



2025/26 SESSION
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BERMUDA SENATE
OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

7 OCTOBER 2026

Sitting number 31 of the 2025/2026 Session
(pages 1275–1302)

Sen. The Hon. Joan E. Dillas-Wright, MBE, JP
President

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10:05 AM**

Sitting Number 31 of the 2025/26 Session

[Sen. the Hon. Joan E. Dillas-Wright, President, presiding]

The President: Good morning, Senators, and to the listening audience.

The Senate is in session.

Shall we pray?

PRAYERS

[Prayers read by Sen. the Hon. Joan E. Dillas-Wright, President]

The President: Please be seated.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

[Minutes 28 September 2026]

The President: I call on Vice President John Wight.

Sen. John Wight: Good morning, Madam President.

The President: Good morning.

Sen. John Wight: I move that the Minutes of the meeting of Monday, 28 September 2026 be taken as read.

The President: Is there any objection to that motion?

Sen. John Wight: Madam President, I move that the minutes of Monday, 28 September 2026 be confirmed.

The President: Vice President, I think Madam Attorney General has a comment.

Sen. John Wight: Oh, I am . . . oh, sorry.

The President: It's all right.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President.

There was just one error recorded, and that was in . . . I am not sure what pages, the reference to the recent passing of the Progressive Group member, Edouard Williams. His name was misspelled, the first name.

So, other than that, thank you, Madam President.

Sen. John Wight: Madam President, with that amendment, I move that the Minutes of Monday, 28 September 2026 be confirmed.

The President: Is there any objection to that motion?

No objection.

[Minutes of 28 September 2026 confirmed as corrected.]

The President: Thank you, Senator Wight, Vice President Wight.

MESSAGES

The President: Mrs. Beale.

The Deputy Clerk: There are no messages, Madam President.

The President: Thank you.

**ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT
APOLOGIES**

The President: I would just like to make note of the fact we have apologies from Senator Fubler who is off Island, so we just acknowledge that.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The President: There are none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The President: We have two Announcements this morning, Senators.

The first one is in the name of Senator Lauren Bell, the Junior Minister of Economy and Labour.

Senator Bell, you have the floor.

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning colleagues and listening public. In fact, I believe I have two, with your permission, Madam President.

The President: Absolutely, Senator Bell.

**BERMUDA DIGITAL IDENTITY: USING DIGITAL
IDENTITY TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO SERVICES**

WITH A FOCUS ON PRIVACY, SECURITY AND INCLUSIVITY

ECONOMIC INVESTMENT RESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATE POLICY 2026

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you. Madam President.

I hereby present for the information of Senate the [Bermuda Digital Identity: Using Digital Identity to Improve Access to Services with a Focus on Privacy, Security, and Inclusivity](#).

And in addition, there is the [Economic Investment Residential Certificate Policy 2026](#).

Senators may access copies on their tablet and/or the Parliament website.

The President: Thank you, Senator Bell.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT SENATE VISITORS

The President: And before I go on, I would just like to acknowledge and welcome in the Senate Chamber Mr. Stephen Symons, the Policy Analyst for Works and Engineering, and Ms. Jane Brett, the Policy Analyst of the Ministry of Housing.

Welcome to you both.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

The President: We have one Notice of Motion, and that is in the name of the Attorney General, the Government Leader of the Senate, who will be presenting the Motion this morning.

VESTING OF GOVERNMENT-OWNED LAND IDENTIFIED ON CADASTRAL PLAN SHEET NO. 4030/001/28

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President. Good morning, colleagues, and good morning to the listening public.

Madam President, I hereby present the following Motion and give notice that I propose to move the motion at a later point in the meeting.

“BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to section 8(3) of the Public Lands Act 1984, that this Honourable Senate approve the vesting in the Bermuda Land Management Corporation of the government-owned parcel of land identified on Cadastral Plan Sheet No. 4030/001/28, comprising approximately 0.801 hectares (1.979 acres) at the former Morgans Point site in Southampton Parish and bounded by lands of Caroline Bay [Ltd.], Sea Express Lane, Tribe Road No. 5, and the Railway Trail.”

The President: Thank you, Madam Attorney General, Government Leader in the Senate.

Moving on.

PETITIONS

The President: There are none.

STATEMENTS

The President: There are none.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

The President: There are none.

FIRST READING OF PUBLIC BILLS

BERMUDA LAND MANAGEMENT CORPORATION AMENDMENT ACT 2026

HEALTH PROFESSIONS (COMPLAINTS COMMITTEES) AMENDMENT ACT 2026

The President: The first Public Bill is the Bermuda Land Management Corporation Amendment Act 2026, and the other one is the Health Professions (Complaints Committees) Amendment Act 2026.

And these we are taking up in our Orders of the Day.

FIRST READING OF PRIVATE BILLS

The President: There are none.

QUESTION PERIOD

The President: There are none.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The President: Items that may be considered under the provisions of Standing Order 25 or the suspension of Standing Order 71.

[Crosstalk]

The President: Minister Wilkerson, I call on you to present this first Bill.

MOTION

VESTING OF GOVERNMENT-OWNED LAND IDENTIFIED ON CADASTRAL PLAN SHEET NO. 4030/001/28

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Madam President, I move that Senate do now take into consideration the following Motion.

“BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to section 8(3) of the Public Lands Act 1984, that this Honourable

[Senate] approve the vesting in the Bermuda Land Management Corporation of the government-owned parcel of land identified on Cadastral Plan Sheet No. 4030/001/28, comprising approximately 0.801 hectares (1.979 acres) at the former Morgans Point site in Southampton Parish and bounded by lands of Caroline Bay Ltd., Sea Express Lane, Tribe Road No. 5, and the Railway Trail."

The President: Thank you, Madam Attorney General, and I think you have introductory remarks.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: I do.

[Crosstalk]

The President: Are there any objections to—

No objections.

Thank you, Madam Attorney General.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President.

I rise today to move that this Chamber approve the vesting of a 0.801 hectare, or 1.979 acre, parcel of vacant government-owned land in Southampton Parish adjacent to Dr. Cann Park in the Bermuda Land Management Corporation. This Motion represents an important step in allowing the proposed Dr. Cann Park II housing development to proceed.

Madam President, before addressing the Motion itself, I believe it is important to be clear about exactly what is before the Senate today. The Motion before my Senate colleagues is not about the detailed design of the proposed development. It is not about the architectural plans, the housing mix, the number of units, affordability criteria, financing arrangements, construction timelines, or project delivery. Those matters fall within the remit of my colleague, the Junior Minister responsible for Housing and Municipalities. Today's Motion is considerably narrower in scope.

In relation to the Motion, the questions before this Chamber are simply these: Is this an appropriate site for the proposed development, and is vesting the appropriate mechanism to enable the Bermuda Land Management Corporation to advance the project?

Madam President, on the first question, we believe the answer is unequivocally yes. This parcel is well suited for residential development. It sits immediately adjacent to the existing Dr. Cann housing complex, managed by the Bermuda Housing Trust, and therefore represents a logical and natural extension of an established residential community.

Rather than introducing development into a previously undeveloped area, this proposal builds upon the existing residential use and established community infrastructure. The site is also relatively flat and largely free from physical constraints that can often complicate residential development.

As a result, it offers a practical opportunity to make productive use of public land. In addition, the parcel is located in close proximity to existing utilities and supporting infrastructure, allowing any future development to benefit from services that are already available in the surrounding area.

Madam President, when Government considers land for development purposes, factors such as suitability, accessibility, surrounding land uses, and proximity to infrastructure are all important considerations. This parcel performs strongly against each of those measures.

Madam President, colleagues may reasonably ask why this particular site has been identified for the proposed development. The answer is straightforward. This parcel possesses many of the characteristics that are desirable for residential development. It is adjacent to an existing housing community, benefits from nearby infrastructure, is relatively unconstrained in its physical characteristics, and is capable of supporting the intended use.

Similarly, colleagues may ask whether other government-owned sites were considered. In simple terms, yes. While the broader assessment of alternative locations falls outside the scope of today's Motion, as this is a matter for my colleague, I can say that the suitability of this parcel is clear based on its location, physical attributes, its current residential zoning, and relationship to the surrounding community and infrastructure.

Madam President, the second question before this Chamber is why Government is seeking to vest the land in the Bermuda Land Management Corporation rather than retain it within the government Estate. This answer is also straightforward. The Bermuda Land Management Corporation is the government entity responsible for advancing this project. If the Corporation is expected to undertake the planning, procurement, financing, delivery, and long-term management responsibilities associated with the development, it must also possess the legal authority necessary to carry out those functions effectively.

Vesting provides that authority. It gives the Corporation clear responsibility for the site and the certainty required to progress the project through the various stages of development and delivery.

Some may ask why Government is not simply retaining the land within its existing portfolio. Madam President, vesting does not alter the public purpose for which the land is being used. Rather, it transfers responsibility for the site to the Government's designated development entity, enabling the project to be advanced in an efficient and accountable manner.

Madam President, I also anticipate that Senators may have questions about the eventual form of the development, including the number of units, the housing mix, qualification requirements, project costs, planning approvals, or construction timelines. These are entirely legitimate questions. However, they are not the

matters before this Chamber under this Motion. They relate to the development proposal itself and not to the land transaction mechanism that is the subject of this Motion.

Today's Motion is focused on two issues alone. The suitability of the site and the rationale for vesting the land in the Bermuda Land Management Corporation.

Madam President, at its core, this Motion is about ensuring that an appropriate parcel of government-owned land is placed under the control of the appropriate government entity so that it can be advanced for its intended public purpose. This is a practical and necessary step. The site is suitable. The location is appropriate. The Corporation requires the legal authority to move the project forward.

Thank you, Madam President, and I now invite colleagues to offer their comments under this Motion.

Thank you.

The President: Thank you, Madam Attorney General.

Would any Senator care to speak on this Motion?

Vice President John Wight, you have the floor.

Sen. John Wight: Thank you, Madam President.

Often, I find Bills come to these Chambers without any context around why we are being asked to approve a Bill, but I thought the Attorney General did a great job in articulating clearly the reasons for it, and she has answered all the questions I would have had.

So, with that, she has my full support.

Thank you.

The President: Thank you, Vice President John Wight.

Would any other Senator care to speak on this Motion?

Senator Victoria Cunningham, you have the floor.

Sen. Victoria Cunningham: Thank you, Madam President, and good morning to my Senate colleagues and the listening audience.

On the face of it, the Opposition has no issue with the vesting of this land . . . parcel of land, I think it was called. But I just want to make sure that when we are building, we are not just building buildings. We are building homes. We are building communities. And to me, especially if we are going to put seniors in them, I think there needs to be . . . *suitability* was the word that was used, to make sure that there are the community services that those seniors might need.

So, are there good . . . I mean, obviously, it is near the Rockaway Ferry, and I am assuming they can walk down, that there would be a bus stop outside Port Royal. But if they are going to be going to supermarkets, are there available community spaces and places that they will need . . . doctors, for them to go, especially if they are lacking in mobility?

The other thing that we are seeing, and I think Dr. Cann Park I is three stories, the potential to build up. So, I know that's not part of this, but has the Government considered increasing the . . . I guess it is not the footprint, but the number of units that would be available? But then if you have increased the number of people that are in there, then I would think you have to then start adding into the services.

But on the face of it, we have no issue, and we understand why this is being brought with the Bill on the Order Paper . . . and thank you very much.

The President: Thank you, Senator Cunningham.

Would any other Senator care to speak on this Motion?

Senator Tannock, you have the floor.

Sen. Tawana Tannock: Yes, thank you, Madam President, and in principle I support what this Motion is trying to do. But I just had a question about the land and the process that was used to determine that this would be the suitable parcel and portion of land for this particular project. So, any land assessment that was carried out, and just a little bit more behind how this particular area was chosen.

The President: Thank you, Senator Tannock.

Madam Attorney General, it seems that's the only other question that has been asked.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President.

Thank you, colleagues, and first with Senator Wight's comments. Thank you. I appreciate the compliments on the brief being comprehensive as to the rationale, and I would give credit to Mr. Symons, who is sitting in the Chamber, for the comprehensiveness of the brief.

In relation to the question around community services, those are in the remit of the Ministry of Housing and Municipalities and will be dealt with in the next [Bill] on the [Order] Paper. And the question is around how the area was chosen.

I think that those questions were, in relation to how the area was chosen were adequately covered in the brief, and if one merely . . . I know that this is Senator Tannock's question, she lives in the . . . she lives west. And certainly, I had the opportunity to go and look at the site when it was proposed. And the questions around why this site versus other sites were largely mapped out because of the ready availability of infrastructure, most particularly.

I also had the benefit of attending, along with the Technical Officer, Jane Brett, and Senator Bell, the public meeting with community residents. And it was really incredibly positive, Madam President, to see the support from community residents who are already in the area. They recognise the need for housing; they recognise the need for ready housing. And so, what this

site does that other sites would not do, it's already, as we have articulated, adjacent to [Dr.] Cann Park I. It has conveniences already around it. But in addition, being a flat site, we don't have to deal with the additional time commitments of excavation, flattening, and things of those natures.

The Minister responsible for Housing and my colleague will talk to that more, and people will have heard that Minister in every public forum, talking about the need to create housing as efficiently and as quickly as possible for the people of Bermuda.

