Eighth Meeting of Second Session of the Thirteenth House

ANGUILLA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

14 JULY 2026

(House Meetings)

Hon. Speaker

Speaker

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House Meetings

PRAYERS

OPENING OF THE SITTING

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Good morning. Members of this Honourable House will now ask the Chaplain to open us in a word of prayer.

PRAYER

Chaplin:

Good morning to all. Let us pray. Father, we thank you for this day you've given us. As we come before you with full hearts and faith and gratitude. We lift up this government and the people of Anguilla and to your loving care we acknowledge. The true wisdom, justice, and peace come from you alone. We ask for your divine guidance over every leader entrusted with responsibility to this sovereign nation. Lord, we pray you'll grant them the wisdom to make decisions that are just, fear and beneficial to all.

Give them discernment to choose what is right, courage to uphold the truth and humility as His servant, integrity and compassion. May they lead not for personal gain, but for the good of the people and the advancement of Anguilla. We pray for the unity among those in this public office. Remove division, pride and selfish ambitions.

Replace with compassion and cooperation, respect and a sincere desire to work together for the common good of Anguilla. Strengthen them in times of challenge. Help them remain steadfast in honesty. Accountability and service. We ask for your blessings upon this House, upon the Speaker and upon the people who serve grant this nation. O God, peace and stability, prosperity, protect our shores, strengthen our economy and provide opportunities for our families, our businesses. And the future generations to flourish. May every community experience hope.

Healing and renewed purpose. We pray for the people of Anguilla. And Lord, while death and violence seems to be overtaking this land, we pray you'll break the bands of evil and wickedness that your light shine upon this nation, upon this people, upon this government. Let your righteousness and compassion your faith, may your peace guide every home and community. Every leader, and may your favor rest upon this land. We declare by faith that you will guide us through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

You may be seated.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Clerk:

Confirmation of Minutes of proceedings of the Sixth Meeting of the Second Session of the thirteenth Anguilla House of Assembly.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

We have members, we have one. To move a motion for the confirmation of the minutes, have a look at it. See if there are any amendments to be made.

Hon.Shellya Rogers-Webster:

Mr. Speaker, I move that the minutes be accepted.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Is there a seconder?

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, I second.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

The motion has been moved. That the minutes. Of the proceedings of the Sixth Meeting of the Second Session of the thirteenth Anguilla House. of Assembly be accepted. As circulated. Those in favour. Those against. The ayes have it. Minutes of the proceedings. Of the sixth meeting of the second session of the thirteenth Anguilla House of Assembly. Have been moved and seconded and accepted as circulated without amendments. Both of the reasons.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Clerk:

Oath of Allegiance, new Members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Clerk:

Announcements by the direction of the Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I have received apologies from the Honourable Speaker of this Assembly. I've also received apologies for the Honourable Member for Island Harbour District one and the Leader of the Opposition. The chair, as you would know that. We just celebrated the 50th. Anniversary of this Honorable House. I'm asking the chair who would have cheered that committee. There's a report that he could report to this Honourable House and to the people of Anguilla. We would be.

More than happy to do that. There is a report and there are some printing issues, some technical issues, OK seeing that we're having some technical issues, the chair for that 50th anniversary celebration has promised that he would. Present that report at the next sitting of this Honourable House.

QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS

Clerk:

Questions. The Honourable Member for Road North to ask a series of questions.

QUESTIONS ON HEALTH CONDITIONS

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I recognise the Member. For Road North.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the opportunity. Good morning. To everyone who's listening in to this House of Assembly session and good morning to all my colleagues in this Honourable House. I have questions for the Honourable Member for West End and Minister of Health. Will the Honourable Minister state the number of persons who were diagnosed and treated at the Princess Alexandra Hospital for acute myocardial infraction heart attack during each of the following periods 1st January 2016 to 21st December 2020 and 4th January 2021 to 31st December 2025?

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I rise to answer the questions. In fact, the first question, but there are a series of questions that. From one to three are pretty much related regarding the numbers that are required, so I'm not sure if the Honourable Member wants me to answer individually or because there will be a repeat of a number of those questions.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Yes, if you just would say which part of the questions he's answering, I'm ok with that.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

You may proceed, Member.

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

Mr. Speaker. To answer the question, the response, the figures presented. Our hospital treated numbers from the Princess Alexandra Hospital. As the island's only emergency and inpatient facility. These data captured virtually all serious events that present for care. They show how many people were treated. Not how many people in Anguilla actually developed these conditions. Hospital data therefore describes utilization, not population incidents or prevalence.

Table 1. Mr. Speaker, persons treated by the Princess Alexandra Hospital for the specific conditions 2016 to 2025. Year 2016, 20 cancer, 4 heart attacks, 10 PEDBT. Other 10 and stroke 18. 2017. 13 cancer, 1 heart attack, 7 PEDBT or other and 21 stroke. 2018. 16 Cancer, 7 Heart attack, 2

PEDBT or other and stroke 18. 2019. 12 Cancer, 7 heart attack, 9 PEDBT or other and strokes 23. 2020. 20 Cancer, 15 heart attack. 4 PEDBT or other and 17 strokes. 2021. 14 cancer, 6 heart attack, 10 PEDBT and other and stroke 24. 2022. 13 Cancer. 5 Heart, 8 PEDBT or other and stroke 34. 2023. 15 cancer, 8 Heart attack, 15 PEDBT or other and 34 stroke. 2024. 25.

Cancer, 20 heart attack, 8 PEDBT or other and 31 stroke. 2025. 20 cancer, 10 Heart attack, 17 PEDBT or other and 35 Stroke. The total amount in that period of time. 168 Cancer, 83 Heart attack. 90 PEDBT or other and 255 stroke.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Honourable Member. So we will. We'll go to Question 5. Has the Ministry identified any statistically significant increase in the incidence of prevalence of heart attacks, strokes, blood clot related conditions or cancers in Anguilla during the period 2016 to 2025? If so, A. What principle causes or contributing factors has the Ministry identified? B. What measures has the government implemented since 2016 to reduce the incidence of these conditions? Strengthen prevention and early detection, promote healthier lifestyles and improve health outcomes for the people of Anguilla and C. Can the Honourable Minister advise whether there are any reports, statistical analysis, policy documents or strategic plans that inform the government's assessments of these trends and its response, and if so, whether he intends to table them before this Honourable House?

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, again to answer the question, has the ministry identified any statistical significant increase in the incidence or prevalence of heart attacks, strokes. Blood clot related conditions or cancers in Anguilla during the period 2016 to 2025. The response, Mr. Speaker. Questions about statistically significant changes. And incidents or prevalence require population based epidemiological. Studies not hospital utilization data. Anguilla's most recent population based assessment remains The WHO'S STEPS survey of 2016, which documented high levels of chronic disease risk factors.

And question A if so, what principle causes are contributing factors as the Minister identified? And B. What measures has the government implemented since 2016 to reduce the incidence of these conditions, strengthen prevention and early detection, promote healthier lifestyles, and improve health outcomes for the people of Anguilla? Response, Mr. Speaker. Anguilla's chronic disease burden is driven by well-known lifestyle risk factors, high salt diets, low fruit and vegetable intake, inadequate physical activity, overweight and obesity. These conditions develop over many years and should not be attributed to any single government or single calendar year.

It is also important to remember that these chronic diseases develop over many years, often decades, and should not be reasonably be attributed to the actions of a single government or to changes occurring within a single calendar year. The ministers focus remains on long-term prevention through Hearts. H.E.A.R.T.S Capital, hypertension control, diabetes management and healthy aging.

As of 2016, the following initiatives have been implemented. National NCD plan subsequent to establishing chronic disease unit in 2015 hearts Hypertension program, Hypertension registry, Move your body program, 15 program, School health program, Nutrition initiatives. Routine screening PSA pap smears. Mammography now available. Men's health initiatives strengthen primary care, improve surveillance and health information systems. Additionally, early detection and screening for cancer such as prostate, cervix and breast, rectal examinations, PSA testing, Pap smear and now mammography that is now available at Welches.

So, question 5(c), Can the Honourable Minister advise whether there are any reports, statistical analysis, policy document or strategic plans that inform the government's assessment of these trends and its response, and if so, whether he intends to table them before this Honourable House? My response, Mr. Speaker. Anguilla's most recent population based estimates of prevalence are derived from The WHO STEPS Survey of 2016, which is available on The WHO website. National Health strategic plans, DHS annual statistical publication, CMO Health profiles 2014, 2018 and 2024 press releases citing NCD burdens. Mr. Speaker.

The Ministry has not identified evidence that population based surveillance demonstrating a statistical significance increase the incidence or prevalence of these conditions during 2016 to 2025. Hospital data show trends in people treated, not incidents in the population. And should be interpreted accordingly. However, this is not to say that a chronic non-communicable diseases are not recognised as a major health threat in Anguilla.

We continue to work to improve the situation. The role of prevention and lifestyle factors cannot be understated. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member.

NATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD FACILITY

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. And Mr. Speaker, I'll go on to another set of questions. So questions for the Honourable Member for West End and Minister of Sports. Can the Honourable Minister inform this Honourable House of the current stage of the proposed National Track and Field Facility, including its progress in planning, design and procurement?

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

Mr. Speaker, if you allow me, I would defer these questions to the Honourable Jeison Bryan, who is a ministerial assistant for sports and who's played a major role in this.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Your request has been granted, Minister.

Hon.Jeison Jose Bryan:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to all Honourable Members of this House. I stand to answer question one. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for Road North for this important question. The proposed national track and field facility remains a flagship priority of this government and forms a key component of our commitment under the National Sports Policy.

I am pleased to advise. This Honourable House that the project has already received outline in planning permission. And preparatory activities are progressing as planned. The Government continues to work closely with our international partners to advance the remaining planning, technical and administrative requirements in keeping with the agreed implementation framework.

The procurement of contractors will be managed through our development partners in accordance with international accepted procurement procedures. Following the execution of the necessary agreements. This government remains fully committed to ensuring that. This project is delivered in a transparent, accountable and efficient manner for the benefit of the people of Anguilla.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question? Honorable Single Island Wide Member to elaborate a bit on what preparatory works have been done?

Hon.Jeison Jose Bryan:

Thank you for the supplementary question. As indicated in the question, the planning permission has been. Permission has been granted and are progressing. So, at the moment we're still in the stage of finalizing within the international partners and then starting with the land.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Honourable Member. Question #2. Can the Honourable Member advise whether cost estimates have been completed for the enabling works and supported amenities of the proposed track and field facility, including spectator seating, lighting, changing rooms, drainage? And field event areas? And if so, what are those estimated costs?

Hon.Jeison Jose Bryan:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I thank Honourable Member for the question. At this stage, the detailed cost estimates for enabling works and supporting amenities, including spectators, seating, lightning, changing facilities, drainage system and field events areas have not yet finalised. As Honourable Members are aware, this project is being undertaken through the World Athletics Cut Out Project 11 partnership.

While significant support is being provided under that program, the. Anguilla remains responsible for funding certain preparatory works and any additional components that fall outside of the scope of financial allocation of Project 11. Accordingly, our immediate priority is to ensure that the preparatory works are completed and that the construction of the track commences without unnecessary delay. Once the design process has been completed and the final costing have been confirmed, I will be pleased to provide this Honourable House with a detailed estimates.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Honourable Member. Question #3 Can the Honourable Member advise whether the funding has been identified or budgeted for the enabling works and supporting amenities associated with the proposed track and field facility?

Hon.Jeison Jose Bryan:

I thank Honourable Member for the question. Yes, funding has been identified for the initial phase of the project. In the government's 2026 budget, in excess of the 1.5 million EC dollars was allocated under this the capital. Program for sports development from this allocation, the initial enabling works associated with the national tracking field facility, including land clearing, surveying and other preparatory activities will be financed at this. At the same time, the government continues to engage closely with our development partners to secure the implementation of a broader project and ensure that the remaining components of the facility are delivered in accordance with the agreed program. This investment demonstrates our commitment to. moving this along a weighted national project from planning into implementation.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you again, Member. Can the Honourable Member indicate the anticipated timeline for the commencement of the proposed track and field facility and state the anticipated date on which construction is expected to begin?

Hon.Jeison Jose Bryan:

Thank you, Honourable Member, for the question. Our initial expectation was for construction to commence towards the end of July 2026. However, additional time has been required to complete the remaining plan approvals. Finalise the necessary agreements and conclude the procurement process. Based on the current schedule, we anticipate completing the outstanding planning requirements by the end of August 2026 with the contract expected to be awarded by mid-September 2026. Subject to the successful completion of these processes, construction is expected to commence shortly thereafter during September 2026 with an estimated construction period of approximately 5-6 months. I wish to emphasise that these timelines remain subject to the timely completion of the procurement procedures, financing arrangements, regulatory approvals and weather conditions.

Nevertheless, this Government remains steadfast in its commitment to delivering Anguilla's first national track and field facility and we will continue to keep this Honourable House and the people of Anguilla informed of the project progress.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS PROJECT

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Mr. Speaker, I'll now have some questions for the Single Island Wide Member and the Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

You may proceed.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you. Question one, can the Honourable Minister state the total expenditure incurred to date on the agricultural lands? The project located on the land previously designated for the proposed National Track and Field Facility, providing a breakdown of costs for equipment, labor, water and any other project related expenditure.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Morning, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Morning.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Good morning to the people of Anguilla. I thank the Member for the question. The Agricultural Lands project was established to increase local food production. Strengthen national food security and demonstrate sustainable crop production practices. The expenditure incurred to date is as follows. Land preparation, beautification and debris removal. $38,727.97. Labour 2 workers over approximately 5 months. 36,000 EC dollars. Planting material, which includes seedlings and seeds. Plus fertilizer. 10,000 EC dollars.

Water 509,740 gallons. The cost that is between the 15th of January to the 20th of May, that is the usage period and the cost is 21,470 EC dollars. Total expenditure to date. $106,197.97 EC. The expenditure includes the initial clearing. And preparation of the site, removal of debris to make the land suitable for cultivation. The beautification of the area that now allows for an access road around the entire 5 acre plot. Expenditure also includes labor associated with land preparation.

