism, work very, very closely together and we have really looked at this to ensure that we get the best value for money from what we are doing and that we utilise these events—and I will borrow one of his terms—to *get the best ROI*. And that is the best return on investment.

It is very important because what we look at with these Sports Tourism events when someone comes to us, is exactly what time of year they are being held. If you are going to put it on in the peak season, then it is not really going to benefit us. It is probably going to clutter up even more and it is better if it is spread throughout the year and that way the Island gets the best value for money from these events. And thankfully we have been quite successful with that. When we spend, we mention that to organisers. They are very receptive, and, trust me; the Minister of Tourism never fails to mention that.

So, Madam Speaker, I would like now to talk a little more specifically about the departments and agencies that are under the Ministry's purview. The Ministry provides funding to a number of NGOs and individuals. The funding is in the form of transfer payments to seamen, ex-servicemen or veterans, youth, community, and sporting organisations. In 2015/16, the Ministry will require sporting associations to sub-

mit a long-term development plan. Now we know we are going to have some resistance, but this is something that is very important because it is all about accountability.

These development plans will begin to meet the strategic direction, number eight of the Sports Policy, which require criteria and policies for government funding. We will implement the new reporting requirements for sports associations, which were developed last year. This will be done electronically as part of government's e-Government initiative.

Madam Speaker, the seamen and ex-servicemen built and protected the country that we now see as one of the major financial centres in the world. Due to financial constraints the Ministry has not been able to add any additional recipients for seamen ex-gratia benefits over the past two years. I am very pleased to be able to announce that the Government has provided additional funding in the 2015/16 Budget for the seamen ex-gratia benefits which will allow for the processing of the pending applications. So, I know that will be joy to the ears of many who have been waiting for some time to receive benefits. And a lot of these are widows of seamen who have passed on recently that were receiving funding and the funding was stopped because we simply did not have enough funds in the budget. But this will all be sorted because of the excess funding that we were able to put in, in 2015/16.

Madam Speaker, turning back to the Department of Children and Family Services, we will continue to provide a full range of casework services to the people of these Islands through a cadre of qualified social work staff. With the separation of welfare services from the clinical services, the department is now better able to ensure compliance with the Children Law, the Adoption of Children Law and the Youth Justice Law. As many may be aware, the department's satellite offices were centralised in April of 2015. The centralisation of satellite offices was one of the efficiencies and cost-savings recommendations of the 2010 public service review of the Department of Children and Family Services.

Madam Speaker, 12 outputs totalling \$8.2 million will be purchased from the Department of Children and Family Services. Some of these services include \$4.1 million for in-home care for the elderly and disabled adults; \$1.9 million for counselling of individuals and families; \$328,000 for operation of Maple House, a home for disabled children; \$337,000 for the placement and supervision of abused children; and \$426,000 for community outreach and developmental services. I have rounded those figures off there. In the Budget they are down to the specific dollar.

One of the main functions of the department is child protection, which is legally guided by the Children Law, as I mentioned. The department will be developing and implementing a training strategy to fur-

ther educate stakeholders as well as the public on monetary reporting of child abuse and the protocols in place. This will reinforce best practice and social work, raise awareness about the issue of child abuse, and ensures that they are building protection factors for children in our communities.

Madam Speaker, I have spoken a lot about the protection of children, but I don't think I can speak enough, because in the short time I have been Minister of this Ministry, the things that I have seen as well as what I knew about before, you can never do too much to protect the vulnerable and our children are some of our most prized possessions. It would shock some people to learn what some kids go through in the home environment. Thank God that we have the Department of Children and Family Services and all of ancillary benefits that go along with it for that protection.

Madam Speaker, during this fiscal year the department, in collaboration with partnering agencies, will continue to focus on the diverse needs of the elderly in our community. We fully recognise the important role that our senior citizens have played and continue to play in contributing to the growth and well-being of our society. During this financial year we will focus on addressing the concerns of our elderly systematically by developing a national plan. We want to maintain the functionality of our elderly people, allowing them to make valuable contributions, Madam Speaker, within their respective families and communities. I think too often, Madam Speaker, we don't realise the asset we have in our elderly.

Our elderly at this stage in our development, in Cayman's development, are some of the most dedicated, hard-working, industrious people. They are now a dying breed. Sadly, we just saw it in George Town where we lost a whole myriad of people who have built this country. There goes a lot of history; there goes a lot of experience; there goes dedication, commitment, you name it. And I think we have missed the boat in this country for too long with not accessing a lot of that experience and knowledge before these people pass on.

Make no bones about it, you know, Madam Speaker, we are next. This is our parents that are dying. Right? There is no group between those that are going now, at that 80-odd age group and us. It is us next—all of us in here, just about.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Speak for yourself.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: I don't know who got between you and uncle Lester, but I can tell you, you are next.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: But, you know, we jest a bit, Madam Speaker, but seriously, we have to not

only take care of them, but we have to extract from them all we can—our culture, our cooking habits, our craft, everything—it is a dying breed. And it is important that we put in place a plan that will see the functionality. Yes, we have individual groups in various districts that are doing their thing and kudos to them. They are doing a fantastic job. But I think we can do better. I think as a country we can do better with utilising our elderly people.

We can use them as ambassadors. They can be the face of Cayman, to some extent. They can be at our airports, our ports. They can be greeting people. They have a ton of experience. They can share the history of this country with visitors. They are polite. They are respectful and they will be respected. And, Madam Speaker, we just have to get this right. It is an important time because these are very important people that are at that point in their life where they are leaving us.

When going to the funerals over the last week and the coming weeks and you listen to what these people did and what they contributed to this country and the kind of stature and integrity that people, you know, the "Sunny boys" the Carl Godets, the Tommy Hurlstons, and the list goes on. When you hear those names and you know those families, you know the values that were brought to this country by the hard work.

So, Madam Speaker, we want promote social responsibility for caring for them and protecting their rights as well. We will be undertaking a comprehensive review of elderly residential care and homes operated by the Government because that is very important too, Madam Speaker. We are fully cognisant of the liability issues that such services place on the Government. And, yet, it is a service that is needed within our communities with the increase of an ageing population.

As we all know, with improved health care the population is growing older. Hence, our plan to conduct a strategic review of services to reduce the liability concerns for the Government while still, providing a critical service for our elderly citizens. The department, in collaboration of other stakeholders, will conclude the formation of minimum standards for all homes and facilities providing care to the elderly. Our focus is on establishing best practice while building our capacity to ensure that we are able to provide excellent services to the senior citizens who, for one reason or another are unable to remain in their home. It is very important, Madam Speaker, because we now have them in our care and we have to ensure that best practice is followed and there are no allegations of abuse or neglect or whatever.