Thank you, Madam President.

The President: Thank you, Madam Attorney General.

[Pause]

The President: You have full support, so it's a matter of you moving your Motion.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President.

With the support, I now move the Motion be approved.

The President: Is there any objection to that Motion?
No objection. You have full support.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President.

[Motion carried: The Vesting of Government-owned Land Identified on Cadastral Plan Sheet No. 4030/001/28 was approved.]

The President: Thank you, Madam Attorney General, and thank you all Senators who have supported this.

Item No. 2, the second reading of the Bermuda Land Management Corporation Amendment Act 2026, and that's in the name of Senator Lauren Bell, the Junior Minister for Housing and Municipalities.

Senator Bell, you have the floor.

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.

I move that the Bill entitled the Bermuda Land Management Corporation Amendment Act 2026 be now read a second time.

The President: Is there any objection to the second reading?

[Crosstalk]

The President: Senator Bell, you will move Standing Order 25. Do you have the wording for that?

Sen. Lauren Bell: Yes, good morning, Madam President.

Again, I move that [Standing Order] 26 be suspended in respect to this Bill.

[Crosstalk]

STANDING ORDER 25

Sen. Lauren Bell: Apologies.

Madam President, I move that the provisions of Standing Order 25 be granted so that the Senate may now proceed with the second reading of the Bill entitled the Bermuda Land Management Corporation Amendment Act 2026.

The President: Is there any objection to that motion?
No objection.

[Motion carried: Leave granted for the Bermuda Land Management Corporation Amendment Act 2026 to be read a second time on the same day as its first reading.]

BILL

SECOND READING

BERMUDA LAND MANAGEMENT CORPORATION AMENDMENT ACT 2026

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.

I am pleased to introduce this Bill entitled the [Bermuda Land Management Corporation Amendment Act 2026](#). Madam President, the purpose of this Bill is straightforward. It seeks to vest a parcel of government-owned land in Southampton Parish in Bermuda and Bermuda Land Management Corporation [BLMC] thereby adding that property to the Corporation's scheduled area under the Act. The parcel comprises approximately 0.801 hectares, or 1.979 acres, and is located at the junction of the Railway Trail and Sea Express Lane adjacent to Dr. Cann Park.

Madam President, while the amendments contained in this Bill are not technical in nature, the purpose behind them is significant. This Government has made it clear that increasing the supply of affordable housing remains one of our highest priorities. We know that too many Bermudians continue to struggle with housing costs, and we are committed to using every appropriate tool available to us to expand housing opportunities across the Island.

Madam President, this legislation places the parcel of land located at the junction of Railway Trail and Sea Express Lane in the ownership and control of the Bermuda Land Management Corporation ensuring that it can be formally incorporated into the Corporation's portfolio and will be utilised for the development of Dr. Cann Park II to advance affordable housing objectives.

Madam President, the Bill amends the Schedules to the Act by adding the description of the property

together with the associated map and provides for public inspection of the detailed [cadastral] plan held by the Department of Public Lands and Buildings.

Madam President, affordable housing does not happen by aspiration alone. It requires land, planning, investment, and from time to time the legislative action necessary to create the conditions for development. This Bill represents one of those necessary steps.

Madam President, it is a practical measure and an important one. It demonstrates this Government's determination to put public assets to work in support of public priorities and to continue moving forward with initiatives that create more housing opportunities for Bermudans.

With those brief remarks, Madam President, I am pleased to table the Bill for the consideration.

Thank you, Madam President.

The President: Thank you, Senator Bell.

Would any Senator care to speak on this Bill?

Senator [Tarik] Dunbar Smith, you have the floor.

Sen. Tarik Smith: Thank you, Madam President, and good morning to my Senate colleagues and listening audience. Just maybe one, maybe two questions, definitely one.

In the Bill, it talks about the number of units. It says for seniors, but also, there's an indication that it might be for families. Is there a specific reason why it's not just for seniors as the other place is? And is there a long waiting list? And how many families that may be on the waiting list for affordable housing could be housed up at this facility? And does the Junior Minister have any figures on what could be a possible cost of these 110 units that would be developed on the property?

Thank you very much.

The President: Thank you, Senator Tarik Dunbar Smith.

Would any other Senator care to speak on this Bill?

Senator David Rogers, you have the floor.

Sen. David Rogers: Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, Madam President.

The President: Good morning to you.

Sen. David Rogers: I have a brief question. It is my understanding that the BHC and BLMC have their own procedural rules for tender and they don't necessarily use the RFP process.

I am curious, though, is the site contractor going to be picked through an RFP process, or if it's going to use the BHC process, what does that look like? Could she describe the process for me?

The President: Thank you.

Would any other Senator care to speak on this Bill?

Hearing none, we will await a response from Senator Bell.

[Pause]

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President. And thank you, colleagues, for your questions and interest in this.

In response to Senator Smith's question regarding the actual cost, as he can appreciate, the plans are still being finalised and financing for this project is also currently being finalised. So, an announcement will be made in the near future once both of those have been confirmed.

He also asked a question regarding . . . why is this project being considered to be used for not only seniors, and he also asked specifically, what is the Bermuda Housing Corporation's waiting list? So, I can confirm that the number of families and individuals seeking access to affordable homes is close to 600 at this point.

So, Dr. Cann Park is being designed with the needs of seniors in mind, but we also recognise that there is that great need, as I just spoke about. So, we are still in the process of deciding the actual makeup of who will have access to this property. The building is designed for it to be approximately 110 units with one-bedroom affordable units primarily for rent to seniors. However, there are a few units being designed for younger tenants. And the final decision on that has not yet been made. So once that decision has been made, we will come back and give you an update on that, Senator.

Now, the timeline is going to be approximately nine months. But again, that process for doing an RF . . . there will be no RFP. The evaluation of contractors was carried out with both modular and precast as well as traditional because we realised that the traditional was way too expensive. So, we have limited it to contractors with experience with modular and precast. So, we are talking about a nine-month process.

Madam President, I believe I have answered all the questions that have been posed.

The President: So, it's left to you to move your Bill.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 26

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.

I move that [Standing Order] 26 be suspended in respect to this Bill.

The President: Is there any objection to that motion?

No objection.

[Motion carried: Standing Order 26 suspended.]

BILL**THIRD READING****BERMUDA LAND MANAGEMENT
CORPORATION AMENDMENT ACT 2026**

Sen. Lauren Bell: Madam President, I move the Bill entitled the Bermuda Land Management Corporation Amendment Act 2026 be now read a third time.

The President: Is there any objection to that motion?
No objection.

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.
I move that the Bill do now pass.

The President: It has been moved that the Bill entitled the Bermuda Land Management Corporation Amendment Act [2026] do now pass.
Any objection to that motion?
No objection. The Bill is passed.

[Motion carried: The Bermuda Land Management Corporation Amendment Act 2024 was read a third time and passed.]

The President: Thank you, Senator Bell, and thank you, Senators who have participated on this Bill.
Senator Bell, you now can move your second Bill, which is the Health Professions (Complaints [Committees]) Amendment Act 2026, when you are ready.

STANDING ORDER 25

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.
I move that the provision of Standing Order 25 be granted so the Senate may now proceed with the second reading of the Bill entitled the [Health Professions \[\(Complaints Committees\)\] Amendment Act 2026](#).

The President: Is there any objection to that motion?
No objection.

[Motion carried: Leave granted for the Health Professions (Complaints Committees) Amendment Act 2026 to be read a second time on the same day as its first reading.]

BILL**SECOND READING****HEALTH PROFESSIONS (COMPLAINTS
COMMITTEES) AMENDMENT ACT 2026**

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, health professions complaints committees are currently unable to fulfil their legislative functions due to difficulties in securing attorneys willing to serve on the Professions Complaints Committees (going forward I will reference Professions Complaints Committees as PCCs). This challenge has contributed to a growing backlog of unresolved complaints and significant delays in complaint processing, which undermines [the rules of] natural justice.

Madam President, historically, the Minister of Health appoints 14 attorneys to serve on Regulatory Authorities and their respective complaints or conduct committees, but filling these positions is challenging. This is due to the amount of time required during the complaint handling process as well as the minimal compensation received. For context, Madam President, fees payable to members of the PCCs and similar government authorities are \$160 per meeting for the chair, or the equivalent of the Chair, and \$80 for members. Madam President, similar challenges have been addressed in other PCCs by allowing persons with legal or ethical training who are not attorneys to assist the PCCs in fulfilling their investigative functions while maintaining due process.

This Bill seeks to align the committee composition across all regulated professions by providing for an expanded pool of eligible candidates available for appointment to the PCCs while also maintaining appropriate skill requirements for the position, thus supporting fairness and due process in reviewing complaints about regulated health professions.

Madam President, specifically, this Bill amends the Nursing and Midwifery Act 1997, the Dental Practitioners Act 1950, and the Optometrists and Opticians Act 2008 to remove the requirement that one member of each respective Professions Complaints Committee be a barrister and attorney admitted and enrolled in Bermuda and to allow the Minister of Health to appoint members qualified by training, experience, or both to assist the Complaints Committee in matters of legal or ethical nature.

These amendments will provide greater flexibility in appointing appropriately qualified members to the Complaints Committees and support the timely and fair consideration of complaints concerning regulated health professionals.

Thank you, Madam President.

The President: Thank you, Senator Bell.
Would any Senator care to speak on this Bill?
I see Senator David Rogers, first and foremost.
You have the floor.

Sen. David Rogers: Thank you so much, Madam President.

The Opposition has no problem with this Bill. We are perfectly fine. This seems to be legislative cleanup, as many of the other statutory bodies have a similar setup.

It does give the Minister flexibility in her appointment. I am, however, sad to see the interprofessional collaboration going. In serving on many of these boards, it did allow you to meet a lot of the young lawyers or a lot of the older lawyers in the field who would serve either as a public service or just starting out their careers. You tended to meet a lot of people on these committees.

It is a quasi- (this is going to be a difficult word for me to say) judicial—

The President: Judicial.

Sen. David Rogers: There you go. A quasi-judicial process that is very complex. You can have some very bad outcomes if you do not follow the process as outlined. So, it is extremely important when the Minister is picking an individual that they be qualified and whatnot.

But it is a band-aid on a bigger problem. The bigger problem is these committees need to be consolidated. We just don't have the economies of scale in the number of complaints and lawsuits. That is something I hope that the Ministry and Minister are looking at, consolidating these Complaints Committees.

My question is specifically to the individuals picked. "Qualified individuals" seem somewhat nebulous to me. Is it a paralegal? Is it a law student? Can you describe the type of person that the Minister would be looking to pick?

My next question is . . . my honourable colleague mentioned that there have been some delays caused by not having legal representation on the committees. Can she tell me how many cases or how many committees have been delayed? How many complaints have been delayed due to the fact that we haven't had the appropriate legal representation?

Thank you for the time.

The President: Thank you, Senator Rogers.

I believe Senator Tawana Tannock is who I saw first and foremost. You have the floor.

Sen. Tawana Tannock: Yes, thank you, Madam President.

As I stated in the Senate previously, for the past two years I have been the lawyer on the Medical Council, which of course is governed by the Medical Practitioners Act. So, I guess my first question is: Should we be expecting an amendment to the Medical Practitioners Act to follow these amendments to bring all the legislation in line?

My second point is this: I fully appreciate, and I have had numerous discussions with the Permanent Secretary of Health about this and the Minister indeed. I fully appreciate the difficulty in getting attorneys to sit on the board. And what I can say is the Medical Council meets once a month and no meeting is less than two hours. Most of the time it goes three hours.

However, that does not account for the sheer volume of emails that you get throughout the week. And I have made a point to say, *call me if you need me*. And they will call me if they need me, because there are so many emails that I actually just can't keep on top of them. And when you have 24 pages of doctors who need to be registered, who have issues that they want to deal with, it does become quite cumbersome. So, I am fully aware of the fact that . . . and I actually thought I got paid \$50 a meeting. I was stunned to hear it was \$80.

[Laughter]

Sen. Tawana Tannock: That was news to me. So, I fully appreciate the constraints, and I know it's difficult.

However, I do have to echo Senator Rogers with the criteria for appointing the persons who are supposed to have the legal and ethical expertise. What criteria will be used? And the reason why I ask is that some of these issues are quite, quite legally intensive. And I know we have the Attorney General's Chambers, and what I often try to do is I try to give guidance to the Attorney General's Chambers if we are going to ask somebody in the Attorney General's Chambers to give an opinion. And then I review that opinion, and sometimes I have other comments.

But I find it difficult to expect somebody who isn't a qualified attorney or barrister, or maybe what's the . . . gosh, like the other routes that you can do. So, if it is . . . you may not be called, maybe you are doing your pupillage, is that what we are talking about? To what extent are we expecting somebody to be legally trained? Because I can tell you first hand that these are significant and serious issues . . . when we have issues of persons not having insurance, persons practicing without a licence, persons who object to the fact that their registration has not been granted. And you have to give a legally qualified opinion to the Council to provide why.

So, I understand the constraints. I understand what's happening. But I am very concerned that it's such a high level of expertise that's required that we need to be a little bit tighter on who exactly we will be looking at to provide this resource.

Thank you.

The President: Thank you.

And I believe Vice President John Wight, you . . .

Sen. John Wight: Thank you, Madam President.

