



Office of the Chief Secretary
Chief Administrator's Office
Tobago House of Assembly
(Public Administration)

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April 30th, 2021

The Chairman
Joint Select Committee
Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago
St. Vincent Street
PORT OF SPAIN
Trinidad

Dear Madam,

Re: Constitution (Amendment) (Tobago Self-Government) Bill, 2020

Your letter dated April 23rd, 2021 refers. On behalf of the Administrators of the Tobago House of Assembly I wish to highlight the following concerns with both bills as follows:

- 1) The Draft Constitution amendment bill – Tobago Self-Government Bill 2020:
 - (a) Section (16) b amends section 121 of the Constitution by inserting after subsection (6) the following sub-section:
 - 6 (A) Power to make appointments on transfer to the office of Chief Administrator or Administrator, from one such office to another such office carrying the same salary, shall vest in the Premier. Since the Chief Administrator's position is the only one at the top of the Public Service in Tobago it begs the question where the office of Chief Administrator would be transferred to in Tobago.

It is also of concern that the Administrator as Accounting Officer performs a fiduciary duty similar to Accounting Officers in Trinidad and manages hundreds of millions of dollars under their purview in each Division. For the sake therefore of equity and parity the following amendment should be considered:

Section 141 Q(6) Where any Secretary has been assigned responsibility for any Division of the Tobago Island Government, he shall exercise general direction and control over that Division and, subject to such direction and control, the Division shall be under the supervision of an Administrator whose office shall be a public office of a level no lower than that of a Deputy Permanent Secretary.

2) The Tobago Island Government Act, 2021

The functions of the Clerk is enhanced according to Section 20. Since the duties are increased the level of compensation should be no lower than that of the Clerk of the House (Trinidad). In that regard Section 20(2) and Section 20 (9) should be amended as follows:

Section 20(2) The offices of the Clerk of the House of Assembly and Deputy Clerk of the House of Assembly are established as public offices which shall be no lower than the Clerk of the House and Deputy Clerk of the House in Trinidad.

Section 20(9) The Clerk of the House should be an Accounting Officer no lower than that of the Clerk of the House in Trinidad.

Once these matter are addressed legislatively they shall bring Public Officers in the Island of Tobago on parity with their counterparts in Trinidad.

Respectfully,



Bernadette Solomon-Koroma
Chief Administrator
Tobago House of Assembly