The Annual Report of the Registry General 2023

Presented by:

The Hon. Senator Lauren Bell

Junior Minister of Economy and Labour

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Madam President, today I rise to introduce the Annual Report of the Registry General for the year ended December 31st, 2023. The Registrar General recognizes the essential role that vital statistical information plays in planning for the provision of services in areas such as tourism, health, education and housing, to name a few, and has performed his duties to a high standard in the recording, collating and presenting of the data to be included in the Annual Report.

Madam President, in accordance with Section 19 of the Registration (Births and Deaths) Act 1949, the Registrar General shall, within ninety days after the expiration of each calendar year, compile for publication in such form and manner as the Minister may approve a summary of the births and deaths

which occurred during the year, together with a general report on the increase or decrease of the population of Bermuda. Pursuant to section 35 of the Marriage Act 1944, the Registrar General is also required to publish a summary of marriages conducted each year.

Unfortunately, **Madam President,** the Annual Report is being introduced late, due to a number of circumstances, including human resources and the need to clarify data .

In preparation of the Annual Report**, Madam President,** the Registrar has relied on information received from the Records Office of the King Edward VII Hospital relating to births; from the local funeral directors, medical practitioners, and the Coroner's Office in relations to deaths; from local domestic partnership officers in relations to domestic partnerships; and from local marriage officers and Masters of Bermuda registered ships in relation to local and maritime marriages respectively.

Madam President, the Report, which deals primarily with the vital statistics pertaining to the Island's residential population, indicates that there has been a slight decrease in the number of births. In 2023 there were 436 births; a decrease of 43 or 9% over the 479 births recorded in 2022. Also, the live birth rate of the population has decreased by 0.6 points per thousand from 7.5 in 2022 to 6.9 in 2023. There were no home births or babies born at the residence of the parents for the year ending 2023, which was a decrease of two from the number of babies born at home 2022.

Madam President, the distribution of live births by nationality based on information provided by the parents at the time of registration of their children's birth, for 2023 reflects 75.7% or 330 of the total live births have at least one Bermudian parent. In 2023, 106 or 24.3% of the births have parents who are both non-Bermudian.

Mrs. Speaker, honourable colleagues are advised that in 2023, 622 deaths were recorded among residents. A death rate of 9.8 per thousand of the population for 2023 reflects an increase of 37 or 6.3% from 585 recorded in 2022. The Report also indicates that there were twelve deaths in respect of non-resident persons, which brings the total number of deaths recorded for 2023 to 634. Also, there was one stillbirth recorded for the 2023 period.

Madam President, it should be noted the estimated population figures in the report only take into account registered births and deaths and not migration because it is not available. This means the estimates in the report are not indicative of actual population levels. The next opportunity of an accurate population count will be the 2026 census.

Madam President, for the year ending 31 December 2023 there were 310 marriages performed in Bermuda, which is 26 fewer (or a 7.7% decrease) compared with the 336 marriages recorded in 2022. The decrease may be attributed to a number of unknown factors or reasons as to why, but there was no deterring the interest of couples that did desire to marry that year.

During 2023, marriages between parties who were both non-residents accounted for only 109 or 35.2% of the total of 310. This figure, for the fourth consecutive year, breaks the trend where marriages between non-residents previously exceeded the number of marriages between residents and marriages between residents and non-residents parties. The Report also shows that there were 157 marriages between parties who were both residents and 44 marriages between a resident and non-resident.

Madam President, of the 310 local marriages recorded in 2023, none were same-sex marriages. In 2023 there were five domestic partnership unions recorded for that period. All five domestic partnership unions were formalized at the Registry General Office.

Madam President, 329 marriages were performed on board twenty-eight Bermuda registered ships in 2023. This total represents an increase of 52 or 16% from the 2022 total of 277. The increase is due to the efforts of the cruise line industry to expand and improve services for weddings onboard their ships. The cumulative number of marriages (local and maritime) processed through the Registry General for the year ending 31 December 2023 was 639 as compared to 613 for the year ending 2022.

Madam President, the Annual Report seeks to provide an illustrative statistical digest of vital events such as live births, deaths, stillbirths,

marriages, domestic partnerships, adoptions and re-registration of births for the year ended December 31st, 2023.

In closing, **Madam President**, the Annual Report of the Registry General for the year ended 31 December 2024 is being compiled and I expect to present the report in the second quarter of this fiscal year.