



**CAYMAN ISLANDS
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
ELECTRONIC VERSION**

2015/16 SESSION

19 November 2015
*Second Sitting of the Fourth
Meeting*
(Pages 759-780)

**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>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 G Wayne Panton, JP, MLA	Financial Services, Commerce and Environment
Hon Osbourne V Bodden, JP, MLA	Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports
Hon Marco S Archer, JP, MLA	Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Hon Tara A Rivers, JP, MLA	Minister of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Hon Franz I Manderson, Cert. Hon. JP	<i>Deputy Governor</i> , 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, MLA	<i>Deputy Speaker</i> , First Elected Member for Bodden Town
Mr Roy McTaggart, MLA	Second Elected Member for George Town
Mr Winston C Connolly, Jr, MLA	Fifth Elected Member for George Town
Mr Joseph X Hew, MLA	Sixth Elected Member for George Town
Mr Alva H Suckoo, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, OBE, JP, MLA	<i>Leader of the Opposition</i> , First Elected Member for West Bay
Mr Bernie A Bush, MLA	<i>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</i> , Third Elected Member for West Bay
Capt A Eugene Ebanks, JP, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for West Bay

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

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

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
FOURTH MEETING OF THE 2015-16 SESSION
THURSDAY
19 NOVEMBER 2015
10:35 AM
Second Sitting

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

The Speaker: Good morning. I will invite the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to say prayers today.

PRAYERS

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:
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, the Leader of the Opposition, Ministers of 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 then 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.
Proceedings are resumed.

**ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS
OR AFFIRMATIONS**

The Speaker: None.

**READING BY THE HONOURABLE
SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

APOLOGIES

The Speaker: We have received apologies from the Third Elected Member for the district of West Bay.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The Speaker: None.

**QUESTIONS TO HONOURABLE
MINISTERS AND MEMBERS
OF THE CABINET**

The Speaker: I recognise the honourable Member for the district of North Side.

**QUESTION 24: BULK FUEL DISTRIBUTORS AND
RETAIL SERVICE STATIONS**

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller, Elected Member for North Side: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I beg to ask the Honourable Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure the following question: Can the Honourable Minister say, under what licence does the two fuel companies (Rubis and Sol) own operating service stations to retail fuel, and how many such licences does each fuel company own?

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Minister responsible for Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts, Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure: Thank you.

Madam Speaker, there are no such licences which provides for Rubis and Sol to own and operate service stations. Actually there are (as I understand it) no restrictions preventing any legal citizen (that is, local person or entity) from owning service stations. Furthermore, to the question raised by the Member, the Local Companies (Control) Licence (LCCL) does not restrict the fuel companies from owning property beyond their terminal. But let me say, Madam Speak-

er, that neither one of those two entities operate any of their service stations.

The Speaker: I recognise the Member or North Side.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

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

Madam Speaker, in the answer the Honourable Member says the LCCL does not restrict the fuel companies from owning property beyond their terminal. Can the Minister say if the LCCL authorises them to own property beyond their terminal?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, there is no specific authorisation in the LCCL which says they can own. But as I said before, there is nothing which says they can't, and any other law in the Cayman Islands does not prevent them from owning property.

The Speaker: Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Through you, Madam Speaker: Is the Minister then saying—and, Madam Speaker, as I understand, an LCCL is a very restricted form of licence for specific purposes which need no Caymanian participation. Is the Minister saying that all LCCL's can own income generating property beyond that specifically authorised in their licence?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, the Minister didn't say that, neither is he inferring that (that is, myself). I understand the question the Member is asking and perhaps if I elucidate a little bit it might get us to where we want to get, if the Member doesn't mind.

This situation arose several years back when these licences, the LCCLs, were being renewed before Rubis and Sol. There was legal opinion at that time which was given that did not prevent them from owning service stations. As it has evolved over time, the Member will recall the recent legislation passed which doesn't deal with owning. The next chapter in the book, Madam Speaker, about fuel in the Cayman Islands is the question of ownership of service stations and how many service stations should be on the Island and the clear cut authorisation or no authorisation to operate.

As we speak . . . no, I best not use that. I forgot that one. Right now, Madam Speaker, the Petroleum Inspectorate is gathering information so that a paper can be produced for Government policy to be decided on regarding those three things I just talked about. My answer to the question which the Member asked can only speak to what obtains now. What I want the Member to understand is that the Government is very conscious of such situations. Since the

legislation was approved I have met with executives from both entities. I have told them what I personally think. I have told them the path we are on and I have told them whenever we get an informed position, those policy decisions will be made and I will speak to them once more to let them know the direction in which we are leaning. So, I only want the Member to know that while I believe I understand where he is going with the question, it is a matter that we are going to deal with.

The Speaker: I recognise the Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Through you, Madam Speaker, I believe that the Minister is going to deal with it, but I also believe that part of what we have to do in this process is to make sure that other LCCLs are not doing similar things, because the Minister at a previous meeting tabled a copy of the LCCL for both of these companies and, as I recall, that LCCL was very specific in that it limited both of these companies to bulk storage and wholesale.

I don't know whether the Minister can answer this or if it should be directed to the Financial Services: Is it not that a business licence would be required by these entities to own these gas stations which are generating lease income from them, even though they may not be operating them?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, I don't want to give an answer that is incorrect. I would suspect that if we compare this situation that the Member for North Side just alluded to, anyone else coming in, buying a set of apartments and renting them out, I am not so sure exactly what kind of licence is required and I believe that this is how it is looked upon presently, why I told the Member and this House what we are looking at as a Government. Rather than make a mistake, I would much rather ask the Member to allow me to check it very carefully and I will give you an answer. But I understand what you are asking.

The Speaker: If there are no further supplementaries . . . Member for North Side, do you have a follow up?
Please continue.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can confirm or knows if these lease agreements that these oil companies are requiring operators to sign, are registered with Government.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, I would suspect that they would not wish to fall afoul of the law by not having these leases registered but I don't know for a fact. I certainly will check that out and also give the

Member that answer if he so chooses in writing along with the other one that I am going to seek.

The Speaker: Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean, Elected Member for East

End: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can tell us, one, whether or not we have any control over this and, two, if—

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Over what?

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Over these fuel companies owning gas stations. I know that he said there is no law or under their licence it doesn't say that they cannot do it. But if the Minister can tell us what kind of research has been done to see whether or not we can stop it and what has to be done. That is if the Government has looked into what can be done.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister for Infrastructure.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, if the Member will recall, part of my earlier answer to the Member for North Side was that I explained that there were three things we were looking at with these bulk distributors: their ability to own stations, to their ability to operate stations and we are also looking at getting an informed position as to at what point in time do we allow any more stations to be built. Once we have all of the information we need with that, we will certainly make policy decisions and whatever legislative changes need to be made with regarding those three situations, we will do that. As I said, that is the next chapter in the page.

The Speaker: Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I guess maybe I didn't ask it right.

Madam Speaker, I am wondering if the Minister can tell us, as a result of finding this out, if it is a fact that anyone with an LCCL can do anything in the Cayman Islands without getting further licensing from the Licensing Department.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, I laugh not in jest, but I think the Member for North Side was headed in the same direction as the question the Member for East End asked.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: I respect that and that is all part of the look-see.

I cannot answer whether anybody with an LCCL can do anything. I don't know that for a fact but I understand all the questions that have been asked

and what it all surrounds and those are facts that we are gathering now to know, although we are being specific to these bulk fuel distributors. But certainly, it will bring to the attention of everyone how Local Companies (Control) Licences does operate and if there are any legislative changes which are needed to make sure that the necessary restrictions for the purposes of such licence are in place.

The Speaker: Honourable Member for East End.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, if the Member would allow—

The Speaker: You want to further clarify? Go ahead, Minister.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: The Minister for Financial Services is quite willing to assist along those lines. So, if you would allow, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister for Financial Services.

Hon. G. Wayne Panton, Minister of Financial Services, Commerce and Environment: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I understand the Member's question to be whether a company that has an LCCL licence can do anything. I think first we have to look back at the Trade and Business Licensing Law which prescribes the type of licence that they have—and they may have more than one type of licence.

The Trade and Business Licensing Law requires that you either have 60 per cent Caymanian ownership and control or you have an LCCL granted to you in order to be able to operate with the Trade and Business Licences that you have. When the Board grants and considers an application for a Local Companies (Control) Law Licence, they have the ability to set conditions on the grant of that licence. So, you would have to look at the types of trade and business licence that the business has and you would have to look at the LCCL which has been granted and examine whether there are any conditions attached to that grant which restrict the way they can conduct business under their trade and business licences.

So, the fact that a company has an LCCL in and of itself does not restrict the ability to conduct business subject to the licences they have unless there are certain conditions made.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Certainly, on the question of whether they can own property, I think it is . . . unless that is somehow a part of the condition or restriction placed in a condition on the licence, on the LCCL grant, normally they would have the ability to own property which would include the ability to own free-

hold as well as the ability to own leasehold interest or grant leasehold interest over freehold.

