

DISCLAIMER

This Report provides a brief of the Proceedings of Parliament of Thursday 23rd June 2016 [PART A]. 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 Thursday 23rd June 2016 [PART A], you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly the Legislative Assembly.

Day 2: Thursday 23rd June 2016
9:00am

[PART A]

I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY CONTINUED

- 1. Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.2) 2015/2016 – second reading debates continued** *(inclusive of the Appropriation Bill, Supplementary Appropriation Bill and the Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on the Second Supplementary Estimates of Receipts and Payments of the Government of Samoa for the Year ending 30 June 2016)*

- 18. FUIMAONO Samuelu Teo, Member for Falealili East (continued from Day 1).**

(b) Natural Resources and Environment

The Member requested the construction of a seawall for his constituency.

(c) Health

FUIMAONO requested a health center to cater for medical emergencies; particularly to deal with non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure. He noted that this was important given that both are considered to be two of the major health risks in the country.

(d) Police and Fire Emergency Services

The Member requested the establishment of a Police Post in his constituency to ensure the safety of residents.

(e) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member stated sports development should be promoted at an early age, and at the grass roots level. He noted that both the Minister and his Associate were former Manu Samoa players, and suggested that their talents be utilised for the initiation of rugby clinics in the rural areas for school aged children. He then stated that Salani and Sapolu require land to utilize for sports fields; again emphasizing that early development will ensure future success in sports. The Member noted that sports development should not be exclusively focused on rugby, as there is a potential for national success in other sports such as athletics.

In concluding his speech, the Member wished Mr. Speaker and the Hon Prime Minister well for this Parliamentary Term.

19. NAFOITOA Talaimanu Ketu, Member for Gagaemauga No. 3

The Member opened his speech by noting the importance of the role of Members of Parliament; stating that not only must a Member be articulate and learned; one must be spiritual and have an acute knowledge of cultural protocols. These individual skills are brought by each Member into the House where together they deliberate matters of national importance on behalf of their constituents.

The Member then addressed Cabinet, his Honour the Chief Justice, Mr. Speaker and Assembly Members. He thanked the Office of the Clerk for their dedicated service and thanked denominational leaders for keeping Samoa in their prayers. He then acknowledged his constituency and its various denominational leaders, thanking them for their support. NAFOITOA acknowledged the good work of the former Member for Gagaemauga No.3, Hon Faamoetaulua Ulaitino Faale Tumaalii. He then thanked his family, his wife, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren for their support. In regards to specific issues for various Ministers, the Member noted the following:

(a) Finance

The Member spoke in support of the tabled budget, making particular reference to

the theme of the budget and its appropriate alignment with the Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS). He acknowledged the Government's continued efforts to minimize dependence on foreign aid, noting that ideally, there should be a time when Samoa is financially independent.

The Member stated that the following requests to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Works have already been lodged:

(b) Natural Resources and Environment

Noting that his constituency is a popular tourist area, he requested that the Minister personally view and assess the state of existing 'fale Samoa' in the area. He stated that they are in need of repair for the use of both the general public and tourists.

(c) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member requested the construction of a road within his constituency in addition to the provision of water tanks.

(d) Justice, Courts and Administration

In regards to village affairs, the Member suggested that the *Village Fono* be afforded the jurisdiction to hand down judgments for village crimes. He stated that this would be an effective way to deter criminal behaviour and would save involved parties time and money as well as free up the court system.

(e) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member suggested on site visits by relevant Ministry representatives to assess the specific educational needs of the villages within his constituency.

(f) Agriculture and Fisheries

The Member encouraged the planting of coconuts (*niu*), asserting its importance in terms of its export potential.

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

The Member addressed Members of Parliament; the *O Le Ao o le Malo*; the Council of Deputies; the Hon Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister; Cabinet; Mr.

Speaker and the Office of the Clerk; his Honour the Chief Justice, Judges and Officials; Heads of Ministries; the private sector and all of Samoa. He then addressed his constituency in all its honourific salutations.

The Member then expressed his gratitude to the Finance and Expenditure Committee for their tabled Report, noting his support for both the budget and committee report. TAPULESATELE then gave a special vote of thanks to the former Member for Vaisigano, Motuopuaa Uifagasa Aisoli Vaai, for the good works he achieved during his parliamentary terms and his advice and support. He wished Motuopuaa the best for all his future endeavours. The Member then expressed gratitude to the Hon Prime Minister and his Cabinet for the works completed throughout the years. Specific issues raised for various Ministers included:

(a) Education, Sports and Culture

General comments included a suggestion that the Government prioritize all levels of education; primary through to tertiary levels. He acknowledged the Government's continued promotion of educational development at the primary level.

