

G. Wayne Panton, JP

MP for Newlands

STATEMENT OF GRATITUDE & CLARITY BY G. WAYNE PANTON, MP

Wednesday, 15 November 2023

My Fellow Caymanians and Residents of the Cayman Islands -

I have always believed that the members that came together as the PACT government represent the best way forward for the people of the Cayman Islands; that belief has not changed.

In this watershed moment in the history of our three islands, we need steady, experienced, disciplined leadership. Last night, after a grueling day of Parliamentary debates, I met with my Cabinet colleagues to discuss the best way forward in the interest of the country.

In times like these, sometimes the bravest thing you can do for your country and for your people is to pass the mantle of leadership to someone else.

I will continue to serve as a Member of Parliament and a servant of the people. Indeed, I will continue to use my experience and skill to help guide the Cayman Islands, offering my best advice and wisdom so that the next generation of leadership in this country can do the best for CaymanKind today, tomorrow, and always.

1

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I believe that my colleagues will be able to offer the kind of leadership needed to complete the work we have started. Indeed, we must always remember that pride must never be more important than the interest of our people; and personalities and egos must never be allowed to halt the progress of Caymanians.

Our people need our help. In the midst of greed and ambition threatening to drown our Islands, Caymanians look to the government to chart a safe and sensible way forward - a way that puts Caymanians at the front of the line of our national policy agenda.

As we continue to evolve and transform as a country, I want each of you to know that I believe all Caymanians deserve a Cayman where we all strive to protect our Caymanian heritage, history, culture and traditions; Caymanians have earned a place where all of us will always be concerned with the greater good and the welfare of the less fortunate. Each of you deserve a Cayman where Caymanians enjoy the fruit of steady, healthy, managed economic growth (yes! - rooted in fiscal discipline and informed by current data); growth that Caymanians can truly FEEL and SEE on their kitchen tables and in their wallets and bank accounts. I want all our people to have a country where all our leaders and all our institutions are built on a solid foundation of morals and ethics rooted in the very best Caymanian ideals.

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Apple co-founder Steve Jobs once reminded us that we are placed on this earth to try to put a dent in the universe. If we don't try to make that dent, to make our mark, why are we here? Never stop trying to make your mark. Never stop trying to mold Cayman into a safe, prosperous space for Caymanians. Never stop caring, even when you fall or fail. The people who dare to care, who dare to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.

My eternal gratitude to my colleagues in PACT. Thank you for taking a chance with me and for all the good we managed to do. We may have disagreed at times on what path to take, but we have always agreed on the destination: tending to the best interests of the people of the Cayman Islands.

Thank you to the dedicated members of the Civil Service, especially those in the Ministries under my remit. Because of your hard work and dedication we have been able to do important work in Energy, the Environment, Climate Resiliency and other areas. Because of you, we were able to launch the Cayman Home Energy Efficiency Retrofits (CHEER) Programme to begin to provide support to vulnerable Caymanian homeowners. We also released the Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022, the most comprehensive review of climate risks and opportunities to the Cayman Islands undertaken to date.

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And let's not forget the National Electricity Assistance Programme, the National Energy Policy update, the protection of an additional 871 acres of terrestrial habitat across all three islands, the inception of the 'Cayman We Want' framework (an important national dialogue), and so much more. Know that none of these accomplishments could have ever been possible without your help, skill and dedication. Thank you.

To the families and people of the Cayman Islands - THANK YOU! And a very special thank you to the amazing people of Newlands; the place of my heart, my home. Thank you for your patience, your loyalty and your faith. Needless to say Newlands will be seeing much more of me as I continue to serve you with renewed energy, fervor and sense of purpose.

I pray that Caymanians will always look into the mirror of our national destiny and like what they see.

I pray that the Creator will protect our communities, safeguard our people – set them apart and raise them up!

In His infinite wisdom, may God continue to protect our country and may he continue to guide and bless these precious Cayman Islands.