

DISCLAIMER

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Tuesday 18 June 2018

9:10am

[Part A]

The Hon Speaker upon taking the Chair, formally addressed Parliament and the participants for the Primary School Programme who were present in Chambers to observe proceedings of Parliament.

I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. Money Laundering Prevention Amendment Bill 2018 – first reading

The Hon Minister for Finance, SILI Epa Tuioti moved for the first reading of the Bill; motion seconded and approved. The Bill was read a first time.

2. Education Amendment Bill 2018 – first reading

The Hon Minister for Education, Sports and Culture, LOAU Sola Keneti Sio moved for the first reading of the Bill; motion seconded and approved. The Bill was read a first time.

3. Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2017/2018 and Appropriation Bill 2018/2019 – debate on second reading

(i) TOLEAFOA Ken Vaafusuaga Poutoa – Member for Lefaga and Faleseela

The Member greeted Samoa in all her honorific salutations and proceeded to acknowledge the efforts of the Minister of Finance and his Ministry for the tabled Budget. He then acknowledged Samoa's international partners for the assistance rendered for Samoa's development (seasonal employment opportunities).

Requests by the Member to specific Ministers included the following:

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure

TOLEAFOA noted the need for road upgrades at Gagaifo, Fa'ata, Safa'atoa, Matafa'a, Faleseela, Falelatai and the main road at Matareva Beach. He then sought the Minister's consideration in regards to granting taxi licenses to road worthy vehicles which have fallen below the mandated year to be issued a license in order to operate his/her taxi.

- Minister for Public Enterprises

Acknowledged the Minister's efforts in administering Samoa's national carrier (Samoa Airways), and queried the possibility of waiving landing fees. He also noted the importance of strong networks between the Ministry and the private sector as this will bolster Samoa's economy. The Member acknowledged the positive standing of the Samoa Shipping Services in the past Financial Year, noting its profitable nature which should be followed by other Ministries and Corporations.

The Member requested the process for housing permits to be implemented in a timely manner noting that the current process is time consuming. TOLEAFOA spoke to the Minister for Women, Community and Social Development seeking financial assistance/benefit for Women Committee's during the showcasing of traditional fine mats 'Faalelegapepe'. He acknowledged his fellow Parliamentarians and concluded his speech.

(ii) TAEFU Lemi – Member for Falelatai and Samatau (Associate Minister for Natural Resources and Environment)

The Member for Falelatai and Samatau acknowledged his fellow 18 Parliamentarians for graduating with a Certificate of Law from the University of the South Pacific (USP). He further spoke to acknowledge the Hon Prime Minister for attending USP's 50th celebration ceremony then expressed his gratitude to the Minister for Finance and the Ministry for preparing the budget for the Financial Year 2018/2019.

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member requested the foundations for housing in urban areas be lifted so as to avert the damage caused by floods. The Member commented on the law making process in general and the authority afforded to the Legislative Assembly, iterating that the Legislative Assembly is the official law making body of the nation. TAEFU acknowledged the Minister for the newly opened road in the village of Samatau and requested road upgrades for all the roads within his constituency.

- Minister of Education, Sports and Culture

The Member acknowledged the Minister on taking the initiative to upgrade the school roads to ensure students ease of access to district schools.

(iii) FAUMUINA Asi Pauli Wayne Fong – Member for Urban West

The Member for Urban West voiced his appreciation to the Finance Minister for the Budget. He then raised concerns regarding the proposed wharf for Vaiusu and requested proper consultation with the Village Council in regards to the project plans before implementation.

INTERJECTION – Hon Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure

Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang clarified to the Member that consultations had been conducted with the village however no grievances from the side of Vaiusu in regards to border issues.

INTERJECTION – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon PM clarified that the development project plan is in the pipeline, on-going consultation with experts have provided that Vaiusu is the most suitable area for a wharf as it can be easily extended/enlarged. The PM iterated that the project is pending until grants and funding is secured for the project.

FAUMUINA Asi Pauli Wayne Fong – Member for Urban West

The Member made the following requests to the Minister for Works in regards to road upgrades for Falelauniu and Siusega; he then acknowledged the Minister for Revenue in remaining steadfast in his decision to tax religious leaders. FAUMUINA requested the process for clearing freight and cargo to be more efficient as it is lengthy and time consuming; he then offered well wishes to the Minister for Education in his preparations for the Pacific Games. FAUMUINA requested chainsaw's from the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. The Member concluded by querying the Minister for Public Enterprise on how revenue was generated within his Ministry and reminded the Minister for Communication and Information Technology of his pending requests.