Madam Speaker, efforts will continue to focus on recruitment of additional foster parents, in particular, persons willing to foster older children and children of special needs. Now, that is an area we are currently fairly weak on, in that we don't have many

foster parents. We do have a few that will take kids with special needs; hats off to those people who do that, Madam Speaker, because that is no easy task. Taking on that type of responsibility, as we know, you are talking about full-time care and a lot of stress that goes along with that. We will be looking to, certainly, increase the amount of foster parents that we have.

The department is extremely grateful for the services provided by former and current foster parents, but there is that increasing need. And we are looking for additional persons to take that challenge to care and nurture those children in our society who, for whatever reason, need another home.

Currently, children and young persons with special needs who are in need of care and protection are accommodated at the Maple House. However, given the increase and demand for services and the complexities of the issue, the current site is no longer a feasible and safe option. It is anticipated that with the provision of a new facility the unique challenges of this population with regard to physical accommodation will be addressed.

Madam Speaker, I am happy to report that we have found another property. It is in the Northward-Bodden Town area and a lease was signed just this week. As soon as some minor renovations are done there, we will be transporting the clients from Maple House up there. The original plan was to have a short-term lease and to renovate the Maple House property and take them back. But after touring both facilities along with my staff, I am of the mind (and I have spoken to [my] colleagues about it, in particular, Minister Tibbetts, who is in charge of lands and planning) that the facility in Bodden Town that we have leased is a much larger facility, much more suitable as it stands. And my opinion is that we should be looking at the possibility of a purchase of that property going forward, and possibly an alternative use for the Maple House property.

Having said that, then the funds that would have been expended on Maple House could be used, better served, with the Department of Children and Family Services having certain needs and at the current location where they are, in terms of outfit and making the area more suitable for the staff that we have brought in now and under the centralisation. So, I think that is the route that we will be going. It is certainly my recommended route and I think it makes sense. The owner of the property that we are leasing from is interested in a sale, and that should work well for both parties.

Madam Speaker, I will speak a bit now about the Department of Counselling Services which works hand in hand with the Department of Children and Family Services. In the upcoming Budget year, the department will continue to offer family programmes and treatment services that assist with building healthy relationships, stronger families, and of course, vibrant communities.

They provide individual couples and family therapist services. They deliver a range of community-based groups to address issues such as substance misuse and abuse, mental health issues and trauma, and other factors that contribute to offending behaviour. They deal with expanding family programmes to include individualised parent coaching sessions that can complement existing parenting skills programmes currently available. We will continue to engage in discourse with community partners in order to transform the residential treatment programmes for men and women so that we are better able to cater to those clients who are duly diagnosed with addiction and mental health. We will also continue to heighten the awareness of sensitive matters impacting families within the community and advocate for positive change at a national level.

As a Ministry, Madam Speaker, we are acutely aware of the social and economic benefits that can be derived from ensuring that these programmes and services are readily available to our populace. Whether this is reflected through a decrease in the number of vulnerable persons in our community who are dependent on welfare or a reduction in drug abuse and the attendant crimes that are committed by persons to support their addiction, or a decrease in the number of young persons who appear before the court in need of care and protection, as the Minister with responsibility for Community Affairs, I am committed to ensuring that adequate support and attention is given to our families to assist them to succeed.

Madam Speaker, in total, \$3.3 million will be provided to the Department of Counselling Services to provide these much-needed services that will go a long way in assisting the Government to achieve its broad outcomes.

Madam Speaker, turning my attention to the Department of Sports, the Government is cognisant that in order to develop world-class athletes and to have a fit and healthy community, the supporting facilities need to be constantly maintained and upgraded. In 2015/16, the Sports Department will ensure that the sporting facilities across the Island are maintained and inspected on a regular basis as they are now. These sporting facilities will be extensively used during the month of August coming, for one of the biggest football tournaments ever in CONCACAF history, which will be hosted in Cayman from August the 11th to the 23rd.

This tournament will involve some 35 teams from throughout CONCACAF and beyond. We will be welcoming teams from the Oceania Football [Confederation] for the first time, Brazil, and England. It is the national Under-15 tournament and it is important that our facilities meet the expected standard set by these overseas organisations. In fact, inspections have already started, Madam Speaker. This is how serious these folk are when it comes to hosting these events of this magnitude.

We are happy that we will have a group over in Cayman Brac using a facility there and it is such a large number of teams, that we will also have a group based in Jamaica. The finals will be held here in Cayman.

So, this is certainly a historic tournament and we thank CONCACAF and President Webb for the foresight in starting this some three years ago. As I took office, we had the first Under-15 Boys Tournament. The following year we had the Girls Under-15 and now we are back with another boys' tournament, but with even more teams. I think the first tournament boasted some 20-plus teams. Now we are up to 35. I don't think we can pass that. I think we are at capacity.

But it is wonderful that we have been able to have this tournament some three years straight as a major sports tourism event and to shed the media and spotlight and global attention on the Cayman Islands. I think this is money well spent and the coverage we get from this and the developmental aspects of it for our young people playing against the likes of Brazil, England, US, and others is huge. Simply, you cannot put a value on it, but it must be a very, very good thing for the development aspect of the game. Football has always been our number-one sport here in Cayman and I do not see that changing in the coming years, so we have to certainly do what we have to do to continue to develop it.

Madam Speaker, the Department of Sports will continue to build a foundation for a lifetime of physical activity because sports doesn't stop, you know, your sporting activity doesn't come to an end when you finish your teens. The whole idea is to have a healthful lifestyle. So our job is to promote that through the community and schools, coaching to develop the fundamental skills, especially in our six focus sports which are netball, cricket, basketball, athletics, swimming, and football.

In order to ensure the Government meets its targets, as outlined in 2015/16, a total of \$3.8 million will be provided to the Department of Youth and Sports to carry out the following:

- Sports Facilities Management—\$1.4 million;
- Sports Education and Training—\$2.3 million;
- Technical Advice and Support to the Ministry and other sport agencies—\$47,000.

So, anyone can look at that and see that with the budget and restrictions we have, we haven't neglected that area. We continue to fund heavily what we can for the development of our people and the health of the nation.