I have taken note of my colleagues' questions, particularly Senator Tannock, who's obviously very close to this issue. I think overall, you know, with the wording of the Bill as it is, I support it.

Thank you, Madam President.

The President: Thank you, Vice President John Wight.

Madam Attorney General, you have a comment.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President.

I rise to support the Bill. And I think similarly, you know, as a lawyer in my previous capacity who would have been called upon to serve on various boards that require a barrister who's admitted and enrolled, I just want to give some practical commentary as to why the Minister took the view that specifically setting out criteria in this particular piece of legislation would be counterproductive.

So, the effort here is not to be too prescriptive, because being so prescriptive is how we are in the place where we are now, where panels sometimes cannot be stood up or the work cannot be progressed. And there is a clear understanding that there has to be a balance. So, there should be the understanding that when the Minister is exercising her discretion on selections, she is taking those things into consideration as to the complexity of the matters before a particular type of board.

But what should be recognised is a person in Bermuda could be legally trained, but not admitted and enrolled. And there are a number of lawyers who are active and willing, or former lawyers active and willing to participate, but they don't currently have a practicing certificate. There are people who have law degrees who are teachers, for example. There are people who have high levels of intelligence, a willingness and are able, perhaps because they are retired, they might not have maintained a practicing certificate who currently just are not in scope. So, I think the idea of not being so prescriptive on the criteria gives that flexibility.

But certainly, there's recognition that ethical standing is a key consideration here. And as Senator Tannock pointed out, there's always the opportunity if a panel feels that it is under-resourced and it needs qualified legal guidance that it can make application to Chambers for assistance.

Thank you, Madam President.

The President: Thank you very much, Madam Attorney General, for that.

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam Attorney General for that additional information and [it is] much appreciated. And I would like to thank Senator Wight for his expression of support for this Bill. I also would like to take the opportunity to thank Senator Tannock for all the work that she does on her board. So, thank you very much again for that.

Now, if I could respond to some of the questions that were tabled by my colleagues. To Senator Rogers, and he may already be aware, but yes, there are definite plans to modernise the process and consolidate the number of committees. And it is going to be done through the Bermuda Health Council. So, we

are looking forward to that coming to this place probably in . . . sometime in the spring of next year. Okay?

I believe that was all of the questions. Let me just double check. Yes, I believe that was all the questions.

The other questions were specifically around who would qualify to serve in this capacity.

The President: Senator Rogers.

Sen. David Rogers: The number of complaints delayed.

The President: That was your question.

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, colleague. If you just bear with me, I am just going to reach out to my technical team to see if we have that statistic on hand.

The President: Thank you.

[Pause]

Sen. Lauren Bell: Madam President, I have been advised that we don't have that statistic.

The President: Thank you, Senator Bell.

Then it's left for you to pass your Bill.
Thank you.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 26

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, I move that [Standing Order] 26 be suspended in respect to this Bill.

The President: Is there any objection to that motion?
No objection.

[Motion carried: Standing Order 26 suspended.]

BILL

THIRD READING

HEALTH PROFESSIONS (COMPLAINTS COMMITTEES) AMENDMENT ACT 2026

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.

I move that the Bill entitled Health Professions (Complaints Committees) Amendment Act 2026 be now read for a third time.

The President: Is there any objection to that motion?
No objection.

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.
I move that the Bill do now pass.

The President: It has been moved that the Bill entitled the Health Professions (Complaints Committees) Amendment Act 2026 do now pass.

Is there any objection to that motion?

No objection. The Bill is passed.

[Motion carried: The Health Professions (Complaints Committees) Amendment Act 2024 was read a third time and passed.]

The President: Thank you, Senator Bell, and thank you, Senators who participated.

We now move on to the last item on our agenda here, and it is Item No. 4, the Motion to be moved by Senator the Honourable Kim R. Wilkerson, Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

Madam Attorney General, you have the floor.

MOTION

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO HISTORIC LAND LOSSES IN BERMUDA TAKE NOTE OF REPORT

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President.

I move that the Senate do now take into consideration the following Motion:

“THAT THIS Honourable House take note of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Historic Land Losses in Bermuda laid for the information of the House of Assembly on 10th December 2021.”

The President: Is there any objection to that Motion?

No objection.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you very much, Madam President.

Madam President, I rise to speak on the report of the Commission of Inquiry into Historic Land Losses in Bermuda. I do so with a deep sense of the weight of this subject. This report is not simply a legal document. It is a record of homes, farms, churches, and burial grounds, of the families who lost them, and of their descendants who still bear the harm of those losses. It is a story of what was taken from our people and of how powerless they were to stop it.

Madam President, I begin by remembering the late, great Walton Brown, whom I was honoured to call a colleague and a friend. He and his many contributions to our Island are sorely missed.

In July 2014, Walton moved the motion in the House of Assembly that ignited the flame for this entire process. He spoke of the *bad old days* when justice was a fleeting illusion for many. His motion asked for something simple and something Bermudians had long been denied: an independent examination of these claims and recommendations to rectify historical

wrongs whose myriad reverberations can still be felt today.

Madam President, both this Government and the people of Bermuda have been unswerving in their pursuit of justice. When the then Governor refused to establish an inquiry, some 2,000 Bermudians marched on Government House. Parliament then approved an Opposition Bill, championed by Walton Brown, amending the Commissions of Inquiry Act [1835] so that the Premier could act. And when the Progressive Labour Party formed the Government, it did act.

In November 2019, the Commission was appointed under the chairmanship of the Honourable Justice Norma Wade-Miller, a celebrated former senior puisne judge of our Supreme Court, along with the Honourable Wayne Perinchief as Deputy Chairman, and five other distinguished commissioners. Madam President, those other commissioners included the late Lynda Milligan-Whyte.

Madam President, I praise those commissioners for their commitment to this cause in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Archives were closed, hearings were disrupted, and much of the evidence had to be given via video link.

Even so, across 74 hearings, the Commission considered 53 claims, heard from 72 witnesses, and drew on the research of historians Dr. Theodore Francis and Dr. Quito Swan. All of this was done on an approved budget of \$325,000 and was further supported by volunteer investigators and former police officers. I thank every single one of them.

And, Madam President, I pause at this point to remember, I called her name in the last session of this Senate, Judith-Ann [Joell-]Chambers [Raynor], who was a paralegal, who was one of those volunteers who helped to investigate and guide families. May she rest in peace, Madam President.

I also thank the claimants and descendants who came forward. Many carried family stories that had been passed down for generations but had never been examined independently. When the Commission asked what they hoped to gain, many answered simply: truth and closure. Others said that they were grateful at last to be heard.

Madam President, no Bermudian should ever have to be grateful simply to be heard.

Madam President, this report was tabled in the House of Assembly on the 10th of December 2021. Nearly five long years have passed. While the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. famously wrote in his 1963 letter from Birmingham jail, “Justice too long delayed is justice denied,” this delay is not without cause. Several matters connected to the Commission’s work were before the courts, and Parliament has a responsibility to avoid prejudicing outcomes.

Those matters have now been substantially disposed of, and our esteemed colleagues in the House of Assembly robustly debated the report on the 25th of September. It is now the turn of this Senate, and

I welcome the opportunity both to be heard by and to hear from my colleagues.

Madam President, it is important that we are clear about the scope and limitations of a Commission of Inquiry. It is not a court. It cannot award compensation or enforce anything. It can hear evidence, make findings, and put forward recommendations.

This Commission was asked to look beyond individual cases, and to question whether collectively they pointed to a systemic issue, a pernicious legal, political, and/or race- and class-based established practice that allowed these wrongs to occur. The decisions that follow are ours to make, and history will judge us based upon the steps that we take.

Madam President, the central finding of the Commission can be stated simply. The expropriations in Tucker's Town in the late 1920s and in St. David's Island in the 1940s were lawful, because Parliament authorised them by statute. However, the Commission also found that the procedures used were in many instances irregular, because the bodies overseeing those expropriations used their economic and political might in ways that were manifestly inequitable and unfair.

Madam President, as a barrister, I find that distinction important. There is a long-standing principle of our common law, which the Commission reminds us of, that Parliament is presumed not to take a person's property without compensation unless it says so in plain words. Parliament can override that principle, but lawful is not the same as fair. The lawful exercising of state power is, quite frankly, the bare minimum that is to be expected. And fairness is what our people deserve.

Now, I will not sit here and pretend that the decisions made, and the actions taken by the state were somehow magically free of racial or class bias. Sadly, the truth is far more sinister.

These were not neutral acts of administration. A cursory examination of the historical record graphically illustrates that the devastating impact of their decisions and actions was felt most acutely by those who were least able to push back against the diabolical machinations of the state, namely the Black Bermudian descendants of those who have been systemically disenfranchised by more than two centuries of shadow bondage and the decades of legally codified racial discrimination that followed in its wake.

Madam President, let me describe what the Commission found. The Bermuda Development Company, in concert with the UK-based shipping firm Furness Withy & Co. [Ltd.], was legally empowered through the passing of legislation that favoured their commercial designs to seize more than 500 acres of largely Black-owned land in Tucker's Town. The Commission found that the process of appointing and paying the commissioners and jurors was rife with conflicts of interest.

They also recorded that the developer's first choice was Riddles Bay. However, the wealthy and

overwhelmingly White landowners there were able to leverage their considerable political and economic influence to redirect attention towards areas populated by poor and working-class and overwhelmingly Black Bermudians.

The Commission's findings were damning. Not only were the original landowners inadequately compensated for their property and the hardship suffered as a result of what is best described as an entirely legal, forcible relocation of hundreds of Black Bermudians and the subsequent destruction of their beloved community, but it was discovered that the acreage does not reconcile, a difference of at least 134 acres over the 510 acres first put before Parliament.

They further agreed that in a cruel sleight of hand, some of this stolen land—because that's exactly what we are dealing with here, Madam President, land that has been stolen—somehow made its way into the possession of certain established White Bermudian families.

In addition, approximately 6.4 per cent of Bermuda's landmass passed into foreign control and ownership. That's 6 per cent of our Island of 21 square miles fell out of Bermudian ownership in one fell swoop.

Madam President, those numbers cannot begin to capture what was taken, though. What was destroyed? Homes, farms, a post office, a cricket pitch, schools, a convenience store, churches, a cemetery, a tightly knit, self-sustaining Black community razed and forgotten. Families were removed, some of them by force and, to add colossal insult to already unimaginable injury, were then barred from returning to the place where they and their families had lived for generations.

Particularly heartbreaking is the case of the last holdout, Ms. Dinah Smith. She refused to leave and was dragged from her property by police officers. Her household items were thrown out onto her front yard, and she was denied the right to return to the now-transformed Tucker's Town, even as a visitor, without permission. Dinah Smith's violent eviction occurred on June 4, 1924. She died the following year. Some might surmise her death was the result of a broken heart.

Madam President, we are left to see the legacy of that loss. I had the opportunity, Madam President, I think more than a year ago, to see a piece of art created by a great-grandchild of Dinah Smith, Chyna Talbot, on display at Masterworks, Madam President, which graphically depicted her recreation of that likely scenario of her relative sitting outside of her home with her belongings strewn about.

Scores of Black Bermudians, who against all odds had managed to fashion a life for themselves in the aftermath of a toothless emancipation that awarded over £50,000 to the former enslavers but afforded the formerly enslaved precious little beyond the removal of the chains, were again at the mercy of a well-connected White Bermudian establishment and the thirst for riches.

We must call the Tucker's Town expropriation exactly for what it was, Madam President: a state-sanctioned injustice targeting Black Bermudians that was made possible through the premeditated weaponisation of the law.

Madam President, there are many similarities between what took place in Tucker's Town and what happened in St. David's. In 1940, the decision to build a military base in St. David's was made without consulting the residents. The construction of the base was a *fait accompli*, a foregone conclusion. Powerful White men conferred with one another, a course of action was chosen, and the announcement was made in the House of Assembly.

At no point in the proceedings were the property owners, whose lands were to be radically repurposed, included in the discussions. Imagine . . . the shock and anger they must have felt is unthinkable. The Commission took note of evidence that 114 parcels of land were seized, fair market value was very rarely applied by those settling compensation, and the pursuit of an alternative location in Southampton and Warwick was discontinued after protests from wealthy landowners. Again, as with Tucker's Town, the demands of the powerful were heeded while the rights of the powerless were ignored.

The Commission heard of a man, his wife, and children hurriedly loading all of their possessions onto a horse-drawn cart while the wrecking ball waited to demolish their home. The parents cried as they watched it come down. Displaced families herded onto wooden barracks where nine or ten would be forced to share three cramped rooms for up to a year or more, labouring women forced to give birth in squalid conditions where privacy was an impossibility. Once again, the disenfranchised, who had been compelled to make monumental sacrifices, were treated at best as a niggling afterthought.

Madam President, one witness, Ms. Elaine Fox, spoke with great dignity. For her community, she said, this is not about restitution but recognition. She told the Commission that Bermuda has done nothing to commemorate the man who led St. David's and lost everything he owned. And what did she ask for? A bench on the hill where she could take her granddaughter and show her what those families saw and what they were made to surrender.

Madam President, a bench. After everything that community gave, that is what she asked for. Surely, she and they are owed more than that.

