

DOMINICA LABOUR PARTY



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"All Shall Eat"

25th March 2025



Statement by the *Dominica Labour Party* Re Electoral Modernization:

On Wednesday, 19th March 2025, the Parliament of Dominica passed three bills aimed at strengthening and modernizing the electoral process in the Commonwealth of Dominica.

These are:

- 1. The Registration of Electors Bill, 2024**
- 2. House of Assembly Elections Bill, 2024**
- 3. The Electoral Commission Bill, 2024**

The executive of the Dominica Labour Party, and indeed the entire Labour Party, would like to congratulate the government for leading this process. We note with pride that the bills were all unanimously approved by the Parliament!

The process for this reform has been a long and arduous one, which started well over a decade ago and included many consultations throughout the length and breadth of Dominica. There were also consultations with various regional and international organizations, including the Commonwealth and the Organization of American States. The former President of the Caribbean Court of Justice, Sir Denise Byron, was engaged in the process and drafted the laws.

It is important to note that while some persons demonstrated outside of Parliament, ALL the members, both on the government side and the opposition, voted in favor of the bills! In fact, even the members of the opposition who demonstrated outside Parliament all publicly agreed that the bills represent major improvements on what previously existed!

All the parties involved did not get all what they wanted. The Labour Party, for instance, was firmly of the view that a national ID card would have more value than just a voter ID card, but compromise in a give-and-take situation. Similarly, it was the view of the Labour Party that the electoral office should send officers to major cities overseas where large numbers of Dominicans reside to undertake the confirmation process there. However, the party compromised and agreed that all confirmations should take place on the island.

The Dominica Labour Party would also like to congratulate the Commonwealth of Dominica Police Force for their handling of the demonstration outside of Parliament. The police valiantly stood by their barricades for hours and protected the Parliament while some demonstrators tried everything to enter the Parliament, including trying to seize the barricades and pelting the police with stones and bottles. Protesters were on social media asking for people to bring truckloads of stones to attack the police, and stones were actually delivered to the scene! It was only after stones and bottles were hurled at the police that, after several warnings, they publicly asked the crowd to disperse then proceeded to use tear gas to disperse crowds.

The Dominica Labour Party remains committed to the advancement and development of democracy and the development of our beautiful country. There is a role for all Dominicans to play in this regard, but inciting violence and breaking the law should not be encouraged or tolerated. The people that could be hurt would be a brother, a sister, a mother, or a father. Dominica is better than that! In Labour, our politics is about PEOPLE! People first; people always! That is why this Labour Party has 19 out of the 21 seats in Parliament.

We encourage all Dominicans, especially Labour Party supporters, to fully participate in the voter confirmation process

I thank you.

Amb Emmanuel Nanthan
President
Dominica Labour Party