Madam Speaker, I would like to turn my attention now to the newly created, relatively new still, Needs Assessment Unit. This, Madam Speaker, is a very important area. Before I even get into details on

it, I want to publically thank the Acting Director of that Unit, Ms. Tamara Hurlston; her Office Manager, Mr. Matthew Hylton; and the Deputy Chief Officer of the Ministry, who we have practically seconded over there. He works very closely with them to help assist them to development and to ensure that we get things in place properly. Those young men and woman, along with the staff of that unit, Madam Speaker, they do a tremendous job in this country.

I know there are complaints. I know you can't please everyone, Madam Speaker. But the work that they do, the ungrateful task that they have, where you are in a job where you are not getting any good news any time of day except that maybe someone isn't coming back. Their job is to deal with people who are in need, people who are stressed, people who are depressed, and people who are miserable, naturally because they are hurting. And the efforts that have been put out of this unit in the short time that it has been created (since 2013), I can tell you, Madam Speaker, are commendable.

They have worked under very, very trying circumstances, serious labour shortages. So when people knock civil servants and talk about, *They don't work and they don't do this, and they are lazy*, they need to look at a unit like this, Madam Speaker, and many others, because these are the people that work hand in hand with us, my small Ministry staff, just like the previous Ministry, phenomenal job that they do. Right? They oversee this unit. And, along with myself, you know, we work closely and sometimes I even. . . as the requests come in, I have to apologise sometimes and say, *You know, it is one more*. Because I am still a representative as well as Minister and I do get the requests first hand as well, and I know that the people that are coming are genuine. I certainly would not send someone that is not in genuine need.

The whole process of this unit, the reason this was set up, is so that the focus can be put on fiscal responsibility and ensuring that this criticism of, you know, social services is giving money to Tom, Dick, and Harry, and people abusing it. Yes, we know there will always be cases, and I am sure there are some out there, but I can tell you the work of this unit and when it is properly staffed, because we are still boosting the staff to where it should be. It is not anywhere near, but with the moratorium on hiring and the restrictions, although there were vacant posts that we filled recently (thank God), we have managed to get four people in there to assist the unit, but you know, just to have them there to scrutinise, because you don't go there now and just get a cheque through the window, you go and you have to be assessed properly, you are put into a very private room and you basically have to lay yourself bare in terms of what you possess and they assess from that.

They check, they do background checks with the banks, with family members, the whole works. And it is done properly and this is going to bring a much

better accountability system to social services and what financial assistance that we are able to offer the public. And I feel good about it because the young lady there, Tamara Hurlston, that I mentioned, is a very serious person. She is an accountant by trade and she takes her job extremely seriously and she has a very good team over there. And I want to pay kudos publicly from this stage to them and tell them to keep on keeping on. Because we are going to keep supporting them and doing what we can to get them to the point where they are comfortable and not as stressed as they have been in the past—So, *thank you for all you do.*

The unit's primary function is to provide financial assistance, as I have said, to assist persons in meeting their basic human needs. So, Madam Speaker, you are talking about someone that doesn't have a job, someone that has no income and they go and, you know, need somewhere to live, and this unit has to look at this person and say, *Look, we are here to offer you a leg up. Over a three-month period, once we are happy that that is the case with you, and that is a possibility of that being renewed, but what we are saying to you is that in the meantime you got to be actively seeking employment, you have got to bring proof that you registered with NWDA [National Workforce Development Agency] and all the like, so that we are not just saying, Keep coming. Keep coming. Keep coming. We are here as a safety net for you, but at the same time we're pushing you in this direction to better yourself, to improve your lot in life, that you are not be a constant drain on the Government, but you can get a leg up and move on and become productive.*

That is the whole idea behind the Needs Assessment Unit. And I think from my perspective, it is working well. Yes, like I said, you will have the odd case of abuse, you will have people who know how to find to beat the system, but as we staff this to where it should be, I think that the level of scrutiny, the tiers of organisation that they have put in place will reduce that abuse and you will no longer hear about so much wastage and people taking advantage of the Government through this medium.

The Speaker: Minister, you have 56 minutes remaining.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Okay, Madam Speaker, thank you.

Is it your plan to go to the hour interruption and take a break at that point and move on or, how do you want it?

The Speaker: I will call for the motion for adjournment and see what the indication is, whether we are going to six or four-thirty.

Honourable Deputy Premier?

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Okay. Well, I will twist the arms to let me finish if they will. So, we will see. What I am saying, I can finish today and then we can start fresh on Monday, I guess. But I just wanted to know if there was an afternoon break in the plan.

The Speaker: If you require one, I can take one.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: No, I'm okay.

The Speaker: Okay. Please proceed.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Thank you.

[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: I was trying to help the Member from East End out there, but he didn't appreciate it.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Can't do anything with him, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, getting back on track here with speaking about the Needs Assessment Unit, as I mentioned in my introduction, one of the things we will be looking at is the Poor Persons (Relief) Regulations. The Ministry will be working very closely, and a lot of work has been done on this already with the unit to conclude the drafting of those regulations. The Poor Persons (Relief) Regulations will focus on assisting the most vulnerable members of the society in meeting their needs while facilitating their independence in the community.

Financial assistance helps different people in different ways, Madam Speaker. For some, it provides long-term support to meet basic cost of living where there is no real prospect of recipients improving their circumstances through employment. While for others, income support is a transitional payment to support recipients through a period between jobs (and that was what I was referring to earlier, Madam Speaker, the transition from education to work a period of re-skilling or temporary incapacity).

So, that is what we are seeing now. As a Government, I see a lot of people in that category that are in between. They have lost a job. They are in between jobs, they cannot find a job that suits their craft or their trade and therefore there is that period of re-tooling. So, this is where we come in as a safety net. Again, to make sure that they continue to live in a respectable manner in the community while they get themselves sorted out.

We have this situation with young people, young mothers, with pregnant young persons. And, again, we have to provide that safety net and, you know, the Children Law makes it mandatory for relief in those circumstances. So, that is quickly then trans-

ferred to the Department of Children and Family Services for them to continue to get the counselling and whatever is needed to support those young people, or those mothers that need support.

While the provision of financial services for persons in need, Madam Speaker, will bring some relief, as a Government, we need to ensure that appropriate support mechanisms are in place to assist recipients in becoming self-sufficient. I can't say too often because that is the goal. The goal is not to have an ever-burgeoning social service. I think, you know, one of the problems is that this has been a growing area of our budget.

