



CANDIDATE DECLARATION – MARIO E. EBANKS, WEST BAY WEST

Introduction

Dear Voters and Residents of West Bay West and citizens of the Cayman Islands, Today after spending 16 years in private life since my last General Elections bid in 2005, I am declaring myself as a Candidate for West Bay West in the upcoming General Elections to now be held, early, on April 14th, 2021. In presenting myself for service and as a future Member of Parliament (MP), I am aware that I am subjecting myself to continued intense public scrutiny, to which I am confident and comfortable. I am happy to put myself forward, to provide a credible and ethical choice for the voters of West Bay West.

I have always been a keen advocate for nation-building and all things Caymanian, and for over 30 years I have endeavoured to be a “Servant Leader” – working effectively behind the scenes in various community and public policy advocacy initiatives. However, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and the opportunity for the Cayman Islands to reset its strategic Vision and future Goals and priorities, gave me a renewed zeal to contribute as a political candidate in this election. My second and compelling reason for becoming a Candidate in 2021 is the conduct and publicly-known behaviours of the long-serving incumbent MP for West Bay West, as this gave me and hundreds of other people grave cause for concern. However, to my surprise this same sense of concern and desire for a Positive Change was shared by many others. Several months ago I began receiving calls, requests, and representations from outstanding citizens and voters across all demographics of West Bay West and West Bay in general, who asked me to put my name forward for the 2021 Elections. After praying, listening, contemplation, and getting the support of my wife Lovenia, I decided to harken the “Call” and I was encouraged by the words from Isaiah 6:8...”Here I am...Send me”.

It was not however until the morning of 1st January 2021, when I was reading my new Daily Devotional book that my wife bought me for Christmas, that I received a clear confirmation of my decision. In that Devotional (“Radical Wisdom”) a quote from the philosopher *Thoreau* jumped out at me. It stated “*Men lead quiet lives of desperation...and go to the grave with their song still in them*”. Right there and then I decided that I would not be a part of that statistic...I would throw my ‘hat into the ring”. This deep desire to make people’s lives better was also rekindled every year as I presented the Annual “Mario Ebanks Award for overall Outstanding Performance” at the Sir John A Cumber Primary School Leaving Ceremony. Every year as I present my Award I look into the eyes of these children, and I see their dreams and aspirations deep within their eyes and faces. On those occasions I remember empathizing with them and their families and asking myself: Who will stand in the gap for them?...Who will protect their futures?...Who will fight for their dreams? Now, I am that person.

Therefore I am making a bold and courageous step in faith, to benefit all of our citizens, children, and future generations. My heart is in this cause, my personal interest and career have been put on hold for this cause, and I ask the Voters of West Bay West for your Vote on 14th April. Regarding my choice to run in West Bay West, I have lived in all West Bay electoral constituencies since 1968, and have friends, family, and supporters in all of them. But, for the past 28 years, my wife Lovenia and I have



lived in Coral Gables in North West Point, which is in West Bay West. Incidentally, during those 28 years, I served for 25 years as Chairman of the Homeowners Association (until I retired at the Annual General Meeting last year). I have always preferred to live within the community and neighbourhood that I represent as their MP – to remain close to them whether sharing their happiness or celebrations, consoling them in their grief, or helping them through moments of conflicts or emergency.

I will be introducing a Website and other social media platforms in the near future, and in the interim here are snippets on me as a person, and some of the issues and policy initiatives that I will be championing.

A biographical sketch of Mario E. Ebanks

- ❖ I am an 8th generation Caymanian, with my great-grandparents from both sides being from West Bay, and from the Ebanks, Rivers, and Bush families;
- ❖ I have been a resident of Coral Gables for the past twenty-eight years, along with my wife of 33 years Mrs. L. Lovenia Ebanks (nee Miller of North Side);
- ❖ I attended the Sir. John A Cumber Primary School in West Bay from 1969 to 1975. From an early age it seemed that my leadership skills were recognized, as at Primary school I was selected to play the leading role of the Prince, in the drama production CINDERELLA. Then in 1975 my sporting and competitive skills enabled me to become the Victor Lodorum (“Champion Boy”) in the annual Sports Day for my House (“Smith”);
- ❖ I have attended the Church of God Chapel in West Bay from 1969 with my family, and my wife and I are still active members and workers in the West Bay congregation;
- ❖ I hold a number of qualifications, certificates and accreditations, and key amongst these are: I am a 1986 graduate of the University of Miami, with a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration with a Major in International Finance & Marketing, with a Minor in Economics & Public Affairs (as a BankAmerica scholar); and a Master’s in Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Tennessee in 2002, as a Deloitte scholar;
- ❖ I began my career in the Banking/Financial Services industry and have been exposed to a number of sectors. I was the first Caymanian Manager of the Cayman Islands Chamber of Commerce in late 1980’s, the youngest Country Manager within Esso Caribbean and Central America in the early 1990’s, a Senior Assistant Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Community Development in the late 1990’s. I served as the first Director of Labour & Pensions from 2012 to 2015, and from 2015 until the present I have been serving as the Chief Human Resources Officer at the C.I. Airports Authority;
- ❖ While not being parents, my wife and I serve as “on call” parents to our nieces and nephews, and for the past 2 years we have been serving as Host Parents for the Children’s Heart Project, an international humanitarian ministry of the Samaritan’s Purse;
- ❖ I am a long-standing professional and community volunteer and advocate, and I am proud to be a Past President of the Rotary Club Central, a Past President of Junior Achievement, a Founding Member and Past President of the Cayman Islands Overseas Students’ Association,



a Founding Member and Past President of the Cayman Islands Society for Human Resource Professionals, and a Past Chairman of the General Assembly of the Church of God Chapels in the Cayman Islands;