Specific recommendations for the education sector included (1) the establishment of a grant or loan scheme for tertiary students. He stated that financial support is necessary as a lack of funding is one of the main obstacles for students wishing to further their education after high school. (2) In addressing the apparent shortage of specialized teaching staff, the Member suggested an increase in training in subjects that have been identified as lacking teaching expertise, such as mathematics and science. He requested finding additional training opportunities for existing teaching staff in addition to utilising retired teachers to provide for ongoing training. (3) The Member noted the need for an increase in apprenticeship opportunities, stating that this could be a solution to the current lack of employment opportunities.

He further stated that the Government should endeavour to encourage the private sector to create apprenticeship roles with a view to creating permanent employment roles in the future. He also suggested that the Government seek to strengthen ties with international partners such as New Zealand and Australia, with a view to increasing seasonal work opportunities for locals. One possibility he raised was making it mandatory for quota applicants to undertake seasonal

work. Overall, he stated that the Government should focus on creating new employment opportunities to cater for the increasing number of graduates who cannot find employment, in addition to encouraging overseas investment in Samoa.

(b) Agriculture and Fisheries

The Member encouraged the Ministry to actively seek out ways to protect endangered plants and animal species to ensure use by future generations and continued economic development. He stated that there should be continued development of popular crops and aquaculture, and that the Government must seek out potential markets to service local supplies. In regards to the issue of conservation, the Member noted the importance of conserving Samoa's fish reserves, as it is one of the primary sources of income for many self-subsistent families throughout the island.

He suggested the establishment of a cannery at Asau due to the natural abundance of fish in the area, which would in turn create further employment opportunities. The Member then encouraged the use of renewable energy as an alternative to fossil fuel. On the theme of conservation, the Member noted the negative effects of carbon emissions to the population and the environment. He stated that carbon emissions have increased over recent years due to the increased importation of defective cars.

(c) Health

TAPULESATELE stated that the Government should focus on developing health services across the board; noting the particular need to source more doctors to service the rural areas. He then concluded his speech by asking the Government to consider his constituency favourably in any future health projects.

21. PAU Sefo Pau, Member for Faasaleleaga No.2

After addressing Members of Parliament, PAU raised specific issues with various Ministers:

(a) Finance

The Member noted that the budget appears to state that the country's main source of income is international aid. He stated if the Government wishes to complete

important national development projects, aid is not enough; there must be a willingness to loan as necessary. For example, he stated that major projects that have been completed such as seawalls and the hospitals, would not have been possible without major loans.

In terms of employment opportunities, the Member voiced concern over the increase of foreign business owners on island, stating that their presence is limiting the opportunities for local businesses to be established and to thrive. He also noted that there is no sense in developing wharfs and airports when there are not enough tourists to utilize such services. He suggested a focus on the provision of high standard accommodation options to attract possible tourists.

(b) Communication, Information and Technology

The Member encouraged the Hon Minister to seek ways to deter the youth from the over use of technological devices such as cell phones; stating its possible negative effects as including time wasting, the exasperation of conflicts and so forth.

(c) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member requested the construction of school buildings within his constituency.

(d) Women, Culture and Social Development

PAU encouraged the continuance of initiatives that targeted the ongoing development of communities, and in particular women.

(e) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member requested repairs to be undertaken to the bridges at Sapapalii and Tapueleele.

(f) Police and Fire Emergency Services

The Member stated that there should be a prison built to specifically house Savaii inmates, to address possible overcrowding issues in the Upolu prison.

(g) Natural Resources and Environment

The Member asked that a seawall be constructed at Sapapalii for protection of residents from natural disasters.

The Member then expressed his gratitude to the Hon Prime Minister for the budget and wished the Assembly well for the remainder of its sitting.

22. OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai, Member for Salega East

OLO acknowledged Members of the Assembly and noted his support for the Member for Palauli East's speech delivered in the House on Tuesday. He then addressed his constituency and acknowledged the candidates who had contested the Salega East seat during the General Elections.

Proceedings were suspended at 10:48am and reconvened at 11:27am

(a) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

OLO stated that the drinking water in Sagone is unsafe for consumption, and noted that he is still awaiting the Ministry to seek alternative sources of water for residents.