I hope that is of assistance.

The Speaker: Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, you are quite aware of this: The LCCL that CUC had from its inception 25 years first, then 15, I believe, or something such as that, they were restricted because no one else was doing it in the country. That is how LCCL came about. They were restricted to the generation and distribution of electricity. They could own, lease, whatever in furtherance of those two things (that is, build substations, buy land to put the generating plant on).

Now, they had to get a trade licence along with the LCCL to operate within the law in furtherance of those two things. The suppliers of fuel have an LCCL for wholesale distribution and bulk storage. Now, that trade and business licence must be in furtherance of that. It is beyond me to understand how they can extend that, or we, the Trade and Business Licence Board, can extend—what the Minister is saying, Madam Speaker, is that that licence may be different from the bulk licence but it should be in furtherance of the LCCL to be able to bulk store and to distribute so that that can be the entity . . . in the trade that they can hire people to what have you, what have you to do it. Are we saying that this is how the law says it or this is how the policy or the Board makes a decision to give them that right to trade other than bulk storage and bulk distribution? That is the question.

The Speaker: Okay, I see the Minister for Infrastructure standing.

Honourable Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, I have no doubt the Minister will assist with this, but let's get perspective here, is what I want to make sure of.

Ownership of these service stations is not today. That is something that has been going on a long time and it is nothing new. They haven't bought any or built any recently and if truth be known, because it is all coming out anyhow, the same one that the Member for North Side was alluding to which was advertised in the paper when we were in the House last, when I met with them I told them that if I were them I would not proceed with it because the Government was going to object. I told them what we were looking into now. But that was from a planning perspective because it was on the Esterley Tibbetts Highway. If either one of the Members or anybody else want to continue to ask any more questions, it is not going to get us the answers. But what I am looking into with the help of Legal Department and whoever

else, whatever the necessary legislation is, we are going to put it in place.

The Minister for Financial Services can respond specifically to the T&B Licence and that kind of stuff. But all I am saying is that I understand all the questions that are being asked and it is time for us to get it tidied up because the attempts that have been made in the past to do so were unsuccessful.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: If there are no—

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Honourable Minister for Financial Services.

Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, the contribution I provided earlier was certainly one that was general in nature to explain the workings of a Trade and Business Licence and a Local Companies (Control) Law Licence and how they interact with each other.

I understand the Member's comment and perspective and I haven't personally reviewed the Local Companies (Control) Law Licence that either of the fuel wholesalers has. If I have, it has been a long time since I did. But I think my understanding is that they do not operate retail facilities, but they own properties which are then leased on to the actual retail operators. So, I think if their licence basically says they are authorised to wholesale fuel, it could be that there is some interpretation there which allows them to own property which is then leased on to somebody else who operates the retail facility and they provide the wholesale fuel supply. But I think my colleague Minister who responded and who is responsible has—I think he has explained it sufficiently that this is something that needs to be carefully reviewed by his Ministry and with the assistance of the Honourable Attorney General's chambers to understand exactly what restrictions may be relevant and what the parameters are within which the two licences—the LCCL and the Trade and Business Licence—have been granted as it applies to how they are conducting their business.

So it may be that there is a construction which allows them to wholesale and still own these properties and then lease them on as operating retail facilities. It may also be that the ultimate construction is that it doesn't support that. I don't know. I would have to see it, but I think the Minister has done a good job of indicating that this is subject to full review by his Ministry and the Legal Department.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Member for North Side, I will allow two more supplementaries.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Through you, Madam Speaker, I know that the Minister says that . . . and my question asks how many licences—but I wonder if the Minister knows how many of these retail outlets these two companies own.

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

The Speaker: Before I recognise the Honourable Minister of Planning, I will recognise the Honourable Premier to move the suspension of Standing Order 23(7) and (8).

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

I beg to move the suspension of Standing Order 23(7) and (8) in order that questions may be asked beyond the hour of 11:00.

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

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

AYES.

The Speaker: I believe the Ayes have it.

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

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I believe I am correct in answering the question from the Member for North Side that Rubis owns two of the service stations and Sol owns five of the service stations. I hope the Member heard me . . . or do I need to repeat?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: My apologies.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: No problem. The answer to the supplementary question, Madam Speaker, is: Rubis owns two of the service stations and Sol owns five of the service stations.

Madam Speaker, just to try to clarify once more, I understand the Member for East End speaking about the CUC licence and I don't remember exactly what that licence says, but certainly, I would look at that also to see if there were specific restrictions so that it would help perhaps to guide us when it comes to what we do in the future with this other one—with these other ones, I should say. And just to also tell Members and not to try to open up a can of worms, but that legislation that was passed very recently was

not intended to be limited simply to Rubis and Sol. There are other types of fuels being sold here and we need to have proper legislation in place, proper safety measures in place and the guidelines under which they can operate. That is the objective from here on in, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: If there are no further supplementaries, then I will call on Madam Clerk.

QUESTION 25: HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY BOARD CERTIFICATION

The Speaker: I recognise the honourable Member for the district of North Side.

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

Madam Speaker, I beg to ask the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs, Health and Culture the following question: Can the Honourable Minister say what is being done by Government to assist the doctors currently employed by the Health Services Authority to obtain their board certification in their chosen medical specialty?

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, the answer: the Ministry of Education through the Education Council Scholarship Programme has provisions in the current 2015/2016 budget year to accommodate medical specialisation opportunities for Caymanian doctors. In order to qualify, the Caymanian doctors must meet the academic criteria already established. This opportunity is not limited to Health Services Authority Employees.

The Speaker: Member for North Side.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Through you, Madam Speaker, can the Minister state how much money of the education budget for scholarships is allocated for the training of these doctors?

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, there is no specific allocation.

The Speaker: Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Through you, Madam Speaker: Can the Member state how many, if any, have applied to the Scholarship Authority have been granted scholarships for further training?

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, over the period under discussion, the Education Council received six applications. Of the six applicants, three met the criteria and were awarded scholarships of CI\$20,000 each per annum. Since then, one of the students who met the criteria has deferred taking up the scholarship until the fall of 2016.

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

QUESTION 26: HEALTH CITY AGREEMENT

The Speaker: Honourable Member for North Side.

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

Though you, Madam Speaker, I wish to ask the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs, Health and Culture the following question: Can the Honourable Minister say what agency in Government is monitoring the Health City Agreement?

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, the answer: The Ministry of Health is responsible for monitoring matters related to health. Other ministries or agencies such as the Ministry of Finance, H.M. Customs Department and the Department of Immigration have separate monitoring systems in place as it relates to their area, such as import duty concessions and Immigration fee waivers.

The Speaker: If there are no supplementaries, we will move on to the next item of business.

STATEMENTS BY HONOURABLE MEMBERS AND MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

The Speaker: I have given permission to the Honourable Minister responsible for education to make two statements this morning.

I recognise the Honourable Minister responsible for Education.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACHIEVEMENTS OF SCHOOL LEADERS

Hon. Tara A. Rivers, Minister of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, today I am happy to present this statement in recognition of the recent professional development accomplishments of some of our public school leaders in both primary and secondary schools throughout the Islands. Strong leadership and management at the school level are identified as key components of school success and this was underscored

in the recent baselines schools inspections and education governance review which took place during the 2014/15 academic year.

Madam Speaker, although school leaders had been and are provided with professional development opportunities, upon taking office in 2013 as Minister, it was identified that there was a need to provide targeted professional development specifically aimed at strengthening school leadership and management and that no such professional development opportunities were being provided locally at that time. Hence, Madam Speaker, the International School Leadership (ISL) Certificate programme was introduced in the Cayman Islands during the 2014/15 school year. The International School Leadership Certificate is an internationally recognised programme offered by the Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) that provides excellent support for current school leaders as well as preparation for future leaders. The framework used for delivery of the programme in the Cayman Islands is based on international best practise and was also contextualised locally as a member of the Ontario Principals' Council's team worked with a group of principals, Department of Education Services (DES) and the Ministry of Education staff to ensure that it addressed local needs.

The International School Leadership Certificate programme is comprised of two parts. The first part spanning nine months and including six modules delivered in face-to-face sessions and via online seminars.

