

**DISCLAIMER**

This Report provides a brief of the Proceedings of Parliament on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019. While all efforts have been made to provide an informative brief, this information must not be relied upon as an alternative to the official Hansard record of proceedings of Parliament. If you have any specific questions about the Proceedings of Parliament on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**Day 6: 9:15am**

**I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY – Reading of Bills**

**1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2) 2018/2019 and Appropriation Bill 2019/2020- Debate on second reading (cont.)**

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSES:**

**(i) Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell, Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour/Public Enterprises. (cont)**

The Hon Minister firstly greeted Samoa in all her honorific salutations and acknowledged Mr Speaker, the Leader of the House, Deputy Prime Minister, Members of the Cabinet, as well as the present Members of Parliament in the House. He then welcomed the Chief Executive Officers for respective Ministries who are also present. He then concluded his greetings by reiterating that concerns regarding minimum wage has been addressed during his speech yesterday.

Hon LAUTAFI then spoke on the poor quality of goods (expired and unlabeled products) put forward by Members and stated that these are considered illegal products; however, he stated that this is difficult to measure and monitor due to its complexity in regards to volumes for imported goods. Therefore, the Minister put forth solutions to address the issue:

- (i). Encourage business owners and customers to report any expired or unlabeled products to his Ministry. Further elaborated that there's a Committee that ensures food produced exported and imported to Samoa are safe and suitable for domestic and international consumers namely Samoa National Codex Committee (SNCC).
- (ii). Advised retailer shops in town and around the rural areas to carefully review the expiry products they are selling and ensure they are labelled (ingredients description of the product) and have a trademark.

The Hon Minister then addressed on the issue regarding the increase of prices due to the removal of the Price Control Unit whilst Consumer and Competition Commission was established – advised the Commission to consider appropriate ways to control entrepreneurs from exceeding the price ceiling.

Further to his response, he firstly spoke on how Samoa Housing Corporation (SHC) has helped and supported the public with building and the renovation of their houses through their financing services. He also addressed a request put forth by a Member for Safata West towards the Corporation for charging their interest rates too high – the Hon Minister emphasised that this is the only finance industry that does not require any personal assets to guarantee any loan application but only guarantors supporting their loan application.

**Afioga LEANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata West**

The Member for Safata West interjected and stated that the rationale behind his concern was an alternative arrangement to meet loan repayments given that the Corporation's interest rates are too high and the public are now in a predicament to pay such high amount (he perceived that the total amount of interest rates charged is almost the same as the amount the applicant requests for).

**Hon Minister for Finance- interjection**

The Hon Minister interjected and stated that the Member's concern is heavily on interest rates which is a matter that's considered by his Ministry and therefore ensured the Member that Central Bank of Samoa and the Ministry of Finance will review its relevant legislation in order to address concerns put forth.

**Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell, Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour/Public Enterprises (cont.)**

The Hon Minister commended the Minister of Finance for his response on the issue and further elaborated that the applicants are also entitled to pay off their loans before the given timeframe from the Corporation. For instance, the Corporation approves an applicant's loan with the agreement to be paid within 10 years and suddenly the applicant won the lotto and paid off his/her loan before the timeframe. He accentuated that this will not only simplify the Corporation's work but it will also give an opportunity to other applicants' application to be approved. The Hon Minister then encouraged the public to seek consultation with SHC on any issue regarding their services.

**Hon Prime Minister - Interjection**

In support to the Minister response, the Hon PM further emphasised that any matters regarding loans to any finance industry the public should resolve their loan issues given that it's a matter between them and the Bank.

**Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell, Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour/Public Enterprises (cont.)**

The Hon Minister then spoke on the temporary workers income for the Apprenticeship Scheme (Carpentry & Joinery) which was raised by a Member and affirmed that our local elected workers are paid accordingly to NZ and Australia's rate. He further stated that the Scheme is 3 years long with a combination of work and part time study which involves both practical skills and understanding of theory in the trades. In this regard, he informed and assured the public that the Government is not exploiting the people through the mentioned scheme as perceived by others.

He then stated and affirmed that the temporary market will be re-located in Sogi and asserted that the Salelologa Market is currently under reconstruction.

