



Con. 25 - Warwick North East

Candidate Announcement Remarks

Senator Ianthia Simmons-Wade

Good morning Premier David Burt, MP's, Senators, family and friends,
Thank you for your presence and support on my roll out as the Progressive Labour Party candidate for
Constituency #25 Warwick North East.

Bermuda we fell asleep in one world and woke up in another world. Our lives have changed significantly and we struggle to live with this new norm. Like the rest of the world our small island's economy continues to be seriously impacted.

During these past months, the Progressive Labour Party Government was challenged to make decisions to balance public health and the impact on our economy. As a result of strong leadership, Government's decisive action and the compliance of the Bermudian people, our active cases of Covid-19 and deaths are extremely low and our borders have reopened. Confronted with tough times, our Government made tough decisions to do what it takes to protect the people and to rebuild our economy. This pandemic is a reminder that there is such a thing as a community and that we are not just individuals. We will come through this together, as we have a reserve of strength inside, that emerges when life puts us to the test. Covid-19 is our greatest test.

Some question, why now for a general election? The Progressive Labour Party government is seeking a mandate from the people to lead Bermuda on the road to economic recovery and to rebuild our island. There will be tough times ahead and many sacrifices. Bermuda we need a Government of resilience. Our government has demonstrated the leadership, values and vision with a track record of performance, achievements and implementation.

Mark Twain said the two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you found out why. Our stories begin well before we arrive on this earth. If we are lucky our story will extend beyond us. At a very young age I knew that my life story would be one of service.

My career has spanned over 40 years in health, long term care and with the disabled. It was my vision to improve and empower the lives of people, but in reality they inspired me. My public service and volunteerism, locally and internationally, have spanned over 45 years. I have chaired and served on government, private and charitable boards and committees, most notable Bermuda Hospitals Board and the Sustainable Development Board. It was never about my role but always about the spiritual goal of service.

My family has a very rich legacy, who for generations strongly believed in community service. As the wife of the late L. Frederick Wade, my level of social consciousness grew significantly. Politics has been an integral part of my life for over 35 years. Community service has also been instilled in my triplets, Frederick, Ceola and Kamela. As a single parent for 24 years, I understand the struggles of being the sole breadwinner and raising and educating children in our world today.

It is an honor to be selected as the candidate for Constituency #25, Warwick North East. I have roots in this constituency having lived here during my formative years from age 11 to age 23. Now I live just a few minutes away, it's almost like I never left.

As a new Senator and the Junior Minister for Health, Cabinet and now Communication it was truly baptism by fire. As a woman and a "pre-senior" I brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Senate. In the past months, I have taken significant legislation to the Senate as a result of this pandemic and supported other legislation necessary for our government to continue to function. This experience combined with working with such a talented Senate team, inspired me to run in this general election for the PLP.

Bermuda like most countries is experiencing an ageing population as well as a declining birth rate. Government statistics predict that seniors will climb to 24.9% by the end of 2026. As the Chair of the Ageing Well Committee, our mandate is to develop targeted policies working along with the government, the community and the third sector. The committee will continue to drive forward policies to ensure seniors are ALWAYS front and centre. Our Government is committed to "Ageing in All policies".

The following are but a few;

- The Parliamentary Election Amendment Act 2020 – enables seniors to vote in an advanced poll or in their home if they are "sick and shut in".
- The Charter of Rights and Responsibilities of the elderly and adults in need of long term care
- Expanded the Home and Seniors Benefits under Future Care
- Instituted an interest free home improvement loan for family who wish to modify their homes for senior relatives
- The Public Service retirement age rose to 68 years of age

Health is our most valuable possession. The Ministry of Health is the caretaker of the island's health care system. As a result of the pandemic we are again reviewing the Bermuda Health Plan to ensure it will provide access to timely, acceptable and affordable healthcare of appropriate quality to all Bermudians.

The PLP government has a track record of performance and delivery. Premier David Burt leads the government with tomorrow as well as today in mind and has also developed a culture of leadership within the Progressive Labour Party.

In closing, to the Constituents in #25 Warwick North East, your vote should be based, not just on me as your candidate, but as importantly on which party you believe has the proven leadership and that is prepared to accept the responsibilities for our island's future. Remember the power of the politicians is in the people. I promise to listen, I promise to work tirelessly and I promise to represent all of you in the House of Assembly if elected as your Member of Parliament. This is my pledge to you.