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PRESS RELEASE

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On Friday August 19th, 2011, and Monday August 22nd 2011, Hon. Prime Minister Dean Barrow and members of the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly held discussions with the Belize Association of Evangelical Churches and the Belize Council of Churches respectively on the Belize Constitution (9th Amendment) Bill, 2011.

Following those meetings and with clarifications by the Prime Minister and members of the Constitution and Foreign Affairs committee it was agreed that the following shall be removed from the Bill:

1)

Amendment of Section 69 – 3.

Delete:

“and a law passed by the National Assembly to alter any of the provisions of this constitution which is passed in conformity with this section shall not be open to challenge in any court of law on any ground whatsoever.”

2)

New section 145(1)(b):

Delete:

“and no court shall enquire into the constitutionality, legality or validity of the said acquisitions notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in section 17, section 20 or any other provision of the Constitution or any other law or rule of practice.”

New section 145(2):

Delete fully:

“The bar on the jurisdiction of the court contained in subsection (1) above is absolute and no court shall assume jurisdiction on any ground whatsoever including, without limitation, any alleged ground of lack of jurisdiction in the persons making the said Acquisition Orders, or any ground alleging breach of the rules of natural justice.”

New section 145(3) becomes new section 145(2) and new section 145(4) becomes new section 145(3).

It was agreed that these changes will become effective immediately; and the Bill now in circulation will reflect the changes, listed above.

Throughout the remainder of the consultation period this amended version of the Bill will be the basis for further discussion.

As a result of the changes agreed to, both Church Organizations hereby give their full support to the Belize Constitution (9th Amendment) Bill.

It is the desire of both Church Organizations that the remainder of the consultation process be held in a civil and respectful manner.

(Rev'd Canon) LeRoy Flowers
President

Pastor Eugene Crawford
President