The six modules completed in Part 1 of the Programme are:

- Module 1: Principal Leadership for School Improvement
- Module 2: Characteristics of Effective Schools and Systems
- Module 3: Building Relationships and Developing People
- Module 4: Setting Goals and Expectations Using Data Informed Decision Making
- Module 5: Leading Improvement in Classroom Instruction: Meeting the Needs of All Learners
- Module 6: Instructional Leadership Project Proposal Development: The Application of Theory to Practice

Madam Speaker, during the first year in which the Programme was launched locally, 14 school leaders across the various primary and secondary schools have successfully completed Part One of the Programme. On November 12, I had the distinct pleasure of awarding certificates commemorating the completion of Part 1 of the International School Leadership Certificate programme to 10 of our school leaders here in Grand Cayman. The leaders awarded were Chabienauth Samaroo of John Gray High School, Delton Pedley of Red Bay Primary, Elvie Clarke of East End Primary, Gloria Bell, formerly of Prospect Prima-

ry, now Senior School Improvement Officer at the Department of Education, Jane Kelly of John Gray High School, Joseph Wallace of Sir John A. Cumber Primary, Kimberly Litrico-Watler of Bodden Town Primary, Lyneth Monteith, formerly of John Gray High School now Acting Chief Education Officer, Richard Wildman of John Gray High School and Vickie Frederick of Red Bay Primary. In addition, the Ministry has just received confirmation on Tuesday of this week that Yvonne Lawe-Gonzales of Prospect Primary has also completed her final assignment and has successfully completed Part 1 of the Programme as well.

Three additional school leaders in Cayman Brac—namely April Tibbetts of West End Primary School, Devon Brown of Layman E. Scott Senior High School and Margaret Juman[-Khan] of Creek and Spott Bay Primary School—have also successfully completed Part 1 of the certification.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Government, I congratulate each and every one of them.

I am also pleased to report that a second cohort of leaders is scheduled to begin Part 1 of the Programme in December 2015, while the leaders in cohort 1 who have successfully completed Part 1 are scheduled to begin Part 2 in January 2016.

Madam Speaker, in keeping with and pursuant to the Plan of Action developed in response to the recent schools inspections and reviews to strengthen school leadership and management, all current government school leaders are expected to have completed this International School Leadership Certificate by the end of 2017. This is also in keeping with the National Priorities Plan of the Independent Members of Government, which sets out the aspiration to “establish the Cayman Islands as a centre of educational excellence” by, among other things:

- facilitating and implementing continuing education requirements for teachers’ professional development; and
- establishing an appropriate accountability mechanism as it relates to each school’s performance.

Madam Speaker, since taking office, the work undertaken in the Ministry of Education has centred by and large on examining our education system with a goal of identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses, and ways to improve the system by working to address gaps identified. One such gap identified was the absence of a formalised Professional Development Policy, which has been developed and formally adopted during the 2014/15 academic year as a result.

In addition, Madam Speaker, one of the recurring themes identified was the need to strengthen and improve school leadership and management and a large part of the strategy to achieve this is to offer strong, relevant professional development opportuni-

ties, and to ensure that they are completed at a high level by relevant persons.

I am happy to report that our school leaders are not only receiving the opportunities to improve their leadership and management skills, but are excelling in these professional development pursuits. I look forward to bringing continued news of their progress, and I trust that the children in our system are already beginning to reap the benefits of school leaders and teachers receiving and taking advantage of strong and relevant professional development opportunities provided.

Thank you.

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

SHORT QUESTIONS

[Standing Order 30(2)]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I should like to, under Standing Order 30(2), ask the Minister of Education some questions.

The Speaker: Permission granted for brief questions as provided under Standing Order 30(2).

Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you.

Madam Speaker, one question: Are these the only certificates, or this one, the only certificate that provides guidance to school leaders?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the Member for that question.

As I said in the Statement, the principals and teachers and educators have been provided with professional development opportunities but this is the only one that provides the targeted, focused professional development certification for school leaders and management at this level.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: What I am trying to find out, is this the only one, the International School Leadership (I think it is called) Certificate? Is this the only programme?

The Speaker: Minister of Education.

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I believe, and correct me if I am wrong, are you asking if this is the only programme that exists in the world?

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No. I imagine with as many countries—

The Speaker: Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:—we've got you've got many different ones, but I would hope you wouldn't adhere to everyone around the world, but, no, in Cayman—is this certificate the only one providing guidance to school leaders in Cayman, the one here, the International School Leadership Certificate programme?

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: Thank you.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: Thank you, Member, for that clarification; that makes the answer a lot easier.

Yes, with respect to the professional development programme that is organised by the Ministry of Education and through DES as well, this is the only certificate programme that is geared towards the principal and deputies and school leaders in their professional development in such a targeted way. This is the only opportunity that they have currently.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: There are other professional development opportunities, as I have said. It is just that this one was determined to be, with respect to the needs of the community as well as given the success of this programme in other jurisdictions that have worked towards improving their systems worldwide, this system was identified as one that would be beneficial to actually professionalise and develop our management at that level given that it is a two-year programme, pretty much, and this is the only such programme that offers that kind of in-depth, targeted professional development for school leaders. But there are other professional development opportunities which they take advantage of, but it was identified through the work of the Ministry that this would have been advantageous for our school leaders in helping them to be able to do their jobs more effectively and ultimately benefit the children of the country.

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Minister for the second statement for today.

INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the entire Government and in particular my colleague, the Minister of Community Affairs, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the observance of the 19th of November as International Men's Day, and I wish all men

in the Cayman Islands, and of course all men in this Chamber, a happy International Men's Day.

This year will mark the fifth year that the Cayman Islands will join the world in celebrating this day. As a society, we must be concerned about the welfare, rights and issues of both men and women and boys and girls in the Cayman Islands. It is important for us as the Government to engage in public discussion on these matters and to encourage a more caring and equitable society that values the contributions of all.

Madam Speaker, the founder of the International Men's Day movement from Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Jerome Teelucksingh, stated that "**International Men's Day has the potential to become the global medium to heal our world. The concept and themes of International Men's Day are designed to give hope to the depressed, faith to the lonely, comfort to the broken-hearted, transcend barriers, eliminate stereotypes and create a more caring humanity.**"

With the 2015 theme, "Make a Difference for Men and Boys," the Department of Counselling Services Family Recourse Centre has once again organised positive and meaningful events for men and boys in celebration of their day. The Government thanks them and other supporting organisations for their efforts to strengthen our men and boys in our Islands which will ultimately lead to more caring communities.

Madam Speaker, just like women and girls, men and boys face unique challenges and suffer from negative gender stereotypes and unfair societal expectations that are often based on the expectations of traditional masculinity which don't encourage boys and men to be nurturing or caregivers to others, especially children.

Far too often we see our young men engaged in high levels of male on male violence being negatively affected by the impact of male peer influencing gangs and perpetrating high levels of gender based violence. In the long run, the negative effects of traditional masculinity can act as a barrier to some men's ability to bond with their children. Additionally, it is believed that men on average experience a lower life expectancy as a result of the negative effects of traditional gender socialisation.

It is important to recognise the issues that men and boys face and work together to overcome the problems associated with unhealthy masculinity in particular and the effects of individual health, relationships in our society. Accordingly, the Government would like to take this opportunity to also recognise and thank institutions and programmes, such as, the Family Resource Centre, the UCCI's Men of Standards programme, the service clubs, churches and other community based organisations and international awareness movements such as Movember for making a difference for men and boys through their positive actions and programming. It is the collective effort of individuals and institutions that provide a positive

pathway for young men in our society and encourage men and boys to make right decisions in both their personal and professional lives.

Madam Speaker, let us strive to make a positive difference in the lives of boys and men, not just on International Men's Day, but for every day. Madam Speaker, I would just like to advise members of the public that there is an event happening this evening at the Lion's Centre and it is being organised by the Movember movement which will allow men in the community to go out and have some free cancer screening testing taking place at 7:00 pm at the Lion's Centre and there is also a list of activities happening or events that have been happening leading up to this day that has been organised through the Family Resource Centre. The public can get more information by actually going onto that particular website as well.

So, Madam Speaker, with that I would just like to once again say happy International Men's Day to you all and please take advantage of these opportunities to empower yourself to become the men that we know you can be.

Thank you.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Madam Clerk, it seems like the Member for East End is making every attempt to get the Chair's attention.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: I take that as a compliment. Let's move on.

Madam Clerk.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Speaker: None.

OBITUARY AND OTHER CEREMONIAL SPEECHES

The Speaker: None.

RAISING OF MATTERS OF PRIVILEGES

The Speaker: None.

OTHER BUSINESS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

**Private Member's Motion No. 11/2015-2016
Motion to amend the Information, Communication
and Technology Authority Law**

The Speaker: I recognise the honourable Member for the district of North Side.

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

I wish to move Private Member's Motion No. 11/2015-16—Motion to amend the Information, Communication and Technology Authority Law.

WHEREAS most customers of the providers of Internet service in the Cayman Islands are not receiving the Internet speeds for which they have contracted with their provider;

AND WHEREAS most of these customers have complained with no improvement in the service they receive;

AND WHEREAS the current ICTA Law does not provide the necessary sanctions that the ICTA board could enforce;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that Government consider amending the ICTA Law to make it an offence for a provider to contract with a customer for a specific Internet speed and not provide the contracted speed and that the penalties for such an offence be a substantial fine and a refund to the customer of the price charged for the service.

The Speaker: Is there a seconder to the Motion?

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I wish to second the Motion.

The Speaker: The Motion has been duly moved and is open for debate.

Does the honourable Member for the district of North Side wish to elucidate further to his Motion?

Please proceed.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Thank you.

