

**CHARTER FOR  
GOVERNANCE 2017  
FORWARD TOGETHER  
TO VISION 2030**



**PLP**



**PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY**



# CHARTER FOR GOVERNANCE 2017 FORWARD TOGETHER TO VISION 2030

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**PERRY CHRISTIE**

Centreville / Party Leader

# MESSAGE FROM THE PARTY LEADER

As our beloved Bahamas moves into a new phase of national development, the Progressive Liberal Party re-affirms the core values that have guided us all through the years from our founding in 1953. Then, as now, we believe every Bahamian deserves human dignity, respect, and equality of opportunity for social and economic advancement.

It will be recalled that in our **2012 Charter for Governance: Vision 2030**, we recognized "an urgent need for change". As you will see from our new platform, '**Charter 2017: Forward Together Bahamians**', the transformative policies we have implemented over the past five years of governance have laid a solid foundation for fundamental change.

When we became the government in 2012, we found that our economy was suffering deeply from the neglect, mismanagement and incompetence by our predecessors. It was necessary, therefore, to lay a foundation for economic regeneration and renewal. Even though we were beset by two of the most destructive hurricanes our country has experienced in modern times, we took the bold and innovative steps that were absolutely necessary to put the country on the right path.

We are acutely aware, however, that while many Bahamians have benefitted from the initiatives we have undertaken, many are still struggling. We have achieved much to be proud of but there is still much more work to be done, especially in the areas of job creation, crime-fighting and national health care reform.

Happily, new jobs and new opportunities, especially in new industries, like agriculture and the creative arts, are on the way to supplement the many new jobs that are being created in the hotel and resort industry.

A massive new investment in our Royal Bahamas Defence Force has strengthened our ability to stop foreign poachers, and is a major element in our new plan to stop drugs, guns, and illegal migrants from entering the country.

An unprecedented investment in education continues. Our new platform addresses the educational needs of our nation with a plan for Universal Pre-School, and a Second Start programme which would enable adults to benefit from education and training as well.

We overcame powerful opposition forces to introduce National Health Insurance, and each new phase will expand benefits to Bahamians. In the process we will be helping to create a progressively healthier Bahamas for generations to come.

In addition, '**Charter 2017: Forward Together Bahamians**' proposes a variety of flagship policies that will change our country for the better in so many important areas of national life. These include:

A concrete Action Plan to expand opportunities, diversify our economy and generate new sources of income to our country;

**Detailed proposals to continue to empower Bahamians;**


**Effective solutions to protect our citizens from the ravages of crime;**

**A sustainable programme to continue to care for our people;**

**And a reformed social contract, to strengthen citizen-participation in governance thereby giving fresh meaning and relevance to our commitment to participatory democracy.**

Taken in their totality, these programmes and policies reflect the best of the values and aspirations that we share as members and supporters of the Progressive Liberal Party.

By God's good grace, and with the continued support of the Bahamian people, let us unite and move Forward Together, Bahamians!



The Rt. Hon. Perry G. Christie, M.P.,  
Leader Progressive Liberal Party

# OUR CORE VISION & VALUES

*"The Progressive Liberal Party adopts this platform in the conviction that the destiny of the Bahamian people is to build a country in which every citizen can obtain a higher standard of living with the promise of greater social and political freedom.*

*"We chart our course under the leadership of the Progressive Liberal Party in the abiding belief that it is dedicated to the service of all Bahamians and not to a privileged few, and will prove its superiority over all other parties.*

*"Ours is the party which has taken on the responsibility to provide a better standard of living for farmers, fishermen, civil servants and all other working classes of The Bahamas and to lead the Bahamian people to the greatest prosperity in their history.*

*"Ours is the party which promises to build on a solid foundation a sound and stable economy, develop our agriculture and fisheries, invigorate our industries and introduce new ones, provide better roads, transportation and communications throughout New Providence and the Out Islands.*

*"We reject the principle which is generally accepted that our government exists for the benefit of a privileged few; we pledge to serve the interest of all and not the few; to achieve security and full production from local industries, farming and fisheries and full employment for all.*

*"The government is the servant of the people, and not the people the servants of the government. Government must be administered economically and effectively, and must constantly strive to raise the standard of living of the people. To this end we pledge our wholehearted support.*

*"This is our platform. These are our principles. They form a political and economic policy which will guide our party and our country.*

*"Under them and with the guidance of divine providence, we can proceed to higher levels of prosperity and security, under them we advance to a better and fuller life and develop sound leadership in Bahamian affairs which will demand the respect and admiration of all."*

Extracts from the **'Preamble to The Platform of the Progressive Liberal Party'**, published in October 1953.

We hereby re-commit ourselves to be guided by these Values.

We further commit to pursue all that we hold to be good and right and just, and in the interests of the Bahamian people.

*Signed:*  
**The PLP Candidates  
for the General Election of 2017**

## FORWARD **TOGETHER** BAHAMIANS

PROGRESSIVE  
LIBERAL  
PARTY

# PLP





# OUR TRANSFORMATIVE INITIATIVES OF THE PAST FIVE YEARS



## NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE (NHI)

The Progressive Liberal Party has introduced National Health Insurance. As part of the introduction of NHI public health care facilities across the country have been constructed and or upgraded.



## RENEWING INSPIRING SUSTAINING EMPOWERING (RISE) PROGRAMME

This programme is a comprehensive, integrated initiative led by the Ministry of Social Services in conjunction with the Ministries of Education and Health to provide support for families in need. The level of assistance received by families is influenced by their fulfilment of established criteria related to the education of their children and the overall health of the family. The first phase of this programme introduced the conditional cash transfer programme which allows programme participants to make purchases through the use of a debit card which is credited on a monthly basis. This programme replaces the voucher programme and allows participants to maintain their dignity while obtaining assistance.



## REFORM OF THE TAX SYSTEM

In an effort to reform the country's tax collection system and to introduce a new stream of revenue, the Progressive Liberal Party successfully introduced Value Added Tax and reduced customs duties.





## PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES) ACT

This legislation ensures that the law protects persons with disabilities against discrimination. Its goal is for persons with disabilities to have the same access to fulfill their potential as are able persons in The Bahamas.



## BAHAMAS AGRICULTURE AND MARINE SCIENCE INSTITUTE (BAMSI)

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute was established to ensure the food security of The Bahamas and to assist in lowering the amount currently spent on the importation of food. This Institute not only grows produce for sale to the local market but it also offers degree programmes to its students in areas associated with agriculture and marine resources. BAMSI also has an association of farmers attached to it.



## UNIVERSITY OF THE BAHAMAS

The Progressive Liberal Party has ensured that the College of The Bahamas became the University of The Bahamas during this term. The importance of a good education cannot be overstressed and Bahamians can now get a university-level education here at home. The Government also expects that the University would have a greater impact on the formulation of public policy through research.



## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME (\$7.75M - \$16.2M)

In this term the PLP administration has more than doubled the investment in scholarships making the dream of a tertiary level education a reality for many more Bahamian students. As part of this initiative there has also been a significant increase from 7% to 20% in the amount of public school students that receive college scholarships.



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## BAHAMAS HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

For the first time there is an established standard for students to graduate from high school across the country. This diploma now assures that the receiver has met all the criteria set by the Ministry of Education necessary for graduation. This new initiative raises the standard which students have to meet and ensure that when students leave high school they are equipped to either enter the job market or continue their education.



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## MARJORIE DAVIS INSTITUTE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Marjorie Davis Institute for Special Education is a place where students who learn differently can receive the special attention that they require from trained teachers and administrators.



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## NATIONAL TRAINING AGENCY

The National Training Agency (NTA) was established in 2013 and provides young Bahamians with the opportunity to obtain international certification in specified areas of study free of charge. The NTA has a presence across the various islands of The Bahamas and is to be credited to date for the graduation of more than 3000 of its students. Of that number, approximately 70% have been successfully placed in employment positions with over 40 companies.



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## LABOUR DAY

Labour Day which is celebrated annually on the first Friday in June, was re-named during this term and formally established as The Randol Fawkes Labour Day. By so doing, the tremendous contributions of Sir Randol Fawkes, the Father of the Labour Movement in The Bahamas has been memorialized.



## INCREASE IN MINIMUM WAGE

Weekly wages have increased from \$150 to \$210; Daily wages from \$30 to \$42; and Hourly wages from \$4 to \$5.25



## RECLAIMING AIRSPACE

An agreement has been reached between the Governments of The Bahamas and the United States in which The Bahamas will regain the control of its airspace after a 10-year period during which time the country will build capacity. Control of our airspace is significant as it is expected that this new stream of revenue will inject millions of dollars into our economy. This administration has also negotiated for Bahamian aircrafts to fly in Bahamian airspace free of charge.



## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT AMENDMENT

This amendment validated all trade unions not properly registered in 1970 (prior to enactment of Industrial Relations Act) – This was of particular benefit to Bahamas Hotel Catering and Allied Workers Union.



## MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

The Marine Protected Areas in the country increased from 2 million acres to 13 million acres in this term. The PLP realizes the need to ensure that we preserve areas of our waters so that fisheries can be replenished and promote the healthy growth of coral reefs which aid in the buffering of storm surge.



Control of our airspace is significant as it is expected that this new stream of revenue will inject millions of dollars into our economy



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## INCREASED AUTOMATION OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY

In this term in office the PLP introduced automation in several areas of Government to improve the delivery of services to citizens. The Registrar General's Department, Road Traffic Department, Department of Inland Revenue and the National Insurance Board have all been automated.



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## ELECTRICITY COSTS REDUCED BY MORE THAN 40%

In the 2012 Charter for Governance the PLP committed to reducing the cost of electricity, we have done that. During this term, the cost of electricity has decreased by more than 40%. The Government remains committed to the deployment of alternative energy sources.



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## SANDY BOTTOM PROJECT

The PLP administration invested \$232 million into new state of the art vessels for the use of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force to protect the borders and people of The Bahamas. These boats have aided in the apprehension of illegal poachers and illegal immigrants on the seas of the country and have brought great relief to those Bahamians who make a living on the high seas.



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## JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Criminal Trials:** In 2015, 232 matters were disposed of before the Supreme Court. This was 114 more cases than in 2012 when this Government took office.

- The rate of conviction in criminal trials in the Supreme Court has more than doubled increasing from 31% in 2012 to 67% in 2016.



## OPENING OF PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

As part of its holistic efforts to fight crime and ensure justice is served, the PLP administration established the Office of the Public Defender where those who cannot afford an attorney have access to legal services.



## DUTY EXEMPTION EXTENDED TO EXUMA, BIMINI AND ABACO

This PLP administration has extended tax concessions through the Family Island Development Act to encourage the increased development of the Family Islands by private citizens and companies. The concessions available under this Act were last extended to June 2017 and included Exuma, Bimini and Abaco where many infrastructural improvements and developments have taken place during the course of this term.



## HAWKSBILL CREEK CONCESSION EXTENSION TO WEST AND EAST GRAND BAHAMA

For decades under the provisions of the Hawksbill Creek Agreement persons and companies within the Freeport area enjoyed tax concessions and privileges that were out of reach to those living outside of the Port area. This administration, in an historic action, has extended those concessions to West and East Grand Bahama to encourage its development and promote fairness to the island as a whole.



## FISHING HOLE ROAD RECONSTRUCTION

In Grand Bahama the impassability of the Fishing Hole Road in times of flooding or storms has been a problem for decades. This administration has ensured that this issue will be resolved and that Grand Bahamians will no longer be stranded based the conditions of Fishing Hole Road. A massive reconstruction effort is underway to create the Fishing Hole Road Bridge.



In Grand Bahama the impassability of the Fishing Hole Road in times of flooding or storms has been a problem for decades





## GRAND BAHAMA SHIPYARD EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

This government has undertaken to ensure that Bahamians are employed at the Grand Bahama Shipyard. An agreement was made which will see that there will be an exchange of foreign workers for Bahamian workers in tranches of 200 persons per year for three years. This year was the first year that this has taken place.



## NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Bahamas now has a comprehensive National Development Plan for which extensive research has been carried out. This document outlines the issues facing the country and the paths to bring resolution to those issues. Over a number of years Bahamians from all sectors and political persuasions have contributed to the development of this document.



## OUR TRANSFORMATIVE INITIATIVES OF THE PAST FIVE YEARS



# OUR KEY POLICIES FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

## EDUCATION

- Continue to increase the investment in Education.
- Undertake Comprehensive Education Reform to ensure that there is at least one Trained Graduate In Every Home.
- Introduce formal certification of Skilled Workers who possess industry-level skills.
- Introduce Universal Pre-School Education to build on existing provision.
- Work towards securing full, Universal Adult Literacy and Numeracy to established, international standards.
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## ECONOMY

- Develop a sustainable **Creative Industries Sector**, which will introduce new sources of revenue into the country. On the current number of annual visitors to The Bahamas, by developing attractions and opportunities to yield an additional

average of \$200 expenditure per visitor, we aim to bring \$1 billion of new revenue into the country each year.

- Build on the **BAMSI** initiative by strengthening the focus on Agri-Business. This is both to ensure security in the food supply, and also to diversify the Economic Base. This includes land and marine-based industries which will introduce new sources of Revenue into the country.
- Explore ways to sustainably harvest minerals and other natural resources for product development and export. Create a Statutory Body to oversee this sector, and to encourage the development of 'value-added' industries in The Bahamas, so as to retain maximum value in the country. This will include all resources, including rock, sand, salt and aragonite.
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- Focus on Entrepreneurship by providing support from start-up idea, to production, operations, marketing and distribution.

Build on the BAMSI initiative  
by strengthening the focus on  
Agri-Business.



- Develop a **'Small Alternative Market'** on the Bahamas International Stock Exchange to allow investors to invest in new businesses amounts ranging from \$25,000 to \$1 million.
- Now that the technical studies have been completed, Review and Implement a Downtown Nassau Revitalization Plan.
- Encourage and support Bahamians to open banks.
- Restructure the Financial Services to become an **'Onshore'**, as well as **'Offshore'** center, whereby financial service businesses will operate 'from' The Bahamas, rather than 'through' The Bahamas'.
- Help alleviate the burden of debt on Bahamians by putting a cap on the level of interest that could be charged for loans taken out by government workers and paid to the bank directly by way of salary deductions. The government will put in place other measures to help those currently paying excessively high levels of interest on loans backed by government guarantee.

## ELECTRICITY & ENERGY

- We will introduce policies under which the government will cover the cost of electricity to residential customers who limit their monthly use to below specified limits. This means that the use of electricity will be FREE to those customers. On current data, we anticipate that this will benefit 15%-20% of the lowest income households. By encouraging disciplined use of electricity, this will

positively impact energy conservation and help to protect our environment.

- Commit to the early construction of power plants using renewable energy sources.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- Fully implement the first phase of National Health Insurance with the introduction of Primary care and expand to cover other areas of health care.

## ENVIRONMENT

- Launch 'Fully Renewable Bahamas: Energy, Waste & Carbon Reduction' to achieve a 30% reduction by 2030 in line with the National Energy Policy.

