

OBA Platform 2024

Our vision for a prosperous future for all Bermudians

Integrity. Accountability. Delivery.

*The One Bermuda Alliance is a diverse party that brings together people of many different backgrounds who believe in the same thing: **To strengthen our community, to bring integrity and accountability to government and to create social fairness through responsible spending of our public funds.***

The OBA wants a better, more prosperous future for Bermuda where every Bermudian has the opportunity for a world-class education, to live in a safe, healthy, sustainable community and to enjoy an affordable standard of living.

To lay the foundation for a strong, fair, prosperous Bermuda that benefits everyone, we must go back to the basics of good government by rebuilding our economy and creating opportunities for people to thrive.

*Our **Back-to-Basics** policies will bring accountability to government and we will govern with inclusivity, integrity and social fairness through financial responsibility.*

Of course, this doesn't matter unless we can actually get it done. In this, our platform, we set out how as your next government, we will deliver our vision of a brighter future for Bermuda.

The Hon. Jarion Richardson, JP, MP
Leader
The One Bermuda Alliance



Contents

1 A world-class education	page 2
2 A safe, healthy, sustainable community	Page 3
3 An affordable standard of living	Page 5
4 Repower our economy	Page 6
5 Strengthen governance	Page 8



A world-class education

Education is the key to prosperity. Accountability, transparency and expertise will be at the heart of our public education system where educators and parents will be empowered to deliver a culture of educational excellence.

We will:

1. Establish an independent Education Authority.

The Authority will include educators, the National Parent Teacher Association and business leaders. It will create an internationally recognised National Education Curriculum for both technical and traditional education. Its mission will be to engage students, teachers and parents to set educational standards and publish exam results and graduate outcomes every year.

2. Increase accountability and transparency in education.

School leaders will be empowered to reward high-performing teachers with more autonomy to directly manage their schools.

3. Invest in early childhood education and special needs support.

A central pool of resources and professional development will be allocated specifically to provide individualised programmes for students with different learning needs and to build a solid educational foundation through early learning.



A safe, healthy, sustainable community

We want a clean island, where the infrastructure is well maintained and in good repair and where our neighborhoods are safe and free of crime. Under the OBA, we believe Bermuda can become a centre of excellence for environmental stewardship.

We will:

1. Increase the number of uniformed officers.

An OBA government will expand community and marine policing, improve road safety and crack down on gang and drug-related violence.

In addition we will:

- **Enforce road safety laws** together with a comprehensive review of Bermuda's road systems and signage;
- **Upgrade and improve the safety of our government facilities**, especially our prisons; and
- **Improve emergency response times** by supplementing the volunteer fire brigade and station ambulances with trained EMTs in the East End; and centralising the dispatch of all emergency services.

2. Establish an infrastructure fund.

Our government will ensure the planned and regular maintenance of our roads and prepare for urgent projects such as replacing the St. George's Swing Bridge, reinforcing the Causeway and replacing the Tynes Bay incinerator.

continued...

A safe, healthy, sustainable community; continued...

3. Become more self-sufficient in food and energy.

An OBA government will reduce the impact of global shocks by using our farming, fishery, water and energy resources more sustainably. We will:

- **Invest in local farming** by maximising zoned agricultural land and reforming planning laws in favour of local food production as part of a wider food security strategy;
- **Support sustainable fishing** and commission a report on our fish stocks and reef health. We will increase funding for fishery wardens and enforce environmental legislation; and
- **Protect Bermuda's waters** by working collaboratively with stakeholders to enact common sense legislation for the benefit of the local fishing industry, the natural environment and future generations.

4. Protect our natural environment.

Our government will enforce existing planning and environmental legislation and prepare for the effects of climate change.

We will:

- **Leverage existing international grants and partnerships** to develop programmes and obtain funding for mangrove planting and reef protection to prevent coastal erosion;
- **Enforce planning and environmental laws** and make it easier for residents to pursue complaints against noise and air polluters; and
- **Develop a national policy on climate change** using recommendations from Government's 2018 Draft Bermuda Plan.



An affordable standard of living

Every person living in Bermuda should have the means to live a dignified life with adequate healthcare, housing and food. Our mission is to ensure that every Bermudian, including the most vulnerable in our society, enjoys this basic right.

We will:

1. Deliver a comprehensive National Health Care plan...

based on collaboration with healthcare professionals and payors to deliver efficient and effective care with streamlined administrative processes to produce favourable health outcomes. This will be accomplished by creating clear and measurable clinical standards of care, regulating the services delivered to prevent excessive charges, providing care regardless of health insurance status, and revisiting the funding model for the Bermuda Hospitals Board to ensure accountability. We will address the issue of chronic illness secondary to lifestyle and in the longer term, will work to increase the number of insured Bermudians to ensure that costs can be reduced by spreading them over a larger population base.