Planting, irrigation, crop maintenance, harvesting and general field operations, as well as the purchase of planting material and water required for crop production. This vital farmland is being used for its intended purposes to produce food for the people of Anguilla. Food that would otherwise be imported at high cost from overseas, I cannot think. Of a better use for agricultural lands but for the production of high quality food free from pesticides and long shipping times.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Question #2 Can the Honourable Minister state the actual yields achieve under the Agricultural Lands Project since its commencement, providing a breakdown by crop and the quantities harvested?

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you for the question. Since the commencement of the project. Produce has been sold to supermarkets. Directly to customers at the Department of Natural Resources. And donated to government departments, sporting clubs and community organizations. The production achieve is outlined. Below. Okra. 300 lbs at $7 EC a pound . Estimated revenue 2100 EC dollars. Eggplant 157 lbs at $7 EC a pound. Estimated revenue. 1099 EC dollars.

Sweet Peppers 476 lbs at $5 EC a pound. 2380 EC dollars.

Tomatoes. 400 lbs at $5 EC a pound, $2000 in revenue. Watermelon 540 lbs at $5 EC per pound, $2700 EC in revenue. Pumpkin. 615 lbs at $3 EC a pound. $1845.00 EC in revenue. Cherry tomatoes 89 lbs at $7 EC per pound yielded 623 dollars EC. Corn 300lbs ear of corn at $5 EC a ear $1500 EC in revenue. Seasoning Peppers. 45.5 lbs at 7 EC per pound.

Yielded. $318.50 EC. In revenue. Leafy greens, which includes kale, celery and Bok Choy. 190 lbs at $5 EC per pound, $950 EC collected in revenue. Total estimated revenue $15,515.50. The project has demonstrated the productive potential of the site while increasing the availability of fresh, locally produced food. In addition to commercial sales, produce was donated to government departments, sporting organizations and community groups, contributing to broader community and food security objectives. I wish to highlight the various institutions that benefited from the department's donation of produce.

Zeniada Haven. Ministry of Health. The Move Your Body initiative. Blue Dolphin Cricket Club. Princess Alexandra Hospital. His Majesty's Prison. School breakfast fundraisers. The Anguilla Hotel and Tourism Association and the Anguilla Tourist Board various senior citizen homes. The value of the donated crops. Is approximately $1900 EC dollars.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Supplementary Question. Do the Honorable Minister have any record of wastages and if not, can it be presented to the House at a later time?

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you for the question. Wastage is still being accounted for as there are several crops still in that plot of land, and that information will be gathered once the entire crop season is completed.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Question #3 Can the Honourable Minister state whether a cost benefit analysis has been undertaken for the Agricultural Lands Project to evaluate its productivity, financial performance and value for public expenditure, and if so, can the findings be provided to this Honourable House?

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you for the question. At this stage, a formal cost benefit analysis has not been undertaken for the Agricultural Lands Project. However, some of the benefits of this initiative are as follows. 1. A complete review of access to affordable water for farming. 2. The turning over of some 5 acres of land for farmers that is already prepped and beautified for maximum benefit. This includes irrigation and ground cover already being in place. 3.

The area will now be a turnkey opportunity for farmers. The departments initial priority was to establish the project, restore the land to a productive state and assess crop performance under local growing conditions. Records have been maintained and the project expenditure. Crop yields, water usage, and revenue generated. However, this data have not yet been consolidated into a formal cost benefit analysis.

The department intends to undertake a comprehensive cost benefit analysis before the commencement of the next planting season. This assessment will evaluate the projects productivity, financial performance, operational efficiency and overall value for public expenditure. The results will guide future production planning, improve resource allocation and support informed decision-making to ensure the long-term sustainability and success. The initiative.

The objective of the pilot project was to demonstrate that large scale vegetable production is achievable in Anguilla and to provide confidence to supermarkets and other buyers that there is potential to reduce imports through reliable. Local production. The project also highlighted an important lesson. For local agriculture to be successful as a people, we have to cut back on imports.

Government must play a leading role in stabilising the market, which includes coordinating production and ensuring that farmers can consistently supply high quality produce in the quantities required by buyers. This approach is intended to strengthen and support the farming sector, creating opportunities for farmers rather than competing with them.

UNITED KINGDOM PROPERTY PURCHASE

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Honourable Member. Mr. Speaker, I'll now go into questions for the Honourable Member for Sandy Hill and Premier and Minister of Finance.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

You may proceed, Member.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Can the Honourable Premier inform this honorable host whether a site has been identified for the proposed purchase in the of property in the United Kingdom and if so, provide its location and address?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you. Good morning to you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to the Members of this Honourable House and the listening and viewing public.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Morning.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for the questions raised. There has been considerable commentary about the Government's consideration of property in the United Kingdom. That scrutiny is welcomed. Public funds must always be subject to careful examination. But responsible government requires us to look beyond immediate price of an investment and consider the lasting value it can create for the people of Anguilla. Mr. Speaker, this proposal is not about prestige, nor is it about acquiring property for its own sake. It is about whether Anguilla can secure a permanent fit for purpose asset in one of the world's most important diplomatic and commercial centers, an asset that can strengthen our representation, support official business, advanced investment and economic opportunities, and serve the interests of Anguilla for future generations. Mr. Speaker.

To answer the first question. Can the Honorable Premier inform this Honorable House whether a site has been identified for the proposed purchase in the United Kingdom and if so, provides a location and address? Mr. Speaker, a particular property is presently under consideration and the government is continuing to undertake due diligence in respect of that property. The process has not yet been completed and no final decision has been made to proceed with an acquisition. The government is also keeping its options open and continues to review other suitable opportunities until a final determination has been made. Given that the process remains active and is commercially sensitive, it would not be appropriate at this stage to publicly disclose the location or address of the property under consideration.

Premature disclosure could prejudice the Government's negotiating position and its ability to secure the best possible terms on behalf of the people of Anguilla.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Question #2. Can the Honorable Premier state the proposed purchase price of the property in the United Kingdom?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, the proposed purchase price is not being disclosed at this stage, while due diligence and negotiations remain ongoing and the government retains the option to pursue other suitable properties. I can, however, remind this Honourable House that the government had originally included an allocation at EC $9.5 million in the supplementary budget.

Which will not be included? Which will be included in a further supplementary budget? That provision is intended to facilitate the potential acquisition of property under consideration together with associated legal, due diligence, professional and other ancillary costs. The EC $9.5 million is therefore a proposed overall budgetary envelope and to date, no binding commitment to purchase has been made.

Thank you.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Question #3 Can the Honourable Premier advise to the total expenditure incurred to date in connection with the proposed purchase of the property in the United Kingdom, including legal fees, valuation costs, due diligence costs, consultancy fees and any other related costs?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, the government has incurred, accrued or committed expenditure in undertaking the legal and technical due diligence necessary to determine whether the property presently under consideration is suitable for acquisition. It is important to distinguish between amounts already invoiced or paid, professional fees that have accrued but have not yet been invoiced, and expenditure authorised for work that is still being completed. Legal professional fees in the sum of approximately £27,497 has accrued to date. No legal fees have yet been paid as no invoice has been submitted through the Attorney General's Chambers.

Legal and Property Search disbursements approximately £2437.42 cents plus 20% VAT given a total of approximately £2924.90. Technical due diligence Approximately £ 20,061 and this package comprises a building survey, a mechanical and electrical survey of phase one environmental assessment, a reinstatement cost assessment, and area referencing. Specialist CCTV drainage survey. The total cost of £2640.00 has been authorised but not yet incurred. Damp and waterproofing inspection, the inspection and report are being provided at no cost to the government.

A fee would arise only if the vendor is subsequently instructed to undertake remedial works. No such works have been instructed. Based on the cost presently identified, the total freeze fees accrued, invoiced or committed amount to approximately £53,123. This figure is subject to final reconciliation. The figure does not include any completion fee that may become payable to the Property Search agent if a purchase is completed, any remedial or fit note works that may subsequently be approved, or any further specialist or

professional advice that may be required. The legal fees have not yet been finalised. If the transaction does not proceed, the professional fees will be subject to review and may be reduced. Any disbursements already incurred would remain payable.

No purchase has been completed. The expenditure to date relates to the legal, structural, mechanical, electrical, environmental and other investigations required to inform the Government's decision and protect the public interest before any acquisition is acquired.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Question #5. Can the Honourable Premier state the estimated annual recurring cost of owning and operating the proposed property in the United Kingdom, providing a breakdown of anticipated expenditure for maintenance, insurance, security, property taxes, parking charges, utilities, management fees and any other recurring costs?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker. Preliminary financial work has been undertaken to assess the likely recurring costs associated with the accommodation options currently under consideration in the United Kingdom. Based on the information available at this stage, the gross annual operating cost is estimated to be in a region of £100,000 per annum. This is a high-level planning estimate and remains subject to confirmation through the ongoing legal, technical and financial due diligence.

The estimate provides for the principal cost ordinarily associated with owning and operating a property of this nature, including insurance, utilities, routine and planned maintenance, statutory inspections. And compliance, security and access arrangements, property management and professional oversight and provision for periodic repairs. The final net cost will depend on the particular operating arrangements ultimately adopted, including the extent and timing of government occupation. And any opportunities to have said part of the cost through the appropriate use of the premises, including leasing of space.

Mr. Speaker is equally important that this Honourable House considers the substantial wider benefits alongside the recurrent cost. A permanent government presence in the United Kingdom would provide Anguilla with a stable and visible base for official business, strengthen its representation and engagement with the United Kingdom Government and other partners. Provide appropriate facilities for meetings and investment promotion, reduce long-term reliance on rented accommodation and secure public asset with enduring strategic value, among other direct and indirect benefits. The Government's assessment is therefore not limited to the cost of maintaining a building.

It is considering the overall value to Anguilla, including the operational, diplomatic, economic and financial benefits. That could be realised over the longer term. The government expects that where the right property and operating arrangements are secured, those broader benefits would substantially outweigh the ongoing cost of ownership. Given that the due diligence process is still being completed, it would be premature to provide a detailed breakdown that may later prove inaccurate or misleading.

A full operating cost assessment will be advanced alongside the acquisition.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Mr. Speaker, I inadvertently left though question four, so. I would like to go back to question before I missed question four in my line of questions.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

It's allowed.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, question four can the Honourable Premier advise whether she intends to table before this Honourable House the relevant documents relating to the proposed purchase of the property in the United Kingdom, including Executive Council approval, valuation reports, due diligence reports and any legal opinions obtained?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, the government recognises the importance of transparency in relation to any proposed acquisition involving public funds, and it is our intention to keep this honourable House appropriately informed as the process advances. At this stage, however, the matter remains under active consideration and the commercial process has not been concluded.

It would therefore not be prudent to table documents that may contain sensitive valuation information. Technical. Findings, legal advice or negotiating positions while those matters are still being assessed. Executive Council papers are also governed by the established rules relating to the confidentiality of Executive Council proceedings, while legal opinions are ordinarily protected by legal professional privilege. Once the process has been concluded, whether the government proceeds with an acquisition or decides otherwise, we will review the information available and determine what documents are suitable.

Summaries can responsibly be provided to this Honourable

House. Having regard to legal privilege, commercial confidentiality, data protection obligations and the public interest.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Question number six, Can the Honorable Premier state the total amount paid to date for the fitting out of office space for the United Kingdom Representative for the Government of Anguilla as approved by Executive Council?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, no amount has been paid by the government for the fitting out of office space for the United Kingdom representative. As an interim arrangement pending any final decision to secure suitable Government premises in the United Kingdom, responsibility for securing appropriate office accommodation rests with the Government of Anguilla's United Kingdom representative. That arrangement will remain in place unless and until suitable Government premises are secured and an alternative arrangement is formally approved.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Question seven, will the proposed purchase of the property in the United Kingdom necessitate any changes to the contractual arrangements of the Government of Anguilla's, United Kingdom representative and if so, what changes are contemplated?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, no changes to the United Kingdom Representatives contractual arrangements have been determined or are presently contemplated solely as a consequence of the proposed acquisition. Should an acquisition proceed, the Government would need to establish clear arrangements governing the occupation, use, administration and management of the premises. Legal counsel has therefore been instructed to ensure that any occupation and use arrangements appropriately save. guard, the Government of Anguilla's interest and operational position.

Any consequential change to the representatives contract or administrative arrangements would be considered separately and would be subject to the appropriate process.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Question eight. Can the Honourable Premier advise whether additional staff will be required to operate the proposed property in the United Kingdom and, if so, whether the cause of those staff will be borne by the Government of Anguilla or by the Office of the United Kingdom representative?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker. No determination has been made that additional permanent staff will be required to operate the proposed property. The operating model is still being assessed. Where necessary, the government may make use of contracted property management, maintenance, cleaning or security services, rather than assuming at this stage that additional permanent employees would be required.

Should a future assessment establish the need for additional staffing or contracted services, any proposal will be subject to the normal budgetary and approval processes. As the Office of the United Kingdom Representative is funded by the Government of Anguilla, any approved staffing or operating expenditure would ultimately be borne by the Government through the approved budget. Irrespective of the administrative unit through which it is managed. Mr. Speaker, I reiterate that no final decision has been made and no binding purchase commitment has been entered into.

The government will continue to proceed carefully and responsibly, and any acquisition will be advanced only after the necessary due diligence, affordability and financial assessments have been completed and the appropriate approvals obtained. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

GOVERNMENT OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Mr. Speaker, I'll now add some questions of the Honourable Single Island Wide Member and Minister for Infrastructure.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

You may proceed, Member.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Can the honourable Minister state the total amount the Government of Anguilla is expected to pay in rent for office accommodation during 2026.

Hon.Jose Vanterpool:

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to all the

Members of this Honourable House, the House of Assembly staff, as well as the people of Anguilla who may be listening and watching. I'd like to thank the Honourable Member from the Road North for his question. The response to question one can Honourable Minister state the total amount of the Government of Anguilla is expected to pay for rent for office accommodation during 2026? The response, Mr. Speaker.

