



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Hon. Minister of Finance
Mr. A.M.R. Irion
Administration Building
Philipsburg

UV/225/2019-2020

Philipsburg, March 25, 2020

Re: Questions from MP S.A. Wescot-Williams regarding solidarity initiative political authorities St. Maarten

Hon. Minister Irion,

Herewith I submit to you questions posed by Member of Parliament, Mrs. S.A. Wescot-Williams pursuant to article 62 of the Constitution and article 69 of the Rules of Order of the Parliament of Sint Maarten.

The letter is self-explanatory.

Yours truly,

R. Brison
President of Parliament



Sarah A. Wescot-Williams

Member of Parliament Sint Maarten

To
The President of Parliament
Parliament of St. Maarten
Wilhelminastraat # 1

Philipsburg, March 23, 2020

STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN	
Ingak. 25 MAR 2020	
Volgnr. 15/696/19-20	
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Honorable President of Parliament,

I hereby submit through you questions directed to the Minister of Finance, the Honorable Ardwell M. R. Irion, regarding Parliament's motion and the "withholdings salaries political authorities".

I kindly ask that these be forwarded promptly,

Respectfully,


Sarah A. Wescot-Williams,
Member of Parliament
United Democratic Party



Sarah A. Wescot-Williams

Member of Parliament Sint Maarten

Minister of Finance
Honorable Ardwel M.R. Irion
Government Administration Building
Philipsburg, Sint Maarten

Philipsburg, March 19, 2020

Ref: Solidarity Initiative Political Authorities Sint Maarten.

Honorable Minister Irion,

On March 16, 2020, you presented me with a document, titled Solidarity Initiative Political Authorities Sint Maarten, (to be) signed by all Members of Parliament and Ministers of Government, the so-called "political authorities", to contribute to the pension of political authorities, by means of a withholding from the salaries of the aforementioned authorities.

Let me first state that I have affixed my signature to the draft document. However, the manner in which this matter was presented, leaves a lot to be desired, and procedural was very unorthodox, to say the least.

I also wish to make reference to my letter dated February 10th, 2020 to the Government of St. Maarten. This letter questions Government's lack of response to a Motion of Parliament regarding reduction of the cost of Parliament, including the elimination of several benefits enjoyed by the "political authorities" of the country.

This Motion of Parliament, initiated by me, resolves:

- To eliminate monthly the ANG.500,-- allowance granted to Ministers and Members of Parliaments;
- For the budget 2020 deliberations, that the government presents to parliament a proposal to eliminate fringe benefits such as vacation allowance etc. for politicians and others in the highest salary brackets (at a savings of approximately ANG. 300.000,--.);
- To restrict all government travel delegations to not more than two (2) persons;
- To establish the travel budget of Parliament at ANG. 500.000,-- ;
- To cut Government travel across the board with (another) 10%;

The questions I submitted on February 10th, 2020 are as follows:

1. What steps has the Government taken to execute aforementioned motion?
2. Has Government considered this motion in the preparation of the budget 2020? If not, why was it not considered?



3. Is Government in favor of presenting a proposal to formally address the “cost of politics” (salaries, unemployment, benefits, travel, etc.) If not, what is Government’s view on the conditions imposed by the Dutch Government for liquidity assistance 2019.
4. How is Government progressing with the other conditions?
5. Does Government concur with the Integrity Commission (2014) that there must come clarity regarding the function of Member of Parliament. Either this function is full time or it is part-time with commensurate reduction.

I believe that especially now, given the fall out for our local economy as a result of the Corona pandemic, the additional measures as per the motion must be implemented post haste.

The formalization of this “contribution by the political authorities” should also be done post haste, as the voluntary consent is open-ended. It should also be recorded in the annals of parliament. Please supply the answers as requested in my letter of February 10th, 2020.

In addition, kindly provide me with a timeline for the formalization of this “contribution by political authorities”.

Respectfully,



Sarah A. Wescot-Williams,
Member of Parliament
United Democratic Party

Annex: motion