(iv) FAAULUSAU Rosa Duffy-Stowers – Member for Gagaifomauga No.3

The Member acknowledged the Minister for Finance and the Ministry for the preparation of the Budget; FAAULUSAU acknowledged the Minister for Revenue on the Ministry's successful operations in the previous Financial Year. The Member for Gagaifomauga No.3 made specific requests to the following Ministers.

- Minister of Education, Sports and Culture

The Member acknowledged the Minister for projects which contribute to the overall development of education. FAAULUSAU commented on the grants appropriated for the Missionary schools and

requested for the amount to be increased as it is not sufficient to pay teacher's salaries, then queried the possibility of including Missionary school teachers under the payroll of the Ministry; noting that a total of 24% of teachers were employed by mission schools while 6% with private schools.

INTERJECTION – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon PM acknowledged the Member for her recommendation regarding teacher's salaries for missionary schools, and expressed his support for the Member's recommendation. The Hon PM elaborated on the importance of Revenue and taxes to fund such requests. Hon TUILAIPA noted the usual amount allotted to mission schools is 13million. He again iterated the rationale behind government's initiative to tax everyone earning an income.

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member for Gagaifomauga No.3 specifically voiced her concerns in regards to the increase of road accidents; stating that the Land Transport Authority should develop a compulsory training program for bus drivers in the changing of gears and the use of brakes. FAAULUSAU also expressed her disappointment with the type of car horns used in buses.

INTERJECTION – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon PM clarified that other accidents are caused because of the lack of understanding on how to use gears in the cars and buses; asserting the importance of proper training by the Land Transport Authority to better inform and equip drivers on the roads.

INTERJECTION – Hon Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Hon Minister acknowledged the recommendations and assured the Member that the Land Transport Authority will conduct the relevant trainings as requested by the Member.

(v) TAPULESATELE Mauteni Tamasone Metuli II Esera – Member for Vaisigano No.2

The Member for Vaisigano No.2 acknowledged the Education Amendment Bill and noted the importance of including Early Childhood Education (ECE) as formal learning.

Proceedings were set aside at 10:44am and resumed at 11:28am

POINT OF CLARIFICATION:

The Hon Speaker clarified to the Member that the Bill deliberated was the Appropriation Bill, and to direct his comments towards the Bill.

TAPULESATELE Mauteni Tamasone Metuli II Esera – Member for Vaisigano No.2

The Member for Vaisigano No.2, acknowledged the Budget prepared by the Minister of Finance and spoke specifically to acknowledge and put forth his requests to the relevant Ministers, which include:

- Minister of Health

The Member acknowledged the work of the Minister of Health and requested adequate supply of pharmaceuticals, and the possibility of a permanent doctor for the village of Sataua.

INTERJECTION – Hon Minister of Health

The Hon Minister, TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama took note of the request and clarified that there were on-going discussions to assign a German doctor for the outpost in Sataua.

- Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries

The Member acknowledged the buoys at sea projects (seawalls), he then noted the importance of such developments for the protection of the Samoan people. TAPULESATELE also acknowledged the Ministry on taking appropriate steps to minimize rhinoceros beetles.

- Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member stated that there continues to be inhabitants residing on access roads thus raising the need to carry out road maintenance.

INTERJECTION – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon Prime Minister supported the issue raised by the member concerning road maintenance (access roads – auala galve), recalling previous instances whereby a Pulenuu kept the funds for access roads and requested that government implement maintenance works. The PM clarified that the maintenance of access roads is the responsibility of the village council. The PM encouraged the Pulenuu to be a leading example in fostering maintenance and sustainability within the village.

Mr Speaker

The Hon Speaker echoed the sentiments by the Prime Minister and advised Members of the House to accept the clarification by the PM.

MOTION – Hon. Prime Minister

The Hon Prime Minister moved a motion to change the sitting hours;

9am – 1pm

3pm – 7pm;

Motion seconded and approved.

- Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member requested the installation of more pipelines before October; acknowledged the contribution of the Electric Power Corporation and requested to establish more street lights to avoid traffic accidents.

The Member concluded with a request for more overseas scholarship opportunities for the future generation of Samoa.

(vi) FUIMAONO Samuelu Te’o – Member for Falealili East

The Member for Falealili East acknowledged the Minister of Finance and the Ministry for preparing the Budget for 2018/2019 and made the following requests to specific Ministers:

- Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure

Upgrade of the roads for Sapoe, Utulaelae and other villages in his constituency. The Member stated the importance of establishing evacuation routes in times of natural disasters.

- Minister for Revenue

The Member noted the increase in the cost of chicken and requested the need to raise the minimum wage to counter the ever increasing cost of living.

