Minister of Border Control, Labour and Culture Statement re Supplementary Funding for new TP for Pirates Week 2024.

Mister Speaker, I wish to speak to the Cabinet approval given for supplementary funding of $200,000 under section 11(5) of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision) to resolve remaining payments related to Pirates Week 2024, and the creation of a new TP, TP 126, dedicated to spend related to Pirates Week 2024.

Pirates Week, initiated in 1977, has become a pivotal event in the Cayman Islands' cultural and tourism calendar, and offers a vibrant celebration of pirate legends and cultural heritage that has historically featured historical re-enactments, music, parades, floats, local food, street dances, district celebrations, historical displays, friendly competition and fireworks. Since 2022, the management of this festival has existed at the core-government-level, and this year, my team in the Ministry of Border Control, Labour and Culture has the pleasure and responsibility of delivering this important national festival.

Despite Pirates Week being an annual event, budget funds were not transferred to the Ministry of Border Control, Labour and Culture for this express purpose. Supplementary information such as a full budget document, an event plan and an established list of sponsors and vendors were also not provided, therefore my Ministry team created this event essentially from scratch.

In August, Cabinet approved $574,000 to TP-119 Community Development Initiatives for the delivery of Pirates Week 2024. This figure was calculated from estimates acquired in line with a Grand Cayman schedule of:

1. Pirates Landing and Launch event, local DJs and international performers and a drone show, Saturday November 9
2. District Days in each District with local entertainment from November 11-15
3. Pirates Week Grand Finale, local and overseas DJs, large international soca performer and fireworks, Saturday November 16

Since that time, it was agreed to, in the interest of maximising the cultural impact of Pirates Week, extend the November 9 international performers so that they would perform in every District Day and to

extend the fireworks show to every District Day. Additionally, the cost of the drone show was more than initially estimated, and there were some additional infrastructure-related costs as a result of the poor weather conditions occurring during that time. These additional costs are the primary contributors to the need for supplementary funding required to remedy the overage outlined herein.

While the initial request was made for Pirates Week 2024 funding to be inserted into TP 119, an examination of the execution of Pirates Week identified it to be a stand-alone event that is separate and apart from community development, which monies under TP 119 are earmarked for.

Cabinet therefore agreed earlier this month to create a new TP, TP 126, dedicated to the delivery of Pirates Week 2024. The initial budget allocation was transferred retroactively from TP 119 to TP 126, and the request for supplementary funds was requested into TP 126.

Mister Speaker, the Cabinet found it necessary to favourably consider this request for supplementary funding because it was agreed that this need facilitated an "exceptional circumstance". As previously mentioned, the Ministry with responsibility for Culture did not receive funding allocated for this critical national festival, nor did it receive Human Capital allocated for event delivery, budget documents, existing

contracts establishing pre-agreed costs, existing sponsorship agreements, or guidance documents on the execution of the event. Additionally, culture-related expenditures are pivotal in the Government's strategy to promote national heritage, arts and cultural activities. In this critical time where our national identity is often being watered down, overlooked or outright forgotten, it was imperative to deliver a cultural celebration that reinvigorated our people's love for our national festival and our connections to our heritage.

In conclusion, Mister Speaker, it is evident that this request for supplementary funding, and the creation of TP 126, was necessary in order to deliver a national festival that provided an economic boost while simultaneously promoted local pride and developed community spirit.