Based on the government's total rental commitments, the total rental expenditure for 2026 is projected at approximately EC $2,163,489.48, with a monthly rental commitment of EC $180,290.79. The Ministry of Finance records these expenditures under the broader budget category of rental of buildings. And historical expenditure specifically relating to office accommodation is therefore not readily available.

Should the Honourable Members require a comparative analysis of prior years, this can be undertaken and provided if wished so. Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that the Five Ma Building is the only additional office accommodation secured during this administration's tenure. The lease was necessary to address long-standing issues with government departments occupying. Additions that will no longer fit for purpose and to provide suitable accommodation while preparatory works are undertaken for the construction of the new government headquarters, Mr. Speaker.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Question two, can the Honourable Minister advise of the total expenditure incurred to date in 2026 under renovation and retrofitting of government office accommodation, including a breakdown of costs by building and department?

Hon.Jose Vanterpool:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, again, I would like to thank the Honourable Member for the question, the response. As of today, the Government of Anguilla has incurred expenditure of EC $753,166.11 during 2026 on the renovation and retrofitting of government office accommodation. The expenditure to date is broken down as follows. The Royal Anguilla Police Force construction of office space. $292,346.40.

The five Mar building retrofit works which includes the housing of Radio Anguilla, the Department of Education and Statistics. $460,819.71 This brings total expenditure to date to a total of $753,166.11. Mr. Speaker, just a further note, in 2008, the Government of Anguilla commissioned a Master Plan Office Accommodation Study, which recommended the centralisation of government services to improve operational efficiency, enhance service delivery, reduce the financial burden associated with rental office accommodation, and address significant overcrowding across government offices at that time in 2008, Mr. Speaker. 16 government departments were operating from rented accommodation. At an annual cost of approximately EC $3.1 million annually, while more than 12 departments were experiencing overcrowded and unsuitable working conditions.

The study also highlighted the benefits of energy efficient building design, future expansion capacity and enhanced security and parking. Mr. Speaker, although funding was allocated over several years to support the initiative, progress remained very limited. In 2024, the Ministry of Infrastructure updated the findings of that 2008 report and recommendations of the master plan and proposed the first phase of construction of two four story government office buildings. This administration has since taken the project beyond the planning stage by allocating funding not only for. continued retrofitting of government office accommodation to facilitate the departmental relocations, but also for the engagement of a specialist consultant to undertake a comprehensive review of the Government's current accommodation requirements and to provide full management services for the development of the new Government headquarters.

The temporary retrofitting of office accommodation is therefore a necessary interim measure to ensure government services continue to operate effectively. While preparations for the new government headquarters continue to advance? It is also worth noting that the current program represents the first concerted effort in many years to move beyond studies and recommendations toward the implementation of a modern, fit for purpose government office accommodation solution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Member. Mr. Speaker, I have no further questions.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank You Member.

GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS

GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Clerk:

Government statements and recent developments, none.

PAPERS

PAPERS

Clerk:

Papers, none.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Clerk:

Reports from Committees, none.

PETITIONS

PETITIONS

Clerk:

Petitions, none.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Clerk:

Government notices, none.

PRIVATE MEMBERS NOTICES

PRIVATE MEMBERS NOTICES

Clerk:

Private Members notices, none.

MOTIONS

MOTION 10 OF 2026: CONTRIBUTORY PENSION SCHEME FOR MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Clerk:

Motions. Motion 10 of 2026 - 2/13 HOA Introduction of Contributory Pension Scheme for Members of the House of Assembly.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I recognise the mover of the motion, the Member for Road North.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wish to move. Motion 10/2026 - 2/13HOA Which is. Shortly entitled Introduction of a Contributory Pension Scheme for Members of the House of Assembly. Mr. Speaker. Resolution. Should I read the resolution? Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Yes.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Whereas, the Legislators Pension Act Revised Statutes of Anguilla Chapter L35 provides pension benefits for Members and former Members of the House of Assembly which are funded from the Government of Anguilla's Consolidated Fund. And whereas Members of the hosts of Assembly are not presently required to contribute towards the cause of those pension benefits. And Whereas principles of fairness, accountability and fiscal responsibility support the introduction of a contributory pension arrangement for Members of the House of Assembly. And whereas other Common Commonwealth jurisdictions, including Barbados, the Bahamas, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands and the Falkland Islands have adopted contributory pension arrangements for legislators or Members of their legislatures recognising that elected representatives should contribute towards the cost of retirement benefits they receive?

Be it resolved. That is Honorable House calls upon the Government of Anguilla to bring this before the Honourable House by December to the 31st 2026 or sooner. Legislation to amend the Legislators Pension Act and any other relevant enactments to establish a contributory pension scheme for Members of the House of Assembly. 1.

Require members of the House of Assembly to make regular contributions towards their future pension benefits. 2. Establish an appropriate contribution rate and mechanism for the collection, administration and management of such contributions. 3. Provide for government contributions to this scheme where considered appropriate. 4. Protect and preserve pension rights and benefits accrued by current and former Members on the existing law and 5. Promote greater transparency, accountability and long-term fiscal sustainability in funding of legislators pensions.

Be it resolved. Be it further resolved. That is, Honorable House affirms the principle that those entrusted with the stewardship of public funds should contribute fairly thorough as a pension benefits to which they may become entitled. Thank you very much, Madam, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Is there a seconder?

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, I second.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

It has been moved and seconded. I will now ask the mover of the motion. To explain merits principles of this motion.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker. There's no better time to get something done. Then now. In this present time. There may be many questions as to why this was not done before. But delay does not mean denied. The record will show. That when the present pension scheme was developed. Many public servants did not pay into it, but they benefited. As former employees of the Anguilla Public Service. It would have been great for us to consider and establish workers in this as well.

Of the Anguilla public service, but that will come soon to this House. That said, the idea to introduce or introduce and include a contributory element for Members of Parliament in the pension scheme of the Anguilla Public Service. Is now. It is known that Members of Parliament, including the Honourable Speaker, benefit from pension after a period of service and following retirement once they have achieved the required age. They have not paid into it in the past. And we are not here to blame anyone or any political party, but a remedy this abominably and fix it. and that is why we are tabling it here today, Mr. Speaker.

The record will show that on Tuesday the 14th. of July 2026, a motion was laid before this Parliament to ensure that after 50 years. After the first Parliament, this matter is being finally made right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. Are there any Contributions to this motion? I recognise. The Member for Valley North.

Hon.Shellya Rogers-Webster:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wish to apologise in advance, Mr. Speaker, because I'm so used to saying, Madam Speaker, so if I do make an error, it is not intentional.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

You will be forgiven.

Hon.Shellya Rogers-Webster:

I rise to support this motion. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I welcome its introduction by the Opposition. The establishment of a contributory Pension system for legislators is not only the right thing to do, but it is also an important step in strengthening public confidence in our institutions. A contributory system promotes fairness, accountability and shared responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, it ensures that those who benefit from a pension also contribute to it. Consistent with the principles that apply to many workers throughout the wider Anguilla Public Service. But, Mr. Speaker, I think it's critically important. For the purpose of the general public to understand the work that has been undertaken in relation to the legislators pension.

Because I think. Mr. Speaker, there is an attempt by some particular persons to. Pretend as though this is something that is new. Mr. Speaker. I also wish to reassure this Honourable House and the people of Anguilla. That this work. In relation to. The legislators pension being contributory will be completed well before December 2026.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, considerable work has already been undertaken. And we are not starting from scratch, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the process is well advanced. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is critically important to place on public record that my support for a contributory legislators pension did not begin today on the 14th of July 2026, nor did it begin when I entered government.

When I first offered myself for election in 2022, during an interview on Klass FM with DJ Hammer in April of 2022, I was asked specifically about the Legislators Pension Fund and the Act. My response was clear and unequivocal. I believe it is critically important that pension be made contributory. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the then administration heard the interview, and I know this because several members of the then administration publicly responded to a number of issues that I raised during that interview.

Curiously, however. There was complete silence on my recommendation regarding a contributory pension. While serving in opposition. Mr. Speaker, I undertook extensive research into the Legislators Pension Act. As part of that work, I met with the head of the Public Service Pension Fund to better understand the operation of that scheme and to compare it with the existing legislators pension legislation.

Those discussions prove extremely valuable and help to shape my understanding of how meaningful the overall reform of the legislation was. I also spent many hours conducting research at the House of Assembly. I wish to place on record my sincere appreciation to the Clerk of the Assembly for his professionalism, assistance and support throughout that research, both when I served as a Member of the Opposition and since taking up government.

Mr. Speaker, my research also extended well beyond Anguilla. I conducted a comparative. Analysis of legislators pensions in Bermuda, Saint Kitts, the British Virgin Islands and the

Cayman Islands. Examining these jurisdictions provided valuable context, highlighted best practices and assisted in identifying reforms that would be appropriate for Anguilla.

Because you see, Mr. Speaker, my interest in making the legislators pension contributory and wider reform of the Pension Act did not begin. On July 14th. Nor did it begin last week Thursday. When I was presented with the motion. Madam Speaker, but farther to the public record. That exists. On November 11th, 2024, under the APM administration, a Facebook post as a simple question. This was a Facebook post from a member of the general public. Will any political party enact a contributory pension system for legislators.

Again, November 11th, 2024. My response while sitting in opposition at the time. Was equally simple. AUF absolutely will. I was able to answer with confidence, Mr. Speaker, because I knew. That my team fully supported that position. It reflected our collective commitment long before we assumed responsibility in government. More importantly, Mr. Speaker.

In May of this year, I submitted a Cabinet memorandum recommending a number of amendments to the Legislature's Pension Act. Following that submission, the Honourable Premier facilitated an extensive review session with Cabinet, during which we carefully examined each portion of the legislation. Madam, Mr. Speaker, line by line. One of the principal recommendations was that the pension system be made contributory.

Mr. Speaker, the only Member of Cabinet missing from that section. Was the Honourable. Deputy Speaker. And that because he was away on government business, every other Member of Cabinet was present and went through line by line. I believe it is important to place on record that every Member of government has consistently supported the reform, Mr. Speaker, of making it contributory. This is not a position adopted or of political convenience. It is one that has been consistently held. And actively advanced.

But the reality is this, Mr. Speaker. Making the pension contributory is only one aspect of the overall pension legislation. And as that administration, Mr. Speaker, and even before we were elected to office, we truly believe that it required a comprehensive review of the legislation overall. A comprehensive review, Mr. Speaker, doesn't mean that every single aspect of it will change.

But a comprehensive review takes into consideration where we are now and the necessary changes that are required for fairness, transparency and accountability, Madam Speaker and Mr. Speaker, I go back to saying I welcome the introduction of this of this motion because it says to us when we come back to this Honourable House in short order.

With the legislation. It will be passed with flying colours, Mr. Speaker, because the Opposition has already indicated that they support the pension fund being contributory. But, Mr. Speaker. I can't help but wonder. If perhaps a bird picked someone on the opposition side and told them how far advanced we were in that process, perhaps. Mr. Speaker. Because I find the timing to be quite interesting, welcomed, Mr. Speaker, but quite interesting. But nonetheless we are far and well advanced in our review of the overall pension legislation.

Mr. Speaker. And the Premier is now actively working with her team to advance the drafting instructions for that new legislation. And Mr. Speaker, I wish to publicly put on record my sincerest gratitude to every Member of this current administration who has from the very beginning actively supported making this legislation, this pension legislators pension contributory.

And I doesn't happen very often, but I actually agree with the Member from Road South, Madam Speaker, Mr. Speaker. There's no time better than now. Because this administration is prepared to make it contributory and I find it so interesting that having solved in office for 4.5 years and they could have had a full five years, but they call a snap election and of course were not successful.

So they had 4.5 years, Mr. Speaker, based on their own decisions. And could have brought the change legislation to the House of Assembly at any point in time during that period. I also find it quite interesting that if you scour through the Internet, through radio interviews, there is very little mention made of adjustments to the pension legislation by the members of that administration. So imagine my pleasant surprise when on Thursday of last week.

I receive the people from this Honourable House, and it had a motion in relation to the Legislators Pension. Again, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the motion and I welcome the motion because it provides an opportunity to tell the general public how actively I have been engaged with this matter even before it comes to the House. In short order, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, because you see, Mr. Speaker, when you are making adjustments and changes to legislation, certainly the legislation that predates you. And effects many people. Mr. Speaker, it's critically important that you do a comprehensive review, not just a piece meal review, Mr. Speaker, because we could have just come in and made this contributory quickly and in short order, Mr. Speaker, but making it contributory is only one consideration of the overall legislation. And so, a responsible administration, Mr. Speaker, ensures that a comprehensive review.

Is done and once the administration agrees on the necessary changes that they wish to see. Progressed, they go through that process of getting the legislation adjusted and bringing it to this Honourable House, Mr. Speaker. So once again, Mr. Speaker, I welcome this. But Mr. Speaker, I also, for the purpose of the general public, because all of the Honourable Members of this House, we have a responsibility to represent the members of the public who have elected us to public office. And I think it is critically important that we share information widely with those members of the public. And there was some information that was presented earlier by the Member for Road South and he would have indicated that he wishes that a number of the wage workers were included in this pension legislation. And I, I, I for the for the general public, I think it's critically important.

That I explain that there are two. Separate funds and I think.

For the purpose of the general public, it's important for them to understand that there's a separate. Act that deals with the legislators pension and there's a separate Act that deals with the Anguilla Public Service Pension Fund.

And on a number of occasions, both publicly and privately, members of this administration have said that we are actively working on ensuring that there are a number of critical wage workers. Who for? Decades, Mr. Speaker, Decades. There are many of them who have gone home. Who have retired and will not benefit from this? Who were considered wage workers? These are full-time staff walking the full-time critical essential workers.