(b) Health

The Member stated that the Fualalo hospital needs to be upgraded and appropriately stocked with medicine and other medical supplies. He also noted the need for a generator to ensure a constant supply of electricity, in addition to air conditioners for individual wards and the pharmacy.

(c) Finance

The Member commented on the budget generally and noted his appreciation of its clarity and transparency. He thanked the Minister, the Chief Executive and Ministry Heads for preparing the budget. The Member raised the issue of roadside lawn mowing contracts, stating that this should be the responsibility of each village.

The Member then noted his dissatisfaction at the overall implementation of Government projects, stating that while consultation and policy phases are well executed, most failures seemingly arise at the implementation phase. He used the Samoa Agriculture Competitiveness Enhancement Project (SACEP) as an example, stating that its implementation has been ineffective; the project is almost complete

yet funds have not been completely utilized. He raised an issue regarding alleged fraudulent applications for SACEP funds and requested the Minister to undertake suitable investigations.

In terms of project statistics, the Member emphasized the need for the disclosure of full and accurate records. He then expressed gratitude to the Minister of Finance for the budget, noting that in comparison to previous budgetary statements and reports, this year's report has proven to be clear and easy to comprehend.

- The Hon PRIME MINISTER noted his gratitude to the new Chairperson of the Finance and Expenditure Committee for clarifying the contents of its report to the said Member. In particular, he appreciated the Member's newfound financial understanding, which he stated should clarify the previous misconceptions held by the Member, such as the Government acquiring additional loans to repay existing loans. He also stated that the budget clearly states that the Government prioritizes statutory payments above all else.

The Member continued by stating that his understanding of this Fiscal Year's report is due to the clarity of the report's contents.

- The Hon PRIME MINISTER again noted his appreciation of the Member's comprehension of the report, particularly in regards to the Government's use of donor aid to fund new developments, and not, as was previously alleged, to repay existing loans.

23. Hon GATOLOAIFAANA Amataga Alesana-Gidlow, Member for Faasaleleaga No. 1 West

The Member stated that despite not being new to Parliament, she is now representing a new constituency based on the revised electoral boundaries. In that sense, her speech should be treated as a maiden speech. She then addressed her constituency and acknowledged the candidates who contested the Faasaleleaga No.1 West seat at General Elections. She expressed her gratitude for the Leader of the Government, particularly for his wisdom in effectively developing the country. She acknowledged the allocation of Members to relevant Associate

Ministerial portfolios. The Member then raised issues relevant to various Ministers:

(a) Finance

GATOLOAIFAANA thanked the Minister of Finance for preparing the budget in addition to monitoring national revenue and expenditure. She suggested that the Minister emphasise the need for businesses to make immediate payments on products already procured and services rendered.

(b) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member expressed her gratitude to the Minister for the installation of streetlights in her constituency, which has been particularly helpful to inland residents.

(c) Tourism and Health

The Member emphasised the need to initiate relevant awareness programmes to inform the public on new and potential viral threats. This would be for the protection of not only the general public but to ensure the international community that Samoa is a health conscious nation. This, the Member stated, will aid the development of tourism and in turn strengthen Samoa's overall economic standing.

In conclusion, the Member wished good health to the Hon Prime Minister and his Cabinet; the *O Le Ao o le Malo*; his Honour the Chief Justice and the Judiciary; the Clerk and his Office and the heads of respective Government Ministries.

- The Hon PRIME MINISTER moved a motion for the extension of sitting times from 9am - 1pm; 3pm- 7pm and 7:30- 11:30pm; the motion was seconded and approved.

24. SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa, Member for Vaimauga East

The Member acknowledged the traditional set up of Samoa; the villages of Vaialele, Letogo and Fagalii and its various denominational leaders. He then acknowledged the Minister of Finance and thanked him for the tabled budget before raising issues relevant to various Ministers:

(a) Natural Resources and Environment

The Member stated that as an alternative to the use of contractors for rubbish collections, funds should be provided to individual villages to collect and dispose of their own rubbish. He also noted the need for cattle to be supplied to villages to assist their cattle farming efforts.

(b) Office of the Regulator

The Member stated that the number of licenses issued by the Regulator should be increased.

(c) Public Service Commission

The Member advocated the reinstatement of long service entitlements for public servants. He stated that the decision to remove this entitlement approved without appropriate consultation; however, the Government should not neglect its long serving employees and endeavour to reward them accordingly.