Madam Speaker, over the past year and maybe even longer, I have received countless complaints from persons that they are not receiving the Internet speeds for which they are paying, in most cases, exorbitant fees. In fact, Madam Speaker, I have never met a person that is actually receiving the speed for which they are paying. There may be one or two that exist, but I have never met that person.

Madam Speaker, the standard response when people complain to these providers is to offer an upgrade at even higher cost and my person response to the provider was listen, *I am willing to upgrade but I would like to get the speed for which I am paying now before I upgrade to higher speed.* There the conversation ends and you are left to whatever mercies you can find to do it. When you complain to the ICTA on behalf of your constituencies, they say, *Yeah, that is a problem but the current legislation does not allow them to sanction the providers.* To that I say, *But they have a licence which you grant. The licence has conditions, I would think, attached to it.*

Those conditions in my view should, and I would hope, contain that they must deliver for the customer what the customer has contracted to receive. But they insist that there needs to be some changes to the law. So, what the Motion is asking the Government to do is to amend the ICTA—that is the Information, Communications and Technology Authority Law—in such a way as to provide substantial fines. And here we are not talking about \$100, Madam Speaker, because these people make millions and millions of dollars in profit in the Cayman Islands and quite frankly, Madam Speaker, I am disappointed of having the previous Government having broken the monopoly that existed. It now appears that we are in a duopoly position because it cannot be by chance that both companies advertise the same phone at the same price almost in the same newspaper.

I think both companies are now happy that they are making enough from their market shares and therefore there is no genuine competition amongst the companies any longer to provide better service than the other company. When you talk to the technicians within the company, and they seem to be in some kind of carousel revolving from one company to the next because one minute they are being furloughed from one of the companies, they are being hired by a provider for that company and then the next time you talk to them, they are furloughed from the provider company and they are going back to the original company. In the meantime, the only people suffering, Madam Speaker, are the customers who are paying these exorbitant fees for these services.

The kind of reputation and the kind of communications that a country such as the Cayman Islands demands, it is a disappointment that the ICTA is not insisting that these people are not providing more up to date technology.

I recall one instance which happened to me. I went to a provider to buy—when the Apple phone first came out—and the person said to me, *Well, you know, Ezzard, now you can't use all the things that this phone can do in Cayman, but if you go to Jamaica you can use everything on it.* I said, *So, you are telling me that Jamaica has better technology than the Cayman Islands.* He said, *Yeah.* I would think that per head of population and for investment, they are making more money in Cayman than they are making in most other places in the world. I think that we should in fact have cutting edge technology.

It is really, in my view, Madam Speaker, wrong when these companies are allowed to contract with customers for specific Internet speeds and the person is unable to get the speed and when they go and complain they are told what you really need to do is upgrade. It is bad enough around George Town, you know, Madam Speaker, but when you get out to North Side and East End and places like that, it is really terrible, the service. They have now gone into TV and that is worse than the Internet service.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: I don't know whether that it somebody is looking in through my window or what, Madam Speaker, but every time I am watching a cricket match, every time somebody gets out all I see is a little white wheel. I watched a whole test match and didn't witness one person losing the wicket because it had seized up and that little white wheel going around in the corner.

This is unacceptable, Madam Speaker, because the people that I represent are paying these fees to this company. You go to them and say, *Listen, I didn't get the Internet speed last week, can you adjust my bill?*

No!

In fact, yesterday morning, somebody came to my driveway and complained that they had gone in to complain that they weren't getting the Internet speed and the company told them that what they needed was an upgrade and they had a special upgrade promotion going on now for \$15 and if they take that they would get one month free. So the person said, *Well, I don't think that's my problem. What I really need is for somebody to come out to my house and tell me what is wrong.*

No, no, no, this is what you need to do, you'll get it.

They paid the \$15 and it comes on their . . . two months have gone by and they have not gotten the speed upgrade but they paid for the two months. When they go in and want to row, then, they call security on them and want to put them out of the building. The Government has a responsibility in my view, Madam Speaker, to do something about this. So, I ask all Honourable Members and I hope the Government will accept the Motion and get what I believe is an equitable situation corrected.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? Does any other Member wish to speak? Final call—does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Honourable Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, the Motion calls for the Government to consider amending the ICTA law to make it an offence for a provider to contract with a customer for a specific Internet period and not provide the contracted speed and that the penalties for such an offence be a substantial fine and a refund to the customer of the price charged for the service.

So, Madam Speaker, the Government is fully on board with this motion and I will explain, but I want to specifically explain something else to the Member for North Side. In thinking about it, I did not believe we had to go as far as to seek any amendment to the Motion, but I just want the Member to understand that I

am treating the ICTA Law as ICTA legislation because what we are doing now is not only the law but regulations; just explaining to you. In other words, where fines and all of that are included will be in the regs and different things will be in different things.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: I understand that.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Okay, I just wanted to make sure that it is not . . . exactly, not just the law itself.

Madam Speaker, first of all, let me say that I, too, have experienced what the Member is talking about and I know exactly what he is talking about because my wife tells me one morning that I am the Minister and the next morning she is not talking to me because it is not fixed. So, I understand.

The ICTA board, Madam Speaker, has received complaints after complaints. I myself as the Minister have spoken to the managing director and this is not today—this is going on now for quite some time—and the board, along with the ICTA itself, have been working on this for a few months now. So much so, that there is a draft bill which will be going to Cabinet very shortly which has been prepared and is a bill for a law to amend the Information and Communications Technology Authority Law (2011 Revision) to increase the fine under section 58 and for incidental and connected purposes.

One of the things that is going to be done, Madam Speaker, is we want to create a situation where the fines can be levied almost administratively so that it happens very swiftly and you don't have to go through any long drawn out process for anybody to appeal and talk foolishness. The way it is going to work and those who understand this will know that you can speed test your Internet services and the legislation that is going to be put in place will be done in such a way that the . . . how they do it, Madam Speaker, is they tie you down now when you sign a contract, that if you want to switch providers because you are dissatisfied with the service, you have all kinds of penalties. So we have to protect the consumer in that regard. So, the regulations will allow once they are dissatisfied and simply, as I said, on their own they can test and prove that they are not getting the service they are paying for, then the regulations will allow for them to be able to switch providers without any penalty. That in itself is a big issue right now with customers, why they almost have to hang on to the bad service that they are getting.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: The way it is now is portability in most instances, there are all kinds of—yeah, it is not so much for Internet, but when you sign a contract with the Internet service provider, if you simply want to up and switch, there are all kinds of penalties that you have to pay which is what you signed for in the contract. That is how it is done. But you want to be able

to—if you are not satisfied and you can prove that you are not getting the service—you want to be able to walk away from them and say listen, I am going to seek that service somewhere else without having these penalties being called to bear.

Also, Madam Speaker, part of the legislation that is being done now is also going to set standards—

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: You got to punish the provider for not providing it, too, you know.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts:—set standards for the Internet service providers whereby as the whole world is and depending on the level of technology where you go, Madam Speaker, I think those who are close to industry will know that there is a range of the level of service that is provided. It is not always expected to be 100 per cent. So there is a window and I think . . . I don't know exactly what the ICTA board will decide when they are recommending that portion of the legislation to us, but I think it is going to be a minimum of 80 per cent. Of course, there will be checks and balances in place where random checks are made to ensure that this is being done and there will be sanctions for the Internet service provider if it is not done. So those are the things that they are looking at.

Madam Speaker, the regulation dealing with that it is thought that you will simply give a specific timeframe, whether it is three months or six months, for all of these providers to meet the standards or begin to pay the price.

The Member for North Side, Madam Speaker, mentioned the eastern districts and he is perfectly right. One of the problems they continue to say that they have is rolling out this service and not having the volume to support the initial capital cost. One could take the very hard view and say that is not our problem; that is your problem, which in truth and in fact, it is. But if we are to be realistic, we understand that any business—taking a little bit of risk here, but I am just looking at it and trying to be as practical as I can—any business, Madam Speaker, and lest I forget, I started going in the easterly direction and I stopped in East End, I should have continued on to Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, also and I understand that.

Just saying in any business, capital expenditure has to be balanced with income and all of that. So the ICTA board is looking very carefully at making a doable timetable for all of this to happen, but at the same time not to be a relaxed one because as of now, Madam Speaker, when, for instance, the managing director of the ICTA meets with these service providers and begins to tell them where they are lacking and all like that, they simply pay no attention because they know what the law says. Now we have to ensure that we put the teeth in the law which will make them know that they are either going to get stiff fines or perhaps there will be a question mark as to whether they will

have a licence renewed, depending on how severe the infringement is.

So, Madam Speaker, without making a long story out of it, to summarise the whole affair is the bill to amend the law will be ready for the next Meeting of the House. The regulations which are being looked at will be ready in January so we expect by the end of January for the regulations to be approved by Cabinet so that by the time the House meets again and the amendments to the law can be passed we will have both of them operational.

