



No. 11 of 2001

I assent,

(SIR COLVILLE N. YOUNG)

Governor-General

27th March, 2001

AN ACT to amend the Land Tax Act, Chapter 47 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 1980-1990, to provide for the imposition and collection of a speculation tax on large parcels of undeveloped land; to enable the Minister to appoint different dates for the revision of valuation rolls for different districts; to require certification from the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys for payment of land tax before transferring any land subject to tax; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(Gazetted 31st March, 2001.)

BE IT ENACTED, by and with the advice and consent of the House of Representatives and the Senate of Belize and by the authority of the same, as follows:-

1. This Act may be cited as the

Short title.

LAND TAX (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2001,

CAP. 47.

and shall be read and construed as one with the Land Tax Act, which is hereinafter referred to as the principal Act.

**Amendment
of Section 2.**

2. Section 2 of the principal Act is hereby amended by the insertion of the following new definitions in their proper alphabetical order:-

“base date” in relation to valuation roll for a district means the date when the revision of valuation roll for that district comes into force;

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys.

**Amendment
of Section 12.**

3. Section 12 of the principal Act is amended as follows:

(i) in subsection (1), by renumbering paragraph (e) thereof as paragraph (f) and by inserting therein the following as new paragraph (e);

“(e) whether or not the land is in use based on the improvements, if any, made on such land”;

(ii) by adding the following as new subsections (4) and (5) immediately after subsection (3):-

“(4) The Minister may, for the purpose of enabling the Chief Valuer to revise the valuation rolls in sufficient time as provided in section 13, appoint different dates as base dates for different districts or combination of districts by Order published in the *Gazette*.

(5) The Chief Valuer shall, when making any notification in the *Gazette* as provided under subsections (1) and (2) of section 13, ensure that such notification complies with the base dates specified by the Minister under subsection (4) above”.

4. Section 18 of the principal Act is amended by adding a *Proviso* immediately after subsection (1) as follows:-

Amendment
of section 18.

“Provided that a party to any deed, conveyance, certificate of title, fiat, mortgage, lease or any other instrument evidencing any transaction involving land which is subject to tax under this Act shall, before executing any such instrument, obtain a certificate from the Commissioner certifying that all taxes in respect of such land have been fully paid”.

5. The principal Act is hereby amended by the addition of the following as new sections 23A and 23B immediately after section 23:-

Addition of
Sections 23A
and 23B.

“23A(1) Subject to the provisions of this section, there shall be raised, levied, collected and paid annually a speculation tax on all pieces or parcels of agricultural land, suburban or beach land exceeding 300 acres.

Speculation
tax.

(2) The rate of speculation tax leviable under subsection (1) above shall be five percent (5%) of the unimproved value of such land or such other rate as the Minister may from time to time by Order published in the *Gazette*, prescribe.

(3) The speculation tax leviable under this section shall be in addition to the Land Tax chargeable under section 21.

(4) This section shall not apply:

- (a) where the aggregate value of improvements, if any, made to land referred to in subsection (1) of this section is more than one and one-half times the unimproved value of such land or where thirty percent (30%) or more of land referred to in subsection (1) of this section, is put to agricultural use or production;
- (b) to any land being used for eco-tourism purposes where the Commissioner is satisfied that unimproved land forms an integral part of improved land;
- (c) to leased national lands;
- (d) to any other category of land which the Minister may exempt from the payment of tax under this section by Order published in the *Gazette*.

(5) All regulations or orders made by the Minister under this section shall be subject to negative resolution.

CAP 158A

Land
chargeable to
tax not to be
subdivided.

23B (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Land Utilization Act or any other law, no person shall subdivide any land chargeable to tax under this Act into parcels of 300 acres or less without the written consent of the Minister.

(2) Any subdivision made contrary to subsection (1) above shall be void and of no effect."

6. Section 24 of the principal Act is hereby amended in subsection (1) thereof by substituting the words and figures “sections 21, 22, 23 and 23A” for the words and figures “sections 21, 22 and 23” occurring therein.

**Amendment
of section 24.**