## FAMILY ISLAND DEVELOPMENT

- Create a new college-based city in North Andros around the BAMSI campus.
- Develop Exuma as an 'Economic & Transportation Hub' to bridge the Northern & Southern Bahamas. We will improve and enhance the infrastructural development of the island. We will also strengthen the inter- and intra-island infrastructure, including the air and sea ports. This will encourage increased airlift and development in all the surrounding islands.
- We will incentivize Bahamians to invest in the new college-based city in Andros, and the Exuma



Economic and Transportation Hub, by launching government initiatives such as tax concessions and purchases of land at concessionary rates, for dwelling homes and businesses, and the application of the Family Island Development Act.

- Support the development of islands surrounding Exuma, to ensure that they are able to maximize the potential of the increased connectivity, especially in relation to tourism.
- We value the natural beauty, heritage and traditions of all our islands, and support their development in line with the aspirations of local populations. We will seek to promote the intrinsic strengths and cultural identity of each island, to develop a comparative advantage in tourism and other commercial opportunities eg. The National Park in Inagua.
- We will build a deep-water harbor on Acklins, in order to establish a new defence force base and also facilitate the growth of tourism in the southern islands.

## **CRIME and JUSTICE**

- Having strengthened the defence of our borders by acquiring nine more vessels under the 'Sandy Bottom' programme, we are to able increase protection against the importation of guns and illegal drugs which are the source and the means of so much criminal activity.
- Initiate training in digital transcription for students at the Salvation Army's Erin H. Gilmour School for

the Blind and Visually Impaired. This will increase efficiency in the Magistrate's Court, and give differently-abled students a chance for training and employment.

- Now that we have recently put in place legislation specifically targeting gangs, and the police force has been restructured to infiltrate and dismantle those criminal gangs, we will continue to implement our plan against gang violence and related crimes.
- Continue to expand and develop a comprehensive 'Rehabilitation of Offenders' programme to enable offenders to return to society and make a meaningful contribution.

## **HOUSING**

- Create a Rent-to-own Programme within the Department of Housing.

## **GOVERNANCE**

- Establish a Ministry of Communications & Information Technology.
- Establish a Ministry of Culture & Tourism.
- Establish a new 'Strategy Unit' at the Office of The Prime Minister. This unit will co-ordinate the development and successful implementation of policies across government to meet our Strategic Priorities. The Head of the Strategy Unit will be a part of the Standing Committee of Permanent Secretaries.

We will build a deep-water harbor on Acklins, in order to establish a new defence force base and also facilitate the growth of tourism in the southern islands





- Introduce Annual Business Plans, to be provided as part of the Annual Budget, to include a number of Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Time-limited (SMART) Goals. These will support better accountability for all parts of government on a yearly basis.
- Introduce Annual Business Reports from each Ministry, specifically in relation to the SMART Goals.
- Continue public service modernization to launch 'Service Bahamas': a one-window delivery of government services. We will move toward the use of a single government card to access all government services.
- Use Technology to drive a Paper-Free Cabinet and Public Service through a phased-in approach.
- Empower communities in New Providence through the creation of Community Development Associations with the Member as Parliament as the ex officio member of the Board.

## LAND

- Undertake comprehensive Land Reform to fully implement land registration, review and overhaul the 'Quieting Title' legislation, and review and revise provisions relating to the disposal and use of Crown Land.
- Re-develop Urban Areas by acquiring vacant & abandoned properties for green spaces & dwelling homes.
- Upgrade the water and sewerage infrastructure in areas where there is a need.
- Review existing policies so as to discourage the holding of Bahamian land for speculative purposes by non-Bahamians.





OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH:  
**HOW WE WILL  
GET THERE**



## THE FOUNDATION: WHERE WE STARTED

In our **'Charter for Governance 2012,'** we offered a large number of ideas and plans as to how to develop The Bahamas to the Year 2030. Many of those plans have since been translated into effective policies and programmes, which have improved the lives of Bahamians.

Other plans will be rolled forward into the next term, as we continue to move forward with our ideas and policies.

One of the landmark achievements of this PLP Government has been to commission the First National Development Plan for The Bahamas. This comprehensive document, still in draft form, has benefitted from the contribution of thousands of Bahamians, from across the political landscape.

It now takes visionary, strategic, clear-sighted and effective leadership to determine how best to successfully implement the National Development Plan. While the Plan offers goals and objectives, it does not prescribe the political choices and decisions required to achieve them. The Leadership Team must therefore articulate clear values, establish priorities, and offer credible paths as to the way forward.

To this task the Progressive Liberal Party brings our core vision and values, our deep-rooted experience of governance, a strong sense of mission and innovative strategic thinking.

## CHARTER 2017

Our **'Charter 2017'** now builds upon and refines our vision for 2030, taking into account key developments since 2012. We propose a number of transformational policies that will herald a new phase of national development, and change our country for the better.

**When we came into government in 2012, we found the economy and the country's affairs in a far worse state than we had realized, as many successful policies had been subject to a 'Stop, Review and Cancel' regime. Our first priority was to reverse that decline.**

Having put in place many necessary fundamental changes, we are now able to move forward. Crucially, we are also now able to benefit from the data and analysis of the National Development Plan so we can move forward in accordance with our values and mission to help improve the lives of the Bahamian people.



# STRATEGIC APPROACH

## WE THEREFORE PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC APPROACH FOR OUR NEXT ADMINISTRATION

- To use the **National Development Plan** as a key tool for policy-making
- To adopt a rigorous **evidence-based** approach to policy-making
- To focus on our commitment to **education**, a key priority for the next PLP administration
- To implement structures and processes which facilitate the efficient and effective **inter-relationship** of all sectors of Government. We recognize that many of our national challenges have multiple causes, and therefore also require multiple, cross-cutting solutions
- To change the 'Ministry-by-Ministry' approach and culture of governance, which results in inefficiencies, with too many sections of government operating in separate silos. Our current PLP Administration has already trialed this evolutionary approach with the **RISE PROGRAMME**, an initiative led by the Ministry of Social Services, in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Education

- To establish clear **strategic priorities** towards which all parts of government must work
- To put a rigorous focus on the **implementation and delivery** of policies, and ensure that those who are meant to benefit under the policy, actually do so

## OUR FIVE KEY TOOLS FOR DEVELOPMENT

In reviewing our overall approach to governance, we have identified Five 'Key Tools' to National Development. These Key Tools are drivers which operate across all areas of our national life.

We will, therefore take account of each of these Key Tools in setting and implementing policies, and also use them as criteria to set priorities.

While each Key Tool in itself sits in an individual Ministry, because of their significance, we expect those Ministries to have a much greater role in helping to drive policy-making and implementation across government. Where necessary, we will implement reforms that will enable this.

### THE FIVE KEY TOOLS TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ARE:

1. Environmental Sustainability
2. Good Governance & Civic Responsibility
3. Cultural Development
4. Youth Empowerment
5. Technology

To put a rigorous focus on the implementation and delivery of policies, and ensure that those who are meant to benefit under the policy, actually do so





## 1 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

As a series of low-lying islands make up our archipelago, the Draft National Development Plan has highlighted changes to the climate and other parts of our environment, as critical risks.

We are among the Top 10 countries in the world deemed most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Not only our way of life, but our very existence is threatened. We are already experiencing the effects as hurricanes become more frequent and more intense.

Under the multi-lateral agreement signed in Paris, this PLP Administration committed our country to putting environmental protection measures at the heart of our development planning.

As we move forward, it is imperative, therefore, that we plan and build our country in ways which can offer us the best environmental protections, and mitigate against future natural disasters.

## 2 GOOD GOVERNANCE AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

**IN LINE WITH OUR CORE PLP VALUES, WE EMBRACE THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES AS HALLMARKS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Consensus-oriented, participatory, observance of the rule of law, effectiveness and efficiency, accountable, transparent, responsive, equitable and inclusive.

Our policies propose the introduction of specific structures and processes that will uphold these principles.

In order to be effective, these principles require a strengthening of the social contract between the people and the government.

We commit to doing what we can to bring this about.

## 3 CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

In our 'Charter For Governance 2012, we committed to ensuring that 'Bahamian culture becomes a major factor in economic development...'



We consider that the critical and most valuable role for government to realize this commitment is to invest in and support the cultural infrastructure of the country.

While we do not see a long-term role for government as a cultural producer, we consider cultural development as an essential dimension, which ranges across all of our national life: in the development of talent and skills, the production of cultural content, the development and maintenance of cultural spaces, investment in the creative economy, the promotion of a more creative, innovative society, and the projection of Bahamian culture on the world stage.

## 4 YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

We consider the fact that young people constitute such a large part of our population, as a key strategic advantage for The Bahamas. We must ensure that we support their natural optimism, and harness their creativity, imagination and vigour for the positive development of our country.

An important way of doing this is to ensure that our young people are empowered to participate fully in the various ways in which our society is organized and managed.

Young people are therefore not merely a target audience (eg. a group which must be educated) but an important constituency, which must be seen and heard in all areas of national life. All policy-making and implementation should therefore consider not only the potential benefits which will accrue to young people, but also the participation of young people in the decision-making and execution.

## 5 TECHNOLOGY

In both the public and private sectors, The Bahamas has yet to take full advantage of the many benefits and opportunities offered by technology.

In terms of hardware, software, cloud computing and infrastructural development, there is much untapped potential. On the international stage, we have fallen behind and our national development will be limited. It is imperative, therefore, that we engage and invest in science and technology in order to realize our full social, cultural and economic potential.

New Providence was recently designated the first Smart Island by the International Telecommunications Union. This will help to drive technology into every sector of government and our daily life. The initiative is currently being spear-headed by the Ministry of Education and the Office of The Attorney-General.

In terms of hardware, software, cloud computing and infrastructural development, there is much untapped potential







**ALEX STORR**  
**Elizabeth**



**ALFRED GRAY**  
**MICAL**



**ALFRED SEARS**  
**Fort Charlotte**



**ARNOLD FORBES**  
**Mount Moriah**



**BERNARD NOTTAGE**  
**Bains and Grants Town**



**CELOLA HAMILTON**  
**South Beach**



**CHARLES CLARKE**  
**St. Annes**



**CHERYL BAZZARD**  
**St. Barnabas**



**CHESTER COOPER**  
**Exumas and Ragged Island**



**CLAY SWEETING**  
**North Eleuthera**



**DION SMITH**  
**Nassau Village**



**EVA BAIN**  
**Central and South Abaco**



**FRED MITCHELL**  
**Fox Hill**



**G. ERRINGTON ROLLE**  
**Long Island**



**GLENYS HANNA**  
**Martin - Englerston**



**GREGORY BURROWS**  
**Bamboo Town**



**HOPE STRACHAN**  
**Seabreeze**



**JEROME FITZGERALD**  
**Marathon**



**JULIAN RUSSELL**  
**Central Grand Bahama**



**KEITH BELL**  
**Carmichael**



**KENDAL MAJOR**  
**Garden Hills**



**KENRED DORSETT**  
**Southern Shores**



**KHAALIS ROLLE**  
**Pinewood**



**CLIFFORD SCAVELLA**  
**Central and South Eleuthera**



**PICEWELL FORBES**  
**Central and South Andros**



**MICHAEL DARVILLE**  
**Pineridge**



**MICHAEL HALKITIS**  
**Golden Isles**



**NORRIS BAIN**  
**Marco City**



**OBIE WILCHCOMBE**  
**West End and Bimini**



**PERRY GOMEZ**  
**North Andros**



**LESLIE MILLER**  
**Tall Pines**

# OUR CANDIDATES



# FOR 2017



## PERRY CHRISTIE

Centreville / Party Leader

## PHILIP E. DAVIS

Cat Is., Rum Cay & San Sal



MELANIE GRIFFIN  
Yamacraw



PRESTON COOPER  
East Grand Bahama



RENARDO CURRY  
North Abaco



RENEIKA KNOWLES  
Killarney



SHANE GIBSON  
Golden Gates



WAYNE MUNROE  
Freetown



# EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES



# PRIORITY: THE ECONOMY OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

Having successfully implemented the necessary structural fiscal reforms to put the country back on track, the PLP is now able to take steps to develop our country's **Business Model**, and move forward towards a better economic future for us all.

## THE NEXT PLP ADMINISTRATION WILL IMPLEMENT POLICIES FOCUSED AROUND THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC GOALS:

### INCREASE THE NATIONAL REVENUE

Our number one objective is to find new sources of national income. In this way, we will seek to grow the overall economic pie.

- While continuing to support the expansion of the tourism industry, we will focus more on the value retained to the country by supporting the development of local industries to supply local goods and services to the sector. This will mean that the 75%-80% of revenue generated from the tourism industry that currently leaves the country, remains and thereby adds greater value to Bahamians from tourism
- Aim to add \$1 billion annually to the economy, by implementing a strategy focused on

delivering an additional \$200 per person from each of the 5 million current visitors via sales of products, services, events and activities of an invigorated and expanded creative industries.

## DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMIC BASE

It is crucial that we diversify the economic base of our country, both to generate new sources of revenue, and to make ourselves less vulnerable to the peaks and valleys of a single industry. By establishing new sectors, we can establish a broader range of interests and economic activity for our people. This will stimulate economic growth and job creation throughout the country.

## WE WILL DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMIC BASE OF THE COUNTRY BY DEVELOPING AND EXPANDING THE FOLLOWING SECTORS:

### LAND AND MARINE-BASED AGRI-BUSINESS

- Launch one of the biggest infrastructural projects in a generation, by beginning to plan, design and build a new 21st Century Smart City in North Andros, based around the BAMSI campus of The University of The Bahamas.
- Establish a 'Department of Agri-Business' within the 'Ministry of Agriculture & Marine Resources', to develop comprehensive policies and strategies which reach across government, to begin the successful development of this sector.

Our number one objective is to find new sources of national income. In this way, we will seek to grow the overall economic pie



## FLAGSHIPS:

Focus on Entrepreneurship by providing support from start-up idea, to production, operations, marketing and distribution.

Develop a sustainable Creative Industries Sector, which will introduce new sources of revenue into the country. On the current number of annual visitors to The Bahamas, by developing attractions and opportunities to yield an additional average of \$200 expenditure per visitor, we aim to bring \$1 billion of new revenue into the country each year.

Explore ways to sustainably harvest minerals and other natural resources for product development and export. Create a Statutory Body to oversee this sector, and to encourage the development of 'value-added' industries in The Bahamas, so as to retain maximum value in the country. This will include all resources, including rock, sand, salt and aragonite

Encourage and support Bahamians to open banks.

Build on the BAMSI initiative by strengthening the focus on Agri-Business. This is both to ensure security in the food supply, and also to diversify the Economic Base. This includes land marine-based industries which will introduce new sources of Revenue into the country.

Help alleviate the burden of debt on Bahamians by putting a cap on the level of interest that could be charged for loans taken out by government workers and paid to the bank directly by way of salary deductions. The government will put in place other measures to help those currently paying excessively high levels of interest on loans backed by government guarantee.

Now that the technical studies have been completed, Review and Implement a Downtown Nassau Revitalization Plan.

Restructure Financial Services' offerings in The Bahamas so that The Bahamas will attract "Onshore" as well as "Offshore" financial service businesses to operate "from" as well as "through" The Bahamas.

Develop a 'Small Alternative Market' on the Bahamas International Stock Exchange to allow investors to invest in new businesses amounts ranging from \$25,000 to \$1 million.



## THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

- Charge the proposed 'Arts, Culture & Technology Council' with developing and implementing a detailed Strategic Plan to focus on the targeted growth of the sector.

## MINING OF RENEWABLE RESOURCES (SUCH AS ARAGONITE)

Now that several research studies are in place, we will introduce legislation to create 'The Bahamas Aragonite Corporation', to provide the legal, fiscal & regulatory framework for the licensed mining of aragonite.

As well as direct mining, we will encourage the development of value-added industries and sub-sectors, so that the raw material can be made into finished products to be sold both domestically and internationally, thereby retaining maximum value in The Bahamas.

Early research suggests that The Bahamas could benefit tremendously from this renewable asset, and establish a strong, global comparative advantage in this area.

We consider that this policy will offer a wide number of new career options, and wealth opportunities for Bahamians.

## CREATE PATHS TO PROSPERITY FOR ALL

As we enter a new phase of national development, it is important that we not only seek to stimulate job and employment opportunities, but that we implement policies which can support considerably more Bahamians in creating wealth which can be handed down to future generations. We will pursue this by encouraging investment, ownership and savings.

- Create a Small Alternative Market Section of the Bahamas International Stock Exchange, to encourage investments from \$25k to \$1m in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)
- Ensure that entrepreneurs are supported through a range of mechanisms, such as the development and marketing of a prospectus through Business Development Networks.
- Among the many types of support which will be considered for entrepreneurs, will be the provision of Crown Land. This will form part of the overall review relating to land use. Criteria will be established to ensure that any provision of land becomes a form of co-investment, which should complement other forms of investment in the venture.
- Establish a 'Virtual School of Entrepreneurship' to ensure the highest standards of provision in entrepreneurship skills and development training.
- Work with existing providers (such as the Junior Achievement Program) to promote entrepreneurship training and education in primary and secondary schools.
- Launch a network of '**Business Development Agencies**' to support people through the early phases of starting a new business.
- Offer incentives for private citizens to invest in enterprises that have a significant social benefit.
- Incentivize the building of a 'Savings Culture'.

Establish a 'Virtual School of Entrepreneurship' to ensure the highest standards of provision in entrepreneurship skills and development training



## IMPROVE THE EASE OF DOING BUSINESS IN THE BAHAMAS

As articulated in the Draft National Development Plan, structural inefficiencies inhibit business activity in our country.

We will therefore incorporate the recommendations of the Draft National Development Plan to reduce the obstacles to business efficacy.

## REDUCE HARDSHIP AND POVERTY

One of the key drags on personal finances is the high level of individual and household debt. We will pursue policies to support Bahamians in reducing their indebtedness.

- Help alleviate the burden of debt on Bahamians by putting a cap on the level of interest that could be charged for loans taken out by government workers, and paid to the bank directly by way of salary deductions. The government will put in place other measures to help those currently paying excessively high levels of interest on loans backed by government guarantee.
- Strengthen 'Personal Financial Management & Education' in the Core Curriculum in schools.
- Establish a network of Independent Financial Advice Centers to help citizens plan and manage their finances.

## INCREASE INTERNAL & EXTERNAL COMPETITIVENESS AND PRODUCTIVITY

**IN ORDER TO ALLOW THE ECONOMY TO GROW AND TO BECOME MORE DYNAMIC, WE MUST CONTINUE TO MAKE EFFORTS TO RAISE OUR LEVELS OF PRODUCTIVITY, AND TO BECOME EVER MORE COMPETITIVE TO ENSURE THAT WE CAN DEVELOP STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES IN THE WORLD. WE WILL:**

Restructure the Financial Services to become an 'Onshore' in addition to 'Offshore' center, whereby financial service businesses will operate 'from' The Bahamas, as well as 'through' The Bahamas'.

Develop initiatives to ensure that the banking sector operates competitively and serves the best interests of Bahamians.

*The PLP shall, help alleviate the burden of debt on Bahamians by putting a cap on the level of interest that could be charged for loans taken out by government workers, and paid to the bank directly by way of salary deductions.*



# MINISTRY OF CULTURE & TOURISM

In our **'Charter For Governance 2012'**, we committed to ensuring that 'Bahamian culture becomes a major factor in economic development...'

We also committed to revitalizing our tourism industry, which was facing a number of serious challenges, such that at the time, the Inter-American Development Bank described the overall situation of tourism in The Bahamas as 'troubling'. Not so today

## WE HAVE REVERSED THE SITUATION FROM THAT IN 2012 WHEREBY THERE WAS:

- No global development plan
- No organizational structure (many Tourism Offices had been closed)
- No TV & Radio ads
- No Tourism Promotion Strategy
- No focus on Global Messaging and Branding

As part of the Goal we set, that "by 2030 the number of visitors who come to The Bahamas because of arts and culture will rival those who come primarily because of our beaches and sea...", we propose to establish a new **'Ministry of Culture & Tourism'**.

This will put both Culture and Tourism into a single policy framework, whereby we recognize that our Cultural Development is an essential part of our national life, and a key Tool for national development, and that Tourism is essentially the marketing of our Culture. In this way, Revenue and Resources can be better aligned for the benefit of our people.

## DURING THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION THE PLP HAS:

## IN CULTURE

- Increased support for Junkanoo and expanded the Junkanoo season beyond just a yearly event with Junkanoo in June and July;
- Launched Bahamas Junkanoo Carnival;
- Facilitated Bahamian artists and entertainers participating on the international stage;
- Passed an 'Honours Bill' to provide a regulatory regime for selecting and memorializing national heroes;
- Supported 14 major exhibitions at the National Art Gallery

Develop initiatives to ensure that the banking sector operates competitively and serves the best interests of Bahamian



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# IN TOURISM

Successfully promoted The Bahamas to now be the 'Sports Mecca of the Caribbean'

Successfully promoted The Bahamas to now be the 'Golf Capital of the Caribbean'

Secured the re-emergence of the Family Islands as key destinations

Increased international airlift (added direct flights to the US from Exuma and Abaco & Canada to Exuma)

Established more tourism offices abroad, led by Bahamians

Increased the global outreach

Introduced eight major new hotel brands [SLS, Rosewood, Hyatt, Hilton (Bimini), Memories (Grand Bahama), Melia, Marriot, Warwick]

Introduced new regulation of the gaming industry

## DURING THE NEXT PLP ADMINISTRATION, WE WILL:

- Substantially invest in and develop the cultural infrastructure in line with the proposals developed under the Draft National Development Plan (ref. The Cultural Development section)
- Work with the Ministry of Education to launch a new 'Arts, Culture & Technology Council' to undertake much of the development and practical implementation of policies
- Continue to create new trends in travel
- Increase and expand the Bahamian cultural experience for tourists
- Continue to ensure that hotels showcase Bahamian culture
- Create policies to ensure that the 75%-80% of revenue generated from the tourism industry that currently leaves the country remains and thereby adds greater value to Bahamians.
- Continue to expand the global outreach
- Continue to Explore new opportunities for airlift
- Continue the rollout of the 24-hour 'Bahamas Tourism Television Network'

*The PLP Successfully promoted The Bahamas to now be the 'Sports Mecca of the Caribbean'*





# FINANCIAL SERVICES

The PLP has proven its commitment to economic growth and poverty reduction. This strategy includes further developing the second pillar of our economy, the financial services sector. The Financial Services industry currently comprises of a set of institutions and instruments in an emerging market. The next PLP administration plans to provide an innovative strategy that will ensure that The Bahamas continues to regain its status as a preeminent financial services centre.

**A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE TO THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY HAS BEEN MANDATES SET BY MULTILATERAL INTERNATIONAL BODIES SUCH AS THE ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (OECD), INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF), THE FINANCIAL ACTION TASK FORCE (FATF), THE GLOBAL FORUM, THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF SECURITIES COMMISSIONS (IOSCO), THE EUROPEAN UNION, AND THE UNITED STATES THROUGH ITS FOREIGN ACCOUNT TAX COMPLIANCE ACT (FATCA). EACH OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS HAS REGULATORY AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS FOR RAISING THE STANDARD OF INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THIS PLP ADMINISTRATION HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT STRIDES IN MEETING THE STANDARD SET TO ENSURE THE BAHAMAS' FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY REMAINS RELEVANT. THIS HAS BEEN DONE MOST NOTABLY WITH:**

- The passing of the Investment Condominium Act (ICON) in August 2014. This establishes The Bahamas as the first common law jurisdiction to have created a new investment fund vehicle.
- The introduction and successful implementation of the Foreign Accounts Tax Compliance Act (FATCA). FATCA has been categorized as the most significant international policy facing the international financial services industry to date. FATCA requires foreign financial institutions to report directly to the IRS information about financial accounts held by U.S. taxpayers, or held by foreign entities in which U.S. taxpayers hold a substantial ownership interest. The Bahamas' involvement in FATCA adds value and credibility to the industry through compliance with the global expectation of transparency.
- The enactment of an Act to provide for the implementation of a Common Standard On Reporting And Due Diligence For Financial Account Information in Tax Matters And For Connected Purposes No. 37 of 2016.
- In Collaboration with The Bahamas Financial Services Board and Ministry of Education Science and Technology, the Ministry of Financial Services introduced in September 2015, a language learning pilot programme with participation from the public junior and senior high schools throughout The Bahamas.

The passing of the Investment Condominium Act (ICON) in August 2014. This establishes The Bahamas as the first common law jurisdiction to have created a new investment fund vehicle





The next PLP administration will continue to meet the needs of the financial services industry.

Building on the foundation, the next PLP administration through the implementation of a Financial Services Promotion Strategy, will secure economic growth and development for the financial services sector.

**DUE TO THE CONSTANT EVOLUTION OF THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY, THERE IS A GREATER CALL TO COMPLY WITH INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES. THE AGENDA OF THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE FOCUSED ON INCREASING COMPETITIVENESS AND INNOVATION, AND ON GAINING CREDIBILITY BY STRENGTHENING RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS. THIS WILL BE DONE THROUGH:**

- Rebranding of the Industry
- Leveraging new business through new product offerings
- Increasing competitiveness
- Introducing new financial services products

Further rebranding of The Bahamas as a full service financial centre will be crucial to the development of the industry. A key element of doing so would be raising the profile of the financial services industry of The Bahamas and collaborating with the private sector and the regulators to determine new mechanisms for differentiating The Bahamas from its competitors. The message must be that The Bahamas is a jurisdiction open for business.

Having reestablished the industry in the past 5 years, the Ministry of Financial Services will ensure that it is well-equipped and responsive to the needs and requests of the private sector. The PLP recognizes that to remain competitive in an evolving industry innovative and competitive products must be introduced. The next PLP administration will serve as an intermediary between the public and private sectors on international platforms by listening and reacting to industry input, facilitating capacity building exercises and through an overall joint promotion strategy.

The PLP will focus on new product innovation, accessing and forging relationships with new international markets that will be key to the continued rebranding of the financial services industry.

*The next PLP administration will continue to meet the needs of the financial services industry.*



*One of our country's greatest assets and competitive advantages that continues to be valued by our competitors is our stable and experienced system of democracy as a sovereign nation.*

One of our country's greatest assets and competitive advantages that continues to be valued by our competitors is our stable and experienced system of democracy as a sovereign nation. Our sovereignty affords us as a country the ability to legislate and create policy for further advancement of international business and economic development. In the next administration, the country's sovereignty will continue to be our major marketing tool used to facilitate the development of policies to suit industry needs.

The PLP recognizes that facilitating the ease of doing business is imperative as it will always be one of our competitive advantages. Increasing the ease of doing business in The Bahamas is a growing need. In the next administration, industry concerns as they relates to the ease of doing business will be assessed and addressed. Key areas of focus would be the increasing technical capacity within the Ministry to guarantee a specific level of responsiveness and the development of policies that would provide industry participants with a level of comfort. Additionally, challenges with immigration matters would be addressed in areas where applicable.

The PLP recognizes that facilitating the ease of doing business is imperative as it will always be one of our competitive advantages



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# AGRICULTURE

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) has been a stimulant for the revitalization and rejuvenation of the Agricultural sector and through its Outreach Initiative, the Associated Farmers Programme (AFP), The Agricultural Sector has received a shot-in-the-arm.

**The PLP shall support the AFP as the key to feeding The Bahamas. The AFP represents a network of farmers under the aegis of the Institute operating on clearly defined guidelines to which farmers are expected to adhere.**

In 2013, the Government of The Bahamas approved a 20-year plan for Rebuilding Bahamian Agriculture. The centerpiece of the plan was the creation of BAMSI as a means of introducing an Import Substitution Policy to address the escalating annual food imports into The Bahamas which had passed the billion-dollar mark.

The 20-year plan identified thirty-two (32) crops which can be produced in The Bahamas to the level of self-sufficiency.

## **THE PLP ESTABLISHED BAMSI ON ANDROS FOR SEVERAL REASONS:**

- about 134,000 acres of arable land
- about 289,000 acres of forests made up of Pinus Caribea

- proximity to the capital of Nassau, the main population centre which offered easy access to a market composed of residents and visitors
- basic infrastructure already in place.

## **BAMSI IS COMPRISED OF 4 UNITS:**

- BAMSI College – Teaching Agricultural and Marine Science
- Marine Farm – Highlighting the mariculture, aquaculture and hydroponics technologies
- Research Demonstration Farm – conducting research on various tropical and subtropical crops and livestock; conduct field trials on various crops.
- Outreach (Extension) Programmes – Engaging small farmers, fishermen and agribusiness in production and value added programmes to meet demand through an Import Substitution Policy

**THE PLP HAS PROVIDED THE FOUNDATION TO PUT BAHAMIAN AGRICULTURE ON A SUSTAINABLE PATH. IT IS THROUGH THE BAMSI MODEL THAT THE BAHAMAS WILL ADDRESS ITS FOOD AND NUTRITION CHALLENGES BY DEVELOPING A NEW CADRE OF TRAINED FARMERS AND FISHERMEN, AGRICULTURAL AND MARINE PROFESSIONALS. THESE PROFESSIONALS WILL TRANSFER TECHNOLOGY THROUGH THE OUTREACH (EXTENSION) PROGRAMME AND AND THE ASSOCIATED FARMERS' PROGRAMME (AFP).**



# LAND

Land is the basis of all wealth. We re-affirm our commitment to create an environment in which all Bahamians will be able to obtain adequate housing, and their own **'piece of the rock'** on which to build a dwelling-home.

**THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY IN THIS TERM HAS BEEN ABLE TO SETTLE AGE OLD LAND ISSUES ON MOORE'S ISLAND AND IN FOX HILL, NEW PROVIDENCE. THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BENCHMARK FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF PROPERTY TITLES IN OTHER ISLANDS IN THE ARCHIPELAGO AS WE CONTINUE INTO ANOTHER TERM WE WILL**

- Commence adjudication of all rights and all interests in all land as a first step in creating a land register. The PLP will establish a tribunal for this purpose, which in turn will benefit from the views of relevant professionals as well as persons with knowledge of the land in question
- Ensure that matters relating to the ownership of land are adjudicated upon swiftly
- The PLP recognizes that facilitating the ease of doing business is imperative as it will always be one of our competitive advantages. Review and amend the Quieting Titles Act to prevent the abuse of its provisions
- Ensure the continuity of the system of stamp duty exemption for first-time home buyers is administered to make this exemption

meaningful. The PLP Government will allow prospective home buyers to be pre-approved. This will eliminate the need for prospective home buyers to deposit large sums with banks in case the application is refused. This will also allow the new homeowner's deeds to be lodged for recording in the Registry of Records immediately

- Encourage competition among financial institutions by removing the cap on the amount of a mortgage that can be transferred from one institution to another without paying stamp duty

## COMMONAGE LAND

The PLP will review and where necessary amend the Laws on Commonage Land to allow for commercial and beneficial use of the land by commoners.