I remember growing up in a Cayman Islands that did not have social services. We had a social worker, Mrs. Hylton, and the next thing you know it went from there, you had a department and now you have all of these different chapters and arms of that. But the actual relief, the financial relief side, and the counselling, you will always need in your community. Don't get me wrong. But the financial assistance side of things, we have to mitigate this to ensure that this doesn't become another deep hole that we just pour money into.

Right now, I think it is a sign of the economic times, Madam Speaker, because it is at its peak due to the recession that we found ourselves in. I think as the country moves forward under a Progressive Government, as we develop and we get employment going and we get projects going where people are benefiting and people are getting trained properly and we have taken care of the educational needs of our people, channelling them in the right direction, it all works together, Madam Speaker. When we do that, we are going to see lesser and lesser reliance. I can forecast that, but it has to happen. We must have that reduction, that end of reliance on social services.

The social support system, you know, is there and it is a needed tool in any community, but we should seek to minimise it while putting people back on track, as it were. That is our job.

Madam Speaker, I will leave that area now and talk a bit about something that is coming up in the 2015/16 Budget, which has to do with housing repairs. I wish we had a lot more funding in this area. We don't, but we have managed to scrap up close to \$800,000, which Madam Speaker, we know we have many of our elderly and persons with children that are not able to do basic repairs to their homes—still, some of them, since [Hurricane] Ivan, sadly. We have the elderly, in particular, who find themselves having to adjust to a fixed income and as a result they end up living in poor unacceptable conditions.

When you retire in Cayman now, Madam Speaker, what are you really retiring on, unless you made a lot of money in your lifetime? A regular worker, because our pension system is relatively new, came in, in the 1990s. People retire, some of them, a few hundred bucks they collect in retirement. Unless

they were able to have significant savings, and don't know how you get that unless you had a decent income. Some of these people worked for less than \$2,000 a month. So what are they supposed to live on? They naturally do not have the means. Government is going to have to trip in and support them.

So, you are not going to see them living in a most comfortable of. . . and that is sad. But it is just the way our history is. I mean, I think as we move along and we are deeper into our pension plans and people's employment get better and they earn more money, you will see people retiring down the road from here, 10 years from now you will see people retiring on healthier pensions. Right now people are retiring on "peanut pensions," as it were. Unless, like I said, they had high salaries, made a lot of money or they were able to save, or whatever; they did extremely well for themselves.

So, we have people in that category and a lot of them, you know, people in that category who have homes that are unable to maintain properly, or they aren't able to repair since the hurricane, or whatever. So, it is very important that as Government . . . and this is something, although this is just a drop in the bucket, I think in the next Budget, 2016/17, I would look to get some additional funding to assist people who need that kind of help.

I know that we will be channelling that through the Needs Assessment Unit to manage that [so] that we don't have any abuse, because it is one of those areas that can be easily abused and we don't want that. We want to make sure that really needy people get it. And not just that, but the people that are going to be doing the work are properly monitored and again, that area is subject . . . I know first-hand, the abuse that can take place when it comes to greedy contractors or, you know, people who simply can't do the work and take the money and run, and that kind of stuff. We have to make sure that all of that doesn't happen. We will be giving priority to clients who are elderly, disabled, and parents with multiple children who reside in their own residence.

Madam Speaker, turning attention now to the Youth Services Unit, in 2015/16, the unit intends to have the 2010 Cayman Islands Youth Services Directory updated and included in the 2016 telephone directory of the Cayman Islands. So, we have a Youth Services Directory, and the plan is to get that inserted into our telephone directory through whatever arrangement that would be with the telephone provider. This directory is a listing of all of our Youth Services providers in Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac. I think that is a brilliant idea. Certainly not mine, but it came from somewhere. And to have that in the telephone directory will ensure that people have a much better easier access to being able to see what exactly is available for young people to do.

There is a lot of activity, Madam Speaker, and yet you hear young people talking about being bored

or we hear about parents saying that there is nothing for the child to do. Truth is there is a lot to do. A lot of people don't know how to access it or what is going on. So, that is a very good idea and I applaud whoever came up with that plan. Having such a resource will make it easier for youth and parents to consult and join in the myriad of positive peer groups available to young people in their residential communities around the Islands.

Madam Speaker, the unit will also upgrade its website page and have a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Those last two are still foreign to me. I have just reached Facebook. But that is what everybody deals with these days, social media is big and we have to embrace it.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry achieves its youth mandate primarily through partnership with a wide range of NGOs, including faith-based groups, uniform, and community groups. These partnerships take the form of grants which are administered by the Ministry in collaboration of the Youth Services Unit. The unit assesses and offers guidance and training to these NGO partners to ensure that vibrant and effective programmes are run in each district. That is very important to understand, Madam Speaker. A lot of people think that the Youth Services Unit conducts programmes. The Youth Services Unit monitors programmes and ensures that right programmes are in place and are getting the kind of support that is available from Government.

Again, I want to pay kudos to the small group of them. The most famous of them is James Myles because of the Youth Flex programme, I think. But James and the director of that unit. . . my Chief Officer's sister . . . help me.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Katherine Whittaker.

They do a tremendous job, Madam Speaker, and they—

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Yes, Katherine is a hard worker. She is a very serious woman, but she does a lot of work. I think James is more the face of it. That is why I was saying that he is the famous one. But they do tremendous work and the youth of these Islands are very grateful for what they do there.

We operate on the premise that the NGOs within communities are best placed to identify the issues faced by the youth. And we believe that with guidance, training, and assistance from the Youth Services Unit and the Ministry that they can offer the most effective youth programming.

Madam Speaker, I have learned that dedicated youth workers go about their work quietly and with diligence without seeking glory. In most all instances

the only compensation they seek is the satisfaction of helping a young person mature to their full potential and take their rightful place in society. So, today I just want to take a moment to thank those youth workers for the work that they do.

These youth group leaders and volunteers are in various churches, as well as uniform groups such as the Scouts, Girls Brigade, Lightbearers, and Girl Guides. Together they provide structure programming for hundreds of our youth and play an important role in the development of our communities and in making them more secure. They empower young people, Madam Speaker. They strengthen community ties and they prevent marginalisation of those young people. This connectivity, Madam Speaker, reduces the risk factors relating to crime and at the same time increases the protective factors in support of our youth.

It is an area that we can't do too much in because when we talk about crime in these Islands and we associate it a lot of times with our young people; if we can pump resources into these areas, we have the preventative mechanism that stops a lot of that.