2. Increase availability of affordable housing...

by amending existing landlord/tenant legislation, partnering with the private sector to lease unused government properties and enabling leaseholders of government residences to purchase their properties.

3. Reduce the cost of energy and food...

by giving the Regulatory Authority stronger regulatory powers to keep electricity costs in check and by working with stakeholders to increase local food production. We will investigate sustainable solutions such as producing methane from biodegradable waste for new energy sources.

4. Better coordinated services for seniors...

to enable our older citizens to live independently with easier access to health and social services in their communities. We will create “blue zones” across the island to facilitate social interaction, access to medical care and a healthy lifestyle.

4

Repower our economy

For a prosperous future, we need a prospering economy. Your Government will create a policy mix that will enable Bermuda to flourish once again. *Here is the OBA's five-point plan to rebuild our economy for the long-term benefit of all Bermudians.*

1. We will create an environment of growth and opportunity to attract new investors. We will:

- **Repeal the Sugar Tax and Airbnb Occupancy Tax;**
- **Promote autonomy with accountability** with additional resources for government to strengthen oversight of tax collection, Customs and other under resourced departments; and
- **Seek investors that do not require government guarantees** with well-managed Public Private Partnerships (PPP's) to take pressure off our constrained Government finances.

2. We will support start-ups and local businesses by cutting taxes and red tape and revitalising the local market through immigration reform. We will:

- **Cut payroll tax for businesses that hire young Bermudians** and increase job opportunities for under 30s;
- **Reduce Government bureaucracy** to make it easier for business to do business; and
- **Ensure fair access to Government contracts for local businesses** by strengthening Government oversight of bidding and procurement.

3. We will re-invigorate our tourism product through an independent Bermuda Tourism Authority (BTA), building out Bermuda's conference infrastructure and increasing sports and business tourism. We will:

- **Reestablish an independent BTA to promote Bermuda** with better coordination between tourism accommodations, attractions and transportation;
- **Partner with hotel operators – not property developers – to reopen hotels** – and tie tax concessions to financial investment and employee training;

continued...

Repower our Economy; continued...

- **Attract more conference and business tourism** by developing conference facilities and a multi-purpose entertainment venue. We will work with local and international promoters to bring festivals, tournaments and other events to Bermuda throughout the year; and
- **Encourage Bermudian entrepreneurs of creative and athletic ventures.** We will partner with them to create new opportunities for artists, entertainers, athletes and other cultural ambassadors for Bermuda.

4. We will increase Government efficiency by investing in the civil service and working with our experienced civil servants to increase investment in under-resourced services and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy. We will:

- **Create a results-driven, customer service-based model** by investing in technology, streamlining Government services, incentivising high performance and centralising information;
- **Create a more joined-up and user-friendly experience for the public** by relocating and merging connected Government departments; and
- **Use Government resources more efficiently.** For example, ensuring that Government departments are housed in Government-owned buildings wherever possible.

5. We will balance the budget and reduce the national debt to create a more sustainable economic future for Bermuda, free from the cycles of boom and bust and crippling interest payments on our national debt. We will:

- **Ring-fence the Corporate Income Tax (CIT) for a stabilisation fund.** CIT funds will be segregated by legislation, held in a stabilisation fund and prioritised for debt reduction as recommended by the Bermuda Fiscal Responsibility Panel.
- **Prioritise the reduction of our national debt** through the stabilisation fund as well as through more efficient debt collection, minimising interest rate costs and tightening up oversight of spending of public funds.
- **Produce a balanced budget** meaning we will not use borrowed funds to claim balanced budgets. We will bring back transparency and accountability to the management of Bermuda's public funds by exercising fiscal responsibility, prudent budget management and regular public reporting.

5 Strengthen governance

The erosion of democratic norms and good governance within our public institutions, combined with inadequate oversight of public officials, has diminished trust in our political leadership. In government, the OBA will prioritise integrity, transparency and accountability.

We will:

- **Be an Accountable to the Public (AtP) Government:** Launch a comprehensive open data portal where government financial records, meeting minutes, and performance reports are publicly accessible including a register of completed and outstanding audits;
- **Publish Public Calendars:** Publish year-long calendar of Parliament, and Committee meetings including Standing Agendas, opening all committees to public by default;
- **Enforce anti-corruption laws** including the Ministerial Code of Conduct where ministers must not use ministerial resources for personal or partisan purposes;
- **End the culture of “friends and family”** by ensuring that government boards are truly independent and draw from the widest possibly membership for government appointments;
- **Limit concentration of interests** by prohibiting the Premier from holding the position of Finance Minister for anything more than a three-month transition period; and
- **Review the existing Westminster system** and consider ways to reduce the cost of government, improve the quality of political candidates and create a better functioning parliamentary system.

Integrity. Accountability. Delivery.



One Bermuda Alliance

oba.bm