



**Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Labour and Social Security**

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ANY REPLY OR SUBSEQUENT REFERENCE TO THIS  
COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE  
PERMANENT SECRETARY AND THE FOLLOWING

January 29, 2021

Mrs Anila McCarthy  
Committee Coordinator  
Houses of Parliament  
Gordon House,  
81 Duke Street,  
Kingston

Dear Mrs McCarthy,

**Re: The Ministry of Labour and Social Security, input on the National Identification and Registration (NIR) Act, 2020**

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Reference is made to your letter dated January 5, 2021, in which you sought our comments regarding the matter at caption.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security supports the introduction of a National Identification System for Jamaica. It is our view that it will greatly enhance our ability to serve the persons who access the Ministry's programmes. We also believe that the Act would support the well-being of senior citizens at a minimum, by increasing their participation in society and improving income security and social protection coverage.

Specifically, the National Identification and Registration Number will be a valuable and useful tool to capture the demographic information of beneficiaries/contributors and pensioners. It would assist in reducing duplication of benefits, while facilitating broader participation in Social Protection Programmes. Additionally, it would serve the purpose of responding quickly to individuals impacted by disaster and aid in completing field investigation, as with the NIR Act additional details would be provided on our clients.

Mrs Anila McCarthy  
Committee Coordinator  
2021 January 29

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We have concerns however in respect of:

- I. Clause 10 (4) addresses applications for enrolment of an individual by another person acting on their behalf. The Ministry recommends the inclusion of senior citizens who are shut-ins, "ageing in place" in their homes and being cared for by close relatives. These persons will not fall under any of the categories outlined in this Clause.
- II. Clause 12 - Verification of identity Information, the Ministry also recommends provision for senior citizens with no form of identification and for whom the Registrar General's Department has no record. These include centenarians (persons 100 years and older) who remain undocumented are unable to benefit from social services.
- III. Jamaica's population is ageing and the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) projects that by 2050, 22% of citizens will be over the age of sixty (60). The Government of Jamaica by way of the Green Paper, National Policy for Senior Citizens 2018, and in consideration of regional and global dialogue and commitments, has signaled its commitment to increased participation of senior citizens in society by promoting the participation of senior citizens in local and national governance structures and promoting advocacy for the views and perspectives of senior citizens. In this regard, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, recommends an amendment to the First Schedule for the inclusion of a senior citizens' advocate or specialist in ageing in the composition of the Board.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, we have no objection to the National Identification and Registration Act.

Yours sincerely,



Colette Roberts Riden (Mrs)  
**Permanent Secretary**