Madam President, the Commission also heard about the Marsden Methodist Cemetery at Tucker's Point, where graves were demolished and no records were kept. A witness told the Commission that part of the burial ground was cleared to make way for a golf fairway. And some of us, Madam President, we played on those courses. I did myself, before recognising what was buried there and what was destroyed.

The idea that someone would transform the graveyard housing our deceased family members into a golf course should be unthinkable to all people of good conscience. Yet, that is exactly what happened. Golf balls raining down upon gravestones. The desecration of the final resting place of our families would be abhorrent to anyone. Their ancestors were laid to rest there and they deserved to be left in peace. We must honour and protect our dead. To that end, the Commission recommended that remediation of the site begin immediately and that its restoration be carried out with input given by the descendants. I certainly echo that call.

Madam President, the Commission also looked beyond Tucker's Town and St. David's. It heard cases from other parts of the Island involving fraud, forged documents, the misuse of powers of attorney, disputes over inheritance and adverse possession, in some instances assisted by professionals who ought to have protected their clients. In one case, it found that an agent of the state played an integral role in enabling the seizure of land. These are not my words. They are the findings of a Commission chaired by a retired judge.

I will not speak to individual cases today out of respect for the claimants, for the courts, and for anyone whose rights may yet be affected. But the Commission's overall observation is a sobering one. Across the cases heard, there emerged a disturbing pattern wherein those with money, influence, power, and access took land from those who did not have the means to resist. The law should not be used as a weapon wielded for the nefarious purpose of engaging in wrongdoing. Not then, not now, not ever.

Madam President, the report makes some 56 recommendations in six groups. I will not read them all, but they fall into a few broad themes. They include acknowledgement and memory, a formal apology, physical memorials, the teaching of this history in our schools, and a museum in St. David's. They include remedy, a process to examine whether compensation paid was fair, and we know that it was anything but fair. A Heritage Trust for descendants, a permanent mechanism to review claims, an independent land tribunal for legacy cases.

Madam President, importantly, the recommendations include law reform, a right of first refusal for dispossessed owners, keeping expropriation powers with statutory bodies rather than private entities, and limits on how long a corporation may hold land. They include the integrity of our records and our land registry, with proper resourcing and safeguards against fraud. They include a Truth and Reconciliation Commission on segregation and race.

Madam President, let me speak to the legal perspective, as this Honourable Senate would expect from me.

First, the Court retains ultimate jurisdiction over disputes about property, so nothing in this debate changes that, bar any future legislative reform.

Second, the Commission recommended that one case be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions. The Director is independent, and the decision on whether to take any action is for that office alone. The Commission itself acknowledged that, with the passage of time, comes the difficulty of fairly establishing responsibility. However, a fair review is still in order.

Third, any framework for compensation must be designed with care. Who is eligible? What evidence is required? What limitation periods apply? And how are the rights of those who bought land in good faith now protected? Something the Commission itself emphasised. These are questions this Government is committed to resolving.

Fourth, the report asks whether the protections that exist today are strong enough. Section 13 of the Constitution and the Acquisition of Land Act 1970 govern compulsory acquisition now. The recommendation to keep expropriation powers with statutory bodies deserves serious legal examination.

Madam President, the Premier already set out the Government's position in the House of Assembly on 25 September. The Government has accepted the report in principle and is reviewing how best to implement it. It has accepted the recommendation to preserve the history of Tucker's Town and St. David's Island, including through physical memorials, the form and location of which will be settled in consultation with descendants. The Ministry of Home Affairs will develop an easy-to-use public interface so that anyone with a concern has an accessible place to turn. And the Minister of Education has committed to ensuring that this history is taught to every Bermudian child.

Madam President, on the matter of compensation, no decision has yet been made as further consultation and examination will determine the direction to be taken. The Government wants to hear the views of others before it does take action, and I welcome the views of the Honourable Senators.

Madam President, I have heard it said on both sides, in another place, and across our community, that this process must have teeth and must not become an exercise in public relations. On that point, I wholeheartedly agree.

As promised in the most recent Throne Speech, the Government is reconstituting the Law Reform Commission, and I expect to announce those developments in November. The commissioner's work will be organised around five pillars. One of those pillars will be the implementation of the recommendations that emerged from this report.

Madam President, I want to be clear about why that matters. This work is so important that it stands as an item on its own. Many of the Land Loss Commission recommendations are, at their heart, questions of law. The rules governing compulsory acquisition, the role of private entities in exercising public powers, a right of first refusal for dispossessed owners, limits on

corporate landholding, the design of a land tribunal, and the establishment of a reparatory framework.

Those are precisely the questions that a Law Reform Commission exists to examine carefully and with expert input. The families who came forward should not have to wonder whether their report has been left on a shelf. It will not be an afterthought. It will not be a footnote. This work will have a place of its own with the home.

Madam President, the past cannot be rewritten. Those who were responsible for the wrongs committed are long gone, and we cannot ask Bermudians of today to carry the weight of decisions they did not make. Although we cannot undo what was done to Ms. Dinah Smith, to the families of Tucker's Town, to the people of St. David's, we must not look away. We must not cower in the face of the demand that we counter historical injustice by doggedly pursuing that which is right and just in the present. We must take seriously the evidence this Commission gathered, say plainly what it found, and ask what fairness requires of us now.

The Commission itself reminded us that money alone cannot make these communities whole. Public recognition, enshrinement of memory in the school curricula at every level, all of these, as well as other related modalities of community healing and restoration, must be called upon.

Madam President, on an island of 21 square miles, land is in short supply. Our community knows too well that we lack affordable housing, and that the ambitions of owning a small piece of the rock are impossible for many Bermudians to fulfil. An equitable resolution matters more than ever to the descendants of those who were dispossessed, and to the generations who will come after them, who cannot access the ranks of landowners.

Madam President, for generations these families carried their stories alone, too often dismissed as a myth. This report gave them, for the first time, an independent hearing, and it confirmed that their pain was real. Our task now is to show them that they were heard, and that we have the courage, the ability, and the tenacity to generate change that will be of benefit to them and to the wider community.

Thank you, Madam President.

[Desk thumping]

The President: And thank you, Madam Attorney General and Minister of Justice, for your most important presentation.

Would any Senator care to speak?

I see Senator Tarik Dunbar Smith. You have the floor.

Sen. Tarik Smith: Thank you, Madam President, and thank you to the Attorney General for a very informative and heartfelt message.

When Madam Attorney General presented this and said she would push it to today, you know, you go and do your research, and as a Bermudian, you hear about these things. But when someone reads it to you, and you listen, and they are passionate, it has to touch your heart.

I can't imagine, as I sit here and I speak about my mother and my father and my step-parents and how hard they worked and we worked to secure our properties, and to have someone come and just say, *Well, it doesn't matter*. I mean, I can only imagine my uproar and what I would try and do. But to be helpless and voiceless in a time . . . I cannot imagine, and it is just a hard thing to listen to. But it is something that we have to listen to, and I commend the Government and the Minister of Education for saying that he wanted to put this into the education system because it is important.

You know, I went to The Berkeley Institute, as I boldly state *Green House* quite often, and this was not taught in The Berkeley Institute. Until this Commission was brought forth and read in the House on the 25th of September, I didn't know much about it. But I have taken the time to read as much of the 500 pages as possible to understand. And Madam Attorney General gave a very clear . . . and I don't really have anything to argue with her about because there's nothing to argue about.

You know, many Black owners were just ripped out of their homes, not paid fairly. Yes. Was it law? Yes, it was, but it wasn't right, and that doesn't make it right. And so many people now have been fighting, and now we have a chance to be a voice of the voiceless.

So, you know, as Madam Attorney General said, in another place it was said that this can't be a signpost. It can't be a PR stunt. It has to have teeth. And I think we all agree on that.

The OBA would like for a committee of members from both parties to be in and see what we can get through legislatively to fix this. We also need to maybe have a permanent body to look at the land loss because so many cases were never looked at. You know, a lot of people still have gripes, and they maybe do not have the money to file legally. And it's just sad all around. You know, as Bermudians, we all should be hurt.

And when I read about it . . . I don't play golf, but when I read about the desecration of the cemetery, it's ridiculous. As we would say, younger kids would say on my football team, *That's wild, coach*. It's wild that such a thing would happen, that we still have golf balls being shot over, and it be part of a driving range.

Yes, the owners of the golf course have apologised, and the Commission spelled out that they should maybe put up nettings, move the driving range, allow people to have proper access, which is very important because these are all Bermudian ancestors. If you are Bermudian, these are your ancestors. And I will be damned if someone would desecrate my grandmother's grave. I would lose my mind. So, I can only imagine what it must be like for those people. And as a

Bermudian, it hurts my heart to see and hear that there's golf being played.

Like I said, I don't play golf, so this is new. This is new information to me that I have discovered in the last few weeks. This isn't about politics. This is about our forefathers and people that were mistreated.

Like I said, I hope that the Minister does put it into the education system so that our young people can know about the history, because history is important, that not only do we know where we come from, but we know what happened to our people.

So now, Senators, this is our thing to deal with as we are the present-day legislators. Let's hope that this gets done and a Commission can be established because the families have given their evidence, and like I said, it's a great personal cost. And the only thing left to do is to give them some justice.

The Opposition agrees to work with who is serious about getting this done, and we will keep asking questions so that it gets done because the people have suffered long enough.

Thank you, Madam President, and thank you, Attorney General.

The President: Thank you, Senator Dunbar Smith.

And I call on Senator Lindsay Simmons, who indicated she wanted to speak. You have the floor.

Sen. Lindsay Simmons: Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, there are some subjects we speak about because we are Senators, and then there are some subjects we speak about because we are Bermudians. This is one of those subjects for me because I cannot speak about the loss of land in Bermuda simply as a matter of history, policy, or law.

I speak about it as a Bermudian, as a woman, as a mother, and as a daughter, and as someone who understands that land is about so much more than a piece of property. Land is home. Land is family. Land is security. Land is opportunity. Land is inheritance. And for many families, land is physical evidence of the sacrifice made by generations before us.

Madam President, I want us to imagine something. Imagine your grandfather working on a piece of land that belongs to your family. Imagine your grandmother preparing meals in the kitchen of a home that has been passed on through generations. Imagine your parents taking their first steps there. Imagine the tree your children will eventually climb. Imagine family gatherings, birthdays, Christmases, Sunday dinners, and celebrations taking place on that land. Imagine knowing that when your children grew up, they would have somewhere to return.

And, Madam President, then imagine being told you have to leave. Where does the family go? Where do the memories go? Where do photos go? Where do the stories go? And what happens to the inheritance that was supposed to be passed on to the

next generation? These are not simply questions about property. These are questions about people. They are questions about history. They are questions about what happens when families lose not only land, but the opportunity that the land represents.

Madam President, the Commission of Inquiry into Historic Land Losses gave Bermudians an opportunity to tell their stories. Fifty-three claims were considered, with seventy-four hearings held. But behind every number was a person. Behind every claim was a family. Behind every piece of land was a story. And we must never allow the numbers to make us forget the people.

Madam President, when we talk about Tucker's Town, we are not simply talking about land. We are talking about a community. We are talking about homes. We are talking about families who lived, worked, worshipped, raised their children, and built their lives there. The Commission found that taking of land in Tucker's Town in the 1920s was legally authorised. But it also found in many instances the procedures used were irregular, unfair, and inequitable. And that distinction matters, Madam President. Because law and justice are not always the same thing. Some things can be permitted by law and still leave people feeling that they were not treated fairly.

And when we look back at history, we have to be mature enough to acknowledge that. The taking of land did not simply mean losing a physical property. It meant displacement. It meant disruption. It meant the loss of a way of life. It meant the breaking apart of a community. And the consequences did not end when the land changed hands. The consequences continue through generations.

Madam President, St. David's tells another part of this story. Another community. Another relationship of land. Another reminder we cannot reduce these experiences to a transaction on a piece of paper. Because how do you put a price on the place where your family was born? How do you calculate the value of a home where your grandparents lived? How do you put a dollar amount on the kitchen table where generations sat together? How do you measure the value of a yard where children played? Or a church where your family worshipped? Or a cemetery where your loved ones were laid to rest? That is the value of land. That is the meaning of home. And that is why historic land loss matters.

Madam President, I cannot stand here and speak about family, generations, and land without thinking about my own family. I think about my father. I think about the generations before him. I think about the people whose sacrifices created opportunities for me. And I think about my daughter. I want her to know where she comes from. I want her to know the names of the people who came before her. I want her to understand their sacrifices, their struggles, their victories. And I want her to understand that the opportunities she has today did not simply appear. Someone worked for

them. Someone sacrificed for them. Someone went without so the next generation could have more. Because that is what we are supposed to do. We are supposed to leave something behind. A lesson. A home. A business. An education. A piece of land. A better opportunity. Something.

And when I think about historic land loss, I don't only think about the people who lost their land. I think about their children, their grandchildren, the generations who never inherited it. I think about the homes that may never have been built. The businesses that may never have existed. The wealth that may never have been created. The opportunity that may never have been passed on.

That is part of history that we cannot ignore because land can become a home. A home can become security. Security can create an opportunity. Opportunity can create education. Education can create a business. A business can create employment. And all of that can be passed on from one generation to another. That, Madam President, is generational wealth.