(d) Finance

The Member expressed gratitude to the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Revenue for initiating an increase in funding allocations to the Customs Office for the construction of a house for Custom Services.

(e) Communication and Information Technology

The Member raised the issue of the delay in the installation of an Internet cable, which has delayed access to Internet services in his constituency. He also noted that Laulii has inadequate television coverage and that during times of heavy rainfall, there is no coverage. He requested that the Ministry look into this issue.

(f) Justice and Courts Administration

The Member noted that many Judges are retirees and that the Ministry should not employ retirees. He stated that this could be a contributing factor to the current backlog of appeal cases.

(g) Education, Sports and Culture

Noting the increase of residents in the Vailele area, the Member requested the construction of an additional school to cater for the growing community.

(h) Women, Community and Social Development

The Member commended the appointment of Hon FAIMALOTOA to the Ministerial

post and suggested that she consider a project for the planting of the pandanus plant as there have been requests from China for its export.

(i) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

Specific construction requests included those for an access road at Laulii, Letogo and Vailele. He also suggested the construction of a pedestrian walkway next to the Fagalii ford, given that it is frequently used for access to both Samoa Primary and the Fagalii Airport. Currently, the narrow bridge does not permit vehicle and pedestrian access at the same time. He also requested the construction of a seawall at Laulii.

(i) Health

The Member emphasised the need for a health facility at Laulii, and that perhaps one could be constructed on existing vacant lands. He stated that a doctor could visit the village on a weekly basis to provide medical services to the entire constituency. He also stated that patients from the Atua region would be able to use this particular hospital, avoiding the need to travel to Motootua. He then suggested that private practitioners be used by the Motootua hospital for night shifts to enable them to tend to their private patients throughout the day.

- The Hon PRIME MINISTER reminded Members of the upcoming opportunity to discuss the specifics of the budget during the consideration in detail stage. He stated that this is important for Members to note as issues raised during the second reading stage cannot be commented on as interjections are not permitted during maiden speeches.

25. PESETA Vaifou Tevagaena, Member for Faasaleleaga No 4

The Member greeted the House and acknowledged the attendant Ministry Chief Executives. He also acknowledged the Judiciary and denominational leaders. The Member then raised issues relevant to various Ministers:

(a) Finance

The Member noted his support for the tabled budget. He stated that if he neglects to address all relevant issues today, he would take them up directly with the

Minister at a later time.

(b) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member reflected on the diesel fuel tank explosion at the Matautu Wharf in April and advised the Minister to ensure adequate checks of the underground fuel pipeline are carried out for safety purposes. He stated that perhaps owing to the increase of seismic activity, the pipeline has been disturbed and is therefore unstable. This, according to the Member, may be the cause of water and fuel leakages.

- The Hon PRIME MINISTER interjected and stated that the pipelines are divided into sections; if there is an issue, individual sections are sealed off.
- The Member for Faleata West stated that the disagreement between the Hon Prime Minister and the respective Member is evidence of a lack of communication between Minister and Associate Minister.
- The Hon PRIME MINISTER disagreed and stated that there is sufficient communication, despite being on other subject matters.

(c) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member noted his support for enforcing a zoning system for schools as a possible solution for current youth issues such as inter-school conflicts; overcrowded classrooms in Apia and also the requirement that many students must live away from their homes to attend a 'decent town school'. He then suggested that an Australian Pacific Technical College (APTC) be established in Savaii, with the help of Australian donors. He acknowledged the efforts of Don Bosco to establish a branch in Savaii and noted its usefulness to local residents.

(d) Justice, Courts and Administration

The Member requested a review of Electoral laws, and noted that issues, such as voter access, regarding special voting booths should be enquired into and remedied.

(e) Women, Community and Social Development

The Member encouraged emphasis on initiatives for the production of fine mats. He

suggested that the Ministry look into suitable legislation to control the use of fine mats for cultural and future preservation.

(f) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member requested the construction of a new bridge at Lano in addition to access roads at Asaga. He then stated that the access road at Puapua needs to be widened for suitable vehicle access.

(g) Natural Resources and Environment

The Member requested the construction of a seawall for Itu Masaga.

In concluding his speech, the Member thanked his constituency for their support, and for offering him their trust to represent them in Parliament once again. He acknowledged the candidates who contested the Faasaleleaga No.4 seat at the General Elections and stated that despite there only being one victor; others will have their time.

Proceedings were suspended at 1:00pm and reconvened at 3:26pm