

'Common Sense Must Prevail': Solomon Makes Forceful Case for Cruise Piers at South Sound Meeting

GRAND CAYMAN, CAYMAN ISLANDS, April 1, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At a spirited town hall meeting at South Sound Community Center in the Cayman Islands on Tuesday, former local parliamentarian Ellio Solomon delivered a compelling, unapologetic case for the construction of cruise piers, urging Caymanians to support the initiative in the April 30 referendum. Framing the issue as a defining moment for the country's tourism industry and long-term development, Solomon described the opposition as driven by emotion, misinformation and vested interests.



ACT Executive Program Manager Ellio Solomon at South Sound Community Center

Countering environmental objections, Solomon said recent surveys and dives revealed that the area proposed for the piers is far from pristine. "We paid someone to dive out there, tracking it with GPS ... and what's down there ... it's a moonscape," he said. "You are not going down there and seeing beautiful red, blue, green coral. That's not what you're going to see."

He argued that continuing with anchor-based tendering poses far greater risks to the environment. "If you care about the environment, why would you be allowing ships to just come and keep dropping anchors?" he asked, noting that thousands of square feet of coral has been destroyed in the Cayman Islands by anchoring. "So ladies and gentlemen, if anyone asks a 10-year-old school kid, which one you think is best for the environment – a parked boat or one that's constantly running? I think that the kid could figure out that a parked boat ebbing in the water is a lot less damaging to the environment than one that's constantly running."

Solomon also criticized the current cruise passenger experience, calling the tender system outdated, inaccessible and contributing to the environmental disequilibrium. "Getting on a boat like this, rocking, is not a good customer experience," he said. The special needs community, the

elderly and their caregivers are often left on the ship, he explained. “We are hurting because people can’t come off that ship,” said Solomon.

Taking aim at the economic implications, Solomon pointed out that Cayman’s use of tenders comes with a high opportunity cost, as cruise passenger spending is limited by the short time spent onshore. He suggested that more time would result in more revenue, calling it “just good business.”

He also called out what he sees as the real opposition: the tender business. “Let’s understand – Lady Justice is holding scales in her hand,” he said, explaining that on one side, Cayman Islands businesses and the country stand to benefit, while on the other, the tender business brings in millions each year. “If you want to know in part where the argument’s coming from, follow the money,” he added.

Solomon said the anti-pier groups are relying on emotional arguments, pointing to retirees who oppose development in Cayman. However, he believes the island cannot remain static and emphasized that development – including cruise berthing infrastructure – is essential to Cayman’s future. “This is a common-sense issue,” Solomon told the audience.

The event featured a panel including former Acting Director of the Cayman Islands Port Authority Joseph “Joey” Woods, former Cayman Turtle Center CEO Tim Adam, and local entrepreneur Noel March. The panel echoed Solomon’s call to action and answered community questions in a robust discussion.

To watch a recording of the discussion, visit [facebook.com/actcruisetourism](https://www.facebook.com/actcruisetourism).

About The Association for Cruise Tourism (ACT) in the Cayman Islands

The Association for Cruise Tourism (ACT) represents a coalition of stakeholders dedicated to the sustainable and responsible growth of the cruise tourism industry in the Cayman Islands. With members across a broad spectrum of the local economy, including tour operators, merchants, restaurants, bars and transportation providers, ACT advocates for the businesses, entrepreneurs and local stakeholders who benefit from cruise tourism, ensuring their voices are heard in decisions impacting this crucial sector. ACT is also dedicated to educating the public, advocating for balanced policies, and supporting initiatives that drive economic growth while benefiting all residents of the Cayman islands. For more information, visit actcayman.com.

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