To say to the Member for North Side that between the regulations, between the regs and the amendments to the law, they will not only encompass what his Motion is calling for, but there are other matters not just ancillary but incidental to those things which that will also include such as a universal service fund which is something that a lot of them don't like to hear about but that universal service fund is being looked at very carefully which will require a certain level of continuous contribution—I guess in lay terms it is almost like a sinking fund but that is expected to assist in providing the service where it is not easy to get to and not financially practical, but also as to how they get that service, there are some difficulties which are involved presently because some of the service providers, for instance, are trying to get arrangements with Caribbean Utilities using their poles and there are difficulties with that with their offshoot company called DataLink, I think is the name of the company. Those matters have to be sorted out because you need standard rates for all of these things and seemingly one has to pay one price the other one pays because it is all individual negotiations. My view is as I have told them at the ICTA level, *Listen, guys, matters like that I believe the board has a responsibility to step in, equalise the pressure and make sure—*

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: And they have the authority to.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts:—yeah, yeah, but to make sure that these matters are all standardised. So those are the things they are looking at in that regard.

The Government thanks the Member for bringing the Motion and I am not trying to pre-empt or anything by saying that even though the Motion is coming, we are working on it. The fact is we were. But we are happy to accept the Motion and in a matter of—within first quarter next year, by end of January and whenever the House meets again, both of these matters by way of regulation and legislation will be sorted out.

Mind you, the whole situation is fluid so perhaps another six months from then we will probably have to bring some more amendments again when you see everything working and you perhaps discover something that wasn't looked at, at the beginning. But, again, the Government thanks the Member and the Seconder for bringing the Motion and certainly we are

doing, on this side, what we need to do to make it all happen.

Thank you.

The Speaker: I recognise the First Elected Member for the district of Bodden Town.

Hon. Anthony S. Eden, First Elected Member for Bodden Town: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As my colleagues indicate, I am not a technological person but I do know that when service is not being provided, something is wrong. I want to thank the honourable Member for North Side and the Member for East End. I have been told by some people that they updated to a 10—whatever 10 is—they came and checked it that evening and they were barely getting a three. So it bears out what he is saying and I am pleased to hear that the Minister for Works is going to deal with this.

I have a couple other complaints, Madam Speaker, which may not pertain to this specific Motion. I notice on occasions that my fixed line, my house phone, I try to call numbers and I try different times and it just will not ring. I get my cell phone and lo and behold I call the same number and it goes through. Maybe they are making a few extra pennies.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Anthony S. Eden: The other thing that is really getting to me now, Madam Speaker, is this robot calling. You must have heard about it in the States. A couple of days ago they started calling the bill isn't due until two or three days later—

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: They send a text "Your bill is zero days overdue. Please pay."

Hon. Anthony S. Eden: These are 1-800 number calls that I saw coming in recently so I hope, Madam Speaker, that this will also be looked at.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Anthony S. Eden: All I can say, Madam Speaker, that it seems like the three eastern districts are being treated like how cow treat last year's calf.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, now you know I wasn't going to make this one pass, especially when the three of us, the Member for North Side and the First Elected Member for Bodden Town are from the eastern districts.

Madam Speaker, let me start by saying that the Minister is right when he says that he doesn't be-

lieve there is any need to change the law, or to amend the law.

The Speaker: Member for East End, you might want to reflect on that statement because the Minister didn't actually say that. He said there was no need to amend the Motion.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Well, if that is what it was, I apologise. Let me say to him then, that there may be no need to amend the law. Maybe he can do it, I think he said in regs; however, Madam Speaker, what I was going to say was that this was our last resort to put fines in the law. That is our last resort. That is the reason it was brought in that way.

Madam Speaker, there are numerous provision in the law whereby if there was the will to enforce those sections by the board, by the department, that the ICTA providers and ICT that is being provided in this country would be much better. Madam Speaker, there is section 23, there is section 72, there is section 29, there is section 32—four sections—and I don't know if I really want to go through all these, Madam Speaker, because, you know, I am somewhat familiar with this law and it might be a little tedious for us all but I draw my colleagues attention and this House's attention to these sections of the law.

Madam Speaker, let me just do section 32 for the purposes of this situation. The side note is 'Suspension of Licence'.

"32. (1) Subject to any special conditions concerning suspension in the relevant licence, the Authority may suspend any licence for a period not exceeding one year in any of the following circumstances:

- (a) where a licensee breaches any condition attached to his licence;**
- (b) where a licensee contravenes this Law or the regulations;"** (which has yet to be written)
- (c) where a licensee is convicted of an offence under this Law;**
- (d) where a licensee fails to discharge his financial commitments under this Law;**
- (e) where a licensee is struck from the Register of Companies;**
- (f) where a licensee is subject to an order of the Court in respect of liquidation or bankruptcy proceedings; or**
- (g) where a licensee compounds with his creditors to the detriment of the Authority.**

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Authority, on the order of the Governor, shall without notice suspend any licence if the suspension is necessary for reasons of security of the Islands.

(3) The Authority shall, before suspending any licence under subsection (1), give written no-

tice to the licensee, in which notice the Authority shall draw to the attention of the licensee the grounds on which the Authority intends to suspend the licence.

(4) The Authority shall, in case of a breach by a licensee of a condition attached to a licence or regulations, give an opportunity to the licensee to remedy the breach within a reasonable time.

Madam Speaker, section 29 is on the renewal of licence and just let me read 29(1):

29. (1) Where an application for renewal of a licence under section 26 is made, the Authority may refuse to renew that licence if the licensee is or has engaged in conduct that materially contravenes this Law or any regulations.

Now, the law requires them to provide certain services and their licence requires them to provide certain services and they are not being provided.

Madam Speaker, I have a son who goes to school in the UK and for £15 extra the other day his speed was going to come up to just over 50 megabytes, I think it is called. He was paying £8 or something like that for 20 [megabytes]. Here we are paying somewhere in the \$70s, \$80s; the Member for Boddin Town would know (I don't know what my bill says anymore) for 10 [megabytes]. When you go on your computer and I spoke about my son because the last time he was home, Madam Speaker, he almost crucified me! He said, Daddy we are only getting 2.5 [megabytes] why can't you pay for more. I said but the bill says I am paying for 10 [megabytes]. He is livid! He is in the house because it is crawling like molasses going uphill and then within days of my son crucifying me for the Internet speed being so slow, there is a little plastic bag hooked up on the door offering upgrades. I said, Upgrades? And then I met a young lady at the gas station the other day with a whole folder of literature offering additional upgrades. I said, well, sweetie, they need to come give me what I am paying for before they can ask me to upgrade.

Madam Speaker, it is the nature of this thing. I get people from East End, my constituents. There is a lady . . . not only on the telephone, though, you know, Madam Speaker, it is the internet, period. A lady from East End, her television is being used as a mirror on the wall reflecting her own picture but she is paying for it. Then, they won't provide the free channels they are required to provide and the lady complains about that. But it is not to complain. It is just wrong that people have to pay for these things and the ICTA board sits down there like stooges and do nothing about it. They have the authority to deal with them.

Madam Speaker, [section] 72—

"72. (1) ICT service providers and ICT network providers shall use reasonable endeavours to ensure that their ICT services and ICT networks are:

- a) reliable;**
- b) provided with due care and skill; and**

- c) rendered in accordance with the standards reasonably expected of a competent provider of those ICT services and ICT networks.

(2) A complaint may be made to the Authority by any person who is dissatisfied with the networks or services provided to him by an ICT service provider or ICT network provider or who claims to be adversely affected by the actions or omissions of an ICT service provider or ICT network provider.

(3) The Authority may prescribe quality standards for the provision of ICT services and ICT networks in relation to all ICT service providers and ICT network providers.”

Do you need any more? Madam Speaker, we don't need any more. The board members are sitting there like stooges. Evidently they are not reading this and understand the power they have and the responsibility they have.

Madam Speaker, I questioned the director of the ICTA in here about termination fees—on mobile termination fees, Madam Speaker. You think our bills have gone down because of deregulation that you were a part of, Madam Speaker, when you were . . . I think it was Pierson—and then you finished it up.

Madam Speaker, everybody is doing what they want. Madam Speaker, I remember when the Honourable Linford Pierson did the deregulation there was a rollout period, it is called, for them to properly install the network, get their network in place and the likes. You know, duty exemptions, they didn't have to pay on ICT equipment during that period. All I am seeing, Madam Speaker, is you are going along the road on your phone and it drops. As small as this country is you are telling me we can't get overlapping coverage? You are telling me we can't cover 24 miles by three miles wide in proper services?