In regards to Samoa's airline, he commended the collective support from the Members of Parliament for using our own plane to travel and stated that all concerns and recommendation put forth accordingly have been noted. In addition, the cancellation for the Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft type was due to two fatal crashes and the global grounding of the Boeing aircraft but mentioned that the Government are currently seeking for a replacement. Despite the cancellation, the Hon Minister highlighted a significant increase in the number of passengers for Samoa Airways Airline which is an indication that such development is progressing as well as offering cheaper airfares if compared to other airlines such as Virgin Australia and New Zealand.

**Proceedings were suspended at 10:00am due to power outage and reconvened at 11:10am.**

) **Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang, Minister for Works, Transport, and Infrastructure and Member for Urban East.**

The Hon Minister informed the House and the public listening in that the power outage was due to a faulty transformer at Fiaga and therefore conveyed his apologies on behalf of his Ministry for the inconvenience.

**Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell, Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour/Public Enterprises (cont.)**

The Hon Minister then enclosed his response by acknowledging the continuous support of his constituency especially his mother and conveyed his good wishes for our local delegates competing in the Pacific Games together with our Prime Minister.

(ii) **Afioga Hon FIAME Naomi Mataafa, Deputy Prime Minister and Member for Lotofaga**

The Hon Deputy Prime Minister firstly greeted all of Samoa in her honorific salutations and then acknowledged the Members of Parliament present in the House. She then elucidated that her absence during the first week of the sitting was due to a conference (Leadership for Inclusive Development) she attended in Australia; however, she expressed her gratitude for making it on time for the budget.

Hon FIAMEA then put emphasis on the impacts of climate change where a cross-sectoral coordination is needed to address issues accordingly. She further noted that the government has also formulated work plans for the Energy Sector which is aimed to be completed in 2025. The Hon Deputy Prime Minister asserted that the government signed an agreement with districts and villages with the purpose to manage natural environment and infrastructure in order for the community to be more resilient and better adapt to climate change and its adverse impacts. Given that climate change is a cross cutting issue, she encouraged all sectors to collectively be responsible.

In addition, she notified the House that the Ministry are currently implementing projects such as reforestation as well as prioritising the reconstruction of seawalls near the main roads. Further to this, she noted that the Ministry is in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) for sending out environmental messages such as “**minimise the use of plastics**” in order to fall in line with our environment policies during the Pacific Games in July.

(iii) **Susuga Hon AUELUA Fatialofa Lupesoliai Tuilaepa Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Member for Lepa**

The Hon. Prime Minister wrapped up Government responses by advising the CEO’s in the House to take note on all the concerns and requests put forth by Members so that they can provide recommendations and advise the Ministers accordingly. He further stated that the requests put forward by Members can be processed within one Financial Year; however, the Government will prioritise the major projects that are beneficial for our country and therefore informed respective Members of Parliament to be patient.

The Prime Minister then put emphasis on the Supremacy of Parliament and reminded the Members on their core functions in Parliament and as Representatives for their respective constituency through complying and abiding with provisions of the Standing Orders. He further elaborated that even though legislation is passed within the Chamber by Parliament; they are still citizens of Samoa and should therefore abide by the law. He also put emphasis on the Rule of Law and clarified that a Member of Parliament can be taken to court once he or she breaks the law. The Prime Minister then reiterated the importance of **Supremacy of Parliament**

which is where laws are formulated but not to act contrary to a law and accentuated that no one is above the law.

The Prime Minister then stated the core bodies that are responsible to enforcing and ensuring that people comply with the laws:

- I. **Ministry of Police** – has the power to review any petition on someone (general public, Members of Parliament and anyone in the private sectors etc) that broke the law and act accordingly if required under the law.
- II. **Ombudsman** – can scrutinise concerns of the public who may be affected in their personal capacities by the activities of Government; and response directly to the Parliament.
- III. **Office of the Attorney General** –takes legal actions on people breaking the law in Court and noted that more than 50 lawyers are assisting the Attorney General in carrying out their functions.
- IV. **Office of the Controller and Auditor General** – audits on the assets, revenue and expenditures for every government ministries and agencies and submit its report directly before the Parliament for tabling.

