

DISCLAIMER

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PART B

Day 4: Monday 26 June 2017

3:15pm

(i) Hon. TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama – Minister of Health

The Minister continued with his response, stating that the equipment he mentioned earlier were available in community clinics, however the difficulty was in maintaining these equipment, as the sea breeze played a major factor in causing corrosion.

• **INTERJECTION**

FAAULUSAU Rosa Duffy Stowers – Member for Gagaifomauga No.3

The Member elaborated that the equipment and resources the Minister claims all clinics were stocked with were not in her constituency's clinic. She noted there were two asthmatic patients but there was only one nebulizer in the clinic.

Hon. TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama – Minister of Health

The Minister responded that equipment can be provided to community clinics, however there should be a record that notes how many people have used the equipment in order to justify its need, rather than just

sending resources from the main hospital that will not be used in the rural clinics. Additionally the Minister commented on the renovations and repairs needed in the Tuasivi mortuary, he noted that inspections and renovations had already been made. The Minister noted that the mortuary in Tuasivi is being housed in a container and that renovations are not in his portfolio, as the only relation between the Ministry of Health and the deceased is when an autopsy is required to be conducted. The Minister recommended that private mortuaries be utilised, noting that the Member of Parliament for Faasaleleaga No.2 Pau Sefo Pau has a mortuary that can be used at a reasonable price.

- **INTERJECTION**

FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga – Member for Palauli le Falefa

The Member queried the timeframe of the merge, asking whether the Ministry was leaning towards the end of the year for this.

Hon. TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama, Minister of Health

The Minister responded that the Hon Prime Minister had already mentioned the merge and therefore he will not elaborate more on the issue; however, in regards to the original query made by the Member for Palauli le Falefa, the Minister clarified that the \$300,000 as noted in page 10 of the budget is an allocation for renovations of the National Kidney Foundation. The Minister then concluded his statement.

(ii) Hon. LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purell – Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Minister addressed the members who raised concerns and issues with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour; beginning with the issue of foreign investors in Samoa raising the level of competition and threatening local markets. The Minister elaborated that although foreign investors have grown in the community, there are policies in place to ensure they operate and follow local principles and guidelines. The Minister also clarified that there is currently a plan to develop rural business owners, to enable local

entrepreneurs to run the rural markets, rather than having foreigners run both the urban and rural markets.

The Minister also commented on the vetting process involved to determine which foreign investor is granted a foreign investment certificate. The Minister noted that there is no legal requirement that the Ministry's decision is based on the background of investors, as there is already a declaration form which these individuals have to fill upon entry to Samoa, noting whether they were involved in any past criminal offences. The Ministry only focused on the character of these investors and the amount they can contribute in Samoa.

- **INTERJECTION**

LEAANA Ronnie Posini – Member for Safata West

The Member required the duration of the license issued to foreign investors.

Hon. LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Minister responded that the licenses/certificates are renewed annually, and the foreign investment certificate is issued on a two year basis. The Minister then addressed the child-vending issue, whereby he clarified that the practice is discouraged by the United Nations and noted that children also have Rights.

- **INTERJECTION**

FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga – Member for Palauli le Falefa

The Member requested for awareness programmes for child vendors to educate these children if they choose not to go to school.

Hon. LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Minister noted that the Ministry is looking into ways to legalise child vending by stipulating a time frame when this can be practiced.

He then addressed the issue regarding the payment of dividends by the Unit Trust of Samoa (UTOS), Samoa International Finance Authority (SIFA) and Development Bank of Samoa (DBS), and asserted that these are separate bodies which should not be affected by public policy as they are a different entity and should operate as normal businesses.

- **INTERJECTION**

FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga – Member for Palauli le Falefa

The Member agreed that SIFA and UTOS are separate bodies, however with regards to DBS, they should be inclusive and subject to Public Finance Policy as they determine the increase and decrease of the interest rates for our businesses.

Hon. LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Minister clarified that if the DBS operated and managed their affairs properly there would not be a concern. The Minister then continued his response addressing the Fagalii Airport; the Polynesian Airlines currently have plans to expand the Fagalii Airport and reduce any possible risks to the public.

- **INTERJECTION**

SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa – Member for Vaimauga East

The Member reminded the Minister of his request for an actual price for quarter $\frac{1}{4}$ acre land in Vaialele, as they would like to own their land. The Member stated that these lands are customary land and should only be sold to Vaialele people.