That remain on the unestablished list. This administration is not waiting for another 5-10, 15 years to address it. We are addressing it now because as my Honourable Member of the House from Road South said, there's no better time than now. So, in the new budgetary process that is coming up, Mr. Speaker, those persons, those wage workers on the unestablished list, they will be added.

To the Public Service Pension Fund, Mr. Speaker, and I think it is critically important for persons to understand that this administration is actively advancing such. We have made it abundantly clear that we do not believe the existing structure is fair and fit for purpose. So that has absolutely nothing to do with the legislators pension because these are two separate and distinct acts and I do not want The general public to be confused.

I don't want the general public to be of the view that we are making adjustments to the Legislators Pension Act, but we are somehow leaving out wage/ unestablished workers. I think that's critically important, Mr. Speaker, because sometimes I feel as though things are said in this Honorable House and those things take on wings and a life of their own. This administration is actively working at. Addressing the wage worker compensation situation, Mr. Speaker, but also making them.

Established members of the Anguilla Public Service, which gives them access to the Anguilla Public Service Pension Fund and insurance that does not require a legislative change, that requires a policy direction and policy change and the necessary budgetary allotment to support that move, and this administration is committed to doing that. Mr. Speaker, and we have publicly spoken about that on many, many, many occasions, so those. (A) 2 separate and distinct things, and I don't want the general public or those wage workers to be confused by any of this, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to reference something that was posted on Facebook earlier today by a general member of the public because again, we don't want persons to be misled. The post indicated this morning we will be listening to the Anguilla House of Assembly to hear who will vote for a bill presented by the Opposition Honourable Merrick Richardson to have all Members of the Assembly pay into their own pension plan. I think it is only right that. Pay their own rather than us taxpayers. Too long the people have been taking advantage of right.

And I think it's important for me to reference this because this is an individual who often speaks on behalf of the opposition and I don't want anything to be distorted. First of all, this is not a bill that is being presented to this House. This is a motion that is being presented. Giving the public the impression that a Bill is being presented gives the public the impression that you are bringing.

A piece of legislation already ready to go that we can. Give that we can vote on and it can be passed, so giving the public that impression. Makes it seem as though there's a Bill being brought to the House. We're voting on that Bill today and once we leave this House, it will be contributory. The opposition is not bringing a Bill. The opposition is bringing a motion.

The motion simply says what you would like to have happen and you are asking the government of Anguilla to do it by such and such a time. Again, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the motion. I welcome the motion because, one. It recognises that when this administration brings it to the House, we already have Opposition support.

So, I expect that we won't have a contentious meeting that is heavily politicized. And you should have done more, and you should have done this because they have already indicated that they have a motion in support of what we intend to bring to this Honourable House and based on what I have outlined in the past few minutes, Mr. Speaker. It is clear that I personally have put on record on multiple occasions my support for the pension being contributory therefore.

Mr. Speaker. I think I have adequately updated the general public on where this Administration stands in relation to making it contributory, and I again welcome the support of the Members of the Opposition and I want to reassure them that they gave us. Deadline of December 2026. We welcome the deadline. We don't think we will need that much time, Mr. Speaker, because, as I indicated, it is well advanced. So what I will say though is that in future.

Where there are things that you feel very strongly about and it's high time that they be addressed, you do so when you have the reins of power. That being said, in the event that you don't do it when you have the reins of power, I welcome your support when the now administration is actively working to get the job done. And that's why the people of Anguilla voted us in, Mr. Speaker, They voted us in because they wanted an administration that. Chose the people that were committed to putting the people first. We recognise that this matter was a matter that has been actively ventilated.

In the public space, on numerous occasions, we recognise the importance of making it contributory. But there are also a number of us who have formally served as public servants in the Anguilla Public Service and we have contributed actively to pension. So, we support, Mr. Speaker, pension contributions.

So, there's no contention in relation to this motion. Perhaps a slight bit of hypocrisy, but no contention, Mr. Speaker, because both the Opposition and the Government of Anguilla. Agree wholeheartedly. That the pension legislation needs to ensure that it is contributory. So, I welcome the Members of

the Opposition to put forth even more motions in relation to things that this administration is actively positioning because it means that they are supporting our policy directives, our policy direction, and I smile when they talked about the wage workers.

And unestablished workers, because again, they had 4.5 years, not because of us, because of them because. They call a snap election. They had that time to get it right and they chose not to. But that's OK because this administration will ensure that the unestablished wage workers are prioritised and put first because we are committed, Mr. Speaker, to putting people first. Thank you.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you Member. Are there any other contributions? I recognise the Member.

Hon.Jose Vanterpool:

Good morning again, Mr. Speaker. And I'll be very brief in my representations, as I do believe that my Honourable colleague was quite comprehensive and detailed in her account. Well, Mr. Speaker, first thing that comes to mind when discussing this motion is the phrase mutatis mutandis. And through you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my Honourable colleagues in Opposition if they are familiar with the phrase mutatis mutandis and.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I'm not and for my purpose.

Hon.Jose Vanterpool:

So the reason that I ask this, Mr. Speaker, I find this to be quite a fitting phrase now for the benefit of the general public. Mutatis mutandis is a Latin phrase that translates to with the necessary changes having been made. And Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a time when Latin hasn't been taught in school, so I'm no expert in Latin.

In fact, the first time I came across this phrase was when reviewing the Legislative Pensions Act. Because of this phrase is contained within the Act and as my Honourable colleague would have mentioned, we have sat down as Cabinet and went through this Act line by line, word by word. And I want to take this time to thank my Honourable colleague, the Honourable Miss Shellya Rogers-Webster, for the work that she has done in spearheading advancing this initiative.

She spoke about comparing other jurisdictions, coming up with formal represent recommendations and bringing them before Cabinet for us to have discussions. The most recent of these meetings, Mr. Speaker, I had to go back to my emails, was less than a month ago. And then that's why it brought me to this, mutatis mutandis, because I do want to commend the Members of the opposition for bringing this motion and the questions today. Because as a former Member of the opposition, there are certain tools that opposition members have and the important role they play to hold government Members to account.

And there's a way to be a responsible opposition by way of bringing questions and motions. And it got other ways to be irresponsible, which we won't get into undiscussed now, Mr. Speaker. But going back to the phrase, which simply means with the necessary changes have been made, we know that this is a change that needs to be made. It's a change that we have all been in support of and while we can say why is the opposition bringing this motion today, why didn't they do it in the 4 1/2 years that they were there? The reality is, Mr. Speaker, the necessary changes were not made by the previous administration.

It was not made by administrations before that administration. But Mr. Speaker, they will be made by this administration. So to put it simply, Mr. Speaker, I think we are all here on the same page and in support of going in this direction. I'm happy to see that the opposition is trying to keep our feet to the fire, but we've already been running miles ahead on this, Mr. Speaker. And so, as my colleague said, I think that we should get this done far in advance of the December deadline.

So, we look forward to this administration being the administration to bring the necessary changes, as mentioned in my responses to the questions earlier. It's time to go beyond studies and recommendations. To actually necessitating the changes that need to be made, and we will continue to do that as we continue to put the people of Anguilla first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. Are there any other contributions? I recognised Single Island Wide Member.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, thank you. For the opportunity to present on this motion. And my colleague Mr. Vanterpool would have said. Member for Valley North, Valley South, Valley North did an excellent job. In representing us here on this side of the aisle. My colleague Mr. Vanterpool would have said that he didn't intend to belong and he presented his presentation, Mr. Speaker, and I won't be long as well because. It is something that both sides of the aisle agreed to. It is something that we have had in train.

Since we got elected, it is something that we would have promised and the Member for Valley North publicly and many

occasions would have spoken to this, as she said, and she gave this, she gave dates. And this is historical fact, Madam Speaker, as to our commitment to the people of Anguilla in terms of supporting this.

These amendments, the amendments to come in the future for the Legislative Pensions Act, Mr. Speaker. I stand to make a correction. To the mover of this motion, because I am very careful and very critical of statements made to the public. I am 1, Madam Speaker, to be very cautious.

To ensure that words that we say as elected representatives. Cannot be misunderstood and that are not misleading, and I wish to quote something the mover of the motion the Member for Road South made as he closed off his opening statement. He said. The record will show. That on Tuesday the 14th of July 2026.

A motion was laid before this Parliament. To ensure. That after 50 years. After the first Parliament, this matter is being made right. Mr. Speaker. That statement is misleading. This is a motion to have a debate to discuss. The points raised in this motion, This resolution document. Those 5. Points that was raised by the Member for Road South. This motion should not be confused with an amendment to a Bill. So, you cannot tell the public that after 50 years.

After the first Parliament that this matter is being made right, it's not going to be made right today. In fact, this is a discussion in the public domain for the people to hear ideas, to hear suggestions. So, I am looking forward. To what the mover of this Bill will bring forth in terms of their recommendations. You brought forward a motion. I hope it was not the grandstand. I hope that in his closing he's going to give us ideas.

As it relates to the percentage. That should come out how the fund should be set up. When it should be set up? I'm hoping because in here as well. It speaks to the Government bringing this to the Honourable House by the 31st of December 2026. So it must mean.

That the Member is going to significantly. Contribute to this debate today as a mover of the motion, if not. It is just grandstanding. We have been working on this. On the amendments to come forth to this Honourable House. And it will come under this administration as promised. God's spare our lives. So, Mr. Speaker.

I support this motion because it is a good motion. And because it is something that. The public that we does that, that that is dissolving of taking place. I recall, Madam, Mr. Speaker, I'm so sorry. I usually don't look up. That way afternoon. So, Mr. Speaker, I recall.

And this is this is history. This is not to. throw anybody under the bus. But I recalled in 2022. When the former Minister of Education the former representative of Valley South. Would have resigned in July of 2022. She returned to the party over the weekend. Rejoin the government of the day and one of the significant promises and commitments to the people for rejoining as stated on radio.

And Klass FM that she promised the people of this country that upon returning, one of her commitments was to work on the Legislators Pension Act to make sure that it is contributory. That is record. On radio being stated by the former Member for Valley South. Three years passed.

Madam Speaker, and the administration did nothing to bring that legislation to the House, so I just wanted to put that out there. Because. We all should be accountable for our promises in our words spoken, and so too we will be accountable for our promises. And we will be held to account and this is why. In government. We are so hard.

On certain departments and institutions, including the Attorney General's Chambers, because we are elected by the people of Anguilla based on promises, based on commitments that we have made. So forgive us when we push, We're not pushing for ourselves. We are pushing for the betterment of Anguilla and the betterment of the people of Anguilla, and we are paid. Each and everyone of us are paid to do so.

From department heads to great ordinary civil servants to Attorney general. Ministers, every one of us, we are paid. To do, to do the things that we promised to do and the things that we got elected for. So, Mr. Speaker. I would have liked to hear before I got up to speak, I would have liked to hear from the Opposition. What are their plans you know? What are their suggestions? What are they bringing to the table? It can't be just. This debate with no substance. I would have preferred to even hear it in the opening.

But. Nothing came forward. I'm looking forward to whatever is to come and as it relates to. The amendments that we intend to make to the Legislators Pension Act, that will come for public consultation. As the Member for Valley North would have said, we sat together in a room for hours. We even we even ate lunch. Sitting together, looking through the Bill and the recommendations that was brought forward. So we have done our internal assessment, we have done our internal.

Deliberations. It's only a matter of time now. For it to come to the public for further consultation and amendment to the Bill. So I hope that today isn't another one of those instances. Where the Members of Opposition. Is seeking headlines. I challenge them to bring substance to this motion. Because from time to time it is proven.

That the Leader of Opposition business. He shows up in Anguilla. Just to make a headline and then returns that returns home to Florida. That is not what Opposition should be about. While I commend them for bringing it to the House, it must be of substance. Mr. Speaker, I rest my case.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Honourable Member. Are there any more contributions to this? Motion. If there are no other contributions to this motion. Oh, I'm sorry. Is the Member for. District two. The Honourable Premier.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I will not be long. Let me first commend the Member for Valley North for an excellent, comprehensive presentation, and so comprehensive, in fact, that I had debated whether or not I needed to say anything at all. But. I wanted to rise, Mr. Speaker, to make a few points. And arise in relation to this motion number 10 of 2026. And let me first say that every Member of this government supports the creation of a contributory pension scheme for Members of the House of Assembly.

In fact, as you would have heard, the work to amend the Legislators Pension Act has already started. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe in the old adage that anything worth doing is worth doing well. Anguillians may recall that one of the Anguilla United Front campaign promises was to make the pension scheme for legislators contributory. We not only campaigned on it, we felt it was the right thing to do and we have taken steps to get it done.

And the member for Valley North, the Honourable Shellya Rogers Webster, being so committed to ensuring that we fulfilled this promise to the people of Anguilla, took the lead on this matter. You have heard of the work she conducted while in opposition. And she reviewed the existing legislation and took the time to prepare not only a summary of the Legislators Pensions Act but also recommendations including how the existing pension scheme could be made contributory. And that comprehensive document was shared at the end of May 2026, as you heard. And in June, the Members of government met to review the summary and the recommendations and discuss the way forward.

And while we await additional feedback in order to finalize the recommended changes to the legislation, the PS of Finance has also forwarded a request for the Clerk of the House of Assembly and the Pension Office to provide additional insight on how the pension scheme could be made contributory. So, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that this administration is well on the way to delivering this promise of making the Legislators Pension Scheme contributory.

And I want to take this opportunity to thank, in particular the Member for Valley North for making this possible. Mr. Speaker, I now turn to the motion itself, which was presented to this Honorable House by a Member of the Opposition, the Member for Road South. It is a well written motion. Mr. Speaker, asking the government to do what we already working on, which is to pass legislation to make the legislators pension contributory. One may call it a coincidence.

But many of us do not believe in coincidences of this nature. Mr. Speaker, the motion refers to other jurisdictions which have adopted contributory pension arrangements for legislators, Barbados, the Bahamas, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands and the Falkland Islands. But, Mr. Speaker, every single one of these countries would have had their pension scheme in place before 2025. The Bahamas for instance, in 1995 and Bermuda in 2020, for example.