The Hon Prime Minister then spoke on the need to reserve our sea cucumbers (fugafuga) and advised the public to refrain from taking it to overseas. In addition, he informed the people of Samoa to also purchase their cocoa and coconuts from the Market instead of depending too much on purchasing it from the Agricultural Store as they can run out of stock. He then concluded his response by acknowledging the progress with our Rhinoceros Beetle Schemes and encouraged the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to continue with its Stimulus Programme.

## 2. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2) 2018/2019 – Consideration in Detail

Clause 2 – *Approved*

First Schedule:

Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: \$40, 000 (Total Additional Expenditure)

*Approved*

Ministry of Finance: \$4,500,000 (Total Additional Expenditure)

*Approved*

National Health: \$3,000,000 (Total Additional Expenditure)

*Approved*

TOTAL ADDITIONAL OVERALL EXPENDITURE 2018-2019: \$7,540,000

*Approved*

Clause 3 – *Approved*

Second Schedule:

Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: \$40,000 (Total Reduction in Expenditure)

*Approved*

TOTAL REDUCTIONS OVERALL EXPENDITURES 2018-2019: \$40,000

*Approved*

Clause 1 and Short Title: *Approved*

### **3. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2) 2018/2019 – third reading**

The Hon Minister of Finance, SILL Epa Tuioti, moved the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.2) 2018/2019 to be third read; motion approved. The Bill was third read and passed the Legislative Assembly.

### **4. APPROPRIATION BILL 2019/2020 – consideration in detail**

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries: <i>Approved</i>	\$18,566,801
Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour: <i>Approved</i>	\$19,852,036
Ministry of Communication and Information Technology: <i>Approved</i>	\$7,644,638
Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture: <i>Approved</i>	\$109,517,345
Ministry of Finance: <i>Approved</i>	\$98,461,552
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade <i>Approved</i>	\$23,634,753
Ministry of Health: <i>Approved</i>	\$112,081,674
Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration: <i>Approved</i>	\$13,126,655

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment: \$25,284,132  
*Approved*

The Finance and Expenditure Committee Chairperson, ALIIMALEMANU Alofa Tuuau put forth the amendment to omit \$600,000 from MNRE for Estimates under SNPF Land Compensation and record the correct Total Expenditure for the Ministry of \$24,684,132.  
*The motion seconded and approved.*

Ministry of Police: \$32,875,887  
*Approved*

Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet: \$8,509,054  
*Approved*

Ministry for Revenue: \$12,468,924  
*Approved*

Ministry of Women Community and Social Development: \$10,047,442  
*Approved*

Ministry of Works Transport and Infrastructure: \$47,067,483  
*Approved*

Office of the Attorney General: \$5,305,858  
*Approved*

Office of the Controller and Auditor General: \$3,913,650  
*Approved*

PM moved a motion to extend sitting hours until the Appropriation Bill 2019/2020 is third read and passed in Parliament: *Motion seconded and approved.*

Office of the Electoral Commissioner: \$5,965,516  
*Approved*

Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: \$6,528,556  
*Approved*

Ombudsman: \$1,206,828  
*Approved*

Public Service Commission: \$4,990,897

*Approved*

Ministry of Public Enterprises: \$2,712,306

*Approved*

Samoa Bureau of Statistics: \$5,376,376

*Approved*

Samoa Law Reform Commission: \$1,478,629

*Approved*

Samoa Prisons and Corrections Services: \$7,098,552

*Approved*

**TOTAL AMOUNT OF FUNDS FOR GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES: \$583,715,543.**

Clause 2:

The Finance and Expenditure Committee Chairperson, ALIIMALEMANU Alofa Tuuau put forth the amendment to reduce the Total Overall Expenditure 2018/2019 from \$583,715,543 to \$583,115,543.

*The motion seconded and approved.*

The question was put and the ayes have it

Clause 2 – Approved as amended

Clause 3 – Approved

Clause 4 – Approved

Clause 1: Short Title and Commencement – Approved

## **5. APPROPRIATION BILL 2019/2020 – third reading**

The Hon Minister of Finance, SILI Epa Tuioti moved for the third reading of the Appropriation Bill 2019/2020; motion Approved.

The Appropriation Bill 2019/2020 was third read and passed the Legislative Assembly with its Amendments put forth by the Finance and Expenditure Committee.

**Proceedings were adjourned at 1:05pm and will reconvene at 9:00am Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2019.**