So, when land is lost, the loss can reach far beyond the original owner. It can affect generations who were not even born when the land was taken. Madam President, I'm not standing here asking us to rewrite history. I'm not asking us to pretend that every claim was proven. I am certainly not saying that we can ignore evidence, facts, or the law. Facts matter. Evidence matters. Truth matters. But so do the experiences of people who lived through these events.

The Commission gave us an opportunity to examine these experiences. It also gave us recommendations. Recommendations around preserving and teaching the history of Tucker's Town and St. David's. Recommendations around memorialising. Recommendations around creating mechanisms to address outstanding land loss issues and, where appropriate, compensation. These recommendations deserve our attention because an unacknowledged wound does not disappear simply because generations have passed.

Madam President, there are families in Bermuda who have carried these stories for decades. A grandmother who told her grandchildren what happened. A grandfather who kept documents. A family photo. A deed. A letter. A story passed down around the dinner table. Someone saying: *That used to belong to us.*

Madam President, these words matter. That history matters. And these families deserve to know that their stories have not been forgotten. They deserve to be able to say: *This is where we came from. This is where our family was built. This is what happened. And this is why we must never forget.*

Madam President, we cannot give these families back the years. We cannot give someone back the childhood they lost. We cannot bring back a loved one who spent their life believing their family had been wronged. We cannot rebuild every home. We cannot turn back the clock and change every decision that was

made. But we can acknowledge. We can preserve. We can teach. We can investigate. We can listen. And where the evidence supports it, we can pursue appropriate remedies. Because justice does not always look the same. Sometimes justice is compensation. Sometimes justice is restoration. Sometimes justice is memorial. Sometimes justice is a history book. And sometimes justice is simply being able to say to a family: *We know what happened. We know who you were. We know what you lost. And we will not allow your story to disappear.*

Madam President, this is also about what we teach our children. And I do not want our children to learn this history so that they become angry. I want them to learn it, so they become informed. So, they understand the importance of ownership. The importance of protecting what their families have built. The importance of keeping records. The importance of estate planning. The importance of knowing who owns what. The importance of understanding the history behind the land beneath their feet. Because our children need to know that Black Bermudians were not merely people who worked on someone else's land.

Madam President, we owned land. We built homes. We built farms. We built businesses. We built churches. We built communities. We built Bermuda. And that is an important part of our history.

Madam President, this conversation is about more than just the past. It is about what we do with what happens. History should not simply make us look backwards. It should make us better moving forward. It should make our system stronger. It should make our laws clearer. It should make our decision-making more careful. It should make us conscious of the power that the government and institutions hold over people's lives because we are not the owners of Bermuda. We are the stewards.

Every generation receives something from the generation before it. And every generation has a responsibility to leave something for the generation after. One day we will be gone. Our children will be sitting where we are sitting. Our grandchildren will be making decisions we cannot imagine today. And they will look back at our generation and ask: *What did they protect? What did they preserve? What did they choose to remember? And what did they choose to forget?*

Madam President, I want us to think about the word "home." Not the market value. Not the square footage. Think about home. Think about the kitchen, the yard, the Christmases, the birthdays, the Sunday dinners, the grandfather's chair, my nana's rocking chair, the family photos, the people who are no longer here. Now imagine being told you have to leave. And imagine your child asking: *Why can't we go back?* And the answer being: *Because it isn't ours anymore.* That is not just a loss of land. That is a loss of a piece of your family's story. And time does not erase history.

Madam President, as a mother, I want my daughter to know her history. I want her to know the

people whose shoulders she stands on. I want her to know the sacrifices that were made for her. The struggles that were endured. The victories that were celebrated. And I want her to understand that what she has today came at a cost. That is how we honour those who came before us. Not by pretending history was perfect. Not by hiding behind difficult parts. Not by ignoring the uncomfortable parts. But telling the truth. The good, the bad, the painful, the complicated. And then learning from it. Because our children deserve the whole story. They deserve to know that Black Bermudians owned land. They deserve to know that Black Bermudians built businesses, Madam President. And they deserve to understand what happens when generations lose the ability to pass these things on.

Madam President, so what do we do now? We cannot turn back the clock. But we can remember. We can teach. We can preserve. We can listen. We can examine the evidence. And where appropriate, we can pursue.

Madam President, I want Bermuda to be a country that remembers. A country that listens. A country that learns. A country that protects. Because we are temporary custodians of this place. One day we will hand it over. And when that day comes, I want our children to be able to look back at us and say: *They remembered. They listened. They learned. And they did better.*

So, I say to our people, know where you come from. Remember Tucker's Town. Remember St. David's. Remember the families. Remember the names. Remember the homes. Remember the farms. Remember the churches. Remember the communities. Remember the graves. Remember the memories. Remember the dreams. Because these were not just a piece of Bermuda. These were people's lives. And Bermuda's history is not only written in books. It is written in our lands. It is written in our homes. It is written in our family names. It is written in our communities. It is written in our memories.

Let us not allow these memories to die. Because when we lose land, we can lose more than property. We can lose a piece of ourselves. Land can be measured in acres. Property can be measured in dollars. But the meaning of a home, that is measured in generations. And for these generations who lost, the very least we can do is remember.

Thank you, Madam President.

[Desk thumping]

The President: And thank you, Senator Lindsay Simmons.

Would any other Senator care to speak?

Senator Rogers, David Rogers, you have the floor.

Sen. David Rogers: I would like to thank my colleagues for their prepared remarks. I found the reading

of this report harrowing. It's a stark reminder to us all how legislation can impact each of our lives for generations.

I would like to echo my colleague and say we have to be so careful about the powers we give government, whether it be the powers over personal property, the powers to take personal freedoms, the powers to change democratic processes, or the powers to curtail commercial practices. It is our job to ensure that the government is careful with its powers, just like it's the public's role to ensure that . . . to decide who uses these tools.

I support my colleague in calling for a joint commission to recommend a way forward. And I would really just like to know what can be done immediately. What can we do, now that this report is published?

The President: Thank you, Senator Rogers.

Would any other Senator care to speak on this report?

Oh, I am sorry. Minister Robinson Perinchief, you have the floor.

Sen. the Hon. Ryan Robinson Perinchief: Thank you, Madam President.

I wish to rise in support of the motion that this Honourable House take note of the report of the Commission of Inquiry into Historic Land Losses in Bermuda. And with your permission, Madam President, as I speak to the Motion, I will be quoting extracts from the report and from the Department of Statistics 2025 briefs.

The President: Mm-hmm.

Sen. the Hon. Ryan Robinson Perinchief: And also, Madam President, given the importance of this subject, I also ask your indulgence to refer to my prepared notes to allow me to appropriately reflect on this report.

The President: Certainly, you may, Minister.

Sen. the Hon. Ryan Robinson Perinchief: Thank you, Madam President.

I wish to start by acknowledging some of the scepticism around the justification for the report. I am conscious, Madam President, that there is a sentiment in our community that we should put the past in the past, that a report about land taken a century ago is at best an act of appeasement for the historically aggrieved.

The Commission was aware of that view and recorded it in its report at page 41. It references a 2014 commentary in *The Royal Gazette* urging Bermudians to let the scar of expropriation heal and to stop picking at it for "short-term political gain." (quote-unquote)

Madam President, I want to address that sentiment directly and state that this report is not about picking a wound. It's about admitting that there is a wound

which was never acknowledged, a wound that never closed and continues to fester in this country.

There's a quote, Madam President, attributed to William Faulkner. He wrote that: "The past is never dead. It isn't even past." It's a reminder, Madam President, that history, trauma, and human choices remain active living forces that continuously shape our present identity and behaviour rather than being closed chapters which we can simply leave behind. The Commission said it in a different way when it stated that "the past and the future are inextricably tied."

Madam President, land that is taken does not simply disappear. It sits with someone else. It appreciates value for someone else. It is passed down to the children of someone else. They continue to shape who owns what in this country, who stays and who leaves, who feels at home in their own island. That is not history, Madam President. That is the present balance sheet of this country.

I want to speak to how the land was taken, Madam President. My colleague, the Attorney General, has already stated that the late Walton Brown described what he called the bad old days when justice was a fleeting illusion for many. He also stated that it was a time where the rich, the powerful, and the connected acted with impunity, and that the villains in these actions were oftentimes lawyers, real estate agents, and politicians, and that what the victims shared was an inability to secure a just outcome.

Madam President, the report indicates that the Commission heard from 72 witnesses and the findings of the report run to more than 500 pages, and what it reveals is that historic land loss in Bermuda was not the work of one bad actor or one bad decision. It was the work of a system. And the law, unfortunately, Madam President, was at the centre of it.

Madam President, I have spent my educational and professional career to date learning where power comes from and how it is used, how the law shapes society, how legal systems can work for the people's interest or against it. And this report is a case study in how the law can be used as a tool, as a vehicle, to legitimise what would otherwise be illegitimate.

And I want to share something, Madam President, that has stayed with me since I was a young Bermudian law student at Durham University in England. In a constitutional law class we studied the case of the Chagos Islands. Chagos Islands are a British Overseas Territory, just like Bermuda. And between 1967 and 1973, the British Government used a local immigration law to forcibly evict the entire civilian population, removed every last inhabitant of those islands from their homes—men, women, and children—so that the island of Diego Garcia could be leased to the United States as a military base. The Chagossians fought back in the courts against the UK Government. And when the Islanders later won, what did the British Government do? It rewrote their entire Constitution to declare that no person had any right to live in the territory at all. The

stroke of a pen, Madam President, wiping out a people's right to their entire own homeland.

And in 2008, in the case of Bancoult (No. 2) against the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the House of Lords upheld it. And I remember reading the law report, Madam President, and stopping at a line that said, and I quote, *the Chagossians' right of abode was purely symbolic*. There was no prospect of them being able to live on the islands in the foreseeable future.

Madam President, in law school, every student is taught that the law abhors a right without a remedy. And the real lesson I took from the classroom that day is that a right, even a human right, subsists only so far as there is power behind it willing to enforce it. What stands behind the law, Madam President, is the gun. By that I mean that when laws are not obeyed, it is the state, the government, that holds a monopoly on the use of force and violence to compel it. Rules, statutes, judicial rulings, they all derive their power from the threat of penalties, fines, imprisonment carried out by agents of the state with the power of arrest and force.

Madam President, when we talk about the Chagos Islands, an entire people [were] removed from their homes to make way for a foreign military base. That story was in another British Overseas Territory on the other side of the globe, but it is also the same story here for our people. That is what was brought to bear on these families. Without the threat of force, without the power of the state, the government behind them, those laws, those boards, those titles, those deed transfers would be little more than a matter of opinion. Their power lies in the enforcement behind them.

When the families of Tucker's Town who refused to sell were removed from their land, it was not an argument that moved them. It was the threat of violence. When we consider Tucker's Town, Madam President, the Commission found that the expropriations of the 1920s were lawful. They were authorised by Acts of this Legislature, but it also found that the procedures in many instances were irregular because the bodies set up to oversee them exercised their power in an unfair and inequitable manner.

At page 55 of the report, it describes rural residents, some of whom could neither read nor write, being required to negotiate the value of their land with a sophisticated group of business executives, a group, in the report's words, that included parliamentarians, some of whom sat on the boards of the very companies acquiring the land, despite alleged conflicts of interest and self-dealing. I want us to sit with that, Madam President. The people writing the law, the people enforcing the law, and the people profiting from the law were in many instances the same people.

The Commission's own phrase for what followed on that same page was "unconscionable but lawful practices of displacement," and the scale was considerable. We're talking about a development company

that ultimately held over 600 acres lawfully, but not justly.

Madam President, I want to speak to the importance of the land because the law did not only take the land. It also took the voice that came with it. In colonial Bermuda, in that time, Madam President, the vote was tied to property. After emancipation, the property qualification to vote and hold office was more than doubled, and the law remained in effect in various ways until 1968. The report records that in the general election of 1897, only 1,123 people out of a civilian population of over 16,000 were eligible to vote, and that White residents who were about 38 per cent of the population controlled 65 per cent of that vote. The Commission does not shy away from naming what that was, and at page 55, Madam President, it describes in its own words an "oligarchical regime" because to lose your land in Bermuda was to lose your say in the very Parliament that decided whether your land could be taken.

Madam President, it did not end in the 1920s. As the Commission records in its conclusions, the land losses it examined spanned from 1828 all the way through to 2021. And the concerns raised in the House in 2014 included a series of land transactions in the 1950s, the 1960s, and the 1970s, in what were described as possible injustices from systematic collusive behaviour between lawyers, bankers, and estate agents.

Madam President, the Commission heard evidence on banking practices around foreclosure, on how loans secured against a family deed could be called in, on how borrowers facing those proceedings, in the words of the evidence, often lacked sufficient resources to instruct counsel, leaving them disadvantaged. This is not just the story in theory of abstract families. This is my family, Madam President. It's our neighbours.

The Commission heard of missing records, Madam President, contested powers of attorney, questionable conveyances, adverse possession. It went on as far as in some cases to find that an agent of the state, our Central Planning Authority, played roles tantamount to a corruption-enabling mechanism facilitating the theft of land.

Madam President, I want to be clear that I do not stand here today to accuse any individual or family of wrongdoing. That's not the purpose of this debate, and it was not the method of the Commission. But we would be doing these families a grave disservice if we pretended that this was just a story about misfortune.