INTERJECTION – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon PM asserted that there was a Tribunal assigned to review the minimum wage noting that the Tribunal raised the wages for public officials; furthermore, the tribunal operates to achieve equality.

- Minister for Communication and Information Technology

The Member informed the Minister that the television coverage does not reach certain parts in his constituency.

- Minister for Education, Sports and Culture

FUIMAONO, queried the status of scholars in Japan, noting that there has been instances whereby students fail to pass the Japanese language, however for fear of returning home empty-handed, these students seek employment to fund their own tuition without the knowledge of parents. The Member urged the Minister and the Ministry to look into such instances to ensure the students/scholars are better monitored.

- Minister for Natural, Resources and Environment

The Member proposed the merge of the Planning Urban Management Authority (PUMA) with the Ministry of Works to avoid duplication of services, noting overlapping functions.

The Member requested the seawall in his constituency to be extended and for the complete extermination of the rhinoceros beetle.

(vii) FAALOGO Iosefa Sopi – Member for Siumu

The Member for Siumu firstly acknowledged his constituency for their support and prayers; he acknowledged the Minister of Finance and the Ministry for preparing the Budget then acknowledged the Minister for Revenue for not increasing taxes. FAALOGO then made specific requests to the following Ministers.

- Minister of Education, Sports and Culture

The Member explained the incident whereby the Palalaua College was burnt down and currently needs additional funding for its completion.

- Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure

An upgrade of the roads for Siumu, and acknowledged the Minister for his visit to the constituency inspecting drainage areas.

- Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries

The Member emphasised the need for a national campaign set up to eliminate the rhinoceros beetle.

(viii) LEAANA Ronnie Posini – Member for Safata

The Member made specific requests to the following Ministers.

- Minister of Education, Sports and Culture

The Member noted the lack of teachers in his constituency and requested the Minister for assistance. In regards to the tuition fees for the National University of Samoa, the Member explained the high cost of enrolment and tuition fees which prove to be the major obstacle for low income families.

- Minister of Natural Resources and Environment

The Member requested for seawalls in his constituency and noted that Safata has a large mangrove area, he then proposed the possibility of turning the mangrove area into a tourist attraction site.

- Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure

Road upgrades for Vaiee and Salamumu noting the numerous plantations needed to be developed, however due to its isolation and difficulty in accessibility this has been an obstacle.

- Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries

Acknowledged the Minister's efforts in obtaining partners for nonu farming and encouraged Members to engage in nonu farming. The Member for Safata also queried the fishing of sea cucumbers.

INTERJECTION – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon PM clarified that Samoa is one of the few countries who have sea cucumbers; therefore it should not be fished/farmed as it should be freely available to the public. He further acknowledged the work of the Ministry of Fisheries in taking initiative in prohibiting the fishing of sea cucumbers.

In regards to the enrolment and tuition fees, the Hon PM clarified that there was an understanding that in such situations, the students may be allowed to sit the exams, however, until fees were paid or the existence of a payment agreement, exam results remain with the schools/university.

- Minister of Education, Sports and Culture

The Member requested to extend the timeframe for the payment of fees from 5 weeks to 12 weeks as it is more reasonable. The Member asserted that the Faculty of Medicine of the National University of Samoa, there is difficulty in enrolling in the Faculty.

The Member acknowledged the Samoa Qualifications Authority in regards to the accreditation of local awards.

In terms of sports, the Member queried the certainty of ages of players in the Under 20's team competing in the Super Nine's local tournament and appreciated the Ministry's attempt to value the use of birth certificates during student registration and enrolment in schools.

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure

LEAANA acknowledged the work of the Electric Power Corporation during Cyclone Gita and commended the efficient response in restoring power lines to ensure the nation accessed electricity. The Member then emphasised the need to conduct proper trainings on how to cut trees (at a regular basis) so as to avoid the impacts of trees falling on power lines and causing more damage during natural disasters.

The Member raised the importance of having Samoa's maritime whitelisted in the International Marine Organisation.

- Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour

LEAANA acknowledged Samoa's national carrier and stated that the success of the Samoa Airways is dependent on the people of Samoa thus urging the Samoan community to utilise the services of our nation.

The Member spoke generally on the mediation process to be reviewed as it is time consuming; LEAANA acknowledged the Ministry of Women in regards to the revival of the traditional treasures of Samoa, 'ie Samoa'. The Member for Safata acknowledged the work of the Ministry of Police, and requested the Outposts in the rural areas to be increased, and stressed the importance of having road signs to caution the drivers to 'drive slowly and carefully'. The Member then concluded by acknowledging the Minister for Finance in preparing the budget for the financial year 2018/2019.

Proceedings were suspended at 1:00pm and reconvened at 3:00pm