

Statement by Robert Myers
October 17, 2014

Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers' Confederation
P.O. Box N. 665
Nassau, The Bahamas.

At: The Board of Directors of the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and
Employers' Confederation

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Chairman of the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers' Confederation (BCCEC), and one of the principal supporters of the incredible effort the organization is making to improve fiscal responsibility, increase transparency and accountability of our government, and lower electrical costs I am compelled to explain the situation with respect to the unfortunate leakage and media exploitation regarding my recent customs matter. Unfortunately, despite what I believe you may understand to be an excusable procedural error for which fair recompense was made, I am compelled to resign my position as the Chairman of the BCCEC and Co-Chairman of the Coalition for Responsible Tax as I believe that the publicity of this matter has cast a negative light on the great work the staff and Board of the BCCEC is doing. This matter has also placed undeserved pressure on my family and businesses.

As you are now aware, my wife and I purchased a used hybrid Porsche SUV in the U.S. this summer, which we used in the U.S. over the summer. Upon our return to the Bahamas, we shipped the car to the Bahamas via Tropical Shipping and provided Tropical and our Broker the required paper work to have the car shipped and cleared.

Given that we had an accident with the vehicle and added mileage during our stay in the U.S., I requested that our Broker have Customs take this into consideration when determining the value of the vehicle. I

provided our Broker with the original Bill of Sale for the vehicle as well as the Kelly Blue Book value of a car of this condition as a means for Bahamas Customs to establish a reasonable value for the vehicle. Our Broker understood and followed what she believed to be the prescribed procedure for the car to be valued by Customs based on the submitted declaration and supporting documentation, as is noted in our Broker's own account of what transpired (see attached).

Given the circumstances, we now understand the procedure was incorrect, but are still unclear as to the prescribed process. We never had any intent to falsely declare the value of the vehicle. We simply seem to have improperly attempted to obtain a fair value for a used vehicle.

I signed the C52 form in acceptance of our error, hoping that the Comptroller would take our explanation into account and resolve the matter. Upon the Comptroller's ruling on the matter, I paid the required customs duty on the full value of the vehicle as listed in the original bill of sale, as well as a fine for our procedural error.

It is unfortunate that during the days that the car was impounded, while I was attempting to resolve the matter, someone within Bahamas Customs chose to provide the details to a local Facebook blog, and then subsequently, to ZNS.

It is clear to me from the media reports that my status as Chairman of the BCCEC has caused significant public escalation of this matter by those who wish to discredit me. I would argue that the reporter's claims that I have been treated with any preference by Customs are misguided. If anything, I have paid a greater price because of my position in the BCCEC, evidenced by the fact that the files related to my matter were leaked to the press. Other than the leaked information, I believe that Customs has acted appropriately.

The law has been served, the penalty paid, and the matter resolved. My resignation will,

I hope, remove me and my family from any further attacks and allow the Chamber to continue to do its good work.

My work over the last six and a half years at the BCCEC has been an extremely positive experience. I have enjoyed working with the staff, directors and chairpersons of the BCCEC. The organization accomplishes great work, and does so with very limited support or thanks. I am proud to have been a part of it, and I wish the BCCEC every success in the future. I thank my fellow BCCEC Board members, family, friends and business partners who have supported me in my Chamber efforts.

I sincerely hope that the efforts, energy and thoughtful positions that we have encouraged within the BCCEC, associations, unions, churches, government and civic groups continue to develop. I hope that people will understand the desperate need for collaboration, change and hard work if the Bahamas is to remain a stable country and economy.

Robert Myers.