We will undertake comprehensive Land Reform to fully implement land registration

The PLP recognizes that facilitating the ease of doing business is imperative as it will always be one of our competitive advantages



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# EMPOWERING BAHAMIANS





We will build a deep-water harbour on Acklins, in order to establish a new defence force base and also facilitate the growth of tourism in the southern islands.

Work towards securing full, Universal Adult Literacy and Numeracy to established, international standards.

Introduce formal certification of skilled workers who possess industry-level skills.

Undertake Comprehensive Education Reform to ensure that there is at least one Trained Graduate In Every Home.

Continue to increase the investment in Education.

Introduce Universal Pre-School Education to build on existing provisions.

Ensure that the quality of education offered at the pre-school level meets set national standards



## EDUCATION

The PLP is committed to the vision outlined in the Report of The National Education Commission in a paper titled, 'A Shared Vision for Education.' We have, therefore, quoted liberally from that document in this Charter.

The PLP adopts and will endeavor its utmost to implement the vision and mission for education as expressed in 'A Shared Vision for Education' a paper prepared under the leadership of the Honourable Minister for Education, Jerome Fitzgerald.

## VISION 2030

The PLP accepts that education is fundamental to lifting and sustaining the values of our people and that in order to ensure the maximum productivity and development of every citizen it should be the right of every child to receive educational training best suited to develop his God-given strengths and talents.

Our vision, therefore, continues to be to create an educational system that is sound and competitive and develops the strength of each child, whether academic or otherwise, towards the maximum contribution that he/she is able to make to the national development of The Bahamas.

### THE PLP SHALL BE RESOLUTE IN:

- ensuring and enforcing appreciation for the fact that while the talents and strengths

of students may differ – they all must be developed to their full potential

- increasing emphasis placed on the teaching of values, ethics and morals
- providing an educational framework which shall enable all students to become productive citizens capable of caring for themselves and contributing positively to the national development process
- **ensuring that initiatives are in place so that there would be at least one trained graduate in each household**

To the extent necessary to achieve its goals, the PLP shall ensure a shift in the culture of the delivery of education in The Bahamas in each of the areas outlined below.

## TECHNOLOGY

Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) are catalysts of change. We will continue to put greater emphasis on advancing STI, STEM and Information Communication Technologies (ICTs). Over the past four and a half years more than 5 million dollars was spent on ICTs and over 3 million dollars was spent on advancing STI and STEM. We will continue in our quest to ensure that every student has access to computers and educational technologies and that schools have increased broadband width to enable digital learning and distance education.



It is our intent to implement a STI Unit that will give STI more prominence than it currently has. We will expand STI and STEM programmes to take full advantage of the benefits they afford in promoting analytical, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Coding is identified as the most important job skill of the future, therefore coding was introduced to the public schools for the first time in 2016. We will continue to expand coding to all grade levels. We will also introduce a structured robotics programme from preschool – grade 12.

We will seek the best expertise to utilize STI, STEM and ICT to propel innovation and entrepreneurship. This shall include subject offerings in non-traditional fields like digital marketing, Nano technology, ocean resource exploration and stem cell research.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology will work collaboratively with the University of The Bahamas, The Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute and other tertiary institutions in our efforts to use STI, STEM and ICT as building blocks to develop a 21st century workforce with knowledge, skills and competencies required for jobs of the future that will play a pivotal role in growing and diversifying the economy.

## PRE-SCHOOL

The PLP is committed to provide every child in The Bahamas with the opportunity to enroll in a pre-school education which provides them with a quality learning experience.

Currently, about 30 percent of children in The Bahamas attend some form of pre-schooling (Department of Statistics, 2012).

### THE PLP IS COMMITTED TO

- **Systematically reducing the proportion of students (currently estimated at 70 percent) entering primary school without pre-school experience**
- Ensure that the quality of education offered at the pre-school level meets set national standards
- Bring about free pre-school education for all children in The Bahamas through public/private partnerships
- Provide grants and subventions to pre-schools
- Create partnerships with pre-school operators which will allow for monitoring and supervision and ensuring high standards of pre-school education in The Bahamas.

## PRIMARY EDUCATION

### IN IMPLEMENTING ITS COMMITMENT TO THE PRIMARY SCHOOL POPULATION OF THE BAHAMAS, THE PLP SHALL:

- Place emphasis in primary education on the bedrock educational components of reading and numeracy skills.
- Place equal efforts on building the self esteem of each child while children are taught to live and work together.

Bring about free pre-school education for all children in The Bahamas through public/private partnerships



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### **AS A MEANS OF CARRYING OUT THIS VISION, THE PLP SHALL**

- Monitor the learning of each child throughout the primary school years in order to provide appropriate intervention
- Ensure an appropriate professional staff complement in each primary school
- Teach dispute resolution skills at an early stage

### **FURTHERMORE THE PLP SHALL DEVISE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES TO ENSURE THAT AT GRADUATION FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL EVERY CHILD:**

- is literate and numerate at or above the fifth grade level
- is grounded in the attitudes of responsible citizenship for living in a democratic society
- has acquired simple basic strategies for a healthy life-style, socialization and wholesome living
- has acquired foundational skills needed to become critical thinkers, problem solvers and reflective learners; and
- is motivated to learn and to achieve success at the secondary school level.

## **SECONDARY EDUCATION**

### **AS A PART OF CONTINUING TO PROMOTE A CULTURE WHICH RESPECTS THE STRENGTHS AND TALENTS OF EACH STUDENT THE PLP SHALL:**

- Continue to place appropriate emphasis on technology and skills development as a means of bolstering the economic growth and the development of our culture and people
- **Provide the opportunity for every student to transition from high school into higher education or, as a result of proper training, into the work force or a career academy.**
- **The PLP shall create an educational fast track whereby students who can complete or partially complete BGCSE by Grade 11 can be advanced to college level studies while they complete their high school education. This programme will be for students in academic or technical/vocational studies.**
- **Establish multiple pathways to graduation. These pathways include academic only, applied sciences, fine arts programmes and career academies.**

### **TO ENSURE THESE OBJECTIVES THE PLP SHALL FACILITATE THE:**

- **Expansion of magnet programmes and career academies to provide programmes of excellence in a wide range of areas which cater to student learning competencies and interests as well as labour market needs.** These programmes will allow for direct entry either into the labour market, advanced skills training or higher education
- Revision of the relevant curricula guides to provide students with a sufficiently diverse, rigorous and productive learning experience
- Provision of career guidance and counselling services to all students so that they are able to build on their strengths, improve their weaknesses and make appropriate career and life choices





- Expansion of the extra-curricular activities to allow for the remediation and enrichment of student achievement. Provide opportunities to reinforce and enhance learning generally and to afford students the opportunity to develop their multiple talents and abilities.

### **THE PLP IS COMMITTED TO THE INCREASE IN THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL FROM 50% TO 85% BEFORE 2030**

The PLP shall direct the policies and resources of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology in a focused effort to systematically increase the percentage of students graduating from high school from approximately 50% which it is at present, to 85% before 2030.

#### **Towards this goal the PLP has...**

- Strengthened the quality of education offered in primary schools by:
- A renewed emphasis on the basics of literacy and numeracy.
- Opening the Marjorie Davis Institute for Special Education to ensure that no student falls between the cracks but instead every student who needs extra attention receives it in a timely manner.

#### **In high school education the PLP has...**

- Standardized the high school diploma so that students are no longer subject to different and varying standards for graduation according to the school they attend.
- Proposed the development and introduction

of strengthened academic and technical and vocational divisions of high school. Several technical and vocational areas of study will be added to the curriculum. Students will be allowed to choose their area of study with guidance and in accordance with their individual strength after a basic ninth grade education.

#### **From the areas of studies offered the PLP shall create:**

- Three equally weighted pathways to graduation.

#### **This will result in graduates who...**

- Can go directly to the work force
- Can go into advanced technical/vocational studies
- Can enter academic pursuits

**The mission of the PLP to increase the percentage of our students who successfully graduate has begun and in the next term of office it will be continued.**

## **POST-SECONDARY TERTIARY EDUCATION**

**THE PLP SHALL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING. IN THIS REGARD, FUTURE EFFORTS SHALL CONTINUE TO**

A renewed emphasis on the  
basics of literacy and numeracy



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- Establish and activate a comprehensive, transparent and effective system of accreditation for all post-secondary and tertiary institutions operating in the country (in keeping with the National Accreditations and Equivalency Council Act)
- Develop appropriate mechanisms to create a stronger relationship between the courses and programmes offered to students and the needs of the local labour market
- **Continue to increase access to post-secondary and tertiary education by employing a variety of financial methods including cost reduction strategies and scholarships, grant and work-study assistance programmes**
- Increase public funding for **BTVI** and **BAMSI** to facilitate the training of a cadre of skilled workers in sufficient numbers to meet local demands
- **Ensure better preparation of students for entry into the local labour market and assist students in understanding how they can seize the economic opportunities within the local economy through the National Training Agency.**
- Introduce a system of grants and awards which will be used to incentivize the production of research to support decision-making in both the public and private sectors
- Facilitate centres for lifelong learning opportunities on every island by creating easily accessible low-cost, high interest courses covering a wide array of topics

- Establish appropriate mechanism for the credentialling of skilled workers who possess and demonstrate industry-level skills, but lack qualifications obtained as a result of formal training

### **CATERING TO THE SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS OF STUDENTS DEVELOPING THE STRENGTH AND TALENT OF EVERY CHILD TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL**

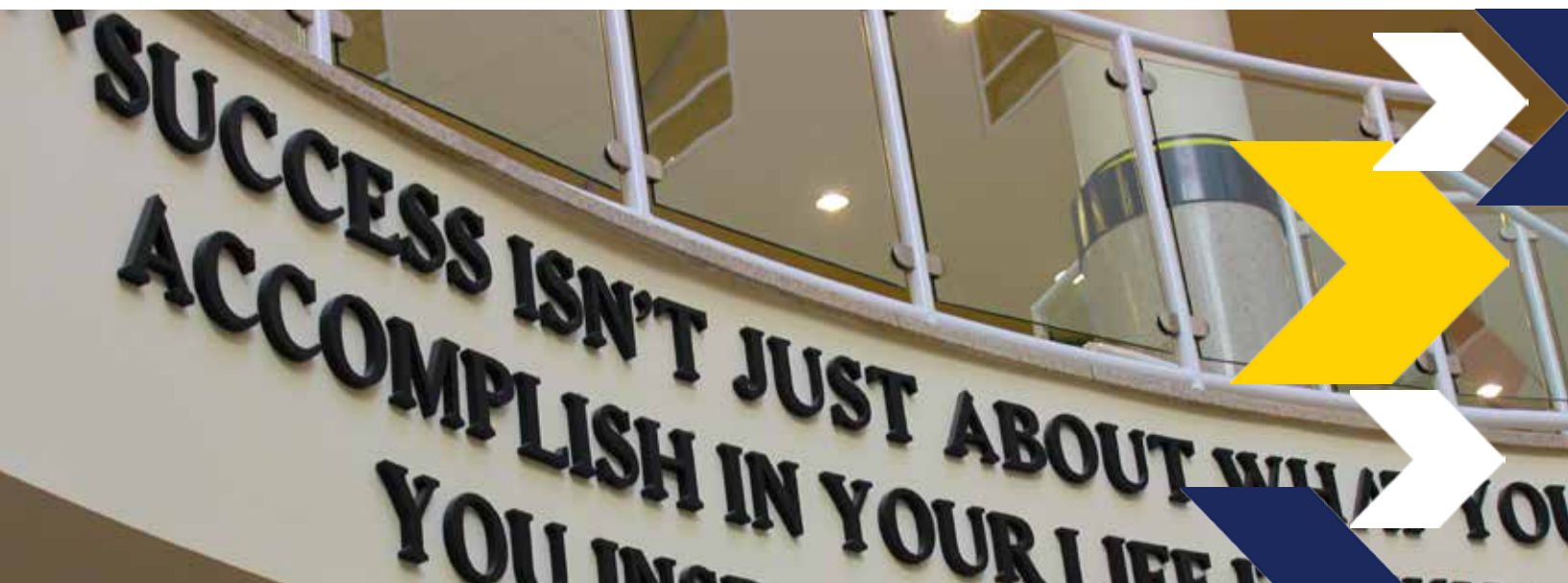
Based on the Draft Report prepared by the National Commission on Special Education (NCOSE) in 2005, about 25 percent of the entire schoolage population has some special education need.

#### **UNDER THE PLP:**

- The policy of Inclusive Education shall continue;
- There shall be stand-alone facilities to cater to the small proportion of students with extreme special learning needs.

### **THE PLP IS PLEASED TO HAVE FULFILLED ITS PROMISE TO OPEN THE MARJORIE DAVIS INSTITUTE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION (MDISE) AND PLEDGES TO CONTINUE IN ITS EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT:**

Teachers and other education professionals are trained adequately to identify special learning needs in students and address them appropriately.



A screening exercise is implemented to detect the special learning needs of students as they enter the school system. This will allow for the early identification of special learning needs and timely intervention thus allowing such students to benefit more from their scholastic experience.

The PLP shall expand the services offered at **MDISE** to cover the following areas:

- Diagnostic services designed to identify the special learning needs of students and design Individual Learning Programmes to facilitate their remediation
- Instructional intervention which provides intensive, short-term instruction to students with mild to moderate special learning needs
- Public awareness, education and training campaign to impart the appropriate knowledge, skills and strategies to a wide range of persons (including teachers, family members, youth workers, caregivers, employers and members of the general public). Such campaigns will equip these various groups in offering suitable support to students with special learning needs.
- Research in order to gain a better understanding of the special needs experienced by children living in The Bahamas and to assess the effects of the various intervention strategies used
- Required resources are provided to support special education at mainstream and special schools as well as the **MDISE**
- Opportunities are made available for skills training at stand-alone special education facilities for students with extreme learning needs

## ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF EDUCATIONAL DELIVERY

**SOME OF THE INDIVIDUALS AND/OR GROUPS FOR WHOM EDUCATION WILL BE DELIVERED IN AN ALTERNATIVE FORM INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED, TO THE FOLLOWING**

- Individuals located in rural and remote locations
- Students who, for a variety of reasons such as profound special learning needs and behavioural challenges, have demonstrated an inability to cope with mainstream schooling
- Individuals who are suffering from health conditions which have confined them to home or a medical facility for extended periods of time
- Children of school age whose parents, for a variety of reasons including a desire to increase familial ties exert greater control over the educational content received, wish to home-school them
- Incarcerated persons

The PLP accepts that of necessity, the nature of the delivery will differ and educational providers will have to embrace the wide range of traditional and modern methods of content delivery from face-to-face instruction to other methods employing the Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

Regardless of the method of delivery, the PLP is committed to ensuring that such programmes

There shall be stand-alone facilities to cater to the small proportion of students with extreme special learning needs





will be subject to the accreditation procedures and clearly defined national standards.