We will strengthen in 2015/16 our relationship with the NGOs through the Youth Services Unit. And this process we will work to build capacity in these groups and reward those that have demonstrated the greatest positive effect on our youth. So, we are going to assess all of those that we have been working with and try and, as it were, consolidate and see exactly where we should focus our energies. Some get better returns than others, and we want to do that analysis to make sure that we get best value for money, as it were.

We live in a society that we certainly can't take things for granted, Madam Speaker. We must work with our Youth Services providers to strengthen all we can in this area. Many already make this contribution to our youth on a volunteer basis and I ask for their cooperation and understanding. It is because their work with our young people is so important that we must seek to put in place the protective measures to safeguard the environment in which youth workers and young people operate.

Madam Speaker, the Cadet Corps is just over 10 years old now and they offer structured international recognised four-star Cadet Corps programme, and as I mentioned, they continue to do a good job with the young people there. It is an area that is badly in need of resources and we have to have a good look at it as to how we go forward, but it is something that I have to turn some serious attention to. There are some good ideas on that because of past reviews that have been done and I will be focusing on that in 2015/16.

The KEYS Foundation, Madam Speaker, provides a key component in the Ministry's continuum of care for children. Madam Speaker, as a Government-owned company, the KEYS Foundation will continue to provide the programmes and services that focus on

therapeutic interventions for children who require residential placements as a result of being in need of care and protection or who engage in offending behaviours. Madam Speaker, as many are aware, in 2013, due to budgetary constraints the Government was not able to proceed with plans to construct a secure youth facility for remanded and convicted children. However, in order to meet the needs of the Government and existing legislation, such as the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009, and the Children Law (2012 Revision), KEYS must continue to serve mixed populations.

In October 2014, Madam Speaker, Cabinet approved the expansion proposal for the KEYS Foundation which will assist the Government in meeting some of its legal requirements as it relates to the provision of accommodation needs without any cost to the Government. The proposal will be implemented in three phases:

The first, being the expansion of the Frances Bodden Girls' Home, which will commence shortly I am happy to say. This expansion will allow for the physical separation of care and protection of the males and females, which presents many challenges to the efficiency of the programme.

Once this project has commenced, KEYS will then seek Cabinet's permission to undertake security modifications to the Bonaventure Boys' Home site. This proposal clearly highlights the importance of public/private partnerships as KEYS has been able to secure the funding for expansion through various private sector donations.

Madam Speaker, this venture is very encouraging as Government needs the support of non-Government organisations to ensure that the needs of vulnerable children are met. I want to pause to pay thanks to Garth Arch, who is the Chairman of KEYS at the moment. Garth had a lot to do with this initiative and he also did the drawings for free, and contributed immensely himself. So, I want to pay kudos to him and the board that are managing to get this initiative done. I am looking forward to breaking ground shortly at Frances Bodden Girls' Home in Lower Valley.

Madam Speaker, the National Youth Commission is an advocacy body on behalf of youth and they have been re-established under the chairmanship of Reverend Donovan Myers. I believe that Reverend Myers, being the man that I know he is, when I chose him to be the new Chair, his passion, his capability of dealing with young people, I think he brings a lot to the table and he is very keen on getting the [National] Youth Policy implemented. There are bits and pieces that have been done, but the National Youth Commission is charged with that responsibility for the advancement of our youth. The Commission is developing its plan as we speak, and I look forward to supporting them in the financial year and beyond.

We have some of the most talented and vibrant young people in the world, Madam Speaker, and

since I have been Minister of Youth, I can attest to this. One of the big things that we have that is very rewarding for our young people is the "Proud of Them" Youth Campaign, which has been ongoing from the previous Minister, Minister Scotland, who started that, and I have continued for the last couple years. But it is a very good initiative and I have taken the extra step of giving those young people a stipend when they are nominated, for the 12 winners of it, and it is something that the National Youth Commission will be overseeing from here on. But, you know, just winning that—because you get 140 to 150 nominations when we do these biannual campaigns, Madam Speaker. And the fact, when you look at all those young people, the names that come forward, the quality of those young people and the very difficult job that the committee has then to choose 12 of them to put up on billboards and empower them around this Island to serve as role models.

My good friend, the Member for West Bay . . . Third Elected Member? Fourth? (Give me the number.)

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Third Elected Member for West Bay, his son is actually on one of the billboards as we speak, and will be coming down now as new ones go up. But that is the kind of thing when. . . I am certain that those young people, from talking and interacting with them, they feel so wonderful that for six months of the year or a few months of the year they are up there for all to see and for them to be role models for those who are seeking to do some of what they are doing. These are young people who are advancing in education and community work and sports and it is a fantastic initiative.

So, Madam Speaker, I look forward to the National Youth Commission continuing the good work that was started in that area and being responsible.

Madam Speaker, turning to some of the capital projects that we have in mind, although the budget was severely cut in this area because of the restrictions that we face, my original, I think, was something in the range of \$8 million that was needed for the various projects that I wanted to see done in this financial year, but it was cut to some \$1.5 million. But we look at it as a Government, and, as we were talking about at the beginning, yes, I have what I need to get done and I know what I need to get done, but we have to prioritise. And when we looked at it as Government, there are areas that needed those funds and I had to accept that this is it for now and make do with what I have.

So, the \$1.5 million that I have in the budget for the Ministry for this coming fiscal year, Madam Speaker, will allow us to do some upgrades to the Haig Bodden Playing Field in Bodden Town and right there we need to put in our changing rooms. The

stands have always been faulty from the time they were installed. We have to replace those. And there are plans for a walking track at the Bodden Town Primary School at the field that is heavily used there and walked on tremendously by the populace of that area. So, we are looking to put a track around that, and to also install some lights at the George Hicks High School track which actually has a track around it, but it is quite dark and ladies would be, I mean, people in general would be a bit . . . there is dim lighting, but I don't think it is suitable. The lighting there needs to be improved. It is a heavily, heavily used facility and we are going to light it up and that should really enhance the health of people in that area and should be well appreciated.

The Member from East End, I know he beat me up a little bit on this, but the plan was to do East End and North Side as well to get changing rooms in both of those facilities. We actually toured East End and I know exactly what the needs are there, but unfortunately, budget just simply did not allow in 2015/16. But I can assure him that in 2016/17 we will get to that.