- ❖ I have served on a host of Government Boards and Advisory Committees over the years including, but not limited to, the: Business Staffing Plan Board, as Deputy Chairman; the Turtle Farm Board as Deputy Chairman; the Education Council; the Board of Governors of the now University College of the Cayman Islands; and a member of the 5-Year Agricultural Plan Review Committee;
- ❖ My Community voluntary service has been diverse for the past 35 years, including organizations such as: the West Bay Heritage Committee, the National Trust, and Cayman Against Substance Abuse (CASA), and a member of the Board of Trustees of the International College of the Cayman Islands (ICCI).
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A snippet of some of our major Manifesto/Agenda for Action initiatives

In consultation with our volunteers and constituents in West Bay West, we are presently receiving feedback and fine-tuning the Manifesto or Agenda for Action of our Campaign, and will continue this approach with the Voters of West Bay West and the community in general. However, below are a number of main points which we will be discussing further during the Elections 2021 campaign meetings and events:

- ✓ If Elected I will immediately advocate for some minor amendments to the Constitution, and the main area of improvement would be to establish Term Limits for Members of Parliament, of no more than 20 years in total. No longer can we have our House of Parliament be a “convalescent home” for career politicians who are tired and offer no solutions. Additionally we will seek to enable a “Recall” provision for the voters to remove MP’s, in cases of improper conduct or behaviour; this will be augmented by a proper Code of Conduct and an Ethics Committee of the House;
- ✓ A variety of programmes and policies will be pursued to promote and empower the youth, families, parents, and communities;
- ✓ We will commission a comprehensive review and overhaul of all employment related legislation, including Immigration, Labour, and Pensions, as well as immediately mobilize the Minimum Wage Advisory Committee. Within an early time horizon, we will ensure that a proper plan for the Succession of willing and able Caymanians to key positions in both the Public and Private sectors, while at the same time providing security of tenure for non-Caymanians without creating a strangle-hold on the necks of future generations;
- ✓ We will ensure that Caymanians are given fair access to meaningful employment in the Cayman Islands, and ensure that Caymanians are not marginalized in the workplace;
- ✓ We will pursue a host of community and District initiatives, in areas such as emergency preparedness, cottage industries, beach access, coastal protection, Adult education, and access to affordable decent housing;



- ✓ We will commission a long-term development plan for these Islands, which will be all-inclusive and include: the economy, culture, societal expectations and norms, the marine and land-based environment, carrying capacity, and acceptable heritage and aesthetics;
- ✓ We will pursue various transportation strategies, focusing not only on large expenditures on new roads etc., but also aggressively embracing a number of proven and effective non-monetary policies and initiatives;
- ✓ We will protect small businesses, will promote green technology and other initiatives to combat climate change and global warming, and will also review the cost of doing business as well as the cost of living for ALL residents;
- ✓ We will implement the District Councils within our Constituencies in West Bay, working together and taking advantage of all synergies.

So, now that you know a bit about me and some of my summary information from our Agenda for Action, what can you do to help? We will be asking everyone who wants real change, and who want a better future for yourselves and your children and grand-children, to join us in the noble cause. We will provide more information on this in the near future.

I know that this will be a tough battle, but West Bay West...IT'S TIME. It is Time for a new, prepared, and experienced Member of Parliament to represent you. It is Time for you to elect someone who you can be proud of, and who will always be an exemplary role model. Our campaign will not engage in mudslinging and character assassination, we will discuss important issues and solutions. We will engage the aspirations of future generations, and I PROMISE that I will not embarrass you but instead will be a dependable role model who embodies character, honesty, integrity, and compassion. Additionally, I will serve the people of West Bay West and represent YOU fully and fight for the causes and improvements that are important to you.

For a long time, too long, West Bay politics and campaigning has been about personalities and "treating". Our campaign will not engage in gutter politics, but instead will be forward-looking, embracing the future challenges and solutions, and preparing our lovely West Bay West and our beloved Cayman Islands for the dawning of a better future. Everyone who knows me can attest to my work ethic and passion, and much of this comes from my father who, every night before he went to bed and as I stayed up late studying or doing my high school work, he would often encourage me with the words of another author... "Heights by men attained and kept, were not achieved by sudden flight, but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upwards through the night". Therefore in this fine tradition, In this endeavour we will not tire, we will not slumber, we will not falter....until the battle is won!!

Yours Sincerely,

Mario E. Ebanks, MBA
Candidate for Member of Parliament – West Bay West.