TCCP CONNECT

Parliament Update | Day 2

6th May 2026 | Putting Caymanian First

It was a busy session in Parliament on Thursday, April 30, 2026, featuring inquiries directed at the Government, significant ministerial statements, and various Private Members' Motions. These discussions centered around topics such as the cost of living, housing, planning, economic risks, long-term savings, child safeguarding, tourism, and waste management.



1. WHAT HAPPENED IN PARLIAMENT?

- A full day of national issues and scrutiny of Government delivery
- Five Private Members' Motions were debated and passed
- Strong focus on timelines, execution and real outcomes
- The government accepted key proposals while retaining control over implementation



2. HONOURING CAYMANIAN WOMEN

Parliament continued recognising Caymanian women who have contributed to the growth and development of the Cayman Islands. The Speaker welcomed several women into the Chamber and thanked them for the guidance, service and leadership they have given to the country. Members also used the moment to speak personally about women who shaped their values, communities and public lives.

A special moment for TCCP was the cross-party recognition of Parliamentary Secretary Heather Bodden for her longstanding work in women's empowerment, governance, advocacy and community service.



3. Tourism: Strong Numbers, Careful Planning Needed

The government reported strong tourism performance, including record stayover arrivals in March and continued growth from key source markets.

This is encouraging for the wider economy and for businesses and workers connected to tourism, including hotels, restaurants, transport providers, tour operators, water sports operators, retailers and local artisans.

The focus going forward is to ensure that tourism growth continues to support Caymanian employment, training, small business participation and ownership.

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4. QUESTIONS TO GOVERNMENT: DELIVERY MATTERS

Question Time focused on practical issues that residents experience directly. Members pressed Government on timelines, service delivery, public systems, and whether decisions are translating into real outcomes for Caymanians.

Special education and Down syndrome support: Government outlined the support available from early intervention through public education and adult training services. The concern remains whether families who fall just outside means-tested support can still access the help they need.

Food security and local egg production: Cayman is currently around 53% self-sufficient in egg production. However, cheaper imported eggs are placing pressure on local farmers, with some local eggs reportedly going unsold. Government confirmed it is engaging supermarkets, hotels and institutional buyers to encourage more local purchasing.

Abandoned vehicles: Government confirmed that RCIPS does not own a tow truck and relies on private contractors. While the legal powers to remove abandoned vehicles already exist, the issue appears to be process, response time and operational capacity.

Work permit refunds: Refunds currently take approximately 8 to 10 weeks, with a target of 3 to 4 weeks. Government pointed to automation and better upfront validation as part of the solution.

Business Staffing Plan accreditation: Government outlined a proposed scheme to reward companies that demonstrate strong outcomes in hiring, training and retaining Caymanians. The main incentive would be faster processing, so the communication around this must remain clearly focused on Caymanian employment outcomes.

Planning transparency: Since 2020, there have been 1,697 variances across 1,180 planning applications. However, the system does not currently provide a clear breakdown of whether those variances relate to setbacks, density, height or other factors. Better reporting would help improve public confidence in planning decisions.

Hospital vending machines: Vending machines have been approved in principle and are expected to be included in the hospital atrium and central registration redesign, with an emphasis on healthy options and vendor standards.

Central Scranton Park: Central Scranton Park came up more than once during Question Time.
Government confirmed that construction completion is targeted for 27 May 2026, with outstanding items including utilities, lighting, court markings and equipment delivery. A separate water pressure issue was also raised, which Government explained as a design and coordination matter.

> “Thursday’s sitting moved from recognition to delivery: questions, motions and national issues were placed clearly on the record.

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5. WASTE MANAGEMENT: STRENGTHENING DELIVERY

Hon. Katherine Ebanks-Wilks updated Parliament on waste management following the recent landfill fire.

The statement acknowledged the impact on residents and recognised the work of frontline responders. Government outlined a more structured approach focused on landfill stabilisation, improved equipment, daily cover, fire prevention, recycling, and long-term planning.

The update also placed greater focus on waste reduction, including commercial recycling, expanded residential recycling, a future recycling facility, and restrictions on selected single-use plastics.

Key point:
Waste management is now moving from emergency response to practical action. The focus must be on visible improvements, stronger operations, and long-term solutions that are properly planned and financially responsible.



6. COST OF LIVING & ENERGY RELIEF: SUPPORT NOW, LONGER-TERM CHANGE

A motion on fuel relief and electricity support was passed as part of broader efforts to ease cost-of-living pressures on households and businesses.

