



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

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

UV/265/2019-2020

Philipsburg, April 24, 2020

Re: Formal notification that MP M.D. Gumbs and MP R.A. Peterson have re-evaluated and have reconsidered their position of agreement with the proposed solidarity agreement

Hon. Minister Irion,

Herewith I submit to you the formal notification that MP M.D. Gumbs and MP R.A. Peterson have re-evaluated and have reconsidered their position of agreement with the proposed solidarity agreement.

The letter is self-explanatory.

Yours truly,

R. Brison
President of Parliament

Nancy R. Guishard-Joubert

From: Melissa D. Gumbs
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 10:51 AM
To: Rolando Brison; Nancy R. Guishard-Joubert
Cc: Ardwell.irion@sintmaartengov.org; Raeyhon A. Peterson
Subject: PFP Faction Letter to Minister Finance
Attachments: PFP Faction Statement Solidarity to MinFin APR 2020.pdf; PAR Pres MinFin 20 Apr 2020 PFP.PDF

Importance: High

STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN	
Ingek. 20 APR 2020	
Volgnr. 15/265/19-20	
Per.	11/2020

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Griffier,

Please find attached from the PFP Faction:

1. Official request to you to submit the attached letter to the Minister of Finance, Minister Ardwell Irion;
2. The abovementioned letter.

Please note for expediency's sake, the Minister is also copied within this email.

Best regards,

Melissa D. Gumbs
Member of Parliament



PFP Faction

Members of the Parliament of Sint Maarten

Sint Maarten, April 20, 2020

Minister Ardwell Irion
Ministry of Finance
Soualiga Road 1
Philipsburg, St. Maarten

Dear Honorable Minister Irion:

In February 2020, Members of Parliament and Ministers, including the PFP Faction, signed off on the solidarity agreement to forego the allowances within our salaries, which would then be contributed to our pension fund. However, the ongoing situational challenges brought on by COVID-19 have brought considerable changes to the country's current and future financial position. Based on global economic outlooks and projections, the situation will continue to change daily for the foreseeable future. It will bring difficult times that will require difficult measures. Based on the current and future-projected scenarios brought on by COVID-19, the PFP Faction has re-evaluated this proposed solidarity scheme and would like to formally inform you that we have reconsidered our position of agreement with the proposed solidarity agreement; we cannot, in good conscience, continue to lend our support to it.

Solidarity, by its very definition, means a community of feelings, purposes, responsibilities and interests. In this instance, the feelings and responsibilities of Parliament and Government must be aligned, in community, with the people of St. Maarten. The economic fallout of COVID-19 will impact them at unprecedented levels. Worldwide, economists have said that the damage to the global economy caused by COVID-19 will be worse than the 2001 World Trade Center terrorist attacks and the 2008 financial crisis. Considering this, we believe that withholding the allowances from our salary, only to have it technically 'repaid' to us via our pension fund, can **no longer** be considered a stand in solidarity with the people who have entrusted us with guiding the Country out of this predicament. We would urge the Minister to consider implementing actual salary cuts that better reflect the reality of our situation.

We will be submitting to your person, and the Council of Ministers, a position paper that will outline the efforts we believe need to be made to show true understanding and alignment with the current and future situation facing our people. We do hope they are taken into consideration.

Sincerely,

Ms. Melissa D. Gurrus, M.I.B.
Member of Parliament, Faction Leader

Mr. Raeyhon A. Peterson, LL.M
Member of Parliament



PFP Faction

Parliament of Sint Maarten

Sint Maarten, 20 April 2020

President of Parliament
Parliament of St. Maarten
Wilhelminastraat 1
Philipsburg, St. Maarten

Subject: Letter to MinFin

Dear Honorable President of Parliament:

Please find attached a letter addressed to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Ardwell Irion. We hereby request that you forward the attached letter to the Minister. Thank you in advance.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Melissa D. Gumbs in black ink.

Melissa D. Gumbs, M.I.B.
Member of Parliament
Faction Leader, Party for Progress

Handwritten signature of Raeyhon Peterson in black ink.

Raeyhon Peterson, LL.M.
Member of Parliament
Party for Progress