Mind you, Madam Speaker, every one of those ICT board members has a cell phone and experiences the same problems. Every one of them has been inundated with complaints and nothing happens. There are provisions in here for them to make recommendations to Cabinet—the Governor, meaning the Cabinet. I wonder how many recommendations have been made. Madam Speaker, I am going to go out on a limb and say zip has been made, unless the Minister can get up and clarify it. They do nothing. They go to the meeting. They are not protecting the end user. Half of them haven't even rolled out. The only thing I see, Madam Speaker, is everybody selling everything else. I see Global something buying Cable and Wireless now.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I have always maintained that the world looks at this country and wonders how it could become so sophisticated in the last 40 years with the services it provides for the

outside world. There are two things that provided that sophistication and that level that we have attained in the financial industry: good electrification and good communication. That is it. We then got professionals who knew what they were doing . . . but from the technical perspective. Because if you go anywhere else or many places in the Caribbean the electricity is off, the communication is off . . . but it was the reliability of our professionals being able to communicate with people overseas. That is when you had a monopoly. We were paying through our ears for it. Now we got a duopoly and we are paying through our ears and everywhere else.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, what I am saying is that too much, too much, Madam Speaker, of them not providing the services that the people need. They continue to provide for the businesses but the local people are of no significance and they continue to charge you for it. I won't even tell this honourable House what my telephone bill is because of course, you know, they are going to claim I am talking too much. But it is constituents, Madam Speaker; they need to call them back. They don't give us any breaks. I believe they have some little agreement with Government between Government phones or something like that, they don't charge.

Madam Speaker, we complain about the cost of electricity and rightly so because the cost is high. But can you imagine, Madam Speaker, if you are using the telephone as much as you use electricity? They would have to bury you the next month from bankruptcy. They are not providing a good service to this country and I am challenging the Minister to get the board of directors to do their job since it is an authority and the Minister can only give general direction. They need to do their job in the interest of this country. They are creatures of statute and the statute is there for them to get their job done. Someone has to impress it upon them because they are there at the pleasure of Cabinet and if they are not doing their job, move them! Put someone that can do the job . . . carry paper to Cabinet and change every one of them. This wearing our hearts on our sleeve for everybody needs to stop. The people are suffering. People suffering and we sit down here and let's wait until next week so they can get done what is supposed to be done. Get it done from yesterday! This is all we ever do and then we come up with some excuse for our people, oh well, you know this one did that and that one did that. What did I do?

One chairman had written to me, Madam Speaker, when I was Minister, to say he was informing me that he wasn't going to apply to be reappointed. I wrote him back and said he wasn't going to be reappointed so don't even consider it! Then, he had the nerve to tell me that my management style was more like rowing as opposed to steering. I agreed with

him because I told him there is no need to steerage when the boat is alongside the dock. She is tied up. You don't need steering then.

Madam Speaker, it is what needs to happen. We appoint these people in good faith and they jump at the opportunity—and I am not talking specific now—because they feel they can benefit as a result . . . many of them! So don't tell me that is not so. I am just saying what others want to say, but are afraid to say it. In the meantime, I come down here, get laws in front of me which I believe will enhance the lives of our people and protect them and these board members go there and make their own rules because they don't agree with it. If they want to make policy, tell them to come in here! But there is a process between where they are and getting here. Fifteen years I have laboured to try and help my people and they are still with this kind of money they got to pay and this kind of service that they are being provided and we appoint people on these boards and they do nothing.

They are not fit for purpose! And then they go blame the Minister. The Minister can only give general directions such as improve the service. There is bad service we would like you to look into the improvement of the service. I have received complaints. That general direction and they sit down there, *Well, the Minister say improve service, what are we going to do?* If you want the notoriety of being on the boards, do the job that you have volunteered to do because there is not much else than volunteering.

Madam Speaker, our people are suffering. That is part of this economy that prevents our people from moving ahead due to the costs they got to pay in ICT services; the unavailability of it not providing that and not getting that service, so that their children can learn on the computers. It is no longer a slate, Madam Speaker, where we used to write on and then when you wipe it off it's done. Those of us who made something of ourselves that are of my age and older, you had to have a good memory, you know. You had to retain it because you write it down on a slate and when that class over you wiped that off. That is done. But our children nowadays, Madam Speaker, can even go in to exams with computers and the likes . . . they allow certain of that. And they sitting in there and the exam, is supposed to take two hours and it is taking ten because the service can't get in through that place.

I talk to people on the Government phone. Ministers, I have been talking to Ministers, hang on, hang on, hang on, I am going into an elevator. Hold, hold, hold, hold, hold. Why? The elevators can hold repeaters in them. That is the kind of service we are getting at the Glass House. They go down in the garage . . . hold on, hold on, hold on, hold on, I will call you back. The whole conversation is over and then when we get them back they change. You forget what you were talking about.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: No, he can hear it gargling.

Madam Speaker, a country as sophisticated as this, as recognised internationally as this and we can't hold a decent conversation because if it's not Cable and Wireless and Digicel, it is the police tapping you and then you hear it go gurg-gurg, they are changing the tape and they shut you off so you can start the conversation back over.

An Hon. Member: You're right about that, they're doing that.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: But, Madam Speaker, you know, I hope they get something out of my conversations. You know what? I tell them that all the time. I hope they get something out of it because I want it out of it. Why is the Attorney General looking at me? Mind you, he knows what I am saying is right, you know.

Madam Speaker, that is part and parcel of the secret service in this country—MI6—that is a necessary thing. I am not complaining. I am just telling them I am going to say what I want because it is me who is paying this bill. So you go ahead and record. That is who I am. I am just saying they should have a longer tape so they shouldn't have to disconnect me and stop the conversation.

The Speaker: Member, are you saying that you are aware that there is MI6 in this jurisdiction?

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I never said that I am positively aware of it but we have had so many here I can't doubt it.

Not at this stage because—remember the one that was with the Eurobank? Madam Speaker, that is like what the second Bush when he was president of America said. They asked him why he could not let go of the thoughts of the holocaust and he said that history has been so unkind he could not afford to forget it. And we had one Attorney General at MI6, too. You remember when we got rid of him? That is since I've been here. That is good. There are plenty more of them there.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: They have infiltrated us and they need to know so give it to them but tell them to get longer tapes. Then Cable and Wireless cuts you off, too—and Digicel. That is not a double, it is a triple whammy. I mean, Mr. AG little people like us, honestly now, what would I have that England needs to know? Do they really think I am going to upset my country? This country that is all I have? What would I do? All they are doing is disrupting my conversations. They need to stop it. And Cable and Wireless needs to provide the service that at least I can talk for five minutes . . . and Digicel. And the termination fees must be equal—not charging one this and charging the next

one that. These are the things we need to look into. It is killing our people.

Madam Speaker, we know that the marl road it's alive and well and our people need their communications. They charge an arm and a leg and we only get use out of it for 30 per cent of the day. If we are paying that kind of money, Cayman must be the most expensive for ICT services in the world, and the service is probably 20 per cent efficient. And we sit and wait until the Member for North Side and I bring a motion before we do anything about it. All we do is redial again because the call was dropped and we continue our conversation. That is not good ICT services, network. It is bad! And the Member for Bodden Town knows because he knows more about this than anybody else in here, you know, Madam Speaker. That one, what's your name? The Third? Fourth? Fifth? What it is? The Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town. He knows more about it than any other one of us. He needs to get up and talk about it. He needs to get up and advise the Government if he hasn't already on what needs to be done to ensure ICT networks are developed in this country where the people get ICT services properly. Look at the Government.

Look at the Government—they are doing nothing about it. They even said the other day that their firewall or whatever that is—the only soul who can't get through that must be me. There is no protection even for the Government. We question them here in Finance Committee. It is so bad that they did not even want to talk about it. You remember that? Who do you think is providing these services? The ICT provider because it comes through their switch into Government and people can hack into our Government. And we do nothing about it! Shut them down! Let us use milk can and cord again. It was so much better when we didn't have cell phones. But we must pay an arm and a leg and get milk can and cord services.

Madam Speaker, you can remember when you use to tie two milk cans with a piece of cord in between those two milk cans. That is all we are getting.

The AG is looking at me. We need legal advice from you for the Government on it, too. That is what we are getting—nothing. I am not blaming any Government in particular. I had responsibility for it. I had an uphill battle; it was like molasses rolling uphill. Eventually we rid ourselves of one that was pushing that molasses downhill. I mean pushing back against it while it was flowing up, you know. Then we get him a big Christmas present; that's what we do. We wear our hearts on our sleeves. Every human being short those who are born with challenges know when they are doing wrong. They must be punished accordingly. That is why we are here. They make millions and millions and millions off this country and treat us like we were—what Tony said? Last year's—

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean, Member for East End:—how the cow treats last year's calf. We do nothing and then when I get up here and advocate on behalf of my people it is, *Oh, well, he is trying to upset the cart, you know.*

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Anti-business—oh, they say that. All of them out there say that Ezzard and I are anti-business. All of them they say that. But you know why? Because plenty of them, they got their business and we see where it is this and that, then that is the problem. But you know what? The difference between me and all them is that riches are to me like caffeine is to 7-Up; never had it, never will. My job here is to advocate on behalf of the people for their betterment, and if in so doing I am better off as a result I want to do it honestly. I am not advocating for no one business that is going to dominate the other. There must be some equality in this country. There must be some justice in this country for our people. If we can't achieve that, then we shouldn't be here. We like playing lip service to these things and then a little later we say, *Oh, well, that one didn't vote for it and that one walk outside and then we try to transfer blame on to the others whilst we have the responsibility and the authority to do something about it. Let's not get caught up in that, Madam Speaker. Let us do what is necessary and stop accusing people of being obstructionists.*

Madam Speaker, if that is what I am to be called, then I shall wear it with a banner across my forehead. I don't know, Madam Speaker. This is just one of the issues affecting our people in a long line and a long list of issues that needs to be addressed forcefully and corrected.