The Premier provided important context, noting that the Government's approach was developed over time based on global fuel trends, local electricity impacts, and the pressure rising costs are placing on families.

The measures discussed include:

- temporary fuel duty relief
- electricity fuel cost adjustments
- targeted support for vulnerable households
- continued investment in renewable energy
- longer-term work to reduce Cayman's exposure to global fuel shocks

The discussion made clear that cost of living is not caused by one issue alone. Families are feeling pressure from utilities, rent, food, insurance, transport and other everyday expenses. Fuel and electricity relief therefore form part of a wider response, not the whole solution.

Key point:
The focus is both immediate relief and long-term resilience. Caymanians need support now, but the country also needs a more sustainable energy future that reduces dependence on imported fuel and helps protect households from future price shocks.

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8. CIVIL SERVICE HOME OWNERSHIP

A motion supporting home ownership for civil servants was passed.

The proposal focused on middle-income Caymanians who may not qualify for low-income housing support but still struggle to build or purchase a home.
Government accepted the motion in principle, with clarification that the role would be to facilitate, not build. The model discussed was Government-supported, bank-financed access to help eligible civil servants move closer to homeownership.

Key point:
Housing affordability now affects many working Caymanians, including civil servants and young professionals. The focus is on improving access, not creating free housing.

9. CHILD SAFEGUARDING: A NATIONAL PRIORITY

The update on child safeguarding is one of the most serious issues raised during the sitting.

It was reported:

- 20% increase in sexual offences in 2025, with a total of 125 reported cases.
- Of those victims, 58% were identified as **children**.
- Parliament was also told of over 200 incidents of children leaving care settings.

Government confirmed that Cabinet has approved a multi-agency working group and that a full legislative and policy review is underway.

Key point:
Child protection must be treated as a national priority. Stronger laws, better monitoring, improved coordination, and earlier intervention are needed to protect children and support families.

10. NEWBORN INVESTMENT FUND

Parliament supported a motion to explore an investment fund for Caymanian children at birth.

The proposal was framed as an investment in children, equality of opportunity and long-term national resilience. The discussion also recognised that the structure of the fund matters. A protected, professionally managed model would allow the investment to grow over time, while safeguards would help ensure it is not used for general Government spending.

Key point:
This is a future-focused idea. If properly designed and protected, it could help strengthen the financial foundation of the next generation of Caymanians.

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KEY AREAS EXPLAINED



1. Planning: Fixing the System, Not Just the Symptoms

Hon. Wayne Panton noted that a planning amnesty may help address existing unapproved structures, but it should not be treated as the full solution.

He highlighted the need to address the reasons homeowners fall outside the process in the first place, including complex procedures, high costs, unclear guidance, and difficulty accessing practical support.

The discussion emphasised that planning rules must remain consistent and safety-focused, while also being clearer and more workable for ordinary homeowners responding to real housing needs.

Key point:
An amnesty can help resolve existing issues, but long-term reform is needed so homeowners can follow the process more easily and safely in the future.



2. ECONOMIC RISK: LOOKING AHEAD

Premier André Ebanks supported the development of a Financial and Economic Risk Committee focused on inflation, cost pressures, population trends, economic stability, and global risks affecting Cayman.

The discussion recognised that Cayman's economy is closely connected to international conditions, including fuel prices, interest rates, tourism demand, financial services and global market confidence.

The Premier helped frame the Committee as a way to strengthen forward-looking oversight, rather than as a sign of instability.

Key point:
Cayman must be able to anticipate economic challenges, not only respond after they occur. This Committee would support better planning, stronger monitoring and long-term stability.



3. WHAT THIS SITTING SHOWED

Thursday's sitting showed Parliament focused on issues that affect Caymanians directly: cost of living, housing, child safeguarding, waste management, planning, tourism and long-term economic risk.

It also showed Government moving important work forward with a practical focus on implementation, relief for families, stronger protection for children, improved waste management, responsible economic oversight, and long-term opportunities for Caymanians.

For TCCP, putting Caymanians first means listening to the concerns being raised, supporting responsible solutions, and ensuring public policy remains connected to the real needs of families, workers, businesses and communities.

The sitting also highlighted the contribution of TCCP members, including Premier André Ebanks on economic risk, Hon. Katherine Ebanks-Wilks on waste management, Wayne Panton on planning reform, and Heather Bodden's recognition for women's leadership and advocacy.

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