Finally, the Ministry of Education led by the PLP Government will work in conjunction with local media houses to provide programming which directly or indirectly supports the curricula generally and values education specifically.

## LEARNING FOR ALL

**The PLP shall facilitate centres for lifelong learning on every island.**

The PLP recognizes the need for Bahamians of all ages to be provided opportunities for learning throughout their lifetime.

In the coming term of office, the PLP shall create easily accessible high interest courses covering a wide range of subject areas for adult continuing education and training.

**These lifelong learning opportunities will facilitate the enforcement or expansion of skill sets for use in the labour market or increase personal knowledge or skills. Wherever it is deemed to be required, Reading Enhancement shall be an integral component of this programme.**

## THE RISE PROGRAMME

Through the RISE Programme the PLP is pleased to have introduced a well-coordinated integrated approach in its efforts to satisfy the pre-conditions of learning, as a means of enabling learning for every child.

Education is the key to empowerment. The PLP pledges its continued commitment to the full development of the strengths and talents of every child in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

## STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGING PARENTS, SCHOOL BOARDS AND OTHER EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

The education system is best when multiple stakeholders are engaged. The school is most effective when it has the support of the family and community and both of those institutions are stronger when they support the school.

The PLP shall design suitable policies and practices to encourage meaningful and consistent involvement of parents in the formal education process and to ensure collaboration with the community via unions, churches and other education-oriented NGO's.

A PLP government accepts that extending the school day and/or the school year can provide for increased educational opportunities for students.





**The PLP shall empower School Boards by enabling them to organize supplemental after school programmes and initiatives to assist in student development and in building school spirit and community support. The PLP shall ensure that Schools Boards are intentional in engaging persons from the community as far as is possible and beneficial in these programmes.**

**The efforts of the Board, along with the support of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), should extend to bringing about the increased involvement of parents in the work of the school and of their children.**

## ENHANCING SKILLS OF TEACHERS

### THE PLP SHALL UNDERTAKE THE FOLLOWING TO PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

- Commit to providing annual professional development activities for all teachers;
- Employ a variety of strategies, including the Future Teachers of The Bahamas programme and student grants, to attract some of the better students to work in the education sector;
- Work more closely with The University of The Bahamas and other local and regional institutions that provide pre-service teacher training to ensure that student teachers are exposed to a rigorous and relevant curriculum
- Increase significantly the professional development activities offered by creating a Professional Development Section capable of offering a wide array of high quality, relevant professional development activities using multiple modalities
- Improve the quality of mentoring and coaching provided for teachers, particularly novice teachers and those in need of additional guidance and support
- Re-organize the Curriculum Division so that the assignment of curriculum officers will best support the supervision and mentoring of teachers. Facilitate and support the creation and development of professional communities among teachers and other educational personnel to encourage continued learning and the sharing of ideas and best practices
- Provide a variety of opportunities for the mobility of educational professionals within the system

Improve the quality of mentoring and coaching provided for teachers, particularly novice teachers and those in need of additional guidance and support



# A TRAINED GRADUATE IN EVERY HOUSEHOLD BEFORE 2030

**THE PLP BELIEVES THAT EDUCATION IS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE RISE FROM POVERTY. HENCE OUR COMMITMENT TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS AT LEAST ONE TRAINED GRADUATE IN EACH HOUSEHOLD BEFORE THE YEAR 2030. TO BRING THIS ABOUT THE PLP HAS IN THE PAST 5 YEARS**

- Re-emphasized the teaching of basics in primary school
- Started the Marjorie Davis Institute For Special Education to ensure that students who need special attention receive it in a timely manner.
- Proposed the establishment of multiple pathways to graduation.
- Standardized the high school diploma so that students are no longer subject to different standards for graduation according to the school they attend.
- Proposed the certification for qualified skilled workers.

- Supported and will increase the opportunity for life-long learning which can lead to certification.
- Introduced the RISE programme to ensure the health and social components required for education are in place, and families that need systematic nurturing can be identified and assisted.

**The PLP shall reduce poverty through education and training and the continued implementation of the RISE programme.**

- Establish a 'Creative Capital Fund', to partner with private sector companies to invest in start-ups in the creative industries.
- Establish a network of 'Business Development Centres', specifically focused on developing creative industry businesses and clusters, to cover training and skills development, business planning, investment financing, mentoring, networking and marketing.
- Upgrade key Heritage Sites such that they can be run on a full commercial basis, while retaining public ownership.

## CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

In our '**Charter For Governance 2012**', we committed to ensuring that 'Bahamian culture becomes a major factor in economic development...'



As a Key Tool for Development, Culture will play an active and critical role across a number of sectors: The Economy (Creative Industries), Education, Health & Wellness, Youth Development, Tourism, Community Revitalization, and the Rehabilitation of Offenders.

Therefore we now propose to substantially build and develop the cultural infrastructure, to ensure that we have in place the institutions and structures which will support our development for generations to come.

#### **DURING THE NEXT PLP ADMINISTRATION, WE WILL**

- **Create a new 'Ministry of Culture & Tourism', to ensure that Bahamian Culture will be a key driver in the growth of our tourism industry, and to expand the degree to which Bahamian Culture is promoted internationally.**
- Establish a new 'Arts, Culture & Technology Council', responsible for the strategic development and implementation of culturally-related policies.
- **Launch a 'National School for the Creative & Performing Arts', to offer full-time training to those who wish to pursue a professional career in the Arts. The school should seek world-class accreditation, and ultimately aim to attract full fee-paying students from throughout the Western Hemisphere.**
- Expand the current provision of creative and performing arts activities offered after-school, to a National 'After-School Creative

Arts Programme'. These programmes will provide a feeder for the National Arts Festival, but principally will support and strengthen the core school curriculum, and provide a safe space for children after school.

- **Build a new 'National Centre for the Creative & Performing Arts',** which will act as a major catalyst for regeneration in Downtown Nassau. As well as offering main-stage productions by the National Companies, the Centre will host world-class touring companies, provide professional facilities for productions originating at other spaces (eg. Dundas Centre for the Performing Arts, University of The Bahamas Theater), as well as offer concert & studio spaces, a café and restaurant, and a visual arts space. It is envisioned that the complex will house both the proposed School and Performing Arts Centre, and will be of high architectural merit, such that it can serve as a cultural attraction in itself. We use as a model the Lincoln Centre in New York, and share their approach that "the arts are not for the privileged few, but for the many." This development will offer a significant number of direct and indirect employment opportunities.
- Build on existing organizations to create a full-time, professional National Performing Companies in Dance, Music and Drama, responsible for developing a National Repertoire and with a remit to act as living billboards, to tour nationally and internationally. These companies will be resident at the new 'National Centre for the Creative & Performing Arts'

Establish a new 'Arts, Culture & Technology Council', responsible for the strategic development and implementation of culturally-related policies



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- Establish a 'Creative Capital Fund', to partner with private sector companies to invest in start-ups in the creative industries.
- Establish a network of 'Business Development Centres', specifically focused on developing creative industry businesses and clusters, to cover training and skills development, business planning, investment financing, mentoring, networking and marketing.
- **Upgrade key Heritage Sites such that they can be run on a full commercial basis, while retaining public ownership.**
- Create more cultural attractions for visitors.
- Redevelop the Shirley Street site of the current National Performing Arts Centre into a multi-media park, to host a number of Radio, TV, video, film, music, technology and other Creative Industry production units.
- Invest in Bahamian media content for ZNS Radio & Television, to boost the local media sector and market, such that the content can be licensed regionally and internationally. This will support the development of a market in creative industries media products, building especially on the talent and skills of graduates from the School of Creative and Performing Arts.
- **Launch a comprehensive 'Arts Rehabilitation Programme' at the Bahamas Department of Corrections, to support Offenders in turning away from criminal activity and help their positive and productive re-introduction into society.**

- **Launch a 'Standing Forum for The Bahamian Diaspora'. Bahamians everywhere would be invited to come home annually, to share their talents, skills, experience, networks and financial muscle to help in our national development.**

## LABOUR

**THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY IS THE ONLY PARTY WITH A PROVEN TRACK RECORD OF DEMONSTRATING IN A TANGIBLE WAY ITS CARE FOR THE WORKERS OF THIS COUNTRY AND BALANCING THIS WITH THE REASONABLE NEEDS OF ITS SOCIAL PARTNERS. A CORE VALUE OF THE PLP CONTINUES TO BE THE NEED TO RESPECT THE ROLE OF LABOUR IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. IN PURSUANCE OF THIS BASIC VALUE THE PLP GOVERNMENT HAS ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING:**

- **Formally renaming Labour Day and establishing The Sir Randol Fawkes Labour Day on the first Friday in June so as to honour the tremendous contributions of Sir Randol Fawkes in the labour movement in The Bahamas**
- **Increasing the National Minimum Wage as follows:**
  - if you are paid by the week the wages increased from \$150.00 to \$210.00,
  - if you are paid by the day the wage increased from \$30.00 to \$42.00 and
  - if you are paid by the hour the wage increased from \$4.00 to \$5.25





- **Amending the Industrial Relations Act to**

- cause an employer's refusal to treat and enter into negotiations to form the basis for a trade dispute as well as a criminal offence,
  - repeal the right of an employer to apply for the revocation of a union's recognition; and
  - transfer the obligation to register collective bargaining agreements from the Industrial Tribunal to the Registrar of Trade Unions.
- Further amending the Industrial Relations Act to validate all trade unions which were not properly registered in 1970 (prior to the enactment of the Industrial Relations) in particular the BHCAWU
  - Amending the Health & Safety At Work Act to expand the powers and responsibilities of Health Inspectors and increase the penalties and fines for violators of the Act
  - Enactment of the National Tripartite Council Act thereby statutorily institutionalizing the provisions of ILO Convention 198 regarding Social Dialogue
  - Decentralization of the Department of Labour with the establishment of Sub Offices on Robinson Road and Carmichael Road allowing easier access to services by residents in the respective areas
  - Emphasis has been placed on creating and maintaining an open-door policy with Social partners so as to give access to the Minister and his Senior Advisors

- Ensuring the timely response to concerns from the various Units of the Ministry.
- Enactment and administration of National Tripartite Legislation
- Relocation of the Department of Labour's Head Office to the City Corporate Centre
- Increase educational and training opportunities for staff of the Department of Labour
- Implementation of The Government's Programmes/Initiatives to respond to the increased levels of unemployment (Citizen Security & Justice Employability Component, National Empowerment Employment Programme and National Training Agency)
- Appointment of Former Trade Union Leaders as Government Negotiators
- Negotiation and Registration of Collective Bargaining Agreement within the Public Sector
- Increased efficiencies in services to the general public by the Department of Labour (i.e. Conciliation Services, Public Employment Services, Labour Certificates and Inspection Services)
- Amending the Industrial Relations Act and Employment Act

**UNDER A PLP ADMINISTRATION PRIORITY IS BEING GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING:**

- Establishment of a Department of Labour Sub Office in Eastern New Providence to give residents in the surrounding communities better access to services (proposed site is Bernard Road).

Increase educational and training opportunities for staff of the Department of Labour



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- Establishment of a Department of Labour Office in Bimini
- Imminent Official Opening of the Carmichael Road Sub Office

**IN FURTHERANCE OF THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF THE PLP TO MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER BAHAMIANS, A MINISTRY OF LABOUR IN A RE-ELECTED PLP GOVERNMENT, INTENDS TO:**

- Continue to build on the strong foundation built during this five year term while working to strengthen relationships in the working environment for workers with their employers placing particular emphasis on:

Reduction in the levels of unemployment with special emphasis on reducing the unemployment among the youth.

Further Decentralization of the Department of Labour with the establishment of Sub Offices in Eight Mile Rock and Inagua

Implementation of National Productivity Legislation.

Enactment of a National Apprenticeship Programme

Expansion of the Legal Unit

**Your PLP Government has worked diligently to correct deficiencies and build the foundation for fulfilling its 2030 Labour agenda and commits to continue to work during a second term, with diligence towards moving further towards the completion of this agenda.**

## SPORTS

Whether at a recreational or professional level, sports provide a positive outlet for our people. Sports promote discipline, precision of skills, teamwork, coordination, enjoyment and help people to stay fit. The PLP recognizes our nation's rich legacy in sports, the potential of our youth and the importance of preserving and expanding our athletes in the country.

The PLP remains committed to the Vision 2030 as expressed in our Charter for Governance 2012: "Every Bahamian should have access to a properly equipped sports facility. There must also be a national sports event at which athletes from all of the islands of The Bahamas can showcase their skills."

During the past 5 years the PLP worked tirelessly to fulfill its Sports Vision for the benefit and enjoyment of the Bahamian people

**DURING THIS TERM THE PLP HAS:**

- Launched The Bahamas 'Sports in Paradise' Brand
- Launched a National Sports Academy
- Created 3 new stadiums designed by young Bahamian architects, engineers and contractors
- Constructed a one of a kind, certified FIFA National Beach Soccer Arena at the foot of the Sydney Poitier Bridge



- Commenced construction of the Andre Rodgers National Baseball Stadium which will be completed by the end of 2017
- Commenced construction of a state of the art National Sports Academy on Moore's Island which will be completed by September 2017
- Implemented a National Youth Policy created by young people
- Recognized over 600 young people for their respective achievements
- Increased investments in the Governor General's Youth Award (GGYA) Programme
- Created Enterprise Business Opportunity (CEBO) doubled its investment in youth and sports enterprise
- The PLP will further develop The Bahamas 'Sports in Paradise' Brand through global invitationals in the areas of Band Competitions, Cheer and Spirit competitions at both the collegiate and high school levels.
- Over our next term of office the PLP shall continue to commit resources and equal passion to youth development through sports and to the development of a Sports Agenda for the continued enjoyment of the Bahamian people.
- The PLP Government will provide funding to programmes for differently-abled people to ensure the participation of the teams in regional and international competitions.
- Presently track facilities are being built on Moore's Island, Abaco and Grand Bahama and the PLP remain committed to the development of a national sporting facility programme to reflect the fact that our nation is an archipelago. While our national stadium is located on New Providence, we recognize that the entire Bahamas should be included in our overall sports development plan. Particular locations throughout the Family Islands will be selected to develop national sporting venues for national and international events.
- The PLP shall ensure scholarships for Family Island students with potential in all areas of sports to attend schools in New Providence that offer training in their areas of potential.

#### **ADDITIONALLY, THE PLP ADVANCED SPORTS TOURISM:**

- The PLP will continue to promote Sports Tourism as a marketing tool to promote the country while also focusing on developing Sports Tourism globally as a revenue generator for the country. The ongoing evidence of such initiatives can be seen in the hosting of the IAAF World Relays, the Carifta Games, the Commonwealth Youth Games and the sponsorship of The Battle for Atlantis, and the Popeyes Bowl among others.
- The addition of Global Golf comes at a most opportune time in the development of The Bahamas Sports in Paradise brand.

Created Enterprise Business Opportunity (CEBO) doubled its investment in youth and sports enterprise



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- The country has never had a more dynamic development in sports than in the past 5 years. The PLP has proven a commitment to a Sports Agenda for all.