So, Madam Speaker, this budget proposed by the Ministry of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports is intended to strengthen the overall stability of Cayman's residents. It is intended to provide government assistance for those who are truly in need, and also to support our residents in their ability to care for each other, which is the Caymanian way.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my Ministry's staff, including the heads of departments for their unwavering and invaluable support and guidance throughout the budget process. It is my privilege to table these proposals for the consideration of all Members of the Legislative Assembly and to reaffirm our commitment to work together with all in pursuing a better future for our children, our youth, our families, and our communities.

So, Madam Speaker, that covers my contribution in terms of the Budget, but I also would like to touch briefly on some other issues before I round up my debate. In particular, I would like to mention some developments in relation to Bodden Town, my home district of Bodden Town, and what we plan to do there, some of what we have done and some of what we plan to do.

One of the happy things that have been done there for the community is that the Anton Bodden Drive has been paved. I just mentioned the plans for the walking track at the Bodden Town Primary School in this coming fiscal year. The Haig Bodden Playing Field upgrades I have just mentioned as well. We are looking at down the road in terms of putting in a boxing gym that will service the eastern districts. We have had a healthy after-school boxing programme, but it was not in the right place. It was at the Civic Centre, which is really not ideally suited to that. We had a lot of kids turn out for that and were doing really well, but

we really have to have a purpose-built structure for that. So that is something that we want to get in that area. That whole area around Haig Bodden we want to make it, as it were, a bit of small sports complex that, you know, everything is on one site.

And something, again, that the eastern districts need between three of them is at least one set of public tennis courts. Ideally, somewhere like in the Frank Sound area, that would service the three eastern districts. I have made it known that I am in support of promoting the sport of tennis. I think that it is a sport that will be very well liked and easily developed because it doesn't take a lot, but I think it has always been one of those sports that have been not that accessible to the regular kids. It is really, you know, unless you were a member of the club or you were living in some facility that had a tennis court, young people didn't have an opportunity to really play tennis. At least one set of public tennis courts on that end of the Island would be fantastic and we would be working towards that.

One of the really important things—and this will be welcome news for the district of Bodden Town and this will be in place before the Pirates Week [Festival] this year—is the access to the Harry McCoy Dart Park from the Anton Bodden Drive side. And this has been a bone of contention for some time. We have a wonderful facility there—the Mission House, the Nurse Josie's Senior Centre, the Park—it is a wonderful area. When people see it they are all blown away by how nice it is, and really Bodden Town has one of the best natural parks on the Island, but access to it is difficult, because it is through the Guns Square area (or Cumber Avenue). The roads are narrow. You get a function there; we just had the Mayfest Function last weekend. Cars pile up. Before you know it, people can't find parking. So, it reduces attendance at functions there and the tremendous work that is done by the senior group that continues to do such a stalwart job. It is a sad thing, because you don't get the attendance that you need at the events which are really, really nice events.

So, I have been pushing for a long time with my colleagues to have proper access and a proper parking lot. I am so happy that my colleague, Minister Tibbetts, has found the resources to assist us with this and we are going to have that access. We are going to create a parking lot. I think that by the time Pirates Week rolls along, Bodden Town will be able to host it in a way that they have never hosted it before, with good access and a lot of happy people. So, I hope that that is welcome news for the district and I am certainly looking forward to getting going on that as soon as possible.

We also have to still address some of flooding issues that we have in our low-lying areas of Belford and Cumber Avenue, in particular. We are looking at that as part of drainage; the whole issue of drainage and what is happening in that area and what we have

to culvert. We have had some discussions on that. It is not an easy area but we have to find some solutions as the water flow is interrupted by the Anton Bodden Drive, which is not culverted. It is something that we have to address as a country, as a Government.

To mention a few other things on the district, Madam Speaker, the Bodden Town Library was recently refurbished and is in excellent condition and I certainly would like to encourage members of the community to take advantage of that nice facility and utilise the services there.

We've just had the opening of Cox Lumber in Bodden Town, the official opening. It has been open since the beginning of the year. But that is a welcome addition to the Pease Bay area, which is developing nicely. We have affordable homes right behind that. That area is starting to develop with plazas and the like and business enterprises. But Cox coming to that area certainly services the eastern districts in a really nice way. The store is fully outfitted, and just about anything that you can get anywhere is on hand.

Excuse me, Madam Speaker.

Moment of interruption—4:30 pm

The Speaker: Perhaps this is a convenient time to recognise the Deputy Premier (we have reached our interruption) to move the suspension of [Standing Order] 10(2).

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 10(2)

The Deputy Premier, Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I move the suspension of Standing Order 10(2) that we may work past the hour of interruption.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 10(2) be suspended to allow us to go beyond the hour interruption and allow the Minister now on the floor to conclude his debate.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing Order 10(2) suspended.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister for Community Affairs, please continue.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, in the Bodden Town district we are also looking forward to the development of the Beach Bay hotel, which we have heard something

about already since we have been in this session. We are hoping that that comes to fruition very soon. The plans are well on their way now and it looks as if we have overcome some of the obstacles that were holding that project back. So, that is a project, as my colleague, the Fourth Elected Member from Bodden Town said in his debate, that that is badly needed in the district of Bodden Town. It is our serious "Go East" initiative. A five-star facility like that would go a long way to not just boosting the image of that area, but of creating greater employment and opportunities for our people who work in tourism and our young people aspiring to do so. We look forward to that happening.

We are also very happy to let constituents know in Bodden Town that we have boosted up the services in our Bodden Town office. We now have the services, thankfully, of Ms. Heather Bodden, well known, someone who needs no introduction, sitting in her office as the office manager, along with the office assistant who was there. We are looking forward to serving the community as the four MLAs, even better because of Ms. Bodden's knowledge and contacts in the community. That way when people can't get us first-hand, they certainly have a reliable contact, who knows not only to get to us, but also with her experience as a former MLA, knows some of the procedures and guidance that can take some of the weight, as it were, off our shoulders. We are looking forward to a long relationship with her in that regard.

Madam Speaker, do you mind telling me how much time I have left?

The Speaker: About 20 minutes.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: About 20?

The Speaker: I have given a couple of extra minutes for the interruption at 4:30.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Okay. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, in my conclusion then, in the remaining time I have, I would like to turn my attention to the bigger picture, and that is just to speak a bit in regard to national issues and some of the things that as a Government, we are dealing with.