And Mr. Speaker, every single Member of the Opposition in this House of Assembly sat in government from 2020 to 2025. And at no time did it take any single step to make the Legislators Pension scheme contributory. So the same energy that they had to prepare this motion today is the same energy that they should have used to actually amend the legislation when they were in power.

And today they come with this motion for us, the government, to do what we are already working on and what we've been working on for months. The Member for Road South said there's no better time to deal with this matter than now. And I agree with him because after being in the House of Assembly as Parliamentary Secretary between 2010 and 2015, elected Member of government, a minister between 2020 and 2025 and now a Member of the Opposition between 2025 and 2030, he has seen it fit to bring this motion while a government which he knows will deliver is in power. And we will bring this contributory scheme to fruition because, Mr. Speaker, we don't base our leadership on political stunts, and we don't revel in a gacha antics.

We have proven time and time again that we put in the hard work and we deliver. And so the work is continuing, Mr. Speaker. Once we gather all of the information and assess how best to structure the contributory scheme, we will come back to this House and we expect the full support of all of the Members of the House of Assembly. And as I close, Mr. Speaker, I just want to make one additional point. The Member for Road South, in his statement indicated that this legislation has been outstanding. It's 50 years old.

In fact, the Legislators Pension Act was passed. 2004, which was 22 years ago, and so it hasn't been 50 years, but we do agree it is time to review and update and we are committed to doing so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Are there any other contributions? I recognise the Member for Road North.

Hon Cora Richardson-Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had prepared some. Still morning, Good morning again to everyone. I've prepared some quick notes, just basically to support this motion that my Honourable colleague brought to this Honourable House. And Mr. Speaker, if someone had closed your eyes. And just be listening, they would think that this is a contentious issue for this Honorable house. A colleague, a friend of mine, sent me a message about some of the presentations and I told her I wasn't going to present. Because I am one who don't believe that everything needs to be.

Political grandstanding. And it feels to me, Mr. Speaker. That is because I know that everyone is obviously on board with this. Everyone of the elected Members seem to be ok with this. I expected to come to this Honourable House and hear good motion, but thank you. We've already started the motion and I'm going to give congratulations to the government side

for already starting the and apparently from all reports, it's already in train and we should be getting. This to the Honourable House to be voted on, of course, Mr. Speaker. Once it comes to the House, Members of the Opposition will look at it and if there's anything else that we see is an issue, we will bring it up.

Mr. Speaker, the Pace Act came to us as Members of opposition, we sent it, we sent back our recommendations while we felt was an issue today at Honorable Attorney General Chambers, almost 40 things that we picked up that might be contentious. The Sports Act that came to this Honourable house for the first reading when we the members of the opposition read we agreed that there needs to be a sports act but there was over most 30 issues that we saw that might be an issue with the act so we sent it back.

So, if the Act when, not if when this the new act for the legislators contribution to pensions come to this Honourable House and we will say most likely we do agree with it but. Having an issue with certain parts of the Act. That does not mean we disagree with it. But like I said, anyone not knowing what was going on in this, in this Honorable House and tuned in would have assumed, hey, these two sides do not agree with this when it's an obvious fact that both sides agree with it. Now, Mr. Speaker, we had a case the last day with a supplementary budget when I was making a point.

And my point is we could only base what we do on this side with the information that we receive. We don't have the, we're not fortunate to sit in cabinet. We are not fortunate to sit in Ex-co to know what government is planning. So, when we come up with things on our side or when we have questions and it comes from a place of not knowing.

So, I applaud and I'm happy to hear that government is so far advanced. With the legislators contributory pension and we applaud it. but to sit here and assume that we had a magical stroke to come to fix everything in the four and a half years and I always don't. I always have started from 2022 because 2020 and 2021, those were the covid years which nothing happened except trying to keep this country afloat. But again, Madam Mr. Speaker.

It's obvious that both sides agree. It's nice when both sides do agree. It happens a lot more often than people realise and this is one such matter that it's nice to know that both sides of the House agree. And when it comes back to the House for the first reading, second reading, third reading, I'm sure when it comes to the first reading, my Honourable colleague will get up and secong the motion, seeing that he brought a motion to the House.

But I want to congratulate my colleague for bringing this motion to the House. Persons might not know, but Members of the Opposition, the only thing we have at our disposal is friends and the good services of the clerk. He had a House. So, we don't have a legal team to produce all the facts of what can make this a good legislation.

We don't have the financial team to cost it or anything like that. But when we do see an issue, Mr. Speaker. We highlighted and we bring it like any responsible Opposition should do, but I just wanted and. I will, I will close on those remarks. My Honourable colleague on the side had a look at my notes before this session started and he knew that I had something prepared, obviously, and this is not what I have prepared, but I just wanted a general public to know this is only a motion like the government side. We are not claiming, we are not claiming that it is a legislation that is brought to this House. It's only a motion to put and maybe be what we open. The conversation would be started.

But the conversation might be started. Obviously the conversation has started, but we wanted a general public to know this is a good motion. We, the members of the opposition, we are willing. And ready to contribute to this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. Recognise and Single Island Wide Member.

Hon.Jeison Jose Bryan:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning again to well, good afternoon to all Members. Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of this motion and welcome it and saying much is like repetition because the member minister for. Road North. Had said for Valley North has said sufficient for us to be aware of and I would like to just go back into 2024.

During the campaign. I remember that a gentleman approached me and asked or said that the Legislature's Legislators Pension Act should be amended and make it contribute the word yes, faith to difficulty with the word make it contributory and I said at that moment. It will happen under our administration, it will happen once we get the opportunity, and I was able to say to that gentleman. Because the conversation had already started from the campaign, from the campaign time, we as a team had already sat, discussed and were aware of the plans that we wanted to achieve if we were elected, which we currently are.

So, for us it's no secret. For the public as well, it's no secret. It's not a new discovery. Why? Because the same Member for Valley North has said it input in radio. Radio interviews that we are, we were working on this and that this was coming. So definitely I welcome that motion from the Member from Road

South but. The Member for Road North said that if listeners listen to this debate or this discussion, it might seem like the Bill is contentious and that probably one side of the other might not agree. But I don't think the word contentious should be the right the right one to use. I think there's a difference between indicating that something might be contentious and there's a huge difference by laying the facts of what has been occurring with such.

With this motion that has been presented. And that's what the Member for Valley North did. She has presented facts of what

this government has intentions of doing, of what this government is doing and what the people of Anguilla will be expecting. So, I just wanted to lay that difference there.

And Mr. Speaker, during the 20th century and the Member for Valley North said something in terms of Birds, but during the 20th century. Birds, The humming Birds were used to carry vital military information or updates to the Roman Empire. And I'm saying this because while the Member made reference, I probably birds might have, dropped something. It's interesting that this motion is being coming to the house at this particular time of the year 2026.

And we have unfortunately, we have to make reference to the opportunity they had to bring it in here prior to 2026 and it was not done. So once again, it's more if I continue to speak on it's more like a. Because all the facts has been laid and that is very important, that the public understands the fact behind this and that every Member on the government side is in support of this. So, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. Are there any more contributions to this motion? If there aren't any more contributions to this motion. Before I ask the movement to respond. While the Speaker of this Honourable House. Has a tremendous amount of privilege and authority. I was going through the Rules of Procedure. And the Speaker does not have the right to respond to comment on motions without the leave of this honorable House. So I am asking this Honorable House leave to comment on this motion that is brought before this Honourable House, seeing that I am.

The senior, most senior legislator and we are speaking about legislators pension. If I could make a few comments on this particular motion, Opposition and Government, I beg leave to be able to respond to this.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

You are so. given leave from the government side.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you all very much, Members. As the move of the motion mentioned, this is the right time. And I believe that we are all in Sync. With this contributory Pension Scheme that all the legislators should be. Part of. I believe that. and as the member for Valley North mentioned, it's a lot of work's already taking place. And I believe that the.

Rather than amending the Legislators Pensions Act really and truly. We should. It should be comprehensive. I believe that that particular act should be repealed and replaced. Based on . The realities of where we are today. It's our cake. And I believe that. Any changes made. To the Act in draft form before it comes to this Honourable House should be shared with all Members, elected Members of this Honourable House. I'm sure that we'll be able to get the contributions from the elected Members, the opposition as well as the members of government. As the Member for Valley North outlined, the process that took place in Cabinet where all of the Members went through the present Legislators Act line by line, and I would have come up with a number of suggestions.

To be able to make this and don't let us not be a pretend. This Legislators Pensions Act and the amendments or the repeal and replacement of the Act will have to be discussed. Publicly as well and expect some pushbacks because at the end of the day, not knowing and the Member for. Road North Member of the opposition said that at times the lack of information.

That they, make their comments based on and again, with the general public, it's a lack of information for even what we do, not only as government ministers, but as opposition members as well as legislators and the great demands that are there as the representatives of the people. So, basically.

This is something that we all got to work together and make sure that we come up with a Legislators Pensions Act not only for ourselves today, but for those who will come after us. And to add the Member for. District 2, the Premier mentioned the present legislators pensions that came into force in 2004. That was before I became a legislator in 2005.

And while over the years I have had concerns, a number of concerns with respect to some of the things that are in that Legislators Pensions Act. It is time to address some of those things. So again, I appreciate it being brought to the. To the House of Assembly by the Opposition, I appreciate the work. That is already entrained to bring this to fruition, to bring it to the House so that we'll be able to move on.

Yes, we are representatives of the people, but at the end of the day, we, must be able to represent ourselves before we can represent anyone else. Simple truth. So thank you all very much for allowing me those few words. The mover of the motion to respond.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. For those very timely words, it is interesting to note that. You said, and I quote, I believe that legislation should be repealed and replaced. That brought to mind that. Work may have been done, but everybody is not on the same page because previous speakers spoke to work that has been already done. And if it is that we're looking at your view. Member for Single Island-wide Member addressing, Mr. Speaker, sometimes as a Single Island Wide Member, given the fact that you asked leave and was speaking not on behalf of the Speaker but on behalf of your position as a Single Island-wide Elected Member, if you would allow me.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

And just to clarify our Member. The Member for Valley North did indicate that all of cabinet members, members of the government were present except your humble servant at that particular meeting. So, to say that we are not on the same page, I think is a bit out of step.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

And thank you for that. That is good clarity because if you are part of the Cabinet and part of the government member, single Island-wide Member Mr. Neil Rogers and don't have all of the information, imagine up here in the opposition.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Imagine. Member, let me be clear again. Everything that is being said is recorded in real time here in this Honourable House and it's one of the first houses and I think in the region that such is done. So let me put it forward again and then let me repeat.

The Member for Valley North mentioned in her presentation. That when they went through the Legislators Pensions Act line by line. Every Member of the government was present, went through it line by line. And the only Member that was absent at that particular point in time was out representing the government was your humble servant.

That has nothing to do with information. Or dissemination or information between us as elected members. So, I want to put that on record to make sure that you, or the listening public, are aware of the fact that what takes place, what takes place in government, I am aware and to put it on record.

I will. Be submitting. To my colleagues in writing. The issues that I have with certain aspects of the Legislators Pensions Act. So, when you talk about repeal and replace, that is one of the submissions because I wasn't at that particular meeting and my views will be made known in writing.

So let's clear that up and not twist it up. Thanks.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and to the Member, Single Island Wide Member, Mr. Niel Rogers. Your explanation that you gave as it relates to this is as clear as mud. But we proceed, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker. My colleague, the Honourable Merrick Richardson, Member for Road North, said.

That if persons were listening today. They would have got the impression that we are not on the same page because while it is on one hand you said it's not contentious, on the other hand you spoke of hypocrisy. You spoke about the fact that the Anguilla Progressive movement was in office for 4 1/2 years and did not do anything. So it says to me that out of a motion that shouldn't have been contentious that there's some contention in acrimony brought into the discourse, Mr. Speaker.

And Mr. Speaker? If we may speak to the historical context of it. Yes, the Anguilla Progressive Movement was an office for 4 1/2 years. Yes, we've had discussions on Legislature's pension pushed by the former Member of the Valley South. The Honourable Deanna Kentish-Rogers, But also it is a position that we also held in, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to this. My position is no secret. Similarly, my position on legislation salaries are no secret. I did not cover behind closed doors. And speak to certain things and then coming out in the public and say something different. My position have been consistent for over 30 years as it relates to legislative salaries. And Mr. Speaker, and we are not talking about legislative salaries. What is important to note.

That the narrative surrounding legislators salaries is that the Anguilla Progressive Movement, when they won office, increased their salaries by 15%. I really knew that was not possible. The Anguilla Progressive Movement legislators and the House of Assembly did not increase their salaries by 15%. And to continue to fool the people as it relates to that.

Is very disingenuous, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, if we must give some historical context, the fact that the Anguilla Progressive Movement was in office for 4 1/2 years, we cannot forget that the Anguilla United Front emanated out of the Anguilla National Alliance in the Anguilla Democratic Party. And Mr. Speaker? From 1977 to 1980. From 1984 to 1994.

From 2000 to 2010 and from 2015 to 2020, the Anguilla United Front. The child of the Anguilla National Alliance in Anguilla Democratic Party held the reigns of the power, Mr. Speaker. And during that time. They too could have ensured that there was a contribution to Legislators' Pension Act. And I would hope that, Mister Speaker, because it seemed as if we debated the Bill today, but we are not. And we shouldn't be debating the bill today, but certain elements were brought into this discussion that needs to be responded to. Mr. Speaker, 4 1/2 years. And as my honourable colleague, Member for Road North said, for two of those years were trying to keep this country afloat because we came into office during the COVID period.

And everything. That has been wrong with Anguilla in everything that needed to be done for Anguilla. They wanted Anguilla progressive movement to get it done and 4 1/2 years. 4 1/2 years, Mr. Speaker. And Mr. Speaker? The Member for Valley North said. That there is an attempt. To pretend that this is something that is new. Mr. Speaker.

