



# Sarah A. Wescot-Williams

## Member of the Parliament of Sint Maarten

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Parliament of Sint Maarten  
Attention: President of Parliament  
Wilhelminastraat #1  
Philipsburg, St. Maarten

Philipsburg, January 30, 2019

Ref: Minister of VSA. Questions regarding Pension.

Dear Honorable President of Parliament:

Please find enclosed questions directed the Minister of VSA, the honorable Mr. E. Lee, in accordance with the Constitution of Sint Maarten and the Rules of Order of Parliament respectively.

I kindly request that these be forwarded to the Minister concerned, reminding the Minister of the 3 weeks period to provide the answers, as stipulated in the Rules of Order of Parliament.

Respectfully,

  
Sarah A. Wescot-Williams  
Member of Parliament (MP)



Sarah A. Wescot-Williams

Member of the Parliament of Sint Maarten

Minister of Health, Labour & Social Affairs (VSA)  
Honorable Emil Lee  
Government Administration Building  
Philipsburg, Sint Maarten

Philipsburg, January 30<sup>th</sup> 2019

Ref: Pension

Dear Honorable Minister Lee,

In August of 2018, the Department of Statistics (STAT), announced that it will not publish Consumer Price Index (CPI)/Inflation rate results for 2018.

Unfortunately, this decision has had far reaching consequences for amongst others the annual decision-making regarding the indexation of the monthly old age pension (AOV).

I have taken note of your ministry's decision to address this matter by means of an inter-ministerial task force.

- Can the minister inform if and if so, which other social programs are (potentially) affected by the absence of a CPI rate for 2017/2018?
- Are the CPI/inflation rates for the period 8/2017-8/2018 available and just not published? If they are not available, can the department of stat "skip" a year for the calculation of the CPI?
- Is the task force clear in its mandate that the first order of business is compliance with art 7 of the AOV law that states that pensions MUST be indexed (unlike that of the minimum wage which is discretionary)?
- Will the minister guard against the task force seizing this opportunity to rectify several matters regarding pension payments, pension premiums and pension age? While the latter matters are urgent, lumping the indexation question with such, will undoubtedly lead to a serious delay in indexing the old age pension for 2019.
- What timeframe is envisaged for the advice regarding the indexation of the AOV? (The AOV legislation in my opinion leaves no alternative but to index the pensions according to the CPI.)
- Can phase 2/step 2 of this task force be the research into adjusting the basic pension amount, as was done in 2015, (retroactively 2013), with the increase in the pension age to 65 as envisaged?

Respectfully submitted,

  
Sarah A. Wescot-Williams  
Member of Parliament