I think that it is well recognised one of the things that we have to do as a country, Madam Speaker, is broaden our economic base. We have always heard of tourism and finance, tourism and finance, but we are seeing more and more interest now in Cayman in terms of doing things, for instance, from the technological perspective, medical tourism, and the like. And I think it is important that we embrace these opportunities and we have to show and teach our people, our young people in particular, that there are options. That there are other things that they can do besides the routine run-of-the-mill jobs that they have always heard about.

With the advent of the internet and technology, there is so much that young people can get into. They have the options now of promoting themselves on YouTube, and the like. We have to make it as easy as possible to support them when they come, because young people are creative. They come back from university, or even if they didn't go to university, and they are full of ideas. They are full of initiative and ambitions and we have to create a Cayman Islands, Madam Speaker, which caters to these young people. We have to make them know that they have hope in their country. We have to make them know that there is something worthwhile to come back from university for, if they have gone to university.

I know because I have two in university right now, Madam Speaker. We have discussions and oftentimes they wonder, *Well, is there really a future for me in my own country?* They see things happening. They see maybe only a certain set of people have been getting ahead, or people being looked after in the past, and they wonder, *Well, where is my future in all of this?* I think we have to take that "wondering" away from them. We have to give them certainty that there is a future, that there is opportunity once you have that hard work ethic, that reliability in you, that honesty and that respect. When you have that in you, then opportunities should be there for you.

Whatever changes we need to make to immigration laws, to business laws, in terms of what affects small businesses, which we have done a tremendous amount of work already in that area, but to create initiatives. My good friend, the Minister for Financial Services, has been doing so much work in that area, whether it is to do with our Development Bank and getting that back on some sort of financial footing to support. We have to create a Cayman Islands, Madam Speaker, that gives our young people—and not just our young people, all of us, because sometimes life takes us in different directions and you may be working for someone today, but tomorrow you want to do your own thing and you have reached halfway through your life and you realise, *This wasn't really what I wanted to do. I wanted to have my own. . . I wanted to be an entrepreneur. I wanted to do. . .* The ability to do that should be there.

I look at the US, Madam Speaker, and I look at what has been done, and whether you like the man or not, I think President Obama had a vision for the United States in terms of bringing back initiative and economic stimulus to the United States, and producing and getting things back American, and giving people opportunities. And it is happening. Like I said, whether you think the world of Obama or you hate him, the fact is that under his stewardship the United States economy has really, really started to turn around. They are now reaping the benefits of production once more and people are starting to take ownership and their young people are seeing a sign of hope, that they have something to look forward to.

This is the kind of environment, Madam Speaker, of which we have to have here. We have to ensure that we are building strong families; we are showing our young people the importance of families. Because, Madam Speaker, make no mistake about it, make no bones about it, when families break down, society breaks down. If we do not think that the family is an important part of the success of any nation, then, we try an alternative. And right now I think we are getting a taste of the alternative because we have many broken homes, and I can speak to this categorically as Minister of Community Affairs because I see it daily.

A lot of our issues are coming from broken families. So, in our homes we have to teach the importance to our kids of the importance of good families, the importance of a good name, the importance of that respect for others and others' property. These are the things, Madam Speaker, as a country, as a nation, as a young nation, that we have to do.

So, I wanted to just throw that out there, as someone who has been here a little while now on earth, 53 years old, I think I have seen a few winters and summers. I have been talking about this long before I got near the political arena. I go back and sometimes I look at letters that I wrote to the press, probably letters that got me in the mess that I am in the elected office, because this is not an easy life, Madam Speaker. I jest when I say that, but those letters, when I was writing them way back as a young person, I was seeing some of the social pitfalls and I had no training, no formal training in that area. I wasn't a Dr. Frank [McField], or someone who had all the sociology degrees in all that stuff, but I was seeing it just as a regular young person and I could see where we were headed.

We were headed for a lot of trouble. We have to take that seriously because no matter what we do in terms of a Government, and as I said, getting large projects off the ground and beautiful airports and ports, and lovely waste management facilities, at the end of the day, if we don't deal with the social ills that are plaguing us, and will plague us even more, then it is all for naught, because those people are going to come and none of us are going to live happy, none of us who believe that we are middle class or above, and think that we are above all that. If it does not get us, it is going to get our children.

So, we need to think seriously about the Cayman Islands that we are building and remember that we came from a spiritual background, a very God-fearing country. We cannot forget that. When we sit with our kids at our dinner tables, we need to talk to them. We need to instill good values in them. We need to make sure that we here as a Government create the atmosphere, the ambiance, the ability for these young people to strive and survive.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to be a part of a Government that is working hard. We are pushing ahead with the minimum wage, something that I have

always supported. I practice what I preach because in my own business I took my own initiative a long time ago to never pay anyone less than \$6.00 an hour. I couldn't see where anyone could survive less than that. I was happy when I heard what the minimum wage was, might even could have been, in my opinion, could have been seven bucks, but at least it is six bucks and we know that no one should legally be paid less than that in these Islands when that comes in. We have given the business community time to get their ducks in a row, as it were. We are pressing ahead. Kudos to the Minister of Education and Labour who pressed ahead, with the support of the Government, and we are going to see that come to fruition.

Similarly, in regards to one man one vote, we all know that it will bring added accountability. There is no perfect system. But it will bring added accountability. You will know who your representative is and the representative will know who you are because he will have less people to deal with. And he or she should be able to offer a better level of representation. I think the inequitable current system is something that I cannot condone. When someone can say they have four votes or six votes, and you sit down and you have one vote where you are based. I think that we have to bring equality to that system and one man one vote is the way to go. I am proud that it is a promise that we have kept.

We saw the results of the 2012 Referendum. If it were not for some shenanigans by the Leader of the Opposition that would have passed with flying colours, but he found a way to deal with it at the time. It was very crafty. But the statement was there from the public. That was the system they wanted it in place, and we have gone and followed that mandate.

Madam Speaker, we are dealing with the whole issue, my colleague to my left here, when he gets up to debate next week, I am sure he will let the public understand the importance of dealing with the fuel situation on-Island. We have to get to the bottom of what fuel is imported for on these Islands. Everyone knows that I own a gas station. We are given fuel at a set price and we make a small margin on it, but the problem has always been on the wholesalers' side. The Minister has embarked on a plan with the fuel companies, hopefully with their support, if not, then, we are not afraid to take tough decisions. But hopefully they will work with us to get to a more equitable situation than what we have now. I think that the decision many years ago for fuel companies to own gas stations was a bad one and that is something we should be seeking to distance ourselves from as we go forward.