And the Member for Valley North said that prior to her running for political office, she was on an interview on Klass FM and she spoke extensively to the Legislature's pension and she said that if. That it should be done. I was paraphrasing. It should be done. And Mr. Speaker, the Member for Valley

North was subsequently elected after the prior Member for Valley North, the Honourable Evan McNeil Rogers, retired. Resigned his parliamentary seat and retired from politics in 2022. I believe it was. And from 2022? To 2025.

The Member for Valley North the Honourable Shellya Rogers Webster never once brought a motion to the House to deal with the legislators pension, even though the Member for Valley not said that prior to running. She was an in an interview and it was raised and she discussed it and she always supported it. Further than that, Mister Speaker.

Hon.Shellya Rogers-Webster:

Madam Speaker, Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, can you give a point of order?

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Yes you can.

Hon.Shellya Rogers-Webster:

The Member is actually misleading the public in relation to that. And as I extensively what I've said, I did my background research and work and I want to put on record that coming to the House on a motion does not bring a piece of legislation. And I have brought multiple pieces of legislation to this House that are under my remit and my ability to do so.

And the Legislators Pension Act is not. I just want to put that on record.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Thank you very much, Member for Valley North, and again I said just as a Member for Road South.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

You may proceed.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Mr. Haydn Hughes, as a member of the opposition, can bring this motion to the House. The Member for Valley North given the fact that prior to her even running, she spoke on Klass FM in an interview about the legislation suspension that Mr. Speaker, and subsequent to that she said she always supported this position. So from 2002 to 2022 to 2025, Mr. Speaker, you didn't bring the motion, then you came to government.

And from 2025 February, sorry, March 1st of 2025 to date, you didn't bring the motion. But she also said. That it would have been a little Birdy whisper. To us. That this was being done. And Jeison Bryan, a Single Island-wide Member, said in the 20th century, there wasn't a 20th century, by the way, in the 20th century, a bird took. Took information to the Roman Empire. But, Mr. Speaker.

If you wasn't fully aware of all of the details in the discussion relating to the preliminary work that relates to this, where would the bird whisper to us and not Whisper to you? Be that as a it may, Mr. Speaker, your mic is on.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

It's on because when you said. You wasn't privy to the information which you're talking about the Member, Single Island Member or your humble servant.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Oh no. My humble servant, the grandfather of the House.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Yeah. Well, you're incorrect with that because that's not what I said.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Correct me.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I said to you again, let me repeat. That. When the member for Valley North mentioned that all of the Members of the government. Went through the Legislators Pension Act line by line. That I was on government official business. I wasn't there. That does not mean that I don't know. The work that has taken place and that is taken place with respect to the Legislators Pensions Act. OK, so just let's get that clear because I'm very well aware of all that is happening in cabinet and within government for the most part.

So, let's put that because remember now I'm the deputy Speaker and I'm also an elected member and a member of the government, OK, so. When you're making comments and they're off the chart. I will correct you.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Mr. Speaker, and Single Island wide Member Mr. Neil Rogers, if there's a really dirty rag and you put it in a bucket of clean water and you wash it. and you throw the water out. It's really dirty and every time you wash that rag in some clean water it becomes clearer. And when you initially started, as I said before, you are clear as mud, but every time you wash it, you come a little clearer.

So, it seemed as if every time you respond to me, it seemed as if you found that you knew more than you actually said you knew at a very beginning. Because, Mr. Speaker, you said that you'll be putting in right in your view after the fact that you said that you believe. While, it is that the rest of the cabinets spoke about amending the legislation, Legislators Pension Act, you believe.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

That it

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Should be repealed and replaced, which is different to an amendment, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

And Member, I am very well aware. Of the difference between amendment and repeal and. I probably will have to ask the clerk. To print. What I said in real time and what you responded to in real time, because we have it now, OK, we can do that. So, let's be straight with that.

And you're not lecturing to me about. What it means to repeal or to amend? I sit in this Honorable House long before you. And I am very well aware of those things. So, and I am not the designated Speaker, but I am also one who is not going to allow you or any Member of this Honourable House to be able to mislead the public out there and particularly misleading in what I have said from this.

So, let's get that clear and get this out of the way and let's move on. Because it's not going to be the regular hero.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy that we can see this in real time, because it was 1. The Honourable Evan McNeil Rogers, who said some 12 years ago. 12 years ago that we should have a system in here where you can have things done in real time and when you go and check the records in real time, you realise the subtle differences in what you have said in your responses to me.

But as you said. Member, I'm not sure which one you are right now, whether you're a Member or you're debating me, but Member, Speaker, as you said, let's move on. Mr. Speaker. The right time. Is always now. Always now. And there was a number of notes that I spoke that I. Took which I really did need to take because they can always go back and read the transcript.

Of the member for Valley North but that time will come. I'm not sure if we're going to debate when they Bill finally comes to the House, Mr. Speaker, but what I can say this, Mr. Speaker. There was a post made by. A former Deputy Governor. On Facebook. About legislators pension some time ago.

Mr. Speaker. In 2024, I believe it was. And yesterday. The former Deputy Governor. Reposted that post on Facebook. And asking about the contribution to legislators pension and I'm sure that former Deputy Governor, who I respect tremendously is going to be very happy to know. That his colleague on the Constitutional Electoral Reform Committee have come to this House. And table this Motion in order to move to that noble ideal of the contribution to the Pension Act.

Mr. Speaker. The Leader of Government Business, the Member for Sandy Hill said. And I quote. Every single Member of the Opposition today were in office on 2020 to 2025. And did not bring forward the Legislators Pension Act, or amend our motion, or legislation to this. To ensure that this occurs. And Mr. Speaker The Member also spoke of my tenure in office. Mr. Speaker.

And I found it quite confusing and I'm using at the same time. Because the Member for Sandy Hill, Mr. Speaker. Have served in government on multiple occasions, one as the Deputy Leader of the country and Deputy Premier. And one. This and 1 as the premier of this country. And one as the minister responsible for Home Affairs and constitutional affairs for a period exceeding five years. From April of 2015. Sorry.

To almost July. Of 2020. And at no point in time during her tenure. Was the legislator's pension or anything relating to it Tabled in this Honourable Parliament. So how it is, Mr. Speaker, then you could speak about the fact that members of the opposition saw 4 1/2 years when you serve even more in government.

As a minister. As a minister. So this is why when certain things come to the house, you don't need to be throwing a stone, you don't need to throw a stone because if you throw a stone, sometimes a stone may be thrown back. And we're not saying that this should be tic for tac because the Member, Single Island Wide Member Mr. Kyle Hodge said that we bring this motion to the House to grandstand. Listen, Mr. Speaker, the fact remain that the government have the power. The government have the authority; we can not tell government what to do. And our suggestions, Mr. Kyle Hodge said he hoped that we would give ideas and recommendations.

But ideas and recommendations and suggestions are thrown

aside and Single Island Wide Member Mr. Kyle Hodge would say, well, the number that I consider is 8 to 3. So we can't even bring ideas and information, Mr. Speaker, because we bring ideas, information both publicly and privately, and it's not considered.

So, who is doing the grandstanding here? If one of the vehicles that can be used by the oppositions to bring motions to this House. And Mr. Speaker, check the record, check the record and look and see when was the last time. A motion was brought to this Honourable House by Members of the Opposition. When was the last time? 1977. 1977, Mr. Speaker.

Is it 1977? Now, I may be incorrect, but if my memory serves me correctly, in 1977 a motion was brought to this Honourable house. By the Honourable Hubert Hughes. And it was a motion of no confidence. And it was a pass, even though Hubert Hughes was a single Member of Opposition.

But then. My memory is suddenly clicking on. Mr. Speaker, a motion was also brought by the Honourable Pam Webster when you serve as a Minister of Government in Anguilla, United Front Administration, and she brought a motion to the House. And did not even get a seconder. Even though she had selected a second nominated member. And if it's one good thing that we have done. Is get rid of the whole motion of navigating members from this House. Now we need to evolve to the next stage, Mr. Speaker, where the Attorney General.

Is elected by the people to solve the people. And this is not, a no present Attorney General. This is something that I've been seeing consistently for a long time. Now. I don't believe that the Deputy Governor should be in the House. But i digress. And I know I'm irritating the member, Single Elected Member, Mr. Kyle Hodge, but afterwards we'll go. He’s, my boy.

I am in his district. We are neighbors. We walk dogs together, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Let's get back. Let's get back to the substantive motion. Let's get back to the substantive motion.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

And Mr. Speaker? Kyle always makes me laugh. He always cracks me up. He's a good comedian, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker. So I believe. That when this motion comes to this Honourable House in two months. Three months, four months, Well Member Shellya Rogers said. It will be coming to this House. well before December 31st, 2026.

Well before December 31st, 2026. I hope that is not a similar promise to Jose Vanterpool when he said that the Caracas by building will be completed by December 31st 2025.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Member the Rules of Procedure, you cannot address them by their names, please by the designations.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Sorry, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I hope it is not the Member for Valley North. Stated that this legislation will be coming to this Honourable House well before December 31st 2026 and I said that I hope it is not a similar promise to the Single Island Wide Member Mr. Jose Vanterpool when he said that the Caracas by Building be finished and completed and usable by December 31st, 2025. And I hope that is not a similar promise as it relates to the salary increases for the public servants that Mrs Shellya Rogers Webster guaranteed on Facebook some time ago that be done and paid by the end of June 2026.

So I am putting.

Hon.Shellya Rogers-Webster:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the Member is well aware that we intended to pay the salaries at the end of June and a decision was made to pause the salaries because there was significant concerns being expressed by members of the Anguilla Public Service and the responsible thing would have been to stop, pause and reassess to move forward. Mr. Speaker, not push through. As they did with the GST legislation.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you very much for that clarification, Member. Continue.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

And thank you very much for that clarification, Member. I too joined the speaker and thanking you. Mr. Speaker, But, Mr. Speaker, the fact remain that the promise was made, the intention was there, but it did not happen. That is the facts, that's a fundamental facts and I'm glad that the Member for Valley North got up and raised that important fact.

So it didn't happen. So, my point is, and I'm putting the onus on the Member for Valley North as if. She has done extensive research and even before she was elected this is something that you wanted to see happen that before December the 31st 2026 it is brought before this Honorable house before the clock turns 12 and the rooster crows and the pig brewed teeth. And fly away, Madam, Mr. Speaker, that this is table before

this Honourable House because a lot of things would be said and as a relative pushing through, Mr. Speaker. I believe that if salaries shouldn't have been paused. I believe they should have been paid and those persons and those persons who were disgruntled, dealt with and paid were attractive.

And I know the Member for Valley North is asking the question with irrelevant, but you just raised it, you just said it, and once you said it, it warrants a response. So, Mr. Speaker, as I close, as I close.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

This is an Honourable House. Please be respected of your positions here. You may continue Member.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Another reason why I like you so much, Mr. Speaker, as I close.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Just be careful with those comments, OK? Very careful, but go ahead.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Love your fellow man. As I close, Mr. Speaker. As I close. I want the public to know. That on Tuesday, the 14th of July, 2026, this Motion was laid before this House. And on the same date. The Members of the government guaranteed a promise and affirmed. That they will deliver before the end of 2026 and we will have an equitable in fear.

Process as it relates to the funds coming out of the pension, out of the consolidated fund to pay pensioners and I also note that a Member of Valley North also stated. That those unestablished Members will be looked at, and I commend them for that. Because this is something that is of concern and don't say why the APM didn't do it in the four and a half years. Because the record will show that Anguilla United Front dominated the political landscape in Anguilla for much longer than any other political entity by far.

It is no comparison and when I speak to retired. Persons who spent decades as unestablished workers who went home with their last paycheck, similar to hospitality workers. Mr. Speaker, it hurts my heart. So, I'm glad to hear the assurances from the government that all of this will be done before the end of this year and rest assured.

Rest assured. That your Loyal Opposition. Will keep their feet to the fire as it relates to these promises and when it comes to the House, you will have a unanimous vote on it. I don't even know if there may be a debate because we didn't expect a debate today.

We end up with a debate. So if politicians do what politicians do, we may end up with a debate. What I can say now without it even come to the House, that when the government, who has the resources to draft this legislation, brings the legislation that emanates from this motion to this House? You will have the support of the Members of the Opposition, so you won't have any contention there.

Thank you, Mr. very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you very much, Member. The motion has been moved. It has been seconded. And it has been debated in this Honourable House. I put the question that the motion 10/26-2/13, the House of Assembly, becomes a resolution of this honourable House. Those in favor say aye. Those against say no. Motion.

Number 7/2026. Oh, sorry about that motion #10/2026-2. Slash 13. Of this Honourable House of Assembly is now a resolution. Of this Honourable House.

MOTION 11 OF 2026: CUSTOMS EXEMPTION OF DUTY ON GASOLINE AND DIESEL IMPORTS REGULATIONS

Clerk:

Motion 11. Motion 11 of 2026 2/13 HOA, Customs exemption of duty and gasoline and diesel imports 2 Regulations, 2026.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I recognise. The Member for District 2.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the following motion. Motion 11 of 2026 Dash 2/13. HOA, Customs Exemption of duty on gasoline and diesel imports #2 Regulations, 2026.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Is there a seconder?

Hon.Jose Vanterpool:

Mr. Speaker, I rise a second.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

The motion has been moved and seconded. I now explain the move of the motion. I know it. Invite the member of the. Mover of motion to explain the merits and principles of this motion. Thank you.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government implemented a number of fuel related relief measures for 2026 to help ease the cost of living pressures. These measures included maintaining a zero rate of goods, tax the GT on eligible fuel imports and reducing the excise tax on gasoline to 0%. These concessions have been continued to help moderate domestic price pressures and provide relief to households and businesses facing rising energy costs.

Despite these interventions, Mr. Speaker, global economic and geopolitical conditions deteriorated during the first quarter of 2026, prompting the government to consider additional relief measures as a result. Government approved a temporary three-month suspension of the import duty on fuel and customs. Service fee on gasoline and diesel imports. At the time, it was agreed that any extension of the measure would be informed by updated evidence, including an assessment of domestic fuel prices relative to the December 2025 benchmark. Since then, ongoing geopolitical tensions involving Iran have continued to create significant uncertainty in global energy markets.

