



PR#095-22

## PRESS RELEASE

### Cabinet Brief

*Belmopan. 07th April 2022. 8:00 a.m.*

The Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, met in regular session on 05th April 2022.

- Cabinet approved numerous fuel price relief measures as follows:
  - 1) The continued provision of fuel price relief for all sectors of the economy to provide predictability in fuel prices. Cabinet has established a firm cap on diesel and regular gasoline pump prices per gallon at \$13.41 and \$13.50 respectively. This cap will be supported through a fuel price stabilization fund to be established by the government with the Central Bank of Belize. Currently, government has already reduced excise taxes by 57% to keep diesel prices at the capped price of \$13.41 per gallon. On an annualized basis, these tax reductions represent an excise tax loss of over \$30 million. Without such tax reduction, diesel pump prices would have been \$2.13 per gallon more at \$15.54 per gallon at the tax rates applied over the past five-plus years.
  - 2) Cabinet also approved targeted support to alleviate fare increases on bus commuters through a fuel subsidy of \$0.91 per gallon for eligible bus operators for a period of up to six months, cumulatively amounting to over \$1.1 million.
  - 3) Similarly, eligible tour operators will be beneficiaries of a capped fuel subsidy jointly funded by the Government of Belize and the Belize Tourism Board in the sum of \$1.5 million for a period of up to six months.

- Cabinet gave its approval for the Minister responsible for Forestry to undertake the following:

to amend the boundaries of the Sibun Forest Reserve;

repeal the Statutory Instruments declaring Mango Creek No. 2, No. 3 and of Grant's Forest Reserves;

amend the boundaries of Mango Creek No. 1 and No. 4;

amend the boundaries of the Melinda National Park, handing over 36 acres to the Stann Creek ITVET for conservation purposes and amend the Machaca Forest Reserve, excising 500 acres for community expansion.

These measures will be undertaken to regularize the current boundaries of these areas and improve the management of these forest reserves.

- Cabinet received an update from the Minister responsible for Immigration informing that the 2022 Amnesty will commence on 2nd August 2022 with the registration process and conclude on 31st May 2023. The registration process will be for four months to be followed by the processing period which will last for six months.
- Cabinet urges all Belizeans to take personal responsibility to minimize the risk of contracting COVID-19 and encourages those persons not vaccinated to do so.
- Finally, Cabinet wishes all Belizeans a blessed and happy Easter and urges extra caution and safety over the busy weekend travels.

**Ends**