

BELIZE

No. 5/1/13

SENATE

Tuesday, 29th March 2016

10:00 A.M.

Pursuant to the direction of Mr. President, in writing, dated 23rd March 2016, the Senate met in the National Assembly Chamber in Belmopan on Tuesday, 29th March 2016, at 10:00 A.M.

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Members Present:

Senator, the Honourable Lee Mark Chang – President
Senator, the Honourable Godwin Hulse – Leader of Government Business
and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration
Senator, the Honourable Dr. Carla Barnett – Vice-President
Senator, the Honourable Francine Burns
Senator, the Honourable Macario Coy Sr.
Senator, the Honourable Stephen Duncan
Senator, the Honourable Aldo Salazar
Senator, the Honourable Eamon Courtenay
Senator, the Honourable Valerie Woods
Senator, the Honourable Paul Thompson
Senator, the Honourable Markhelm Lizarraga
Senator, the Honourable Rev. Ashley Rocke
Senator, the Honourable Elena Smith

MR. PRESIDENT *in the Chair*.

PRAYERS *by Rev. Ashley Rocke*.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE OF A NEW SENATOR

The Clerk administered the Oath, in accordance with section 65 of the Belize Constitution, to new Senator, the Honourable Eamon Courtenay.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President made the following announcement:-

“Honourable Members, by letter dated 23rd March 2016, Cabinet’s recommendation has been signified to the following:

1. General Revenue Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill, 2016;
2. Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2016;

3. Brewery (Amendment) Bill, 2016;
4. Official Charities Fund Motion, 2016.”

BILLS BROUGHT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration signified his willingness to take charge of the following Bills:

1. General Revenue Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill, 2016;
2. Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2016;
3. Brewery (Amendment) Bill, 2016;
4. Belizean Nationality (Amendment) Bill, 201;
5. Immigration (Amendment) Bill, 2016;
6. Passports (Amendment) Bill, 2016;
7. Refugees (Amendment) Bill, 2016; and
8. Caribbean Community (Free Movement of Skilled Persons) (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the Bills be taken through all their stages forthwith.

Question put and agreed to.

PAPERS

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration:-

- 4/1/13 - Draft Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for Fiscal Year 2016/2017.
- 5/1/13 - Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment of First Schedule) Order, 2015.
- 6/1/13 - Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment of First Schedule) (No.2) Order, 2015.
- 7/1/13 - Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment of First Schedule) Order, 2016.
- 8/1/13 - The Fifteenth Annual Report of the Ombudsman of Belize for the Year ending 2015.

Papers were ordered to lie on the Table.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE
SENATE ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

Senator, the Honourable Macario Coy Sr. was given leave to make a short speech about Pastor Scott Stirm's video about the Garifuna culture.

**MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE
SENATE**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that, at its rising, the Senate adjourn to a date to be fixed by the President.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

A. GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

I MOTIONS

1. Official Charities Fund Motion, 2016.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

BE IT RESOLVED that this House approves the expenditure of \$2,352,589 from the Official Charities Fund as detailed in Appendix A of the Draft Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2017.

Question put and agreed to.

2. Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize of the Paris Agreement Motion, 2016.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Paris Agreement (hereafter called "the Agreement") was adopted on 12th of December 2015;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement, in enhancing the implementation of the Convention, including its objective, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by:

- a) Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change;
- b) Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production;
- c) Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate resilient development;

AND WHEREAS, nationally determined contributions to the global response to climate change, all Parties are to undertake and communicate ambitious efforts as defined in Articles 4, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 13 with the view to achieving the purpose of this Agreement as set out in Article 2; The efforts of all Parties will represent a progression over time, while recognizing the need to support developing country Parties for the effective implementation of this Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 20(1) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No. 13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

II BILLS FOR SECOND READING

1. **General Revenue Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to appropriate certain sums of money for the use of the Public Service of Belize for the financial year ending March 31, 2017.

After the debate thereon, question put and agreed to.

