

BRUG Submits National Decree for Government subsidized school food program

--PHILIPSBURG—Unified Resilient Sint Maarten Movement (URSM) prospective candidate Richinel Brug submits in accordance with article 7 of the Law on Compulsory Education a National Decree containing general measures regulating a Government subsidized school food program for students. This National Decree was booked in at the Government Administration Building on Friday August 25th, 2023.

“As mentioned in my previous press release: article 7 of the Law on Compulsory Education, states that it is the responsibility of the Government of Sint Maarten to provide a meal to every single student attending school, whose parents are not in a position to provide such. The train of thought behind this law is that nothing should hamper a student of following education on the level it is supposed to be followed. This article goes further to state that provisions to establish and fund a Government subsidized food program for students, as well as the rules regulating the application, granting and accountability of such a program, should be established by National Decree containing general measures.”

“Based on my own research conducted last school year I know that at least 600 students come to school on a daily basis without a (nutritious) snack or food. Schools, private businesses, individuals and NGO’s try their utmost to assist these students in need. I have said this before and I will say it again: while I am extremely grateful for and appreciative of the efforts of these kindhearted individuals and organizations, this is not, I repeat, not their responsibility.”

“Once approved, this draft National Decree will make it possible for the Government of Sint Maarten to properly execute article 7 of the Law on Compulsory Education. The National Decree is drafted in such a way that all students attending public schools will automatically be part of this program. Subsidized schoolboards will also be able to take part, once the respective schools apply for this food program for those students who otherwise would not be able to attend school on a full stomach.

“Upon announcing my candidacy for legislative office in March, I made a promise to the people of Sint Maarten that I will not only highlight the challenges our people face, but also come with tangible legislative solutions that will directly impact the grandparents, parents and children of this country. As a father of two beautiful children who are now attending the same MAC school I attended, I wanted to make sure I set some monies aside, to be able to pay a lawyer to draft this National Decree PRIOR to getting into office. It is our collective responsibility to alleviate and attempt to eradicate poverty on Sint Maarten.”

“To this day, I can still remember my primary school days at the MAC school. During every recess we were offered a breakfast which consisted of a glass of milk, a sandwich (sometimes 2), and a vitamin. On special days we were even offered fruits. Everything was prepared at the school kitchen and delivered to our classroom by Ms. Veronica Taylor and Ms. Irene Fyfield.”

“Considering that the majority of our Sint Maarten population speak English, my team and I made sure to have a certified translator translate this draft legal document. Persons who are interested in reviewing the draft National Decree in Dutch and or English can request this by registering on my website: www.richinelbrug.com.”

"I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three foods a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits."

Martin Luther King Jr

