



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

by:

The Hon. Jason P. Hayward, JP, MP

Minister for the Ministry of Economy and Labour

Department of Labour Act 2025

Friday, 9 May 2025

Good morning **Mr. Speaker**, I am pleased to introduce in the Honourable House today, a Bill entitled the Department of Labour Act 2025 which provides for the continuation of the Department of Labour and establishes the Director of Labour as the public officer responsible for the supervision of the Department of Labour, subject to the general direction and control of the Minister responsible for labour relations.

Mr. Speaker, prior to July 2017, the Labour Relations Section (the “Section”) was a section within the Department of Workforce Development. In July 2017, after the General Election, the Section was separated from the Department of Workforce Development and placed within the Ministry of Home Affairs Headquarters as a standalone Government Section. Headed by the Manager of Labour Relations, all employment and labour related legislation was amended to provide the Manager with specific legislative responsibilities that were previously held by the Director of Workforce Development.

Mr Speaker, the Members of this Honourable House may recall that in March 2023, Cabinet approved the transition of the Labour Relations Section to the Department of Labour (the “Department”) and the Director of Labour post, among other posts, were created to ensure the efficient operation and management of the Department.

Mr Speaker, the creation of the new Department meant that the Employment and Labour Code of Bermuda (comprising the Employment Act 2000 and Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 2021) and corresponding and consequential legislation, regulations and orders required amending to correctly reference the Department by name and reflect the continuation of the Department. This Bill does exactly that.

Mr Speaker, by establishing the Director of Labour as a public officer with supervision over the Department of Labour, this Bill also ensures that the legislative responsibility for the Department, including but not limited to:

- receiving all employment complaints and labour related disputes;
- referring unresolved employment matters to the Employment and Labour Relations Tribunal or to the Minister responsible for labour relations;
- imposing civil penalties for contraventions of the Employment Act 2000; and
- the granting or refusal of a union as the exclusive bargaining agent in respect of an application for union certification,

is correctly assigned to the head of the Department and not the Manager of Labour Relations, which is a direct report.

Thank you **Mr. Speaker**