Madam President, it was a story about power. It was about who had access to lawyers and who did not. It was about who sat on the boards and who did not. It was about who could read the deed and who could not. It was about who the system was built to protect and who it was not.

Frantz Fanon wrote, Madam President, that, and I quote, "For a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and,

above all, dignity." Bermuda's history shows us exactly why. In Bermuda, when land was the vote, the safety net, and the only real form of capital most Black Bermudian families could hold, taking it was never just a transaction, Madam President. It was a taking of dignity.

Madam President, it would be comforting to believe that all of this belongs to the past. It does not. Many of the individuals whose conduct is described in this report never had to answer for the harm that they caused. Many have passed on. Others are protected by the passage of time, by limitation periods, and by the silence of those who knew. But the institutions that were involved, Madam President, the banks, the law firms, the real estate agencies, the boards, they did not go away. Many of them are with us still. And the culture that allowed these losses to occur has not died with those people who practised it.

Madam President, the reality is that modern Bermuda still runs far too often on the social handshake. Deals are still made behind closed doors between people with power. Before the wider public ever knows an opportunity existed, properties still go up for sale or for rent through a quiet word in someone's ear and are gone before most Bermudians ever see the listing. Informal networks of family, of school, of club, of political party still operate as quiet mechanisms of inclusion for some and exclusion for others. And too often, the line between who is let in and who is left out still falls along lines of race, of class, and affiliation.

None of this requires a forged deed. None of this requires a private Act of Parliament. It requires only that small circles continue to look after their own, while the majority of Bermudians are told that the door of opportunity is open to all. The result is the same, Madam President. Bermudians disadvantaged in their own country and an inequality that continues to compound.

Madam President, let us be honest about where that line has fallen. The head start secured through the land and the vote did not disappear. It shows up in our numbers today. The Department of Statistics' most recent employment brief published last October record that in 2024, the median gross annual income of White workers in Bermuda was \$99,420, compared with \$66,041 for Black workers. That's a racial gap of more than \$33,000 every single year. Income, Madam President, is only the part that we can see. Behind it, and the relevance here, sits a far larger gap in land, in capital, in inherited wealth, the very gap that this report speaks to.

Madam President, I want us to imagine something. We are accustomed to speaking about inequality in terms of employment and wages, what is earned in a year, but a wage can be spent in days, weeks, let alone a year. Land is held for a century.

So, imagine, Madam President, if we could see those same figures and statistics, not in terms of what people earn in a year, but in terms of what people own, in terms of who owns the land in this country, how many

families have been here for generations, yet still do not own a house, versus how many own five, six, or seven. The multiple property owners against the first-time buyers. The families and Bermudians whose holdings have been handed down across generations against the many Bermudian families who were displaced. What would those figures look like? How big would that gap be? I suspect, Madam President, that it would make a \$33,000 racial income gap look very small. And I suspect that it is a picture that many would rather not show us.

Madam President, the Commission concluded that land loss in Bermuda has meant, and I quote, "[T]he transfer or loss of potential wealth, as well as loss of political and economic power by one group of people and their shift to another." And among the recommendations, it called for further research simply to establish how much expropriated land in Tucker's Town ended up in whose hands. A century on, we still do not have the full answer to that question, Madam President. And that in itself should tell us something.

And on political affiliation, Madam President, this Senate should remember that for generations, Bermudians who stood with the movement for universal suffrage, Bermudians who stood with those who organised against injustice and segregation and classism paid for those choices with their jobs, with their mortgages, and with their prospects and their children's prospects. That history, too, is a part of how opportunity in this country came to be doled out, Madam President.

That is why, Madam President, this report matters. It is not only an accounting of the past. It is an opportunity for a meeting of minds for Bermudians of every background to look honestly at how we got here and to unite around a single principle, equality of opportunity for every Bermudian in their own land. Unity cannot be built on a foundation that part of our community refuses to examine. It can be built on truth, honestly told and fairly answered.

Madam President, I want to turn now to the people this report could not reach because I note that the Commission received 53 claims, and I understand that 18 were heard. Many were denied, withdrawn, or closed for reasons of jurisdiction, and the Commission sat through a pandemic and three shutdowns of our society at a time when claimants could not necessarily access the archives or the information they needed to prove their case. And the report itself acknowledges that other matters may need to be explored in the future.

But behind those claims, Madam President, are the families who never filed one at all. They are the families whose elders passed on before anyone thought to ask that story, the families who knew in their bones what happened but could never find the paper because the paper was the very thing that was lost or taken, the families who, as citizens uprooting racism in Bermuda told the Commission, still carry a fear of economic repercussions for speaking up in a small Island

where speaking up can cost you your livelihood, and the many Bermudians who were never dispossessed of land because they were never permitted the fair opportunity to acquire land in the first place.

Madam President, their claims will never be heard. But they were disadvantaged all the same. And so were their children, and so are their grandchildren. I want them to hear clearly from this Honourable House today that they too are seen, that this report stands for them too. The official record of this country now says this happened here. It says that Bermuda was not “Another World” apart from the dispossession that marks colonial societies across the Caribbean and the Americas and around the globe, and that your family’s story was never just folklore.

This brings me to the final point I wish to make, Madam President, because there are some who would be very keen to see this report discredited or would seek to delay the actioning of this report until we hear every single claim or have another report about this report. The result would be justice continuously and continually delayed and therefore denied.

My view, Madam President, is we do not need to have heard every single claim perfectly in order to begin the process of repair. As lawyers, Madam President, we are trained to look for proof, a deed, a signature, a witness. But it would be a very cruel irony to make the production of those things the price of justice when that deed was the very thing that was taken. A system that dispossessed people of their records cannot then demand perfect records from them before it is prepared to act.

And in fairness, Madam President, the Commission also understood this. Its method was not only to adjudicate individual cases but to ask whether the evidence taken as a whole demonstrated a systemic problem, one where, in its words at page 14, “the cause of any loss transcended the individual case and demonstrated a legal, political or ethical culture that allowed it to occur.”

And in its conclusions, the Commission found exactly that, a systemic pattern which shows that those individuals and institutions with money, influence, and power took land from those persons who were poor and did not have either the economic, legal, or political power to resist. That is the finding that matters, Madam President. Once a structural failure has been established, we do not need to wait until every individual casualty has been counted before we begin to repair the structure.

Madam President, there are questions and recommendations in this report that are properly for consideration at a later date, and I will not pre-empt that consideration. But I do want to speak to the nature of repair itself. When the Commission asked the claimants what they hoped to gain, it records that many of them answered, and I quote, “Truth and closure. . . . *At least we’re now being heard.*” Repair does begin there, Madam President, with truth, which this report has now

placed on the official record. But Madam President, it cannot end there.

Around the world, when societies finally acknowledge injustices of this kind, they too-often stop at a certain point. A memorial is built, a plaque is unveiled, a chapter is added to the school curriculum. Those things matter, Madam President. The Commission recommends them, and they deserve to be done well if adopted. But memory on its own is not repair. A monument does not return a single acre. A history lesson does not close the gap in wealth. And if we are not careful, Madam President, acknowledgement becomes a way of honouring an injustice while leaving its results exactly where they are. As if the material inequality it created were just a matter for the history books, rather than something that exists right now in who owns land, in who holds capital, in who can borrow, and in who can build.

Madam President, the powerful did not take this land with plaques and lesson plans. They took it with the full force of the law, with private Acts of Parliament, with compulsory acquisition, with arbitration panels and foreclosure proceedings, executed with precision and with rigour. Madam President, if the law and government could be used with such rigour to take, then they certainly can be used with the same rigour to correct and repair.

That is the standard I would ask us to hold ourselves to. Not simply symbolic gestures in place of action, but the same level of seriousness, of purpose, the same attention to detail, the same use of law and institutions that were once applied to dispossess now applied to repair. That is why the structural recommendations of this report matter every bit as much as the symbolic ones. It mentions the integrity of our registers, the locations of missing records, access to legal aid for ordinary people, a permanent mechanism to review claims, and an independent land tribunal so that the next family facing the loss of their land is not left, as so many in this report were, with an inability to secure a just outcome. Each of these recommendations deserves serious consideration through the proper processes of government.

Madam President, I would be remiss if I did not connect this to the Bermuda we are living in today. For most Bermudian families today, Madam President, generational wealth has never looked like a stock or investments portfolio or a trust fund handed down from one generation to the next. It has looked like land. The family homestead shared among the children, the apartment built on so that the next generation could start a household, the house put up as security to start a business or go off to school. Madam President, when that land was lost, what was lost was 100 years of what it could have become.

Today, the Government has been claiming that Bermuda is in a housing crisis, families doubling and tripling up, young Bermudians who work unable to afford a home, many who studied overseas and came

home with their talent only to find no place to rent or to put down roots, and too many have taken that talent elsewhere. In today's market, the young person whose family still holds land has a way in and up. The young person whose family lost it is too often starting from nothing.

As I stated in my maiden speech, Madam President, our young people and our future generations deserve a place to call home and a home to build upon when they return. This report helps us understand why, for too many of them, that place does not exist.

Madam President, I want to acknowledge that this record exists because people did the work. I want to acknowledge the Chairman, the Chair, the Honourable Justice Norma Wade-Miller, her fellow commissioners. I want to thank and acknowledge the claimants who stood in public and relived some of the most painful chapters of their family histories. I want to thank the historians, the researchers, [and] organisations who gathered testimony from families who were still afraid to speak.

I pay tribute to the late Judith Chambers, a member of my own family who served as one of the commission's investigators. She did not live to see every hope of this work realised, but her work is part of this report and part of why we are here today. And with a son's pride, I also, Madam President, acknowledge the Deputy Chair of the Commission, who is my father, the Honourable Wayne Perincheif. And he, too, once served as Minister of National Security and gave his time in retirement so that these families could be heard. And I'm proud of that work as well.

And, Madam President, I will close with this. The report describes land in Bermuda as a sacred trust held for the use and enjoyment of Bermudians now and for generations to come. It speaks of the descendants of those who were uprooted and lost that inheritance. Taking note of this report should be an invitation for us all to think about the Bermudian inheritance, what was received, what was taken, and what we intend to leave behind.

A Bermuda where the law is a shield for ordinary people and never again a weapon against them. A Bermuda where opportunity is not decided by a handshake or a whisper behind a closed door. A Bermuda where the families whose claims will never be heard know that their country has heard them anyway. A Bermuda where a young person's starting line is not determined by what was taken from their great-grandparents. And a Bermuda where our people can own a piece of land they were born on and know that it belongs to them as much as they belong to it.

That, Madam President, is the work of repair. It is the work of nation-building. And it is why this report is not about the past alone.

Thank you, Madam President.

[Desk thumping]

The President: And thank you, Minister Robinson-Perincheif, for your most poignant and comprehensive response.

Would any other Senator care to speak?
Senator Lauren Bell, you have the floor.

Sen. Lauren Bell: Thank you, Madam President.

I'm humbled and honoured to have this opportunity to speak today on the report of the Commission of Inquiry into Historic Land Losses in Bermuda.

This is not an easy subject, nor should it be. It asks us to look honestly at parts of Bermuda's history that are painful, uncomfortable, and for far too many Bermudians, largely unknown. I approach this from a perspective as a White Bermudian woman. And what struck me deeply in reading this report was how much of Bermuda's history I was never taught. I have listened to fellow Black Bermudians speak about these events. And for some, these were not stories first discovered in the history book or commissioner's report. They grew up hearing them. These stories are a part of who they are. They heard them from their parents and their grandparents, their aunts, their uncles, their neighbours. Stories of families who owned land, land that was lost, communities that were displaced, and hurt that remained long after the original events.

Madam President, my childhood was different. While I grew up on the very same Island, and sometimes only a few miles from the very places highlighted in this report, I did not grow up hearing these stories. While one child might pass a particular piece of property and simply see beautiful Bermuda land, another child might see where their grandparents once lived, farmed, worshipped, and buried family members.

Madam President, we are looking at the same Bermuda, but we're not necessarily seeing the same Bermuda. For one Bermudian, this may seem like a distant history, while for another, it is the story first heard sitting at their grandmother's table. And that is the difference between knowing history and carrying a memory.

And the fact that I was not told this story meant my understanding of Bermuda was incomplete. Madam President, the Commission records that in Tucker's Town, people did not simply lose property but homesteads, places of worship, agriculture, livelihoods, communities, and sacred places to rest. In the 1940s, families in St. David's were also displaced, and homesteads were razed to facilitate the establishment of the US military base. And the Commission heard claims of historic land loss from elsewhere all across Bermuda. These are Bermudian stories.

And Madam President, race is not incidental to this history. As evidence reproduced in the commissioner's report, historian Dr. [Quito] Swan described the St. David's dispossession as being orchestrated, and I quote him here, Madam President, "orchestrated by a matrix of white internationalism—British colonialism, U.S. imperialism and Bermuda's oligarchy." He

described powerful institutions being pitted against a small community of largely Black Bermudians who possessed limited economic, political, and social power. These are difficult phrases, difficult words. Power, race, class. But we cannot sanitise our history simply because the language makes us uncomfortable.

For much of Bermuda's history, political, economic, and social power were concentrated in the hands of a relatively small, predominantly White elite. Land represented wealth. It represented security, inheritance, and opportunity. But in Bermuda, the relationship between land and power was not merely economic. It was political. For much of Bermuda's history, owning qualifying property was connected to the very right to vote. So, land did not simply determine what you owned. Land determined whether you had a political voice at all.