Heightened fairs of supply disruptions. Increased geopolitical risk premiums and contributed to a significant fluctuations in crude oil prices. And while recent price, Mr. Speaker? My. OK. While recent price declines have eased some immediate concerns, oil prices remain highly sensitive to geopolitical developments and continue to experience significant swings as market sentiment shifts. This level of volatility presents particular challenges for small, highly import dependent economies such as Anguilla. Even where international prices fluctuate in both directions. Sustained uncertainty, elevated freight costs and supply chain risk can translate into higher landed fuel costs, and these increases often pass through to domestic fuel prices, transportation costs, electricity generation costs, and ultimately the broader.

Cost of goods and services across our economy. As a result, the impact extends beyond fuel consumption alone and can place additional pressure on household budgets, business operating costs and inflation. In Anguilla's case, the risk of pass through effects is especially significant given the economy's reliance on imported fuel. Higher fuel costs affect not only motorists, but also the distribution of goods, tourism related activities, construction operations, utility services and other essential services given the continued volatility in global energy markets and the ongoing risk of higher fuel costs. Government considers it appropriate to extend the temporary suspension of the import duty on fuel and custom service fee on gasoline and diesel imports for a further three months. Extending the suspension will bring the total relief period to six months and will continue to provide short term support to households and businesses by reducing the pass through of international fuel price increases.

The extension is intended to help maintain affordability and cushion customers from further fuel price volatility while geopolitical and market uncertainties persist. Mr. Speaker, if you would now permit me to read through the regulation itself. Thank you. Resolution motion 11 2026-2/13. HOA, Customs exemption of duty and gasoline and diesel imports 2 Regulations, 2026. WHEREAS Section 76 of the Customs Act, Revised Statutes of Anguilla Chapter 169 enables the Governor in Council to make regulations in relation to tariff rates. Whereas the Governing Council did make those regulations on the 8th of April 2026. WHEREAS Section 76 of the Customs Act provides other regulations may not take effect until it is approved by resolution of the House of Assembly.

Whereas those regulations are settled in the Schedule, here too be it resolved that under Section 76 of the Customs Act, Revised Statutes of Anguilla, Chapter 169, the House of Assembly approves the regulations set out in the Schedule. The Regulations. Customs Act revised such as Anguilla Chapter 169. Customs Exemption of duty on gasoline and diesel imports 2 Regulations 2026.

Regulations made by the Governing Council under section 76 of the Customs Act, Revised. Statutes of Anguilla, Chapter 169. Exemptions from duty. The items specified in the schedule are exempt from the imposition of duty, citation and commencement. These regulations may be cited as a Customs exemption of duty on Gasoline and Diesel imports 2 Regulations, 2026. These regulations are deemed to have come into force on the 19th of June 2026 and these regulations expire on 17th September 2026. And Mr. Speaker, there is a schedule Section 1. Items temporarily exempted from the imposition of duty the following items are temporarily exempt from the imposition of duty items Gasoline, Motor Spirit Tariff Code 27101220, Diesel Oil Tariff Code 27101930.

And Mr. Speaker, the Explanatory note, These regulations extend for further temporary period the exemption from the imposition of duty on gasoline, motor spirit. And diesel oil that was previously provided under the Customs Exemption of Duty and Gasoline and Diesel Imports Regulations, 2026. The exemption continues from the 19th of June 2026, immediately following the expiry of the previous regulations in order to maintain uninterrupted relief from import duty on fuel while International Energy markets remain volatile. The exemption is temporary and expires on the 17th of September 2026 unless further. extended or earlier revoked Under Section 76, 2 of the Customs Act regulations made under Section 76, 1A or B are not valid unless they implement a budget item approved by an act of the legislature or are approved by resolution of the House of Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. The motion has been moved and seconded. And the explanation of the merits. And principles. Have been done. Are there any contributions to this emotion? If there are no contributions to this motion, can I ask the move of the motion to respond.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Members of this Honourable House for their full support.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you very much, Member. I put the question that motion 11/2026-2/13. HOA becomes a resolution of this House. Those in favour. Those again The ayes have it. Motion 11/2026-2/13 HOA is now a resolution of this Honourable House.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Clerk:

Personal explanations, None.

OTHER BUSINESS

OTHER BUSINESS: GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Clerk:

Other business Government Business.

PRISON AMENDMENT ACT 2026

Clerk:

A Bill for Prison Amendment Act 2026, second reading.

Attorney General:

Mr. Speaker, I bid my colleagues all good morning, good afternoon now and the viewing members of the public. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Bill shortly entitled the Prison Amendment Act 2026. Be read for a second time.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, I rise a second.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

The Bill has been moved and. Seconded. I now invite debate on the merits and principles of this Bill.

Attorney General:

Mr. Speaker, the objects and reasons of this Bill relate to Section 7 of the Prison Act to provide that all officers. Both male and female. Should have the powers, the authority and the protection. And the privileges of a police officer. This can only be achieved by removing the reference to male. In this section. The Bill also validates, Mr. Speaker, anything done by a female prison officer under Section 7 prior to the commencement of this Bill. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, provides the quality and safeguards for how our prison operates and the public officers who undertake this very important function for the public.

Thank you.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you very much, Member. I now invite. Debate on the merits and principles. Of this Bill. Are there any contributions? I recognise the Member for district 2, the Honourable Premier.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my comments are going to be very short. Approve the bringing of this amendment to the House of Assembly. The existing prison act between however long ago it was created. For some reason, omitted made reference to male officers and not female officers, and that admission would, one would argue, give rise to an argument as to. The. Appropriateness of any actions taken by female officer. And so, this act, this amendment is very simple in its nature, and it seeks to validate the actions of female prison officers and liken them to actions done, undertaken by male officers.

And so, in light of that, I support this amendment. Thank you.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you very much, Member. Are there any further contributions to this Bill? If there are no other. Contributions.

May I ask the mover of the Bill to respond?

Attorney General:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill. Shortly entitled the Prison Amendments Act 2026. If there are no further contributions, do be moved and passed.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I put the question. That the Prisons Amendment Act 2026. Be read a second time, those in favour. Those against. The ayes have it. I call upon the clerk. To read the Bill. A second time.

Clerk:

A Bill for Prison Amendment Act 2026.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Committee stage. I refer this Bill to the committee of the whole House to be considered. Clause by clause.

Clerk:

Clauses 1 through 3.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Clauses 1 to 3, Are there any? Amendments to clauses 1 to 3. If there are none, I put the question should be. Accept clauses 1-3 as is. Those in favour. those was against.. I put the question that the title and enactment clause. Be approved, as is, those in favour. Those against. The ayes have it.

This House now resumes. It's sitting. I asked the mover to report.

Attorney General:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to report that the Bill shortly entitled the Prison Amendments Act 2026, has passed through the committee stage without any amendments and is now, Mr. Speaker, ready for its third reading.

Clerk:

A Bill for Prison Amendment Act 2026, third reading.

Attorney General:

Mr. Speaker, The Prison Amendments Act 2026 now follows it's third reading to the House without any amendments through the committee stage. Mr. Speaker, as reported to this House and I now move up this Bill shortly entitled the Prison Amendment Act 2026 be passed for 3rd time.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Is there a seconder?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

I rise to second, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

It has been moved and seconded. That a Bill shortly entitled. A Bill for Prison Amendment Act 2026. Be read third time and passed those in favour. Those against. The ayes have it. I call upon the clerk to read the bill a third time.

Clerk:

A Bill for Prison Amendment Act 2026 third. Bill for Prison Amendment Act 2026.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

The Bill has been read third time and passed.

CUSTOMS TEMPORARY MODIFICATION OF VALUATION OF IMPORT DUTY AMENDMENT ACT 2026

Clerk:

A bill for Customs Temporary Modification Evaluation of Import Duty Amendment Act 2026, first reading.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Recognise the Member for district 2.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I rise in relation to a Bill for Customs Temporary Modification, Evaluation of Import Duty Amendment Act 2026.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, I hereby move a motion for the suspension of Rule 44 and for the benefit. Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I ask for your permission to be able to move the motion under Section 44, entitled The Suspension of Rules of Procedure, for further reading of the bill.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

That permission is granted member.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the motion for the suspension of Rule 44. I'd like to read Section 44 for the benefit of the general public. Every Bill shall be read three times prior to being passed, and no Bill shall pass through more than two readings at anyone sitting unless this rule shall have been formally suspended for the purpose.

And you will note on the agenda, Mr. Speaker, that the said Bill is listed for first, second. Committee stage and 3rd reading and the reasons are set out in my explanation, which is to be forthcoming. And so, in those circumstances, I'm asking that Rule 44 will be suspended.

Thank you.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Those in favour. Seconded, sorry.

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

I rise to second, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

It has been moved and seconded. That Rule 44 be suspended so as to permit all three readings of this important Bill to take place at this sitting. Those in favour. Those against. The ayes have it. I call upon the clerk. First.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, if I may be permitted to give my comments in relation to this Bill at this time. OK. Don't you announce it? Mr. Speaker, I ask that the motion for the Customs Temporary Modification of Valuation of Import Duty Amendment Act 2026 be read a first time.

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

I rise to second, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

It has been moved and seconded. Those in favor. Those against? The ayes have it.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, if I may be allowed to present my comments in relation to the Bill for Customs Temporary Modification of Valuation of Import Duty Amendment Act. OK, Mr. Speaker, my apologies, I hereby. Move that the Bill for Customs Temporary Modification Evaluation of Import Duty Amendment Act, 2026 be read a second time.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Is there a seconder?

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

I second, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

It has been moved and seconded. Those in favor? Those against?

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm so excited to explain the reasons why we're coming to this House on short notice and suspending the three readings. The government has been monitoring the continued effect of elevated import related costs and households, businesses and the wider economy. A key contributing factor remains the method by which import taxes are calculated on the goods charged at ad valorem rates. Under the current framework, the taxable value includes not only the price. The goods themselves, but also freight, insurance and other incidental costs associated with their carriage to Anguilla.

Where shipping and insurance costs rise, the tax base rises with them even before the applicable rates are applied. In response to these pressures, in April of 2026, Executive Council approved the Customs Temporary Modification of Valuation of Import Duty Act, 2026. Providing for a temporary shift in the import tax base. From CIF landed costs to FOB for an initial three month period.

Under that Act, freight insurance and other carriage related costs were excluded from the base on which ad valorem import duty is assessed. It should be noted that the relief also flows through to the Goods Tax Act 2025 and the Excise Tax Act 2019. Conditions have not eased since the original approval and have been several respects intensified. The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank has noted that the introduction of broad based US tariff measures has increased international trade pressures across the region, driving up the cost of imported goods.

The Caribbean sources between 60 and 80% of its basic foodstuff from the United States, which also serves as a transit point for most of the region's international. Imports. Global freight markets have reinforced this picture with container rates to the US West Coast rising more than 50% in a single week in early June 2026 to approximately US $4800 per 40-foot container and air cargo rates remaining more than 30% above pre conflict levels year on year. These pressures have a direct impact on the freight and insurance costs that feed into the CIF based.

Taxable value of goods entering Anguilla and the extension of the relief measure is a response to an external environment that has not materially improved since the initial approval of this measure. As a result, Executive Council approved the extension of the temporary legislative intervention, reducing the import tax base from CIF landed costs to FOB for a further period of three months.

The continued objective is to cushion cost of living and import related price pressures affecting households, businesses and the wider economy at a time when external conditions continue to weigh on the landed cost of imported goods. The estimated revenue cost of the renewed 3-month period would be approximately EC $3.06 million. On this basis, the estimated total cost of the six-month intervention comprising the current three month relief period and the proposed 3 month extension would be approximately $8.02 million.

Mr. Speaker. The objects and reasons are set out. The Customs Temporary Modification of Valuation Import Duty Act, 2026 introduced a temporary measure under which import duty and goods subject to ad valorem rates is assessed on the price of goods at the place of export FOB, excluding freight, insurance and other transport-related costs for a period of three months. The conditions that gave rise to that temporary measure, including continuing instability in global markets and elevated freight and insurance costs, continue to exist.

This Bill therefore extends the operation of the principal Act until the 9th of October, 2026, so that the temporary concession remains available for a total period of approximately 6 months from the original commencement. As the Principal Act expired before this Bill could be enacted, the Bill provides for the continued operation of the Principal Act during the intervening period, validates anything done under that Act during that period, and makes provision for the reassessment and refund of import duty where duty was assessed otherwise than in accordance with the Principal Act. This Bill does not otherwise alter the basis on which the value of imported goods is determined for the purpose of Assessing import duty, Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. I now invite. Debate on the merits and principles of this Bill. Any contribution from Members of the House? If there are no contributions On this bill, can I ask the mover? To reply.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the Honourable Members of this House for the full support. Thank you.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. I put the question. That this Bill be read a second time. Those in favor. Those against. The ayes have it. I call upon the clerk to read the Bill a second time.

Clerk:

An Act to amend the Customs Temporary Modification Evaluation of Import Duty Act 2026 to extend its period of operation, provide for the continuity of that Act, notwithstanding its expiry, to validate anything done during the intervening period, provide for the reassessment and refund of

import duty where necessary and for related matters.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I referred to this Bill. To the Committee of the whole House to be considered clause by clause.

Clerk:

Clauses one through five.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Clauses one through five. be accepted as presented those in favour. Those against.

Clerk:

The title and the enacting clause.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

The title and the enacting clause. be accepted as presented those in favour. Those against.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I beg to report that the bill entitled Customs Temporary Modification of Valuation of Import Duty Amendment Act, 2026. Has passed through committee without amendment and is ready for its third reading.

Clerk:

A Bill for Customs Temporary Modification Evaluation of Import Duty Amendment Act 2026, third reading.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Mr. Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled A Bill for Customs Temporary Modification of Valuation of Import Duty Amendment Act 2026 be read third time and past.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Is there a seconder?

