

BELIZE

No. HR 24/1/11

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, 19th January 2015

10:24 A.M.

Pursuant to the directions of Mr. Speaker on the 14th January 2015, the House met on Monday, 19th January 2015, in the National Assembly Chamber, Belmopan, at 10:24 A.M.

Members Present:

The Hon. Michael Peyrefitte, Speaker
The Hon. Dean O. Barrow (Queen's Square), Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development
The Hon. Gaspar Vega (Orange Walk North), Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Natural Resources and Agriculture
The Hon. Erwin R. Contreras (Cayo West), Minister of Trade, Investment Promotion, Private Sector Development and Consumer Protection
The Hon. Patrick J. Faber (Collet), Minister of Education, Youth and Sports
The Hon. Michael Finnegan (Mesopotamia), Minister of Housing and Urban Development
The Hon. Manuel Heredia Jr. (Belize Rural South), Minister of Tourism and Culture
The Hon. Anthony Martinez (Port Loyola), Minister of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation
The Hon. John Saldivar (Belmopan), Minister of National Security
The Hon. Wilfred P. Elrington (Pickstock), Attorney General and Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Hon. Rene Montero (Cayo Central), Minister of Works and Transport
The Hon. Pablo S. Marin (Corozal Bay), Minister of Health
The Hon. Santino Castillo (Caribbean Shores), Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
The Hon. Hugo Patt (Corozal North), Minister of State in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture
The Hon. Herman Longsworth (Albert), Minister of State in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
The Hon. Mark King (Lake Independence), Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation
The Hon. Edmond G. Castro (Belize Rural North), Minister of State in the Ministry of Works and Transport, Deputy Speaker
The Hon. Omar Figueroa (Cayo North), Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister
The Hon. Elvin Penner (Cayo North East)
The Hon. Francis Fonseca (Freetown), Leader of the Opposition
The Rt. Hon. Said Musa (Fort George)
The Hon. John Briceño (Orange Walk Central)
The Hon. Florencio Marin Jr. (Corozal South East)
The Hon. Michael Espat (Toledo East)

The Hon. Julius Espat (Cayo South)
 The Hon. Dolores Balderamos Garcia (Belize Rural Central)
 The Hon. Rodwell Ferguson (Stann Creek West)
 The Hon. Oscar Requena (Toledo West)
 The Hon. Ivan Ramos (Dangriga)
 The Hon. Jose Mai (Orange Walk South)
 The Hon. Marco Tulio Mendez (Orange Walk East)
 The Hon. Ramiro Ramirez (Corozal South West)

MR. SPEAKER in the Chair.

PRAYERS by Pastor Conrad Arzu.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE OF A NEW MEMBER

The Clerk administered the Oath of Allegiance to the new member:

The Honourable Omar Figueroa (Cayo North)

(Applause)

The Honourable Speaker welcomed the newly elected Member for Cayo North.

PAPERS

The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development moved:

- No.HR251/1/11 - Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment of First Schedule) (No.9) Order, 2014.
- No. HR252/1/11 - Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment of First Schedule) (No.10) Order, 2014.
- No. HR253/1/11 - Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment of First Schedule) (No.11) Order, 2014.
- No. HR254/1/11 - Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment of First Schedule) (No.12) Order, 2014.

Papers were ordered to lie on the Table.

The Honourable Minister of Trade, Investment Promotion, Private Sector Development and Consumer Protection moved:

- No. HR255/1/11 - Supplies Control (Prices) (Amendment) (No.42) Regulations, 2014.
- No. HR256/1/11 - Supplies Control (Prices) (Amendment) (No.43) Regulations, 2014.

Papers were ordered to lie on the Table.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

1. **Sugar Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2015.**

The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources and Agriculture introduced the above-mentioned Bill:-

Bill for an Act to amend the Sugar Industry Act, Chapter 325 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000-2003; to bring the Act into conformity with the Belize Constitution; to secure to all cane farmers the freedom to belong to an association of their own choice; to facilitate the commencement of grinding seasons in a fair and equitable manner, taking due account of the legitimate interests of all stakeholders; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Cabinet's recommendation signified by the Minister.

Bill read a first time and ordered to be printed, and pursuant to Standing Orders, referred to the Public Service, Labour, Industry and Trade Committee for examination, consideration and report.

In accordance with Standing Orders 49(1), the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources and Agriculture moved that the next stages of the Bill be taken forthwith.

Question put and agreed to.

