



Members of the Parliament of Sint Maarten

Chairlady of Parliament Sarah Wescott-Williams
% Mrs. Nancy Joubert, Secretary General
of The Parliament of St. Maarten

STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN			
Ingek. 03 JUN 2019			
Volgnr. 151/1100/18-19			
Par.	H/V	W/V	

Philipsburg June 3rd 2019

Re: Notice for time needed by undersigned MP's for reviewing budget and presenting amendments

Dear Madame Chairlady Wescott-Williams,

The undersigned members of parliament wish to bring to your attention the following. We are in receipt of the digital version of the "Nota van Wijziging" which was made available by email to MP's on May 29th at 6pm.

Having examined this budget, it is clear to the undersigned that this amendment, and the 355 pages of document encompass almost a totally new budget. There are also some severely far reaching differences that were NOT debated in the central committee of this budgetary process, which is the right of Members of Parliament. Had it been a minor or even moderate budget amendment, this may not have been as much of an issue. Now, considering the time frame, undersigned members of parliament understand the need to move forward as soon as possible with the Public Meeting. However, the one week time is simply not enough, and we are of the opinion that the meeting should be moved forward to allow sufficient time.

Furthermore, while the Government has its own right of amendment, which the Minister has taken several weeks to present (after taking several months to create the actual budget), Members of parliament too have the right as per Article 86(2) of the Constitution, further elucidated in Articles 58-65 of the Rules of Order Parliament. However, it is our opinion that the lack of sufficient time on this government-amendment is clearly unreasonable for members of parliament to prepare their own amendments. Consider again: the Minister with many more resources than MP's available to him took more than 6 months to bring a budget to Parliament in its final form, including the current amendment; members of parliament in return are afforded just one week to review and to exercise their right of amendment?


At the very least, if MP's can be given the opportunity to send questions in writing, and receive those responses before the continuation of the Public Meeting, then perhaps we can find a middle ground. All in all then this would mean that the debate should begin in the first week of July, affording the Ministers the maximum 3 week period they are allowed for responding to questions. Taking consideration IPKO, this would fall right after that period.

We stress again, while we know the budget is long overdue, it is not the fault of Parliament, and rather that of the government. To be expected to rush through this at this time without proper preparation and insufficient ability to amend 355 pages of budget is highly unreasonable, and borderline disruptive to our democratic responsibilities and rights.


In summary, the undersigned MP's are asking that the public meeting is moved to the first week of July, immediately after the end of the IPKO delegation effort in the Netherlands, which affords members of parliament sufficient time to 1) peruse the budget 2) present amendments to the budget.

We look forward to your cooperation in this matter as soon as possible.

Respectfully Yours,



R. BRISON



C.T. EMMONS



E. DORAN



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Hon. Members of Parliament

Mr. R. Brison

Mr. C.T. Emmanuel

Mr. E.J. Doran

Wilhelminastraat # 1

Present

UV/341/2018-2019

Philipsburg, June 6, 2019

Re: Response letter dated June 3, 2019 (IS/1101/2018-2019 dated June 3, 2019)

Hon. Members of Parliament,

Your letter of June 3, 2019 (IS/1101/2018-2019 dated June 3, 2019) has been received in good order.

The changes to the draft Budget 2019 the Government has presented by way of this notification of amendment (IS/1081/2018-2019 dated May 28, 2019), are summarized in the elucidation and do not in my opinion constitute "almost a totally new budget".

Further postponement of the handling of the 2019 draft Budget is therefore not advisable at this time. As of April 18, 2019 when the public handling of the draft Budget 2019 was made known, Members of Parliament were entitled to propose amendments to the Government's proposal of law.

Furthermore, the proposal to now interrupt the legislative process (following the report of the Central Committee) with a round of written questions is procedurally incorrect. I therefore can not honor your request to put off the budget handling until the month of July.

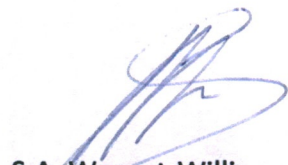
Wilhelminastraat # 1, Philipsburg, Sint Maarten

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Email: info@sxmparliament.org | www.sxmparliament.org

Needles to say, this proposal or any such can be tabled during the meeting of Parliament itself in accordance with the Rules of Order.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S.A. Wescot-Williams', written over a blue horizontal line.

S.A. Wescot-Williams
President of Parliament



Members of the Parliament of Sint Maarten

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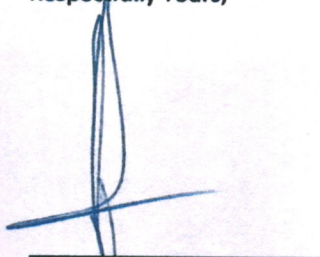
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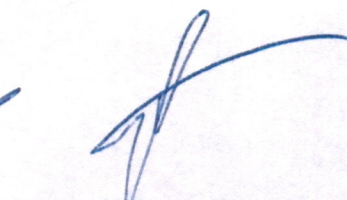
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