And even after the franchise was broadened in 1963, qualifying property ownership continued for a time to confer an additional vote. So, when we speak about land in Bermuda's history, we are talking about more than houses and acreage. We are talking about home, livelihood, inheritance, wealth, social standing, and political power. And we are talking about the inequities that currently still exist as a result. When race, wealth, land ownership, political influence, and legislative authority exist within the same unequal system, those with the least power were often least equipped to protect themselves.

The Commission concluded that although the Tucker's Town and St. David's land grab had statutory authority, those overseeing the processes exercised their powers, in many instances, in an unfair and inequitable manner. That distinction matters, Madam President. Law and justice are not synonymous.

Madam President, the very journey to establish this Commission tells us something about the power that exists within this country. In 2014, while the Progressive Labour Party was in Opposition, the late PLP's Shadow Minister of Immigration and External Affairs, Walton Brown, brought a motion calling for a Commission of Inquiry into historic land losses. This motion was passed. Yet the governor of the day refused to establish the Commission. And for many Bermudians, the refusal to act upon the expressed will of a majority of their duly elected representatives was seen as a very affront to democracy. And as a result, approximately 2,000 people marched on Government House in protest. I joined that march.

Subsequently, MP Walton Brown brought an amendment to the Commission of Inquiry Act 1935 to grant the Premier the power to appoint a Commission of Inquiry. This amendment spoke of creating more democratic and accountable processes. And while this amendment ultimately passed, a Commission on Historic Land Losses was still not established by the Government of the day. It was not until the PLP returned to Government when Premier David Burt announced in

2019 that a Commission would finally be established, fulfilling the mandate of that 2014 House resolution.

Madam President, that history, the history of the creation of this very Commission, matters. This Commission required a motion, a majority vote, a public protest, legislative changes, and above all, persistence. And we should properly acknowledge the role that the late Walton Brown played in this journey. He spoke of the bad old days when justice was a fleeting illusion for many, and when the rich and powerful and the connected acted with impunity. Those words should resonate with every person entrusted with public office today, because now we are the people entrusted with this power. The power does not belong to us. It belongs to the people. We are merely its temporary custodians, and history requires that we never, ever abuse it.

Madam President, remembering is important. Documenting our history is important. But remembering cannot be where this conversation ends. The Commission has done its work. It heard the evidence. It made findings. And importantly, it made recommendations. So, I believe the question before us now must be: What do we do next?

The commissioners' recommendations were extensive. They amount, in my view, to four broad responsibilities. They include repair, recognition, reform, and reconciliation.

First, repair. The Commission recommended that Government establish a system to determine whether compensation paid to disposed landowners in Tucker's Town and St. David's was fair and equitable, and, where appropriate, establish a regime through which descendants could be compensated. The Commission also recognised that some families could not complete their claims because records were missing, documents were difficult to access or interpret, and further research was required. It therefore recommended a permanent, properly resourced mechanism to continue reviewing historic land loss claims, with the ability to ultimately facilitate remedies or compensation.

That recommendation deserves serious consideration, Madam President. We cannot tell families to prove what happened generations ago while simultaneously acknowledging that Government records may be incomplete and that ordinary families may not have the financial or technical resources necessary to reconstruct complicated claims of title. If we acknowledge gaps in historical records, then we must be part of helping people to reconstruct it. The Commission also recommended an independent land tribunal to address outstanding legacy issues and to consider further evidence that might emerge.

Second, Madam President, is recognition. The Commission recommends a public apology and acknowledgement to the descendants of the Tucker's Town and St. David's families who unfairly lost their lands. It also recommended that this history be taught in our schools, preserved in libraries, repositories, and physically memorialised.

I strongly support this recommendation. Because the difference between my childhood understanding of Bermuda and that of some of my Black colleagues should not be replicated into the next generation. Our children and my grandchildren should learn about slavery, emancipation, segregation, and the struggle for universal adult suffrage, the Theatre Boycott, organised labour, Tucker's Town, St. David's, and the history of land ownership and land lost. Not because we want children to inherit the divisions of the past, but precisely because we do not.

Education should give them the knowledge necessary to understand the Bermuda they have inherited. Perhaps the next generation of White Bermudians will not reach adulthood and have to say: *I never knew*.

Third, Madam President, reform. The Commission recommended changes to Bermuda's compulsory acquisition framework to make future explorations transparent, fair, and equitable. It proposed stronger protections of land rights, fair compensation, protection for vulnerable people, and the first right to a refusal where land taken compulsory is no longer required for its original purpose. This is where history speaks directly to us as legislators. We cannot undo every decision made in the 1920s and 1940s, but we can examine the laws of 2026. We can ensure that compulsory acquisition is properly scrutinised. We can ensure that valuations and compensations are fair, and we can ensure affected people have meaningful rights. And we can ensure that persons with the least power are not simply overwhelmed by the institutions.

The Commission also recommended reviewing legal aid so that qualifying people involved in property disputes have access to assistance, because a legal right means very little if someone cannot afford to enforce it.

And fourthly, Madam President, reconciliation. The Commission recommends a Heritage Trust benefiting descendants of those unfairly compensated or dispossessed in Tucker's Town and St. David's, potentially supporting historical preservation, social development, and infrastructure. It also recommended a broader truth and reconciliation process to examine segregation, race, and other aspects of Bermuda's history that went beyond the commissioner's remit. These recommendations deserve proper consideration, because reconciliation cannot simply mean people who have carried painful history to move on. Reconciliation requires truth, it requires acknowledgement, and it requires more than anything, Madam President, action.

So, Madam President, I believe Government's next step should be to establish a formal implementation framework for the commissioner's recommendation, and Government may determine that the objective of a particular recommendation can be better achieved through a different mechanism. But complexity cannot become an excuse for inertia. The Commission did not simply ask Bermuda to look backwards. It gave us a literal roadmap to move forward. It enriches my

understanding of the country I love, but understanding must eventually lead somewhere.

We have investigated, we have listened, we have a report, we have recommendations. We must now determine what we are prepared to do with them. We can repair where repair is possible, we can recognise what happened, we can reform our laws so the mistakes of the past are not repeated, and we can pursue reconciliation grounded in truth rather than silence. That is not about living in the past. It is about understanding our past, accepting the responsibility that comes with that knowledge, and determining how we use that power entrusted with us today. Because ultimately, Madam President, the value of this Commission will not be measured simply by the report it produced. It will be measured by what Bermuda is prepared to do next.

Madam President, before I close, I want to acknowledge those committed to making this work possible. I pay tribute to the late Walton Brown, whose persistence and determination were instrumental in bringing this issue before Parliament. I also pay tribute to my party for its long-standing commitment to ensuring that these stories were heard and investigated. It is this determination and commitment that is but one example of why I am a proud member and representative of the Bermuda Progressive Labour Party.

I thank the members of the Commission of the Inquiry for the considerable responsibility they undertook in examining this difficult and painful history. But most importantly, Madam President, I want to thank the families and the descendants affected by these unthinkable acts.

They carried these stories across generations. They came forward, reopening deep wounds to tell their truth, to seek justice, and to ensure that what happened to their families is neither forgotten nor repeated. Their courage and their persistence are at the very heart of why we are able to have this conversation today.

Thank you, Madam President.

The President: And thank you, Senator Lauren Bell.

Would any other Senator care to speak?

Hearing none, then Madam Attorney General, Minister of Justice, it's over to you.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senate colleagues, for your views, your impassioned speeches, but most importantly, for your understanding.

I think that Senator Rogers asked what can be done immediately. We have talked about the recommendations, but the thing that came to me immediately is that minds and hearts are open. And I saw that demonstrated in the Senate Chamber this morning. So, I wish to thank our Senate colleagues for that open mind and open heart in hearing this.

Senator Rogers is perhaps aware that the Opposition Leader has already reached out about the desire for a joint committee or bipartisan. And whether it includes members of the community as well as parliamentarians is yet to be seen, but we understand that desire. And this is work that must be carried by the nation.

Madam President, I sat in this Chamber in the public Gallery on the evening of September 25. I sat in the back alongside the family of my friend, the late Walton Brown, Jr. And I do want to call his family members who were there by name. In the back, continuing to support the cause and the call, were his sister Deanna, his brother George [and] his brother Charles, as siblings. In addition, his cousins, June Ann and Julissa. And it was my privilege to be in their company while they heard Walton Brown's vision being debated in this very place, Madam President.

In terms of our Senate team here, I really thank my Progressive Labour Party colleagues for their speeches and passion about the things that I have been left with. Senator Simmons, in really bringing home the fact about what "home" really means. I thank her for that. Senator Perinchief, in his powerful speech, for that understanding that it wasn't just a taking of land, it was a taking of dignity. And that has repercussions generationally. And that land is indeed a sacred trust.

And I appreciate my colleague, Senator Bell, giving the perspective of a White Bermudian and her desire for the education and learning that should be available to her children, future generations, and to future generations of all Bermudians, Madam President. So, I thank them.

Finally, while I was, I believe, giving my speech, I checked my phone. Not sure if that's against the rules, Madam President. When I was finished speaking. And I got a message, a WhatsApp message from Frederica Forth. She was one of the commissioners. It was very interesting. I didn't mention her name, but the message that she sent me was simply a scripture. I don't know if she was listening or it was a coincidence. But, Madam President, it was Jeremiah 29:11. And for those who know the Bible would understand what that scripture means. But it occurred to me, Madam President, it was fitting because what we are debating today in this Motion, Madam President, it really is about giving future generations of Bermudians, and particularly Black Bermudians, those who have been dispossessed, giving them a hope and a future. So, I am encouraged, Madam President, that the work will be done. That this report will not sit on a shelf and that it will be actioned.

And with that, Madam President, I thank you.

The President: Thank you, Minister of Justice, Minister Wilkerson.

I would just like to thank each one of you. I want to say that those individuals, people listening to the Senate today would be most impressed with the

manner in which you have addressed this issue and this topic.

I think people have been well informed. They realise that the Senators present here have done their research and have given the audience a view of how much work goes in, how much work you put in when you come here to debate a particular topic or subject. And I personally want to thank you.

Yes, I've read the report, and I've talked to individuals who were on the panel. And I want to thank the Government for supporting this issue that has been a very painful part of Bermuda's history. And so, I'm lost for words right now, but I really want to let you all know that I appreciate the work that you have done today and how you have spoken about this report and the recommendations that the Government has made and that we all here present today support.

So, I thank each one of you. And it has been a very painful part of Bermuda's history, but I think you have addressed it very well today. And on my behalf, I thank each one of you for your presentation.

And it's over to you, Madam Attorney General.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President.

I move that the Senate do now adjourn until Wednesday, October 28.

The President: Sorry. We left out congratulations and obituaries.

[Crosstalk]

CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES

The President: Senators, would anyone want to speak on Item No. 15, Congratulations or Obituaries?

Senator Lindsay Simmons, you have the floor.

Sen. Lindsay Simmons: Madam President, October 3, 2026, was one of the saddest days in Bermuda. I'm sure when we first heard that the air ambulance had gone missing, so many of us prayed and held on hope for the six souls on board. We prayed for the Bermudian mother who was travelling to Boston to receive the medical care she needed. We prayed for her son, Sergio Lottimore, who travelled with his mother so that she would not be alone in this journey. A son doing what so many of us would be doing for our mothers. Today, our hearts are broken as we face the devastating reality of this tragedy.

This was a Bermudian mother and her son, one of our families, one of our own. Madam President, when I first heard the name Marilyn Lottimore, that's what I was told, I didn't recognise the name. I actually want to take a moment to remember Ms. Marilyn Lavonne Bean. I knew her as Lavonne Bean. Madam President, I had many conversations with Ms. Bean through her

work at Rent Control. She actually falls under the Ministry of Home Affairs, her [work with] Rent Control, sorry.

And she was always kind and she actually encouraged me, Madam President. Whenever I had a question, she would get right back to me. She always took the time to answer my questions, and she would encourage me by telling me, *Hey, Lindsay, you're doing a great job. Keep up the good work.* She actually told me when she realised I went to Berkeley that her son went to Berkeley. And when she said the name Lorenzo Lottimore, I definitely knew who her son was.

Madam President, sometimes we don't recognise how much someone's words of encouragement mean to us until years, months, or days later. But I remember hers. And I am grateful for them. I did not personally know Sergio, but I know how much Ms. Bean loved her four children. Again, her eldest son went to the Berkeley Institute when I was there. And that connection makes this loss feel even closer to him.

As a mother myself, I can't imagine the pain of losing a child. I cannot imagine the pain of losing a mother. And I cannot imagine what this family is experiencing as they now face the unimaginable reality of losing both. I keep thinking about the love that brought Sergio into that flight. He was there for his mother. He was making sure that she did not have to make that journey alone. He was making sure his mother received the care she needed. Madam President, that is love. And that is what makes this loss so incredibly painful.