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

2. **Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to amend the Customs and Excise Duties Act, Chapter 48 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000; to provide for the removal of revenue replacement duty on Caricom goods; to increase the scope of goods subject to excise duty; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Question put and agreed to.

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

3. **Brewery (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to amend the Brewery Act, Chapter 286 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000; to provide for the duty payable on local beer to be the same as that of other Caricom countries; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Question put and agreed to.

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

4. **Belizean Nationality (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to amend the Belizean Nationality Act, Chapter 161 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to make provision, in the interest of administrative and operational efficiency, for the responsible Minister to delegate certain functions to any Minister of State appointed to assist the Minister; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

After the debate thereon, question put and agreed to.

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

5. **Immigration (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to amend the Immigration Act, Chapter 156 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to make provision in the interest of administrative and operational efficiency, for the responsible Minister to delegate certain functions to any Minister of State appointed to assist the Minister; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Question put and agreed to.

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

6. **Passports (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to amend the Passports Act, Chapter 164 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to make provision in the interest of administrative and operational efficiency, for the responsible Minister to delegate certain functions to any Minister of State appointed to assist the Minister; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Question put and agreed to.

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

7. **Refugees (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to amend the Refugees Act, Chapter 165 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to make provision in the interest of administrative and operational efficiency, for the responsible Minister to delegate certain functions to any Minister of State appointed to assist the Minister; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Question put and agreed to.

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

8. **Caribbean Community (Free Movement of Skilled Persons) (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to amend the Caribbean Community (Free Movement of Skilled Persons) Act, Chapter 17:02 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to make provision in the interest of administrative and operational efficiency, for the responsible Minister to delegate certain functions to any Minister of State appointed to assist the Minister; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Question put and agreed to.

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

III COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE SENATE ON MOTION AND BILLS

In accordance with Standing Order 68A, the Senate, without question put, resolved itself into the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee, a Committee of the whole Senate, to consider the Motion referred to it and, thereafter, in accordance with Standing Order 54, into the Committee of the whole Senate to examine and consider the Bills that were read a second time.

(In the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee)

MR. PRESIDENT in the Chair.

1. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize of the Paris Agreement Motion, 2016.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

(In the Committee of the whole Senate)

MR. PRESIDENT in the Chair.

1. **General Revenue Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill, 2016.**

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Schedule agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

2. **Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

Clauses 1 to 5 agreed to.

Schedule agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

3. **Brewery (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

4. **Belizean Nationality (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

5. **Immigration (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

Bill was held back in Committee for further consideration.

6. **Passports (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

Bill was held back in Committee for further consideration.

7. **Refugees (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

Bill was held back in Committee for further consideration.

8. **Caribbean Community (Free Movement of Skilled Persons) (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

A. GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

IV MOTION

(Adoption of Motion)

1. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize of the Paris Agreement Motion, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

V REPORTING AND THIRD READING OF BILLS

1. **General Revenue Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Committee of the whole Senate has considered the above-mentioned Bill, clause by clause, and has agreed upon it without amendment.

Whereupon the Senator moved that the Bill be read a third time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

2. **Customs and Excise Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Committee of the whole Senate has considered the above-mentioned Bill, clause by clause, and has agreed upon it without amendment.

Whereupon the Senator moved that the Bill be read a third time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

3. **Brewery (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Committee of the whole Senate has considered the above-mentioned Bill, clause by clause, and has agreed upon it without amendment.

Whereupon the Senator moved that the Bill be read a third time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

4. **Belizean Nationality (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Committee of the whole Senate has considered the above-mentioned Bill, clause by clause, and has agreed upon it without amendment.

Whereupon the Senator moved that the Bill be read a third time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

5. **Caribbean Community (Free Movement of Skilled Persons) (Amendment) Bill, 2016.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Committee of the whole Senate has considered the above-mentioned Bill, clause by clause, and has agreed upon it without amendment.

Whereupon the Senator moved that the Bill be read a third time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

The Senate adjourned at 4:46 P.M. to a date to be fixed by the President.

PRESIDENT

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