## YOUTH

The Progressive Liberal Party is committed to giving priority to the promotion and development of youth and youth policies and initiatives, so that our youth are empowered to contribute to the growth and development of our nation. The PLP recognizes and appreciates the important role that young people play and potential contribution to our country's economic development and innovation through their unique vision, fresh ideas and high levels of energy. Young people are therefore a large resource for development in the community.

### **THE 'KNOW YOUR BAHAMAS' NATIONAL YOUTH SUMMER PROGRAMME IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

A PLP Government shall launch the 'Know Your Bahamas' Youth Summer Programme in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and will commission a book that will highlight things every Bahamian should know about The Bahamas. This book will be used in the pilot programme of the Youth Summer Programme. This initiative will be comprised of a voluntary summer programme for independent and public school students of all ages, with the primary focus of immersing students in a one-week civic education programme. The ultimate goal of the programme will be to help students build character and develop an understanding of the rights and duties of citizenship. Understanding the constitution, Governance in The Bahamas will also be a focus of the programme.

### **PROVIDING SUBSIDIES TO YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS**

Through the National Youth Council, the PLP will ensure the accreditation and empowerment of all youth organizations and youth workers. Also, the PLP will establish a more meaningful public private relationship with youth organizations. **The PLP will provide subsidies to youth organizations in proportion to membership enrollment.**

### **THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL**

A National Youth Council will be established to act as the representative body for voluntary youth organizations. Council members will use their collective experiences to act on issues that impact young people. The Council will seek to ensure that all young people are empowered to develop the skills and confidence to fully participate as active citizens in an inclusive society.

The Council will establish a National Youth Development Endowment Fund for the purpose of facilitating the creation of youth centers throughout the country, with the ultimate goal of ensuring our youth remain positively engaged. The National Youth Development Endowment Fund will be managed by a Governing Board of Trustees.

### **THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORK**

The PLP Government will support the professionalization of youth development work through an established partnership with the University of The Bahamas.

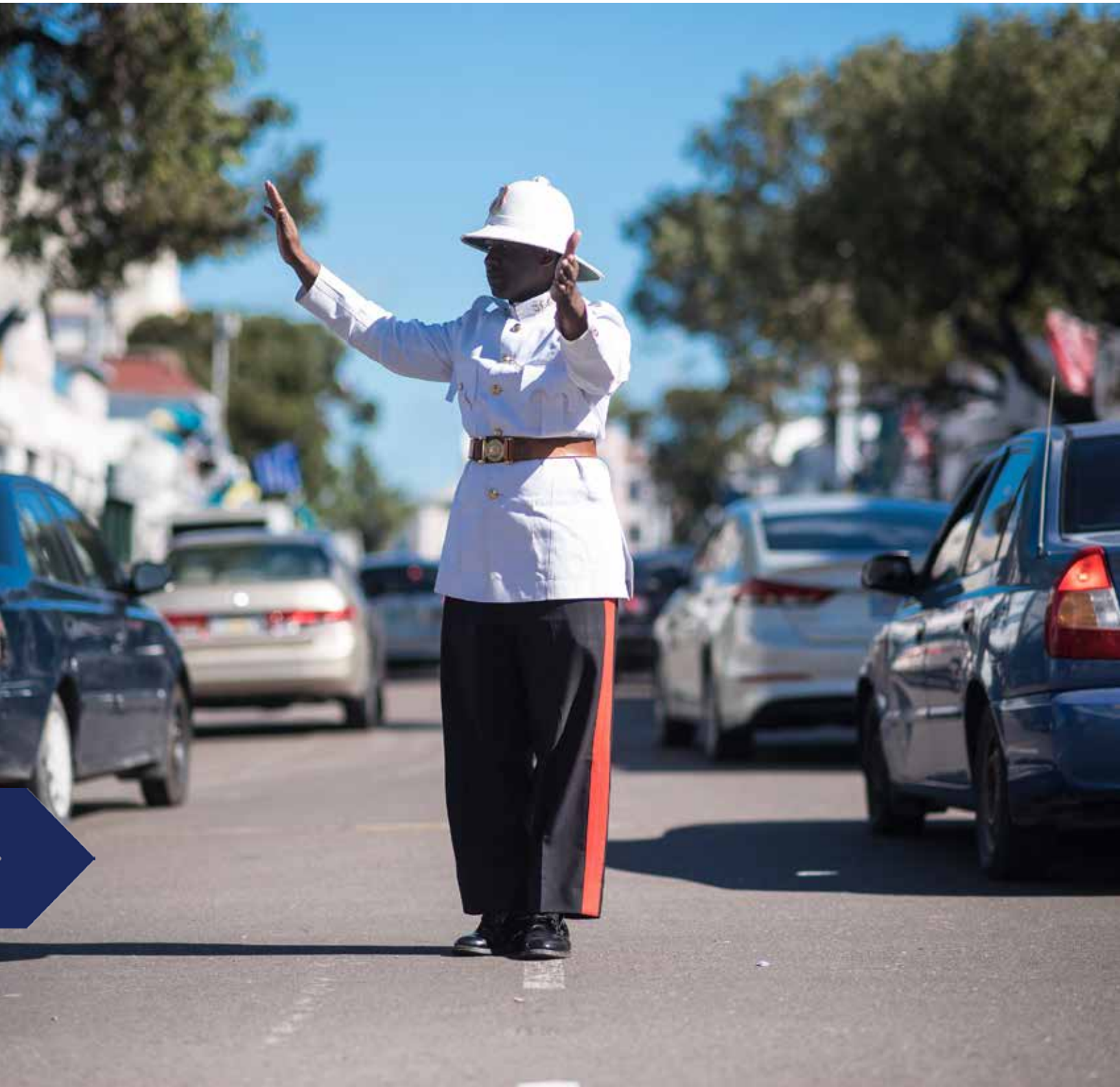
The PLP Government will:

- Build the competencies of those who work with youth.
- Support regional cooperation and partnership in the professionalization of youth work.





# PROTECTING OUR CITIZENS



## NATIONAL SECURITY

In this past term in office, the PLP has introduced sustainable measures to protect and secure our borders, reduce crime and rehabilitate criminal offenders.

## PROTECTING AND SECURING OUR BORDERS

Before coming to office, the PLP heard the cries of our fishermen and saw the destruction of our fishing grounds by illegal foreign poachers.

**The largest single investment in the Royal Bahamas Defence Force of over 232 million dollars was made in response to the need to protect our borders generally against crime, and allow Bahamian fisherman to exercise their God-given right to the waters of The Bahamas.**

Initiate training in digital transcription for students at the Salvation Army's Erin H. Gilmour School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. This will increase efficiency in the Magistrates Court, and give differently-abled students a chance for training and employment.

This investment in the Royal Bahamas Defence Force has modernized and helped to decentralize the operations of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force allowing for the greater protection and security of our islands.

**For the first time, by the use of the Rho-Rho boat (landing craft, MV Lawrence Major), there is the means of responding effectively to the needs of Bahamians in our Family of Islands especially those affected by hurricanes or other natural emergencies.**

**The PLP has created the first mobile city during this term in office. This series of mobile units includes a mini-hospital and other life-saving and survival facilities. By means of this mobile city, the Royal Bahamas Defence Force is able to provide a quick response in times of emergency.**

**Your caring PLP Government shall ensure that the operation of these vessels and facilities that have been commissioned, will continue to protect and respond to our people while securing our borders and marine resources for the economic benefit of our people.**

Now that we have recently put in place legislation specifically targeting gangs, and the police force has been restructured to infiltrate and dismantle criminal gangs, we will continue to implement our plan against gang violence and related crimes.



## FIGHTING CRIME

Over this term the PLP has introduced social and educational initiatives which shall continue to eliminate many of the root causes of underachievement, deviant behavior and social maladjustment which have been identified as forerunners to anti-social and criminal activity.

**The PLP has commenced the establishment of the Star Academy which is geared towards reducing juvenile delinquency and changing the attitudes and behavior of “at risk” youth.**

Over several years, a culture of social deviance among a small group of our youth has led to a multiplicity of gangs and violence which has inflicted immeasurable pain and fear in our society.

Guns are the weapon of choice for much of the criminal gang activity and capital crime generally in our society. The PLP accepts that a significant element of the war on crime therefore must be the fight against the importation of guns into our country.

**Consequently, over the past 5 years, the PLP embarked upon a focused investment of over 232 million dollars in the protection and safeguarding of our borders. Having achieved this measure the PLP is formalizing the efforts of the National Intelligence Agency, a quasi-autonomous body whose mandate is to collaborate and coordinate with all other existing law enforcement agencies and our international partners as a means of ensuring that information and intelligence is obtained, shared, analyzed and acted upon in a deliberate way to neutralize any and all threats against citizens, visitors and the state.**

The main focus of this agency is to be centered on international and domestic crime, for example, acts of terrorism, drug trafficking, firearm trafficking and human trafficking.

### THE AGENCY SHALL BE FORMALIZED BY:

- widespread dialogue
- introduction of legislation
- providing requisite human resources
- providing requisite physical resources

As a result of the focused investment in the fight against crime, major crime is down by 50% since 2012. Over 2,000 illegal firearms and over 41,000 rounds of ammunition have been taken off our streets during this term in office. There is a heightened presence of Police in all of the hotspots in Nassau. But the PLP recognizes that there remains a need to further reduce crime and to recover firearms brought into The Bahamas illegally while we neutralize the illegal importation of firearms within our islands.

A major and immediate role of the National Intelligence Agency is to work in tandem with the Royal Bahamas Defence Force and Customs Enforcement and Marine Unit to employ the use of the nine new vessels of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force to reduce the importation of guns at our borders.

**The National Intelligence Agency along with the present increased capacity of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force represent the first significant deliberate approach to address the importation of guns into The Bahamas.**

The PLP accepts that a significant element of the war on crime therefore must be the fight against the importation of guns into our country





## GANGS ON OUR STREETS

A significant percentage of the shootings and homicides in The Bahamas are a direct result of revenge and retaliatory killings associated with gangs and gang violence.

The PLP has passed gang legislation. The Royal Bahamas Police Force has formed a Gang Unit to carry out the mandate of this Legislation.

**Through the Gang Unit the resources of the Royal Bahamas Police Force are brought to bear in the fight against gangs in The Bahamas. In particular, this Unit gather the ground intelligence that will yield timely information and prevent the expansion of gangs among our youth.**

Having strengthened the defence of our borders by acquiring nine more vessels under the 'Sandy Bottom' programme, we are able to increase protection against the importation of guns and illegal drugs which are the source and the means of so much criminal activity.

## SECURING A CERTIFIED FORENSIC LABORATORY

Plans have been completed for a scientifically specialized forensic laboratory with areas including toxicology, ballistics and testing. This was foreshadowed in our Charter of Governance 2012.

**THE PLP SHALL INVEST IN THE COMPLETION OF THIS LABRATORY AS A MEANS OF:**

- saving money
- saving time
- ensuring evidence for trial

The PLP has proven its commitment to the fight against crime which has kept our borders and waters safe and which has reduced serious crime to half the level it was in 2012.

With nine newly acquired Defence Force vessels and a functioning National Intelligence Agency the PLP shall launch a sustained and unyielding border control to prevent any form of trafficking in The Bahamas and particularly the importation of guns into The Bahamas.





## PRISON REFORM

The PLP recognizes that every effort must be made wherever possible to lift up those among us especially our youth, who fall into criminal activity.

Every effort must be made to reach, and where possible, reform and rehabilitate the inmates of our prison system, who will eventually return to society.

Since 2012 there has been much improvement to the facilities and the environment at the Prison.

Further, the PLP introduced new legislation which not only changed the name of the Prison to The Bahamas Department of Correctional Services, but served as a catalyst for the move from a penal institution to one which emphasizes rehabilitation. The facility is now driven by the most progressive practices on the rehabilitation and re-integration of offenders.

With emphasis on ensuring that the punishment suits the crime, the PLP has obtained a 50 million dollar loan from the Inter-American Development Bank. These funds shall be invested to roll out a new probation and parole programme to ensure that in all cases persons are not incarcerated where there is not a need for incarceration.

The PLP introduced new legislation which not only changed the name of the Prison to The Bahamas Department of Correctional Services, but served as a catalyst for the move from a penal institution to one which emphasizes rehabilitation.

## THE PLP SHALL ESTABLISH A DRUG TREATMENT COURT TO ENSURE THAT:

- persons with drug addiction are directed to treatment, and
- prevention measures are employed in respect to first time users/offenders charged with possession of small amounts of illegal drugs.

## A JUVENILE REFORM SYSTEM

In the next term, the PLP shall establish a Juvenile System and Rehabilitation Facility to ensure that juvenile offenders charged with serious crime will be separated from other juvenile offenders and from adult criminals.

The PLP shall encourage a justice system which is tough on crime while accepting that every criminal deserves a chance for reform.

The PLP shall encourage a justice system which is tough on crime while accepting that every criminal deserves a chance for reform



# CARING FOR OUR PEOPLE



# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

This PLP Administration has redesigned and implemented comprehensive reforms as the foundation for improved delivery of healthcare in the future.

The introduction of the first phase of National Health Insurance and its preparation has been a celebrated achievement of this administration.

In preparation for National Health Insurance, this administration performed upgrades to hospitals and clinics throughout the country.

## **THE NEXT PLP ADMINISTRATION WILL FOCUS ON EFFICIENTLY INTEGRATING THE PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY LEVELS OF HEALTHCARE THROUGH THE CONTINUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NHI**

**The rollout of Phase 2: Enrolment.** During this phase, Bahamians will select their Primary Care physician (doctor), which includes family medicine practitioners, general practitioners, internists, OB-GYN (obstetricians/gynecologists), and pediatricians. Primary Care will help 100% of our population. Primary Care is a necessity for all Bahamians. This will assist with early detection and treatment of illnesses before they reach a catastrophic stage.

Upgrades to health infrastructure will be a constant exercise as healthcare evolves.

Development of Family Island Healthcare Services to make them NHI compliant

- Upgrades/expansions to family island clinics/mini hospitals will continue.

- Provide new equipment for Family Island clinics/mini hospitals
- Increase the capacity of the medical care on the Family Island by transferring more Doctors and Nurses.

## **REDESIGNING A STATE-OF-THE-ART RAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL IN GRAND BAHAMA**

- A state-of-the art Rand Memorial Hospital will be redesigned and constructed to facilitate the needs of the people in Grand Bahama.

## **PERFORMING UPGRADES TO THE PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL (PMH)**

- Redesigning the chest ward (infectious diseases) of PMH
- Designing and constructing a new maternity ward (PMH)
- Major technological upgrades of PMH
- Improvements to emergency services
- Improvements in the supply chain management
- Further training for medical practitioners

## **FAMILY ISLAND DEVELOPMENT**

- Provide the infrastructure for diagnostics, day surgeries and other out-patient services in the Family Islands.
- Securing resident doctors and nurses on every island of the Commonwealth

## **RECRUITMENT OF QUALIFIED HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONERS**

There is a growing need for more Bahamian healthcare practitioners. The next administration shall focus on a major recruitment exercise. This exercise would entail a joint venture between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the National Training Agency to develop a strategy for recruiting healthcare providers at all levels, inclusive of providing incentives for education.