Madam President, we must also remember the four Canadian crew members who lost their lives while carrying out their important work: Philip Childerhose, Thomas Farquhar, Sarah Paton and Jolene Weir. They were doing a job that requires tremendous dedication, helping people receive the medical care they need. They were helping one of our own. They were doing their job. They were serving others. And they never made it home. Their families are grieving. Their friends are grieving. Their colleagues are grieving. Their community in Canada is grieving. So today, as Bermuda mourns the loss of Lavonne and Sergio, we must also hold the families of Philip, Thomas, Sarah, and Jolene close in our hearts. Six souls were on that flight. Six human beings. Six people who were loved. Six people with families, friends, memories, hopes, and dreams. And now six families and communities are carrying the unimaginable loss.

Madam President, Bermuda has never experienced something quite like this. And I know we all gutted. We are a small Island. We are all connected. We may not know every person personally, but there is something about being Bermudian that means when one of our families is hurting, we all feel it. Today, an entire Island is hurting with this family. And we cannot forget the families of the four crew in Canada. Their grief matters too. Their loss matters too.

As the difficult efforts continue to recover their loved ones, let us remember that behind the news

reports are real people: a mother, a son, families, friends, colleagues, and communities. People who are loved. People who were expected to come home. Let us give these families the privacy, dignity, and grace they need to grieve. Let us be mindful of our words. Let us be compassionate in our conversation. And most importantly, let us find meaningful ways to support them through this unimaginable time. This is not time for speculation. It is not time for judgment. It is time for humanity. It is time to pray. It is time to support. It is time to come together.

Madam President, there are moments in life when words simply aren't enough. This is one of those moments. I will remember Ms. Bean for her kindness, her encouragement, for the conversations we shared through her work at Rent Control, and for the simple words she gave me when she told me I was doing a great job and encouraging me to keep going. Ms. Bean, I hope you know how much these words meant. I will carry them with me. And today, I pray that the love you poured into your four children surround them now. I pray that your family feels the strength of the people who knew you, the people who loved you, and the entire Island that is grieving alongside them. And for Sergio, I pray that his family finds the same comfort in knowing that he was with his mother. He was beside her. He was caring for her. He was loving her. That is something that can never be taken away.

Madam President, this tragedy has reminded all of us how fragile life is. One moment, a family is making plans. A mother is preparing for a medical journey. A son decides he will accompany her. A crew prepares to do the job they have done so many times before. And then, in an instant, everything changes. It reminds us not to take our loved ones for granted, to make that phone call, to say I love you, to give people their flowers while they are still here. Because we never know when the last goodbye will be, and we don't know when they will say their last goodbyes to us. So let us hold on to our families a little closer. Let us be kinder to one another. Let us check on our neighbours. Let us support one another. And let us remember that life is precious.

Madam President, Bermuda, let us stand together. We cannot change what happened. We cannot take away these families' pains. We cannot bring their loved ones back. But we can make sure they do not have to walk this darkness alone. We can surround them with our prayers. We can surround them with our love. And we can give them the strength of the entire Island standing behind them. Because this is what community is supposed to look like. When one of us hurts, we all hurt. When one of us mourns, we all mourn. And when one of our family's needs strength, Bermuda comes together to help carry them.

Madam President, may God wrap his loving arms around the Bean and Lottimore families. May he comfort them in the moment when words cannot. May he give them the strength for the days and weeks and

months ahead. May he also comfort the families of Philip, Thomas, Sarah, and Jolene. May he give strength to their friends and colleagues and community in Canada. And may he strengthen wisdom [and] protection to everyone involved in this difficult effort.

Madam President, as I close, I hope you allow me to make two special respectful requests on behalf of this Honourable Chamber. First, I would like to ask that we send a formal letter of condolences to the Bean and Lottimore families on behalf of the Senate and the people of Bermuda. I believe it is important that this family knows that they are not grieving alone. That their loss is felt across this Island. And that Bermuda stands with them.

I would also ask that the condolences be extended to the families of Philip, Thomas, Sarah, and [Jolene], and their friends, colleagues, and community in Canada. Because six lives were lost. And every life deserves to be remembered.

And finally, Madam President, if you feel it's appropriate, I respectfully ask at the end of [Congratulations] and Obituaries . . . I would respectfully ask that this Honourable Chamber join me in a moment of silence for Marilyn Lavonne Bean, Sergio Lottimore, Philip Childerhose, Thomas Farquhar, Sarah Paton and Jolene Weir—six souls, six lives, six families, six stories. And so many people who love them.

Thank you, Madam President. May God comfort where there is heartbreak, peace where there is pain, and strength where there are simply no words left. Today, Bermuda mourns. Today, Bermuda prays. Today, Bermuda stands together. May God continue to hold these six souls in his loving arms, and may he give every family who has loved them the strength to face tomorrow. I pray that they all rest peacefully.

Thank you, Madam President.

The President: Thank you, Senator Lindsay Simmons.

Would any other Senator . . . Vice President John Wight, you have the floor.

Sen. John Wight: Thank you, Madam President.

I can't articulate it any better than Senator Simmons just articulated this tragedy. Sergio was a good friend of my oldest daughter. They were also previous work colleagues, and my daughter called me Saturday morning when she learned of this tragic news. And she's been grieving, as the whole community has been since then.

I think every untimely death affects our community. Somehow, a tragedy of this magnitude, with the circumstance being what it was, with Sergio assisting his mother, what they thought would be to good health back in the States turned into a very different outcome. So, all I can say, as Senator Simmons articulated beautifully, is that this, I think, has impacted every Bermudian, every resident. And our thoughts and prayers go to the Lottimore and Bean families.

Thank you, Madam President.

The President: Thank you, Vice President John Wight. Senator Tarik Dunbar Smith, you have the floor.

Sen. Tarik Smith: Thank you, Madam President.

I just want to say, I do have an appointment, so if I get up and leave, there's no disrespect to anybody who may be doing Obits and Congrats. I do have to be somewhere just after 1:00.

I want to thank Senator John Wight and Senator Lindsay (I always say Lindsay because of our personal relationship) for those words. Lorenzo Lottimore, I called him Renzo, was a good friend of mine. We went to Gilbert Institute together, as well did Serge, as we called him. One of the nicest human beings I think you could ever meet. I didn't know Ms.—formerly Ms. Lottimore—personally, but I did know Serge and Renzo very well.

Being an avgeek, which is someone who loves aeroplanes, I've always investigated plane crashes. But when it happens to somebody in a community, as you know, it hurts. And as an avgeek, when I woke up in the morning and on my Facebook I saw this, it was shocking. And I didn't find out until I would say quarter to nine at night who it was, and it really knocked me on my backside.

So, enough has been said, and you should know when someone has said enough to just say my condolences to the Lottimore and Bean families, to Renzo, and his sisters. I'm very sorry for this tragic loss.

I also have an obit for my uncle, "Nature Boy," as they called him, Harold Wade. He passed away. His funeral was on Friday down in St. George's, so condolences to my Aunt Maxine, his children Jermaine and Kyle.

And a congratulatory memo as well for Ms. Tammy Richardson-Augustus, who this past week put on a "Don't Cut Yourself Short" initiative for young Bermudian footballers. Her sponsors brought down John Barnes, Andy Cole (now known as Andrew Cole) formerly of Manchester United, now at Liverpool, and Bermuda greats Kyle Lightbourne and Sir Clyde Best, to mentor and give words of encouragement and show some of their former skills to the youth of Bermuda. And I was honoured to be asked to be a coach and to participate in the activity. So, I want to thank Ms. Richardson-Augustus for the initiative.

And thank you, Madam President, very much.

The President: Thank you.

Would any other Senator care to speak?

Senator Cunningham, Victoria Cunningham, Opposition Leader [in the Senate], you have the floor.

Sen. Victoria Cunningham: Thank you, Madam President.

And I would like to associate with my colleague's comments for Sergio and his mother. But again, sadly, our last session was . . . what, a week and

a half ago? And I gave obits or condolences to our caucus chairman, Chris Gauntlet, on the passing of his father, Ted. His mother [Daphne] sadly passed away on Monday morning this week, and so to have to bury two parents in the space of a month, I think, must be heart-wrenching. So, I give condolences to Chris and his brother.

On a happier note, I want to celebrate St. Mary's Church in Warwick and their 400th celebration this past weekend. Well, their constant celebrations. I think it's a great testament to the church family, what they've built there, and I look forward to attending some of the celebrations.

And finally, it would be remiss, Bermuda College just signed another, their 45th articulation agreement with Dalhousie University in Canada with a new engineering pathway, so students can do one year at Bermuda College and then head up to Canada to complete the rest of their undergraduate studies. So, I just wanted to congratulate Bermuda College. I know they were in New England getting their recertification, so I hope that all went well.

But thank you very much.

The President: Thank you. Senator Cunningham.

Would any other Senator care to speak?

Hearing none, then I'd just like to associate myself then also with the, first of all, celebration of St. Mary's, celebration of their 400th year anniversary. And also, I associate myself with the condolences for all those members [of] the air ambulance tragedy. The entire Bermudian population is really very sorry, and join us, actually, in our commiserations about this tragedy.

I think that . . . sorry.

Madam Attorney General, I was just finishing up on this, but it's over to you now.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Thank you, Madam President.

I did want to give some remarks on the obits, if that's fine.

The President: Oh, please, I'm sorry.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Yes, I think you didn't see my indication—

The President: No, no I—

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: —because normally you do the last.

The President: I apologise.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: That's fine.

Certainly, I think Senator Smith has said it quite rightly in relation to the tragedy of the Bean and Lottimore [families]. Senator Lindsay has said it all and said it well, but I just wanted to, in this Chamber, join

with those remarks of condolences for the family and support her suggestions of a formal letter and moment of silence.

And in that regard, for a wider memorial, I am aware from my colleague, the Reverend Dr. Emilygail Dill, that the Western Alliance of Churches will hold a memorial for all of those who were lost at Fort Scaur on Saturday evening at 6:00 pm. The Bean family originate from the Scaur Hill.

The President: Yes.

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: And so, the Western Alliance wished to mark an observance and all of Bermuda is invited to attend.

And I want to join in the condolences given by Senator Smith in relation to, I believe he said it was his uncle, Nature Boy, who was, back in the day, quite a character. And I remember the first time ever seeing him on the dance floor at the Four Aces [Club]. And I was probably too young to have been in a nightclub, but I was quite impressed by the way that he danced. And he was always an amazing dancer, really, for his entire life. And I believe he exuded a kind of joy that wherever he was, it made that event better. So, you have my condolences. I'm not sure if Senator Smith is still in the room, I know, he had to leave.

And I would also join him in the congratulations around the event, "Don't Cut Your Future Short." I was off the Island and unable to attend. But I understand that it was a well-organised event by Tammy Richardson-Augustus in the prevention realm.

So, with that, Madam President . . .

The President: Thank you.

You can now move on to . . .

Oh, we will do the moment of silence at the end, but adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Sen. the Hon. Kim Wilkerson: Okay. I will move to the motion to adjourn, and that the Senate do now adjourn until Wednesday, October 28.

The President: Would any Senator care to speak on the motion to adjourn?

Senator Rogers, you have the floor.

Sen. David Rogers: I'd like to . . . it's been an extremely emotional Senate session. I'd like just to encourage and I'm not emotional about the topic I'm speaking about. It's just . . . it's been . . . it's been an extremely heavy session.

But getting back into the swing of it. One of the unintended consequences of the removal of the medical certificate in the last session was it took away one of the, I would say, preventative—

The President: Senator Rogers, you cannot now speak on something that was already tabled.

Sen. David Rogers: No. I'm talking about the consequences of it. I'm not debating the action.

The President: No. There will be no discussion on that.

Sen. David Rogers: Okay.

The President: Thank you, Senators, for giving this moment of silence.

So, the Senate stands adjourned until October 28.

Thank you.

[At 1:09 pm, the Senate stood adjourned until 10:00 am, Wednesday, 28 October 2026.]

MEN OF BERMUDA ENCOURAGED TO GET ROUTINE PHYSICAL EXAMS

Sen. David Rogers: So, men in particular, I would like to encourage them to get their routine health checks. They typically do not unless they feel something is wrong, statistically. We know we can often mitigate many preventable serious illnesses if there is early detection, especially for high blood pressure, heart disease and certain types of cancers. Treatment is certainly more effective when it is detected early. So, I'd like to encourage men to go out and make sure they get a physical, at least once every two years.

For men in their 20s and 30s, please concentrate on mental health, STI, and earlier cardiovascular indicators for men in the ages of 30 to 50. Your focus should be on cholesterol, hypertension, diabetes and early signs of prostate and colorectal cancer. And for men over the age of 50, key concerns are prostate cancer, colorectal cancer, hearing and vision decline, osteoporosis and chronic disease management.

Please ensure to foster a relationship with a steady health care provider because this improves communication, mutual trust and a clear understanding of how you talk to each other. So that is my admonition.

Thank you so much, Madam President.

The President: Thank you, Senator Rogers.

Would any other Senator care to speak on the motion to adjourn?

Hearing none, then, Senators, we will now entertain the suggestion that has been made by [Senator] Lindsay Simmons that we have a moment of silence for all those lost from the air ambulance, the Bermuda mother and son and the medical staff and crew.

I would ask Mrs. Beale to give us the time, please.

[Crosstalk]

MOMENT OF SILENCE

*[In memory of lives lost on Latitude Air Ambulance
G100 crash October 3, 2026]*

The President: I have asked Mrs. Beale to give us the time.

[Senators rose and observed a moment of silence.]