Madam Speaker, as a Member of this Parliament, you see how lawyers the other day come at me? With a vengeance! I went back though and it is not done yet. That is what we do because I am advocating for my people on their behalf. That is what they do! Come at me! I am but one man and you know what? If I am so important and I have stopped it—that means it wasn't right in the first instance. They are afraid of what I got to say. I want them to be afraid. Always be afraid. There are two things, Madam Speaker, and this ICTA thing, too . . . this, too. There is only one of two ways a human being gets an adrenaline rush. It is out of love or fear. They make the decision whether they are going to love or fear me.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, I don't need to prolong the debate on this. I think the Government recognises that some-

thing has to be done and this is what the Minister, I think, has reiterated here this morning. So I am in full support of actions that Government will take to try to do something about the number of wrongs that has been outlined by the mover and the seconder of the Motion.

It is important, Madam Speaker. When the UDP as a Government, took on deregulation in telecommunications, we took tremendous criticism. Madam Speaker, you ought to remember. At one point you had, I think at the last going off, you were the Minister responsible for it with us. We took serious criticisms all around, not just from the business community in connection with those companies. Questions were asked even by the Foreign Office. Questions were asked by the Opposition and accusations were made, Madam Speaker, you ought to remember. You were the Minister as I said at the last going off by the Opposition at the time. But we knew that that had to be done.

What I am concerned about, and as I said, I am not going to take the time of this House to reiterate them, but I don't think that anything was exaggerated from those two Members this morning in regards to the problems that we are having with telecommunications. I am concerned about many aspects. I am concerned about the aspect of telecommunications with the media—television services. I see faces change. I see powerful ex-Senators now being hired as key anchor people and you have to wonder about all these sorts of things. But I am watching as Opposition to see exactly where they lead, how they will act and how professional—while it is not illegal, but certainly, from a media standpoint, professional standpoint, it does not speak well and I certainly will say more about it once I find out more about it. But I am concerned about the whole aspect of telecommunications, the media aspect of it, the cell phone aspect. The Member from East End raised the question about Members being tapped. We are tapped. We know that. Particularly so if you stand up to them they are going to do more than tap you. They are going to tap you, all right, if they could lick you with a mortar and pestle, they will do so, too. They have tried that often. The only thing is that when we are right, we are right. And we have nothing to fear but fear, itself.

So, Madam Speaker, I am satisfied. I am supportive of this Motion, and certainly hope that, as the Minister said, that his office is moving in the right direction with those matters. But it is tremendous problems and I don't know if I have the words this morning to explain my discomfort, discontent with the operations, the service we get.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: I recognise the Fifth Elected Member for the district of George Town.

Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr., Fifth Elected Member for George Town: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise in support of this Motion brought by the Member for North Side and seconded by the Member for East End.

Madam Speaker, with all the boasts that we do in this country about it being first world in the Caribbean, that we have one of the highest standards of living in the world, that we welcome business and people to our shores, we should be at the cutting edge of communications, technology and so many other things. Madam Speaker, in other countries their demands put on vendors and when they don't deliver, legislation has teeth and it bites very hard.

Money is hard to come by, Madam Speaker, for most people. If you are not getting what you pay for, that just adds insult to injury. My constituents deserve more as citizens in this country. I deserve more as a customer as well, and, Madam Speaker, for what it is worth I, too, have felt the sting of this in terms of you download your speed apps, you test your system, you test it repeatedly, it varies all over the place but it never gets close to where it was promised and what was stated on your contract. I have sent in pictures of these, you know, freezing them and sending them in and they say things like, Oh, the walls are made out of cement and this that and the other. But, Madam Speaker, I live in George Town, in and around all of the satellites and wires and all of that. I could perhaps understand that if I was out on the tip of North Side or tip of East End. But even then as the Member for East End said, we are a small Island. We are no bigger than some little county in the middle of nowhere in the big scheme of things. I mean, if you look at us on the map, you see the name and that is about it. So there shouldn't be any excuse. What I think has happened over time is that people realise that they can get away with it. They can give you what they want because no one really makes a big stink in Cayman about anything. Right? We take it, we bend over, we take it again and, you know, we might cuss to the guy next to us. We might mumble under our breath but that is where it stays.

Madam Speaker, the role of Government is to protect those that can't protect themselves. It is also to ensure that everybody is doing their fair part and that means both the buyers and the sellers. It also is to set the laws in place. But most importantly, and I think I am developing a theme this week about enforcement of those laws.

Madam Speaker, we can come here for days and days on end. We can set all the laws, policies, and regulations in place. But if we don't enforce those laws when people break them or bend them or ignore them, then what we have created is this culture of I am going to do it until they stop me from doing it and I know just from history they are not stopping me from doing it.

Madam Speaker, there is no excuse for not having premium service on every part of this Island. If we are serious about being this first world of the Caribbean, we need to get serious about the things that

matter. Not only just for the people that live and work here, but the people that are looking to see whether or not it is a place that they want to come and live and work and invest, because, Madam Speaker, this thing goes a lot wider than these shores. If we want to be up there with the likes of the Singapores and the—this that we like to claim, you know, our competitors, we need to get serious about doing the things that attract businesses, investors, et cetera. Because you might think that it is not—or that it is a small thing. Oh, it's some little person in East End and Cayman Brac and West Bay and North Side arguing about a few little dips or whatever they call them. You might think, *Oh, it is just these guys that want to stream their sports and their movies that are complaining.*

Madam Speaker, the world is watching. People are sizing us up with the competition every day. If we are going to allow people to come here, set up shop, they must set them up to the standards that we expect and the standards that we demand.

Madam Speaker, we also suffer from the fact that we don't have a lot of competition in Cayman. But, again, that is the role of Government to play because when there is lack of competition there is room for people to rape and pillage if they don't go checked. Madam Speaker, that is my other theme for this week—"checks and balances". You cannot come in to any organised society, any established society and do whatever you want, get away with it, plunder and pillage and then move on. If the people that are there already allow you to do it, they should be ashamed of themselves.

Madam Speaker, we keep turning the other cheek. After a while, we are going to run out of cheeks. Madam Speaker, we need to demand more as a people. We need to be more assertive as a people and Government needs to lead the way in that. We need to stand up for those people en masse. Everybody has to be singing from the same hymnal in these types of cries and fights. Because, Madam Speaker, not only does it affect future business, but the cost of living in Cayman affects each and every resident, especially the ones that are teetering on the verge of poverty and those that are less fortunate than others. When they have to look at the bills in front of them, when they have to see that they are not getting what they pay for, when they see that they cannot give their children what they need for school and other things—because everything now centres around technology—we are actually, by allowing it to happen, impeding the advancement of our people with something that we probably take for granted almost every day of the week.

Our people have to keep up with the rest of the world. We already know that we are disadvantaged in so many other ways and something like technology, Madam Speaker, is a great equaliser. We need to ensure that we have world class telecommunications, Internet. We need to start pushing our people in that direction.

Madam Speaker, we, as a Government, had a visit quite recently from the Estonian Government. They were talking about e-governance and other things. But they also talked about technology, Madam Speaker, and them taking a very conscious decision to ensure that they were at the pinnacle of technology where everybody had access to the Internet. And not just basic internet—cutting edge Internet. Madam Speaker, they have slightly over a million people, I think it is, in Estonia. But they are pushing everyone in that direction because like us, they don't produce a lot of things. But they are banking on their people and they are banking on technology because you only need to see the 13 year olds that are writing apps and getting multi-million dollar contracts to realise how that can transcend borders, class, age, all those things. Madam Speaker, we cannot look at it and say oh I can't get my football and it is digitised and say oh well, I will go for a walk and read a book and think that is the end of it. We are hurting our future generation by not demanding the things that we are paying for.

Madam Speaker, again, why waste our time down here making laws when we don't do the second part? It is just like filling your house with every gadget, every valuable object and then leaving the door open and hoping that nobody is going to come in and take it out. If you leave doors open, if you leave stones unturned, people will take advantage of you. For those people that cannot defend themselves, that is our role, Madam Speaker. We need to do better. We need to demand from those in charge of enforcement, those in charge of policy, those in charge of technology—which are our people, Madam Speaker, like the board and all of this, they need to get on the same page and I agree with some of the speakers before, or they need to get out.