Upgrades to health infrastructure will be a constant exercise as healthcare evolves



Major contributors to the country's mortality rate have included high rates of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and hypertension. A healthy diet, physical activity and overall positive lifestyle changes are critical to prevention of illnesses.

**With the introduction and implementation of NHI, it becomes important to ensure that health and wellness is promoted along with the preventative care phase. Investment in our population's health will be a key priority of the next administration.**

During the rollout of NHI, educational initiatives promoting healthy lifestyles focused on physical activity and proper dietary practices will be introduced. Building physical activity into daily routines will be crucial to the country's fight against health challenges. Physical activity can

improve the state of diabetes, blood pressure and heart health and other non-communicable diseases.

### **HEALTHY LUNCH PROGRAMME**

A healthy lunch programme will be introduced in schools ensuring that children receive nutritious balanced meals. HEALTH AND WELLNESS IS A MINDSET. Promoting healthy lifestyles inclusive of diet plans within the schools would provide the requisite foundation for a healthy society in the future.

### **MANAGING STRESS**

Programmes aimed at assisting citizens with coping with stress, socializing, physical activity and healthy eating will be introduced.

Avoiding unhealthy practices such as smoking, alcohol abuse and poor food choices will also be a focus of the stress management programme.

With the introduction and implementation of NHI, it becomes important to ensure that health and wellness is promoted along with the preventative care phase. Investment in our population's health will be a key priority of the next administration.





# SOCIAL SERVICES

**Vision 2030:** To see a country where all citizens are economically empowered to provide for themselves and their families and have equal opportunity to access services that will enhance the basic quality of life for all.

The Progressive Liberal Party Government has succeeded in taking the provision of Social Services in a new direction and putting care and compassion into service while giving a sense of dignity to those who have fallen on hard times and find it necessary to seek assistance.

The PLP has sought to be faithful in the delivery of its mandate for Social Services during the past five years and has been responsive to the needs of the disadvantaged, while implementing significant new programmes and improving substantially on efficiency and timely delivery of service.

**Implementation of the R.I.S.E. (Renewing, Inspiring, Sustaining, Empowering) Programme allows the root causes of poverty to be addressed while paving the way towards poverty alleviation and/or reduction through a number of measures**

R.I.S.E. is a conditional cash transfer programme for which participants are required to meet health and educational conditions in order to qualify.

Through R.I.S.E the Department of Social Services has been able to give a cash grant to families in need by issuing R.I.S.E. Pre-Paid Cards

In addition to providing cash support, R.I.S.E. interfaces with the Ministry of Education in an effort to help school-aged children succeed in the classroom and with the Ministry of Health so as to assist with improving the health status of mothers and infants.

- R.I.S.E. is a programme which is designed to break the poverty cycle
- R.I.S.E. improves service delivery to beneficiaries
- R.I.S.E. benefits at-risk families. Families in the following categories have benefitted from the R.I.S.E. programme:
  - Children from birth to eighteen years
  - Pregnant women
  - Adults nineteen to fifty-nine years
  - Persons with disabilities
  - The elderly (sixty years and older)
- Persons in the R.I.S.E. Programme automatically qualify for the following additional assistance:
  - Medical Card to be used at public hospitals and clinics
  - The National School Lunch Programme for children enrolled in school
  - Burial Assistance
  - Rent Assistance

R.I.S.E. is a programme which is designed to break the poverty cycle



The re-alignment of Urban Renewal has been a success story which is difficult to parallel. An Urban Renewal Unit has been established to resume the pivotal role of the provision of Social Service assistance and care programmes as part of Urban Renewal 2.0

**The PLP Government will:**

- Continue the programme to regularize workers on unemployment assistance
- Provide on-going opportunities for public education on social legislation and programmes
- Continue building partnerships with NGO's
- Continue focusing on and guaranteeing the rights of persons with disabilities

**THE PLP, DURING ITS NEXT TERM OF GOVERNMENT, REMAINS COMMITTED TO ALLEVIATING THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND MANY OF OUR SENIOR CITIZENS:**

**Construction of a State-of-the-Art Facility for Persons with Disabilities:** In its next term, the PLP Government will ensure the construction of a modern, state-of-the-art, purpose-built, government facility on Gladstone Road to provide safe and a supportive environment for post-school aged persons with developmental disorders. This facility will increase the independence and quality of life for disabled persons in a safe and healthy environment.

- The construction of this facility will meet the needs of a section of the community and

their families, which have to date, been underserved after graduation from their respective educational institutions.

**The Facility**

- Will provide a quality based environment which embraces several core values, which include treating every person with dignity and respect; and the recognition of each individual's strength and ability, to enable all persons to reach their maximum potential as contributing and valued members of society.
- Will provide opportunities for further training and development, social work and work-related skills for the disabled community
- Will provide day-care for those young adults and training to aid in job placement

**THE PLP RECOGNIZES THAT THE TIME HAS COME TO ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE FACILITIES ARE IN PLACE FOR OUR SENIOR CITIZENS WHO CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED IN THEIR HOMES AND WILL:**

- Provide additional housing accommodation for senior citizens
- Continue to work in conjunction with Urban Renewal to provide appropriate activities and training for seniors

The PLP Government has remained true to its basic philosophy by proving that it is committed to uplifting our people while maintaining dignity.



The mandate in the 2012 Charter has been substantially fulfilled with the foundation laid for progress during the next five years. During the next term the PLP as your Government, will continue to care and protect.

- Community Policing Award in 2003, 2004 and 2005, awarded by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Urban Renewal re-established as Urban Renewal 2.0 was reinstated in 2012 by the PLP and has continued to flourish. There are currently 28 successful Urban Renewal Centres operating throughout The Bahamas which continue to have a positive effect on urban communities.

During this period, hundreds of homes have been restored through the Small Homes Repair Programme and employment provided for contractors, tradespersons and skilled individuals.

Under this PLP administration, the Urban Renewal Marching Band was extended to a number of new communities throughout New Providence. The Urban Renewal Marching Band has had a transforming impact on its youth participants. There has been increased international exposure for the Band. Notably, the participation in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Washington, DC where the 103-member Urban Renewal Music Masters Youth Band received the Best in Parade Award defeating over 100 other units.

The involvement in the Marching Band initiative has opened a world of possibilities for these young persons and their families.

Urban Renewal 2.0 has been successful in building a much-needed relationship of trust between law enforcement and community residents. Urban Renewal 2.0 has provided a vital vehicle for change and advancement in urban communities.

## URBAN RENEWAL

### A BRIEF HISTORY

The Urban Renewal Programme, the brainchild of the Rt. Hon. Perry G. Christie, commenced during the PLP's 2002 administration. This Programme was intended to and did in fact, begin to address the social ills affecting society-at-large; particularly in the urban communities and to foster better relationships between the Police and the community. Initially the Programme commenced in the Farm Road constituency and was then extended to several additional areas in New Providence and the Family Islands.

### **THIS PROGRAMME HAS BEEN AN OVERWHELMING SUCCESS AND HAS RECEIVED INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM AND AWARDS AS A POSITIVE, AGGRESSIVE SOCIAL INITIATIVE, INCLUDING:**

- The Motorola Community Policing Award of the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police

The involvement in the Marching Band initiative has opened a world of possibilities for these young persons and their families





# URBAN RENEWAL PROGRAMME 2017

The Progressive Liberal Party will continue to revitalize the programme.

## WE WILL:

- Continue to restore and revitalize Urban Renewal so as to be the most aggressive tool to address social ills.
- Continue to identify community Leaders to participate with the Urban Renewal Commission from each community.

Revitalization and Expansion of the Urban Renewal Programme.

**MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER TO VISION 2030, IN THE ON-GOING EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAMME, THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY WILL CONTINUE TO:**

- Establish community development cells that particularly target young people in communities. This project would bring in experts in various methods of creative enterprises: community farms (agricultural, fishing, mariculture), waste conversion, recycling, etc.
- Integrate the young people of the communities into the vocational institutes according to talent, aptitude and interests
- Create a jobs bank in each community with a central networking operation connecting all members to the Department of Labour
- Create a Citizens Watch in each community
- Continue to support positive youth activity and the expansion of the Urban Renewal Programme





# HOUSING

**THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT. IN THE BAHAMAS, THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO NEED VARYING DEGREES OF ASSISTANCE IN SECURING ADEQUATE HOUSING FOR THEIR FAMILIES. THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY HAS A STELLAR RECORD OF PROVIDING BAHAMIANS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBTAIN AFFORDABLE HOMES. TO ENSURE THAT MORE BAHAMIANS HAVE ACCESS TO ADEQUATE HOUSING, THE NEXT PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY ADMINISTRATION WILL:**

- Implement a Rent-To-Own Programme within the Department of Housing as announced in 2015/16 Budget;
- In conjunction with the Ministry of Education, ensure that high school students receive lectures from professionals on obtaining mortgages and personal finance management.
- Continue to explore new housing models and modern building methods to reduce the cost of homes for the average Bahamian.
- Redevelop areas by acquiring vacant and abandoned properties for the construction of green spaces and dwelling homes.
- Facilitate existing homeowners, who qualify, with the ability to access financing through the Bahamas Mortgage Corporation to retrofit their homes with alternative energy generating systems.
- Develop multi-family units to maximize land use.
- Issue \$100 million dollars in bonds through the Bahamas Mortgage Corporation to advance an aggressive housing construction programme.
- Continue to seek private partnerships for the development of new communities and green spaces as has been done in this term.
- Within every new Government housing community make a number of serviced lots available for sale at a competitive rate to Bahamians for the construction of their own homes.
- Ensure that all government-built houses have an alternative energy component.

Create a Rent-to-own Programme within the Department of Housing.

Implement a Rent-To-Own Programme within the Department of Housing as announced in 2015/16 Budget



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# INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

During this term of governance, the PLP through the Ministry of Works and Urban Development has continually addressed the need for structural upgrades and repairs throughout our nation. Many of our docks, roads, drains and seawalls walls were made usable for the people of our islands.

## **WATER AND SEWERAGE CORPORATION (WSC)**

A Progressive Liberal Party Government remains committed to making the delivery of potable water accessible to all whilst ensuring efficiency and quality of service in its delivery.

The PLP has laid the foundation for the development of a national water policy in conjunction with all national stakeholders.

## **THE WSC HAS COMMENCED ITS ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING PROCESS AND HAS INSTALLED A NEW SUPERVISORY CONTROL AND DATA ACQUISITION (SCADA) SYSTEM TO MONITOR MORE ACCURATELY, CONTROL AND RESPOND TO SYSTEM CHALLENGES:**

- There has been a substantial savings by a reduction of non-revenue water.
- Maintenance programmes are being carried out and infrastructure strengthened and modernized.
- A fully resourced Environmental Protection Department created within the Ministry of the Environment to assure the regulation of the

sewerage sector and the on-site treatment of waste water prior to its recycling.

Substantial progress has been made towards ensuring that all Bahamian communities have access to piped potable water. Approximately 1,350 homes in the Family Islands have been provided with potable water for the first time as well as an additional 1,000 homes in New Providence.

Family Islands impacted by supply and distribution systems upgrade works are:

**Crooked Island  
Eleuthera  
Cat Island  
San Salvador  
Long Island  
South Andros**

## **DURING THE NEXT TERM THE PLP GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD ON THE FOUNDATION OF ITS FIRST TERM AND WORK TO:**

- Provide all homes in the country with potable running water.
- Implement legal and regulatory reform to assure the proper extraction of ground and potable water.
- Assure sufficient and efficient funding by a public-private venture. Requests for proposals will be published in local newspapers, and tenders would be awarded with an automatic target of transparent Bahamian majority participation.
- Continue the reduction of WSC's reliance on the central government for funding except for entities unable to pay for water supply.



## UTILITIES REGULATION AND COMPETITION AUTHORITY (URCA)

Your PLP Government remains committed to partnering with URCA to enhance and develop the sectors which URCA regulates so as to ensure that the policies of the government in respect of those sectors are responsive to the needs and developmental goals of our people.

On the energy side URCA has assumed responsibility for ensuring that policies which provide for reliable, efficient cost-effective utilization of technologies such as renewable energies are employed so as to obtain the benefits which they bring.

### **ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS INCLUDE**

- Liberalization of Cellular Mobile Services
- Enhancement of Consumer Protection and Education Programmes in Regulated Sectors
- Increased Regulatory Capacity by investing in Human Capital
- Legislative & Regulatory Reform

During the next five year period, in the dynamic field of Electronics, emphasis is to be placed on Information Communications Technology as we move toward a SMART Bahamas. This will impact the manner in which business is done and provide opportunities for many.

Commit to  
the early  
construction  
of power plants  
using  
renewable  
energy sources.

Implement legal and regulatory  
reform to assure the proper  
extraction of ground and potable  
water



# ELECTRICITY

In 2012 the cost of electricity throughout The Bahamas was simply too high. It was determined that the management of the electricity resources would best be handled through a special purpose company under a separate management agreement.

**From 2012 to the present time, the cost of electricity has been reduced by over 40%.**

Focus is being placed on the implementation of changes which will result in the further reduction of the cost of electricity. In its next term of office, The PLP will introduce policies under which the Government will cover the cost of electricity to residential customers who limit their monthly use to below specified limits. This means that the use of electricity will be free to those customers. On current data, we anticipate that this will affect 15%-20% of the lowest income households. By encouraging disciplined use of electricity, this will positively impact energy conservation and help to protect our environment.

Incentives are being provided to reduce the demand for energy by solar and Government has led the way by installing a solar system in the headquarters of the Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation.

Customs duties on energy efficient appliances have been reduced.

In New Providence, lights on main thoroughfares have been changed to LED lighting and all other lights as necessary, are being changed to LED bulbs.

Incentives will be utilized to effect further overall reductions. These incentives will include more effective generation of power and the use of renewable energy by an ongoing systematic programme.

Upgrades are being carried out so as to improve reliability across New Providence and in the Family Islands. The Government along with Bahamas Power and Light (BPL), continues to move aggressively towards finding solutions which will result in further lowering the cost of electricity.

We will introduce policies under which the government will cover the cost of electricity to residential customers who limit their monthly use to below specified limits. This means that the use of electricity will be **FREE** to those customers. On current data, we anticipate that this will benefit 15%-20% of the lowest income households. By encouraging disciplined use of electricity, this will positively impact energy conservation and help to protect our environment.





# ELECTRICITY

The geographical composition of The Bahamas makes the efficient management of transportation important to the development of our country. In this term historic advancement has been made within the transportation sector. Some of the accomplishments made during this term are set out below.

**Since the 1950s, the airspace above The Bahamas has been controlled by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of the United States of America. This administration has negotiated a landmark agreement that will see The Bahamas fully regain control of its airspace after a 10-year period during which we will build capacity for its management. During this period the Government was also able to ensure that Bahamian aircraft fly free in Bahamian air space. This represents millions of dollars in savings to The Bahamas with substantial savings accruing to BahamasAir alone.**

The PLP Government also created the Civil Aviation Authority which has responsibility for the oversight of safety and security protocols and aviation systems nationwide.