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development moved that at its rising today, the House adjourn to a date to be fixed by the Speaker.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

A. GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

I MOTIONS

1. Write-Off (No.1) Motion, 2015.

The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development moved:

WHEREAS, on 3rd April 2007, Government of Belize vehicle license plate BZB-1472 attached to the Ministry of Health was involved in a traffic accident and sustained extensive damages;

AND WHEREAS, the Police investigation found the driver to be at fault, however, no charges were brought against him and the Solicitor General advised that it would not be prudent to surcharge as the limitation period had elapsed; as a result the Accounting Officer made recommendation for the write-off of this loss;

AND WHEREAS, the Accountant General, the Auditor General and the Financial Secretary are in support of the write-off;

AND WHEREAS, the total cost of repairs borne by the Government of Belize is \$14,647.21;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this House approves the write-off of \$14,647.21 as a loss to the Government of Belize.

Cabinet's recommendation was signified by the Minister.

Pursuant to Standing Orders, Motion was referred to the Finance and Economic Development Committee for examination, consideration and report.

2. Write-Off (No.2) Motion, 2015.

The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development moved:

WHEREAS, on 26th February 2013, Government of Belize vehicle license plate BZB-0214 attached to the Police Department was involved in a traffic accident where Police Officer O. Gabourel accidentally lost control of the vehicle and crashed into a building; the officer died on the spot;

AND WHEREAS, the vehicle was valued at \$30,000.00 at the time of the accident; the Accounting Officer made recommendation for the write-off of this loss;

AND WHEREAS, the Accountant General, the Auditor General and the Financial Secretary are in support of the write-off;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this House approves the write-off of \$30,000.00 as a loss to the Government of Belize.

Cabinet's recommendation was signified by the Minister.

Pursuant to Standing Orders, Motion was referred to the Finance and Economic Development Committee for examination, consideration and report.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker made the following announcement:

“Honourable Members, it has been agreed that the Sugar Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2015, pass this day.

As you are well aware, under Standing Order No. 74, all proposed Legislation, Messages, Petitions, Motions and other matters relating to the subject mentioned under the title of each Standing Committee shall be referred by the House to such Committee for examination, consideration and report to the House.

The only logical way for this to be done, other than by suspension of Standing Orders, is for me to suspend the Sitting to enable the Public Service, Labour, Industry and Trade Committee to examine, consider and report to the House on the Bill.”

Question put and agreed to.

The Sitting was therefore suspended until the Public Service, Labour, Industry and Trade Committee concluded its business.

The meeting was suspended at 10:54 A.M.

The meeting was resumed at 11:30 A.M.

PRESENTATION OF REPORT FROM COMMITTEE

The Honourable Chairman of the Public Service, Labour, Industry and Trade Committee:

No. HR257/1/11 - Report from the Public Service, Labour, Industry and Trade Committee on the Sugar Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2015.

Report was ordered to lie on the Table.

II BILL FOR SECOND READING

1. Sugar Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2015.

The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources and Agriculture moved that the above-mentioned Bill be now read a second time:

Bill for an Act to amend the Sugar Industry Act, Chapter 325 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000-2003; to bring the Act into conformity with the Belize Constitution; to secure to all cane farmers the freedom to belong to an association of their own choice; to facilitate the commencement of grinding seasons in a fair and equitable manner, taking due account of the legitimate interests of all stakeholders; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(Suspension of the debate on the Sugar Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2015.)

In accordance with Standing Order 12 (8), the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance moved that the proceedings on the matter on the Order Paper be entered upon and proceeded with at the Sitting at any hour though opposed.

Question put and agreed to.

(Resumption of the debate on the Sugar Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2015.)

Following the intervention of the Right Honourable Member for Fort George, the Opposition Members walked out.

After debate thereon, question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly, read a second time and, pursuant to Standing Orders, committed to a Committee of the whole House.

III COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON BILL

Pursuant to Standing Orders, the House, without question put, resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider the Bill that was read a second time and Mr. Speaker left the chair.

[In the Committee]

The Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

1. Sugar Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2015.

Clauses 1 to 19 agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the House without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER in the Chair.

IV BILL FOR THIRD READING

1. Sugar Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2015.

The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources and Agriculture reported that the Committee of the whole has gone through the Bill, clause by clause and directed him to report same without amendment.

Whereupon the Minister moved that the Bill be now read a third time.
Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development moved that the House be adjourned.

Question put and agreed to.

The House adjourned at 2:20 P.M. to a date to be fixed by the Speaker.

Speaker.

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