

BELIZE

No. 26/1/13

SENATE

Monday, 17th December 2018

10:09 A.M.

Pursuant to the direction of Mr. President, in writing, dated 12th December 2018, the Senate met in the National Assembly Chamber in Belmopan on Monday, 17th December 2018, at 10:09 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 Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees
Senator, the Honourable Dr. Carla Barnett – Vice-President and Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance, Labour, Local Government, Rural Development, Energy, Public Utilities, Public Service, and Elections and Boundaries
Senator, the Honourable Michael Peyrefitte – Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs
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 Osmany Salas

Member Absent:

Senator, the Honourable Elena Smith

MR. PRESIDENT *in the Chair.*

PRAYERS *by Senator Rev. Ashley Rocke.*

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

A moment of silence was requested by the Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees to pay tribute to the late Hon. Jane Usher, Former President of the Senate.

Mr. President made the following announcement:-

“Honourable Members, by letter dated 12th December 2018, Cabinet’s recommendation has been signified to the following:

1. Income and Business Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018;
2. Stamp Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2018; and
3. International Business Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2018.”

BILLS BROUGHT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees signified his willingness to take charge of the following Bills:

1. Designated Processing Areas Bill, 2018;
2. Income and Business Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018;
3. Stamp Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2018; and
4. International Business Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2018.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees moved that the Bills be taken through all their stages forthwith.

Question was put and agreed to.

MOTION RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE SENATE

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees moved that, at its rising, the Senate adjourn to a date to be fixed by the President.

Question was put and agreed to.

I BILLS FOR SECOND READING

1. Designated Processing Areas Bill, 2018.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to repeal and replace the Export Processing Zone Act, Chapter 280 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to facilitate investment, production of value adding

of enterprises in Belize in national priority sectors; and to ensure compliance with regulations and standards; and to stimulate employment, transfer of technology and economic development; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

After the debate thereon, question was 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. Income and Business Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018.

(Suspension of the debate on the Income and Business Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018.)

In accordance with Standing Order 10 (8), the Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees 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 was put and agreed to.

(Resumption and continuation of the debate on the Income and Business Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018.)

3. Stamp Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2018.

4. International Business Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2018.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees moved that the abovementioned Bills be read all together.

Bill for an Act to amend the Income and Business Tax Act, Chapter 55 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to make provision for a tax regime for companies engaged in certain business activities; to set the rate of tax for these companies; to exempt from tax the interests and dividends from certain trade or business; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Bill for an Act to amend the Stamp Duties Act, Chapter 64 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to exclude a certain category of international business companies from the charge of duties applicable under Part IV; and to clarify the interpretation of a Belizean company in regards to the excluded

category of international business companies; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Bill for an Act to amend the International Business Companies Act, Chapter 270 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to eliminate ring-fencing by extending the regime to Belizean residents, removing the restrictions from international business companies to carry on business with Belizean residents, removing the prohibitions in relation to owning of real property, and removing the exemptions from taxes and duties; to provide for physical presence by international business companies; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

After the debate thereon, questions were put and agreed to.

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

II COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE SENATE ON BILLS

In accordance with Standing Order 68A, the Senate, without question put, resolved itself into the Committee of the whole Senate to examine and consider the Bills that were read a second time.

(In the Committee of the whole Senate)

MR. PRESIDENT in the Chair.

1. **Designated Processing Areas Bill, 2018.**

Clauses 1 to 31 agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

2. **Income and Business Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018.**

Clauses 1 to 9 agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

3. **Stamp Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2018.**

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

4. **International Business Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2018.**

Clauses 1 to 14 agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

III REPORTING AND THIRD READING OF BILLS

1. Designated Processing Areas Bill, 2018.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees 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 was put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

2. Income and Business Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018.

3. Stamp Duties (Amendment) Bill, 2018.

4. International Business Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2018.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees reported that the Committee of the whole Senate has considered the above-mentioned Bills, clauses by clauses, and has agreed upon them without amendment.

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

Question was put and agreed to.

Bills were read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment, Sustainable Development, Immigration Services and Refugees moved that the Senate be adjourned.

The Senate adjourned at 12:25 P.M. to a date to be fixed by the President.

PRESIDENT

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