**The Potter's Cay Dock has undergone extensive renovations in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources. Once completed, this transformation will include: adjustments to the entrance and exit causeways, creation of loading zones, bathroom facilities, passenger holding facilities and a freight depot.**

**Extensive improvements have been made in regard to the various airports around the country which include:**

- The refurbishment and reconstruction of the San Salvador airport
- The extension of the Bimini Airport runway by 1000 ft. the enlargement of the airport terminal and the necessary works carried out to enable night flights
- The completion of the Leonard M. Thompson Airport in Marsh Harbour, Abaco
- The completion of Phases II and III of the Lynden Pindling International Airport, New Providence
- To enhance airport surveillance capabilities, a new ASR12 radar system was sourced and purchased.
- The Approach Control Centre was constructed which houses the radar controllers and is the location of simulation training.
- The Road Traffic Department system was modernized and safeguards put in place to bring about efficiency and accountability.

**In the next term the Progressive Liberal Party administration will:**

- Ensure that The Bahamas continues to build capacity in anticipation of having full control of its airspace and all that entails.

To enhance airport surveillance capabilities, a new ASR12 radar system was sourced and purchased



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- Review the current Road Traffic Act with a view to amending it to meet current needs and provide for current concerns.
- Continue the roll out of the Unified Bus System with a public/private partnership governed by an Authority and Act of Parliament. Currently, the Inter-American Development Bank has agreed to finance a six-month pilot programme as well as the engagement of a consultancy firm to provide support for the implementation of the new system.
- Review and amend the complement of Maritime legislation in The Bahamas to enhance the standards for maritime safety in both leisure and commercial maritime activities.

## TAXI CABS

- Review legislation and policy concerning the leasing of taxicabs with a view to granting licences to leaseholders
- Allow existing taxi plate owners to make a written recommendation for the passing on of the plate upon his/her retirement or demise.
- Advance policy that for holders to maintain their public service licences, all rules of the service including dress code and maintenance of vehicles must be upheld.
- In order to ensure that the services of taxicab and limousine operators are not excluded from any property, all laws relating to the

transport industry and in particular the ownership and operation of taxi and limousine services will be strictly enforced.

## AIRPORTS

- Seek public/private partnerships to attract capital for the infrastructural redevelopment of select airports while maintaining government ownership, oversight and controls.
- Explore ways in which The Bahamas can enter the business of aircraft mortgage registration for which a feasibility study has been completed and a path of implementation forged.
- Ensure the completion of the redevelopment of the airports at North Eleuthera, Exuma, Moore's Island, the Great Harbour Cay and Mayaguana.

## POST OFFICE

- Seek a partnership with an internationally established fast mail company to enhance services offered by the Post Office.
- Complete the build-out of the new location for the Post Office currently underway at the former City Markets site on Tonique Williams-Darling Highway.
- Seek to strengthen the human resource complement with additional staffing and comprehensive training.



# **PRESERVING WHAT MAKES THE BAHAMAS SPECIAL**





# ENVIRONMENT

**THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE BAHAMAS IS ITS GREATEST ASSET BEYOND THE BAHAMIAN PEOPLE. THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY RECOGNIZES THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT THE ENVIRONMENT OF OUR COUNTRY IS PROTECTED AND PRESERVED FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS OF BAHAMIANS. TO FURTHER THE WORK THAT HAS BEEN DONE IN THIS TERM, IN OUR NEXT TERM THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY ADMINISTRATION WILL:**

- Establish a Bahamas Environmental Authority as a statutory entity.
- Enact legislation establishing the Department of Environmental Protection and Planning as the technical arm of the Ministry of the Environment.
- Continue to create usable green spaces and parks for the use of the Bahamian people across the country through the Bahamas Public Parks and Public Beaches Authority.
- Complete the National Heroes Park launched in January 2017
- Develop the Lake Killarney National Park
- Expand the Youth Environmental Corps Programme nationally.
- In conjunction with the Ministry of Education provide bonded scholarships for young people (18-30) studying subjects relative to the environment.

- Further expand the Marine Protected Areas Network.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

**The Bahamas is one of the countries of the world most vulnerable to climate change. While The Bahamas' contribution to emissions is negligible we must do what is within our power to mitigate the effects of climate change and its impact on our country and its people. In its next term of office the Progressive Liberal Party government will:**

- Create the ways and means to gain citizen support and buy-in to increase conservation and climate change awareness.
- Review and reactivate the National Action Plan on Climate Change.
- Review the zoning legislation and policies of the country to create a plan for the resettlement of Bahamians residing in areas prone to flooding and storm surge during hurricanes where possible.
- Join organizations and sign on to treaties that will assist the country in advancing its alternative energy deployment goals as outlined in the Bahamas National Energy Policy.
- Work to promote the Residential Energy Self Generation Programme recently brought on stream by Bahamas Power and Light.





- Reduce the tariffs on energy efficient (high SEER rating) Air Conditioning systems.
- Retrofit public schools and buildings with alternative energy systems.
- Phase out the use of non-biodegradable plastic bags and styrofoam.
- Continue the work being done to regulate vehicle emissions.
- Seek to further reduce the tariffs associated with the importation of electric/hybrid cars, trucks, buses and carts.

## SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

The need to ensure that our surroundings are kept clean is not only important to the aesthetics of the country but also to the health and safety of the Bahamian people.

Recognizing this imperative, the next Progressive Liberal Party government will:

- Ensure that the efficiency in the collection of residential waste continues to improve.
- Along with a strategic partner, ensure that the New Providence Landfill is remediated based on scientific methods and resume recycling on a commercial scale.
- Explore avenues to bring 'waste-to-energy' to the country.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

The Bahamas is rich in natural resources. The Bahamian people should receive fair compensation for the use of the natural resources of the country. The country should also be aware of the opportunities available to utilize its natural resources as a means of revenue generation. In our next term the Progressive Liberal Party government will:

- Explore ways to sustainably harvest natural resources for product development and export.
- Ensure that a list of the natural resources, their uses and potential and where they can be found is maintained in the Ministry of the Environment.
- Seek to improve the fiscal regimes for the harvesting of natural resources as was done in the case of Petroleum to ensure that the Bahamian people receive fair compensation.

**Launch 'Fully Renewable Bahamas: Energy, Waste & Carbon Reduction'** to achieve a 30% reduction by 2030 in line with the National Energy Policy.

Explore ways to sustainably harvest natural resources for product development and export



# FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Progressive Liberal Party reaffirms its belief that diplomacy should be practised in a manner that helps The Bahamas achieve its goals and objectives as a nation.

## **IN FURTHERANCE OF THIS BELIEF, IN THIS TERM, THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS:**

- Amended the Foreign Affairs Act to provide for the establishment of the Foreign Service
- Vied for a seat on the United Nations Human Rights Council
- Ensured visa-free travel for Bahamians to countries such as the United Arab Emirates.

In this next term we will continue to build the global profile of The Bahamas and forge and maintain relationships with other countries that will benefit our country and the Bahamian people.

## **MOVING FORWARD THE PLP WILL:**

- Continue to ensure that The Bahamas has a global presence.
- Continue to increase the number of embassies and consulates abroad to ensure there is a visa-free policy and ease of travel for Bahamians and to establish a greater Bahamian footprint throughout the world.
- Where it is advantageous to Bahamians and The Bahamas, ensure that our embassies are equipped with a cultural attache.
- Ensure that there is a more progressive and aggressive involvement in regional and international trade negotiations that are of interest for Bahamians and the Bahamian economy.
- Actively seek a more prominent participation and involvement in the affairs of the United Nations General Assembly by exploring and securing non-permanent seats at the:
  - The United Nations Security Council
  - The United Nations Human Rights Council
  - The United Nations International Telecommunications Union Council (ITU) 2019-2023



## THE PLP WILL ALSO:

- Continue to encourage and promote the national interests of The Bahamas through strategic recruitment and placement of qualified Bahamians in international locations and with international organizations.
- Improve public education on international trade agreements signed on behalf of The Bahamian people and the role of Foreign Affairs in the life of the country and its citizens.
- Collaborate with the relevant government ministries and agencies to provide more exposure for National Youth Ambassadors on regional and international issues.

## THE PLP IS COMMITTED TO THE NECESSARY TRAINING IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE AND WILL SEEK TO:

- Officially establish the Foreign Service Institute in collaboration with the University of The Bahamas for strategic training and development opportunities for Foreign Service Officers and offering courses for other government officials.
- Allow for a progressive career path with long and short-term exchange training programmes for Foreign Service Officers with aspirations of progressing their careers within international organizations.
- Continue its efforts for the creation of a Council of Foreign Relations headed by a representative at an ambassadorial level.

## IMMIGRATION

The efficient movement of people through and within the country is essential especially with Tourism being our lead industry. It is also important that we ensure that everyone that is in the country has the permission to live, work and play here. The Progressive Liberal Party Government in this term advanced an aggressive immigration programme. There were over 200 new immigration officers hired, the Immigration Act was amended to strengthen penalties for illegal landing, it re-established the Belonger status, strengthened the powers of arrest by immigration officers and made it illegal to enter into fraudulent marriages.

## THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY GOVERNMENT WILL:

- Ensure that there is a continuous effort for the specialized training and development of Immigration officers, to provide more proactive efforts to combat illegal migration
- Ensure that there is concerted effort to provide a Bahamian understudy to all holders of work permits issued to foreign nationals for an ease of succession when the permit expires.
- Engage in bi-lateral discussions with the Haitian and Cuban Governments concerning the requirements for work permits for their nationals within The Bahamas.
- Continue to issue and process Resident Spousal Permits and permanent residence applications in a timely manner.

Continue its efforts for the creation of a Council of Foreign Relations headed by a representative at an ambassadorial level



- A PLP administration will revisit all Conventions and Agreements relating to immigration ensuring that their intent is in line with the National Immigration Policy.
- Continue to improve on the already implemented Border Management System, including the Electronic Identification Card and E-Passport.
- Work toward a paperless system for applications for passports and immigration entry.

## GRAND BAHAMA

In 2012, the PLP Government committed to the redevelopment and restoration of the economy of Grand Bahama by establishing the Ministry for Grand Bahama.

The Ministry for Grand Bahama has been successful in providing resolution to matters of contention within the community.

### **MOST NOTABLE AMONG THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS HAVE BEEN:**

- The successful negotiation and enactment of the Hawksbill Creek Grand Bahama (Deep Water Harbour and Industrial Area) Extension of Tax Exemption Period Amendment Act, 2016. This PLP Government was successful in renegotiating with investors of the Grand Bahama Port Authority (GBPA), the extension of certain concessions with a new structure.
- Within this new structure, the people of Grand Bahama now have representation on the GBPA'S Board by the Government of Commonwealth of The Bahamas.
- The introduction of the Grand Bahama Shipyard's employment programme. This programme will employ up to 600 Bahamians, over a four-year period, at the Grand Bahama Shipyard, of which some 200 persons have already been employed. These workers will replace the foreign workforce and make the Shipyard a Bahamian majority operated entity.
- Major upgrades to the Rand Memorial Hospital which include:
  - construction upgrades;
  - upgrades to the fleet of ambulances and vehicles;
  - providing additional healthcare professionals;
  - an increase in doctors and nurses who provide home & domiciliary care services;
  - an extension of clinic hours to alleviate the burden on the hospital's Accident & Emergency section;
  - renovations of all clinics throughout the island in preparation for the launch of NHI;
- Duty free concessions to East & West Grand Bahama which allow businesses in these areas to receive similar concessions granted to GBPA licencees;
- The new high school for West Grand Bahama is currently under construction;
- **The Fishing Hole Road Reconstruction:** In Grand Bahama. The impassability of the Fishing Hole Road in times of flooding or storms has been a problem for decades. This





administration has ensured that this issue will be resolved and that Grand Bahamians will no longer be stranded based on the conditions of Fishing Hole Road. A massive reconstruction effort is underway to create the Fishing Hole Road Bridge.

**THE NEXT PLP ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO RESTORE THE ECONOMY OF GRAND BAHAMA AND PROVIDE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ISLAND. THESE PURSUITS WILL INCLUDE:**

- The Ministry for Grand Bahama in collaboration with the Grand Bahama Port Authority, the Ministries of Education and Labour, the National Training Agency, the University of The Bahamas and the Grand Bahama Chamber of Commerce, will establish a skills training and recruitment programme to provide multidisciplinary training to Bahamians in areas where there is a deficiency on the island;
- Continuing efforts to establish a maritime academy on Grand Bahama which will recruit, train and employ over 200 Bahamians, within a 1-year period. This will provide career opportunities for Bahamians onboard cruise ships;
- Two-phased construction of a new state-of-the-art hospital with phase one being the Freeport Community Clinic;
- Developing the tourism economy of Grand Bahama;
- Working with the Ministry of Finance to develop a formula to provide grant funding for SME's in Grand Bahama;
- Working with the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Resources Institute (BAMSI) to develop the agriculture industry of Grand Bahama;
- Implementation of the One Stop Shop to facilitate new investments, which will spur economic growth and development for the island and increase the ease of doing business;
- In collaboration with the GBPA, promotion of Grand Bahama as an industrial hub and a tax haven for new investors.

Working with the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Resources Institute (BAMSI) to develop the agriculture industry of Grand Bahama



# **STRENGTHENING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE**



# GOVERNANCE & CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

The Draft National Development Plan sets out the Goal of having a “modern, open and accountable, service-oriented government”.

## **DURING THE NEXT PLP ADMINISTRATION, WE WILL SEEK TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:**

- Undertake a comprehensive review of the way the Cabinet operates, to introduce greater efficiencies.
- Create a ‘Ministry of Culture & Tourism’, to ensure that Bahamian Culture will be a key driver in the growth of our tourism industry, and to expand the degree to which Bahamian Culture is promoted internationally.
- Launch a ‘Ministry of Communication & Information Technology’ to better engage Bahamians in consultation and the communication of government decisions and activities.
- Launch a Standing Committee of Permanent Secretaries to co-ordinate implementation of Cabinet Decisions and Government Policies
- Create policy whereby the Secretary to the Cabinet would chair regular meetings of Permanent Secretaries to ensure the effective and integrated delivery of government services.
- Establish a new ‘Strategy Unit’ at the Office of The Prime Minister. This unit will co-ordinate the development and successful implementation of policies across

government to meet our Strategic Priorities.

- Expand Ongoing Public Service Education to create a Continual Learning Environment.
- Introduce Annual Business Plans, to be provided as part of the Annual Budget, to include a number of Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Time-limited Goals. These will support better accountability for all parts of government on a yearly basis.
- Introduce Annual Business Reports from each Ministry, specifically in relation to the SMART Goals.
- As part of the commitment to national education, encourage ongoing Training for Ministers & key Public Servants.
- Establish an independent office for a ‘Commissioner of Standards’
- Make more frequent use of consultative processes such as the issuing of ‘Green Papers’ and ‘White Papers’ in the development of legislation.
- **Continue public service modernization to launch ‘Service Bahamas’: a one-window delivery of government services. We will move toward the use of a single government card to access all government services.**
- Through a phased-in approach, use Technology to drive a Paper-Free Public Service.
- Empower Constituencies in New Providence through the creation of Community Development Associations with the Member of Parliament as the ex officio member of the Board of the Association.

Introduce Annual Business Reports from each Ministry, specifically in relation to the SMART Goals



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