Madam Speaker, Immigration, as I mentioned earlier, I guess, because of our size and our dependence on foreign labour, will always be a bone of contention. We have to get the systems at Immigration right. We have to get it fair. We have to make sure that we do not depend on Immigration dollars, or per-

mit dollars, in terms of a budget. We need to make sure that Immigration is doing its job and it is there to create the control that we need, but at the same time it is there to stand firm when it comes to our Caymanian people and making sure that they are able to access jobs when they are ready, able, and capable of getting them.

We should not have permits standing in the way of people. We have too many like that right now. I know that we have, you know, there is a lot of work in that area, but I see too often our Caymanian people, and in particular those who have worked for many years and have been made redundant. Those people, it bleeds my heart to see a number of them—some are close friends—who can't find another job. Something has to be wrong with that, Madam Speaker, because how in God's name can you be a committed employee for 25, 30 years somewhere and suddenly you are out of a job and you can't get another job? And there are people who are holding jobs that you could certainly replace? There is something wrong there, Madam Speaker, and we have to get a grip on that.

I am sure that we all recognise I am not telling my Government anything they don't know. But it is a tough situation. It is never an easy answer because somebody is going to pay the price, no matter how you turn it. But at the same time, we have to make sure we protect our local people. I have always felt that we must make sure our people are fully employed and whatever else on top of that, as the old men would say, "it brotha". Got to come on top of that, yes, we need that support in the workforce. We will always be dependent on foreign labour, but we must ensure that our people, where possible, are working, gainfully employed and getting their rightful place in this community. Not just that, but upward mobility not being blocked when they can move up, because too many times the concrete ceiling is there as well. We all know it, Madam Speaker. I am not talking any secrets here.

Madam Speaker, we are grappling with all of these issues and we grapple with them on a daily basis and when we sit on a caucus, these are the things that we discuss and we try to find solutions for. It is not easy, Madam Speaker.

I am happy that we are moving ahead with the George Town Revitalisation Plan. It is something I have always been very, very much in favour of. What I have seen so far, I know the Minister is very committed, and we have others on the team who are anxious to see this going. We are starting with our road plans first. We are asking the corporate community to join us as we move forward because Government will set the infrastructure and set the policies and the zones, and all that type of stuff, but the Government is not going to be the ones that redo the town. We expect that funding and that support to come from the private

sector. So, this will be a government/private partnership.

Certainly, the issue of crime in this country, Madam Speaker, is something we always have to bear in mind and keep under control. Thank God lately we haven't been hearing too much bad news, but we know that comes in spurts and starts and we give the police as much resources as we can, but there is only so much we can do. There is work that has to be done to control that.

So, Madam Speaker, I am getting close to that time I guess to wind up. I am very happy to say that I am working with a Government that is progressive, that is doing good things. We cannot go back, Madam Speaker, to the days of the Leader of the Opposition being in charge of this country.

Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, the Father of the House, often boasts about his 30 years. In those 30 years, yes, he has done some good stuff. But, Madam Speaker, he has also caused a lot of trouble in this country. I was looking back at his record and when he came into office, and the only Cabinet that the Leader of the Opposition served in for a full term was the first one in 1992. He has been in three other Cabinets and in all three there was pure chaos, and two he was kicked out of.

So, Madam Speaker, why would we return to the days of the Leader of the Opposition running this country? This we do not need, Madam Speaker. We need Government that is stable, that people can trust and not have to worry about the kind of chaotic Monday-morning headlines under his type of governance. He and I are friends, but we will never be political friends because his style of Government is totally different one from me. And, Madam Speaker, I just want people to think about that. He was a part of four Cabinets and he only survived one. Two he was kicked out of. That is not a good record, Madam Speaker.

So, Madam Speaker, that *my-way-or-the-highway* doesn't work. The only time that works is in a song "My Way." *My way or highway* doesn't work in government, Madam Speaker. You got to work as a team. We have a Premier who has taken his licks, but I can tell you what, Madam Speaker, he is leading this country and he is leading it well. He is leading a team of talented individuals and he sits there and he listens and he says what he has to say. He has his views, but it is not all his views that get done. It is what we, as a caucus, come up with and go forward with under the mandate that we have from the people of this country. That is the way we are governing, in an honest and transparent manner. Not self-serving, Madam Speaker, but for love of country and the people of this country.

Madam Speaker, we have embarked on many large projects, as I said. We cannot afford a derailment at this time. We need to make sure that these come to fruition. The country needs them. We do not need any change in the course from where are going

right now. We have much to implement and we are going to do so, Madam Speaker. Stimulating this economy and ensuring that all our people who want to work are working is a key component of the governance of the Progressives.

Madam Speaker, I think I have outlined the position of the Ministry. I have looked at my district needs and some of the plans for that. I have touched a base on some of the national issues and a bit on the type of governance that we offer. Madam Speaker, I am proud to have been able to contribute to this debate and I thank you for your time and indulgence and all Honourable Members of this House.

I once again commend all who have worked hard to make this a reality and we look forward to better days and a better tomorrow.

The Speaker: You have two minutes remaining.

Hon. Osbourne V. Boddan: Thank you, Madam Speaker; that is perfect.

I just wanted to offer, before I sat, condolences publically to the many families who have lost loved ones lately. Many of them are very close to me. Just today, we sadly, got news again of the loss of Mr. Al Aaron who is a member of the Boddan Town constituency. He was employed at FCIB [First Caribbean International Bank] for many years. So, on behalf on all of us (because I don't think anyone else will be speaking when I sit) on both sides of this Honourable House and yourself, Madam Speaker, and the staff, we would like to offer condolences to the family of late Al Aaron and may his soul rest in peace. They are gone but their works do follow them.

And as our dear friend, Lion Tommy always says, *The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Madam Speaker, I stand here and I work hard as a Minister for this country. We all do, all of us MLAs, and we are praying for a better Cayman Islands. We are only here for our people, and may God bless us all in these Islands. Thank you.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Premier.

ADJOURNMENT

The Premier, Hon. Alden M. McLaughlin: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I think we have done very well this week in terms of getting through the debate, and, as a result of that, I think I will go easy on the House this evening and adjourn at five o'clock rather than the usual six o'clock.

And so, Madam Speaker, I adjourn this Honourable House until Monday, coming, at 10:00 am.

The Speaker: The question is that this Honourable House do now adjourn until 10:00 am on Monday.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

At 4:57 pm the House stood adjourned until 10:00 am, Monday, 25th May 2015.