Madam Speaker, people have to know that there are consequences. Businesses that get a lot from this jurisdiction in terms of profits and in many instances, guaranteed profits, need to step up to the plate because just like their shareholders that they answer to, we are owed something as well as the clients, because without us, those profits might not be as high.

Madam Speaker, I know some of the technicalities. I know about our size and I know about all that stuff. But I also know this, we are no smaller than some counties and little townships somewhere else and if those people can demand superior broadband—and when I read the Motion in the binder, I looked up some of the sizes of towns, et cetera, and just tried to do a comparison, Madam Speaker, and what was found is that this is actually the world over where people sometimes have to fight to get what they are promised and what they pay for or in some instances, people take it upon themselves and they form broadband co-ops and they lay their own fibre in their own areas and they go out and get specialists and they pay in a closed group for the service just to show it can be done, Madam Speaker. One just has to

look on the Internet and see some of those success stories where in some instances they are quadrupling their service and halving and quartering the cost.

Madam Speaker, let's not let it get to that, where everyone wants to be a backyard broadband specialist. Let's ensure people get what they pay for, what they are told when they are signing these contracts that we have heard that they can't get out of. Let's ensure that both sides live up to their bargains because if not, Madam Speaker, why are we here? What are we doing?

Madam Speaker, with those few words, I fully support the Motion brought by the Member for North Side and seconded by the Member for East End because if it doesn't start here, where?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Fourth Elected Member for the district of Bodden Town.

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr., Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I have been challenged to get up and speak, so I didn't want to disappoint the Member for East End but I was already planning to and I promise I won't be long.

Madam Speaker, I actually a few weeks ago was toying with the idea of bringing a similar motion but I obviously have the benefit of being a Member of the Government and also more involved on the technology side as councillor for e-government. So I did have a discussion in caucus with the Minister and he assured me that there was a plan to deal with these issues that have been raised here today and a lot of my concern actually was personal in nature because I recently subscribed for broadband services and telephone services. I am not going to mention too many company names, but I do believe in naming and shaming, but I will be responsible today.

My experience has been similar to those voiced by most of the Members that have spoken so far. Because I am a Member of the Government and people recognise that my background is in technology, I do get a lot of the complaints. I want to first say that I have to defend the current members of the ICTA board to some extent because I was instrumental in advising the Minister and giving him certain names of people who I thought would work well on that board. I think that the changes that the Minister has talked about, Madam Speaker, which will be coming shortly, have been inspired by those members of the board. I have some confidence that there are members on the board who are just as concerned if not more and who are taking their jobs very seriously. Some of them I have worked with extensively throughout my career in technology and I know that they are well aware of the issues and they know how to sort them out.

I did discuss, Madam Speaker, this issue with the Minister and, as I said, I was prepared to bring a motion but having the benefit of sitting in caucus with the Minister I decided to hear him out and hear what his plans were and I am satisfied as well that he has a very good grasp of the issues and that they will be resolved fairly shortly. I am using the recent passage of the fuel regulations as an example of how seriously he takes these issues. So I have every confidence that he is working hard with his team to get them resolved.

Madam Speaker, I am concerned and I have been concerned for quite some time. As I said, my experience started years—many, many years ago—but recently I actually signed up for a broadband service and there was no end of issues that I encountered and me being a good citizen, you know, would call support from that particular company and report the problem to them and, Madam Speaker, as everyone has said, you know, you get the phone answered by some person I think it was in Panama or somewhere who barely spoke English and who spent most of his time arguing technical points with me on the phone. It got so bad, Madam Speaker, that I at one point asked him when he became a Microsoft Certified System Engineer as I was and he told me that that was irrelevant, that the issue was somewhere outside in the line. But I told him to stop reading from the script and report to his supervisor the problem and I told him exactly what the problem was.

It is a capacity issue in many cases where these companies—they are signing up as many clients as they can. As many as they can—it is a free for all and they don't have the capacity to service all of these clients adequately. So what happens is you end up fighting over bandwidth with other customers. I pointed that out to him but, again, he told me that no, the issue is with the line outside and we will send a technician soon. I said, *It is a brand new line, it was just installed. I doubt that there is anything wrong with it, but go ahead.* What did give me some comfort, Madam Speaker, is when the on-island technician showed up, it was a young Caymanian guy who was obviously well-trained, knew his stuff and immediately agreed with me what the issue was. Made one phone call to his office, they upped my bandwidth because I was getting nowhere near what I was paying for and I haven't had any issues since. But I have experienced the little round circles—I can't watch cricket. I can't watch many things at home but that has now been resolved.

What is ironic, Madam Speaker, is that the same technician who came out to my home and told me that when their new television service is launched, said I wouldn't qualify for it because of the poor quality of my bandwidth. Mind you, this is the same company—the poor quality of bandwidth that I was experiencing. So I said, *Your own internal standards are going to prevent you from giving me television service based on what you are offering me as a customer.*

And he said, *Yes, it is unfortunate but this new television service has very strict rules.* I said, *Well let's get this resolved quickly then because I need to watch my cricket.*

Madam Speaker, I spent some time recently at ICCI with one of their technology classes. I was privileged to have been invited to—along with the Director of e-government, Mr. Ian Tibbetts, to present Government's vision for e-government to the class that was meeting that night. The discussion became so involved and the students became so excited that the class was supposed to end, I think, at 9:30 and we were there until, I think, almost 11 o'clock. The students at that university, at that school, became so involved in what we were doing and excited by the prospect of what this Government can now offer and will offer in the future, that the discussion went well, well over time. But in the back of my mind, Madam Speaker, I kept having those same worries because I have been given responsibility for leading Government's e-government initiative from the political side.

I have shared a chairmanship of the steering committee with the Honourable Deputy Governor and throughout that entire session that was worrying me because if there is one thing that will kill this initiative, it will be the poor quality of Internet access throughout this country. Everything that we are building, everything that we are doing in terms of pushing forward with e-government and revolutionising how Government does business and how Government makes contact with our citizens and the services that we offer the people of this country will depend heavily on good quality Internet access, Madam Speaker, and without that, our initiative will fail. We will waste significant amounts of money and I do not want to be the individual who is going to be labelled as the person responsible for that failure.

So, I am pleased and I am convinced that the Minister has an extremely good grasp and handle on the situation and that it is being addressed.

Madam Speaker, just in terms of what we are doing with e-government, and I want the service providers to understand this: what we are trying to promote is a partnership with these technology firms, with these Internet providers and communication providers. Government is not going to be able to do this alone but, again, we need them to step up to the plate. We need them to acknowledge what they are doing wrong and don't force Government's hands every time that there is an issue. You know, we almost have to come here and beat them up in order to get them to take us seriously. You know, when we liberalised the telecom market we opened up opportunities for so many companies that have come in here and it is not really a situation where we want to be punishing the technology firms but we can't accept substandard service and quality. As the Member from George Town just said, you know, we have to protect those who can't protect themselves.

One major area of concern for me, Madam Speaker, I just touched on briefly, is the outsourcing of support. That is a major, major concern. When you pick up the phone and you can't get help immediately, the individual does not communicate well with you and on top of that, he or she is located in some other jurisdiction. That, I know, has come about because these companies are trying to save every penny they can save. But penny wise and pound foolish is what I call that because what they are doing is offering a diminished service and they are still charging us an arm and a leg.

[Pause]

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: Sorry, Madam Speaker, one second.

[Pause]

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: Thank you, Madam Speaker, I am just being reminded by the Minister and I actually had a point to discuss this later on in my debate, but back before—pre-liberalisation—when we had one major service provider that was staffed primarily by Caymanian technicians, these individuals, and one of them now sits on the ICTA board, were well-trained. I remember a lot of them spent a lot of time overseas in the UK. They came back and they were considered the cream of the crop. Some of them actually have been seconded to other jurisdictions because of the expertise and how good they were at doing their jobs. Now we are in a situation, Madam Speaker, where these same individuals are now losing their jobs and being replaced by individuals from outside of this country and it is a shame. It is a travesty because they are the individuals who show up. They are the individuals who show up and get the job done. I stand by those Caymanians who are in the telecom industry and who are trained to work in the telecom industry and I agree with the Member from North Side, we need to protect them and make sure that they are the ones who are retained in these companies.

The Speaker: Honourable Member for Bodden Town, is this a convenient time for the luncheon break or will you soon . . .

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: Yes, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: All right. We will reconvene at 2:30 pm.

Proceedings suspended at 1:02 pm

Proceedings resumed at 2:35 pm

The Speaker: Proceedings are resumed.
I will recognise the Honourable Premier.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Madam Speaker, at the request of the House I am proposing to adjourn proceedings until 10:00 am tomorrow in order to facilitate a number of Members who wish to attend a funeral this afternoon.

The Speaker: The question is that this honourable House do adjourn until 10:00 am tomorrow morning.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

The honourable House now stands adjourned until 10:00 am tomorrow.

At 2:35 pm the House stood adjourned until 10:00 am, Friday, 20 November 2016.

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