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

I rise to second Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

The Bill shortly entitled. A Bill for Customs Temporary Modification Valuation of Import Duty Amendment Act 2026 be read third time and pass those in favour. Those against. The ayes have it. I call upon the clerk to read the Bill third time.

Clerk:

An Act to amend the Customs Temporary Modification Evaluation of Import Duty Act 2026 to extend its period of operation, provide for the continuity of that Act notwithstanding this expiry, validate anything done during the intervening period, provide for the reassessment and refund of import duty when necessary and for related matters.

PAYMENT SYSTEM AND SERVICES ACT 2026

Clerk:

A Bill for Payment System and Services Act 2026, first reading.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I recognised the Member for district two.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill shortly entitled A Bill for Payment System and Services Act 2026 be read the first time.

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

I rise to second, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

It has been moved and seconded. The Bill read a first time. Those in favour. Those against. The ayes have it.

Clerk:

An Act to modernise and strengthen the legal and regulatory framework regarding payment systems, thereby providing an environment for payment of services. For payment of service providers that is safe, efficient, resilient, inclusive and competitive through the management of risk and maintenance of financial stability and the protection of the interests of consumers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS BILLS

Clerk:

Private Members Bills, none.

PRIVATE BILLS AND OTHER ORDERS OF THE DAY

Clerk:

Private Bills, none. Other orders of the day.

OTHER ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

I recognise the Member for District two.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week I would have attended the. Monetary Council meeting. Held by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank. And I was very proud to have had the opportunity to unveil the face of the Honourable James Ronald Webster on the EC $10.00 bill. And I would encourage persons to visit the Eastern Caribbean Supreme, Eastern Caribbean Central Bank website and take a look at the proceedings because not only Anguilla, but throughout the ECCU days and Caribbean Currency Union, all of the faces of leaders and important persons would have been placed from one from each country on the various. EC Dollar Notes There were also some significant changes that were made.

To the front and the back of the notes themselves, I'm happy to report that the war spite will still present itself on the pace of the $10.00 bill along with General James Ronald Webster's representation. And so, I want to take this opportunity to thank the family for giving us the consent and allowing the likeness of the Honorable James Ronald Webster to be placed on the face of that bill.

And it is very significant, Mr. Speaker, because. We are celebrating the 100th anniversary birthday of James Ronald Webster. And so, it is timely that this has come forward. I also want to thank the ECCB for making this possible for the members of the Monetary Council to have made a decision to go in this direction and replace the face that was present before with the faces that we have now.

I also, while I'm on my feet, want to extend my deepest and heartfelt condolences to. A number of persons, family, friends and loved ones to the family, friends and loved ones of Robin Ricketts. Mr. Franklin Richardson and Mr. Romney, who is commonly known, as was commonly known as, “Done It” from Blowing Point and while I was away. I am aware that the Acting Premier, the Honourable Shellya Rogers-Webster and the Governor would have issued a statement extending their condolences.

And informing the public as to the sad state of affairs that exists in relation to that. And so I want to thank them as well for that statement that was made. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Recognise the Member for West End.

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do want to offer condolences to the families of Robin Ricketts, who I knew very well. Franklin Richardson, who was a cousin of mine, “Done It”. I don't know his full name, but again, there's always somebody of somebody that you know, and that's what makes us special as an island.

But also want to Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for being there for me in England as I laid my mom to rest. And I want to thank the government of Anguilla for the condolences that they sent and message from you, Madam Premier was accepted with love from my family, our family in England.

Mr. Speaker, I think in this House at times we say things that we ought to try to be funny, or maybe it's a jab, but a statement was made when we were talking about the London House, London Office, and I said that I would support it, and the statement was made that I, as a minister, visit England more than anyone else. The fact is that is true because for a number of years I would come to Anguilla. Coach and then go back to England every year for 10 years and plus I lived there and England has been great to me and my mom. She's lived there for 64 years Mr Speaker But what concerns me, Mr. Speaker, is that the last time I saw my mum.

Was four years ago and it hurts me to think that was the last time I saw my mother alive. And I would encourage anybody in this House, out of this house, wherever your mother is or family member. Do not make an excuse to go and see them. Because you're not sure that the next time you see them, you look at them in a coffin.

But The thing is when, Mr. Speaker. My mom looked beautiful as I said at the funeral, she's the most beautiful woman I ever saw in my life. At the age of 15. I didn't know her but didn't know her physically before that and the fact that every day she would.

And I speak to her; she had nothing but positives. She's helped me to get to where I am today. So Mr. Speaker asked all of us if you if your mother is passed on or your father. I was closer to my mother. Thank God for the time you had them. I felt very selfish that I had my mother for 65 years and I felt it wasn't enough. So, to Shellya, you and your beautiful young son and Premier, I know you don't have any sons as yet, but they'll be coming.

You got two. Daughters I would encourage, I would encourage all of us to spare thought to tell your mother that you love them, because I did and I always will. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. I recognise the Member for Road South.

Hon.Mr. Haydn Hughes:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Madam Premier, please don't take the advice of the Honourable Cardigan Connor. two is enough. Be that as it may, Mr. Speaker. I think about two weeks ago if I'm not mistaken. I, the entire House was visiting the senior citizens homes, and I had the occasion to visit the Miriam Gumbs home where quite some time before any other members came. And when I went there, first of all, I must say to the staff of the Miriam Gumbs home, they do a tremendous, tremendous job.

It was Immaculate. It was clean, it was tidy. It was, and I was really impressed by what I saw there. So, kudos to the staff over there who managed that home. But when I was there, I saw my neighbor. Mr. Robin Ricketts for. Many years he was my neighbor, my physical neighbor in South Hill. And he and his wife and his wife had passed and I know he wasn't in the home and he was transferred there.

But he was more than a neighbor. He was my boss, so to speak. And sometime after I was there, the Honourable Cardigan Connor came. And he too. Worked with. Mr. Ricketts, We both did, and we both enjoyed working with. I know sometimes, Mr. Speaker, please allow me some time. But sometimes, when persons die, we say good things about them. They may not be good, but we say good things about them because you never say bad things about someone who dies, But I can tell you the good things that we can say about Robin Ricketts. We are not making it up.

We're not making it up. And when Cardigan Connor came I said to him, come here. I was sitting next to Robin. We call him Robin. He never allowed us to call him Mr. Ricketts. I knew that. Call him Robin. I said come here. So, he came over.

So I said Cardi you know who this is? He looked at him. He said no, I said look close. He looked at him. He couldn't face it. I can't say. And remember, just two years ago, if you had seen Robin, you would have been able to recognise him. I said Cardi, and I hope he'll allow me to call him Cardi because that's what I said, Cardi, this is Robin. I have never seen tears sprang into somebody's eyes so quickly.

And I too was moved because Cardi. I don't know what emotion he did. But tears sprang in a spring, and his face. And we ask someone to take some pictures of us together. And if you look at Cardi’s expression, you can see the pain that he saw. We didn't expect him to die. And we were talking, I was talking to him for some time, and then we started making some jokes, as you would say, locker room jokes with Mr. Ricketts. And he smiled.

He actually smiled, and we felt good. But when we left here, after spending some good time with Robin in particular, we never expected the news that would be passing. Immediately after hearing he passed I. Reached out to Cardi. And I think he was on his way to England, to his mom's funeral, I said. Cardi, Robin passed. And it says, and I want to say this too, that, we maybe are on different sides of the political divide and each one of us have supporters who do not speak to us.

But behind closed doors, we are human, where Anguillians first, and we communicate and we have conversation, But. It also dawned on me. How we treat people. In how we dispense of people. How we. Take people and we just throw them away. After we have no more use for them. And this is not an indictment on no government or in the politician.

This is an indictment on human beings, Mr. Speaker. Because yes, it is. In 1959 we had our first hotel in Lloyd's Guesthouse and subsequently Rendezvous Bay Hotel when it would be hotel immediately day after. But without Robbing Ricketts and Sue and Robin Ricketts. Most of us may not have been standing here today because we have been somewhere, where whether it is in England. Or whether it's some other country trying to make a living. To send back a remittance to those who remain here. Because in 1978, when Sue and Robin Ricketts came to Anguilla, Anguilla didn't have anything.

And by happenstance alone of Leon Ryden Vacation in Saint Martin, someone who had no interest in hospitality. And went over invite him to Anguilla and he came. They presented him Maundays Bay site. He didn't like it. And they said OK drive around and they saw the Meads Bay site and he fell in love And within a few weeks, Mr. Speaker, within a few weeks. That Malliouhana Hotel Started construction, you know, that couldn't happen today. The long process would have been so cumbersome.

And Sue and Robin Ricketts named that hotel the Malliouhana Because before the white man came. Before the European brought our forebears out of Africa and dropped them on this land, there were people here that we call Taino’s, that we call Arawaks, that they had their most important religious ceremonial site in your village. Mr. Speaker, the village should be where they had the most important religious ceremonial

site in the entire Caribbean. Only other place have something.

Of closest importance was in Cuba. And there and there they had all of their information stored, and they named. That hotel the Malliouhana after the original name of Anguilla, before the Spaniards name it Anguila in the French and fight for it in the British and so forth and eventually became Anguilla.

And then there after that, they were so in love with the Maundays Bay Site, were safe. We can talk about a lot of history to that. They were able, and I'm not going to go into it, but they were able to bring investors to the Maundays Bay based site. And in the Maundays Bay side, where they were also partners in developers of the Maundays Bay site, they name it the Juluca. And Juluca was the rainbow God that was named by the Taino people.

And the petroglyph. And the symbol of the Juluca is still found thousands of years later in the fountain cavern situated in Shoal Bay, protected. And for many years, both administrations of the Anguilla United Front and Anguilla Progressive, Anguilla United Movement had been trying their hardest to make that our World Heritage Site, to no avail. It should be.

And Mr. Speaker Cap was because he was on the cap of the area and so it was named Cap Juluca with the Juluca guard being the symbol of the Cap Juluca logo. Two significant. Important. Inconsequential movements that happened in Anguilla that transformed this country. Because Leon Ryden came in with the Malliouhana, he developed the Cul-De-Sac where a lot of our hospitality professionals such as Junior Lake and Eustace Guishard and Chesney Hughes and the like were developed in that area.

Albert Lake, the most, the best Sommelier the Caribbean has ever seen. He's still alive and we must honor and remember him Eustace Guishard. Who became the Caribbean Hotelier of the Year, One of four indigenous Caribbean hoteliers to ever win that prestigious award. All developed through those initiatives by Sue and Robin Ricketts, Mr. Speaker.

I mean, I don't have enough time to tell the story because I know the story intimately because it was one Mr. Hubert Benjamin Hughes who signed up on the alien and whole licenses the facilitate those development. And I saw a lot living in my father's house, Mr. Speaker. But. I just want to reiterate.

What the Honorable Cardigan Connor said. That while we are here. We must remember those persons. If we still have a parent, our parents around. We must remember them because we have at least two Members of Parliament in here who lost, maybe three. I'm not sure about the Member for Sandy Hill, but at least two Members of Parliament who lost their mothers while being Members of Parliament, and that is the Honourable Merrick Richardson and the Honourable Cardigan Connor. And they are Members of Parliament who last year, fathers, including myself and yourself. While being Members of Parliament, Mr. Speaker, so remember them and check on them every day, because every day.

Our parent or parents or someone we know is with us is a day less that they will be here. Which means that every day that transpires is one day less, they'll be here. So let us make time to check on them daily. And I was so happy the other day when I attended a funeral of my mom and somebody said to her, oh, he looked like he's taking good care of you.

And she said to them, if there's one thing every single day Haydn checks on me. Mr. Speaker, so I just want to reiterate what you said Cardi. And I know Sue and Robin really didn't have any family. Their family is Anguilla. They made Anguilla their home. They chose to live in a country with dirt roads, no electricity, no running water.

Because when Cap Juluca opened, we didn't have electricity down there because we didn't get electricity until there was a teenager in South Hill So they chose this dusty, dry place to make it their home, and we must remember them. And. Mr. Speaker, before I close, I just want to extend deepest condolences to the Romney's family. In particular, the Chief Education Officer, Mr. Brent Romney on the lost of his brother who was gunned down in Blowing Point just this past just a few days ago. And the entire Romney's family, the children of Michael family of Michael Romney, Brad Romney and the rest of the entire family.

So, we hope that that is the last shooting. We always do so, but we hope that that is the last shooting that will occur on this blessed place. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the time that you afforded me.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. Any other Closing remarks. Recognise the Member for Valley North.

Hon.Shellya Rogers-Webster:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise as well to extend sincerest condolences to a number of persons. While I would have done so for a number of individuals during last week's press conference, the number of persons who have passed since that time I wish to extend sincerest condolences to the family of Mr. Brandon Romney, the family of Roland Sawyer Richardson.

The family of Evelyn Thomas, of course, many of us would be very aware. Of Evelyn, she was a staple in the Valley community for a number of years. She was at all of our sports days, football tournaments over the years selling whether specials, treats and lots of different things and we extend condolences to her family. I also want to extend condolences to the family of Albert Edward James Hawley, better known to many of us as Garrett.

I would have walked extensively with Garrett during my time at the. Department of Youth and Culture. He was responsible for cleaning the grounds of the Landsomebowl Cultural Centre for many, many years and we built a close working relationship and it was very saddened to hear of his passing. So,

I wish to put on record my sincerest gratitude for his service over the years. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you very much, Member. If there are no other. Comments to be made. I'll invite.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

A Member to move the adjournment of this House.

Hon.Premier Cora Richardson Hodge:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House be adjourned until July 28th, 2026.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

There a seconder?

Hon.Cardigan Connor:

Yes, I rise. To second, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker Tara Cater:

Thank you, Member. I put the question to this Honourable House that this Honourable House stands adjourned until July the 28th at 10 AM. Those in favour say aye. Those against. This Honourable House now stands adjourned. Until Tuesday. Until July the 28th at 10 AM.