- **INTERJECTION**

Hon AUELUA Fatialofa Lupesoliai Tuilaepa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi – Prime Minister and Member for Lepa

The Hon Prime Minister clarified that if these lands were sold, everyone residing and leasing on Vaialele land has an equal right to buy these land not just the people of Vaialele.

Hon. LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Minister asserted that currently $\frac{1}{4}$ acres in Vaialele are sold for \$35,000. He then clarified the 17% interest rates queried by Members on loans offered by the Samoa Housing Corporation; is accorded to unsecured loans, hence the reason why the interest is high because the risk on the Corporation is also high. The Minister noted the international achievements of the Corporation from their contribution in the lives of the Samoan people.

(iii) Hon. FIAME Naomi Mataafa – Minister of Natural Resources and Environment

The Deputy Prime Minister addressed the Assembly, she highlighted the issues raised by Members regarding her Ministry, which included the development of seawalls and the global issue of climate change. The Minister mentioned that in three programmes were implemented in 2013 from funding received from Asia Development Bank, European Union and World Bank; noting the programme near completion was the Coastal Integrate Management Plans which provides information and guidelines for constituencies on how to deal with climatic matters. The Deputy Prime Minister elaborated that the requested projects were dependent on the risk factors.

The Deputy Prime Minister clarified that the Ministry cannot address access roads, seawalls and other infrastructural developments unless the strengths and weaknesses are identified. However noting the issue of climate change and changing the mind-set of individuals is the current focus of the Ministry. This is with regards to informing the public about the dangers of deforestation, sand mining, and littering in Samoa.

Proceedings were set aside at 4:44pm and resumed at 5:25pm

The Hon Deputy Prime Minister again reiterated the importance for Samoa to implement projects that can alleviate the impacts of climate change, and stated that the Ministry was in the process of carrying out a project with the objective of planting 2 million trees. The Deputy Prime Minister noted that Samoa had received approximately \$60million worth of funding from the Climate Fund to implement the projects developed to counter the effects of climate change as well as provide awareness programs to increase the knowledge of the Samoan people on ways to adapt with the changes in climatic conditions.

The Deputy Prime Minister addressed the Members who requested proper drainage system to reduce flooding in their areas, and stated that the Ministry will receive more income from leased land and therefore have the funds to provide proper drainage; the issue of customary land was also mentioned; Hon. Fiame noted the importance of leasing our lands for development purposes as this can provide a means of income for our families.

(iv) Hon AUELUA Fatialofa Lupesoliai Tuilaepa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi – Prime Minister and Member for Lepa

The Hon. Prime Minister wrapped up Government responses stating that there was only one issue he would like to elaborate on, and that was the concern with child-vendors. He stated that foreigners perceived the issue of child vending as a form of coercion from the parents. However, the Prime Minister explained that there are two types of children in this world; those who go to school and those who sell goods because there will always be families who are fortunate and families who are less fortunate.

The Prime Minister asserted that Government is trying to address the core of the problem, which is the undeniable fact that these children come from families who are less fortunate. Therefore the only solution in such scenarios is to try and find ways to raise the standard of living of these families. If these

families have a steady form of income, then the possible outcome is having less child vendors on our streets.

The Prime Minister elaborated that poverty exists everywhere in the world, even in America, although she is a wealthy and powerful nation; homeless cases grow and poverty is very much visible in some parts of America.

The Prime Minister clarified that regardless of what the public perceives, everyone has the freedom to do as they please and the freedom to choose whether to accept the help or not. He concluded by clarifying the purpose of the Human Rights Protection Party, which is to stand for the rights of the people, especially the less fortunate.

2. APPROPRIATION BILL 2017/2018 – Consideration in Detail

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries: 17,341,655

Approved

Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour: 19,189,691

Approved

Ministry of Communication and Information Technology: 7,655,608

Approved

Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture: 100,313,401

Approved

Ministry of Finance: 75,695,977

Amended to reduce 1,931,500 funds from the Ministry

New Appropriation for the Ministry of Finance: 73,764,477

Approved as amended

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: 22,607,740

Approved

Ministry of Health: 88,478,915

Approved

Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration: 12,279,017

Approved

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment: 26,667,188

Approved

Ministry of Police: 30,189,444

Approved

Ministry of Prisons and Corrections: 9,673,758

Approved

Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet: 7,739,197

Approved

Ministry of Public Enterprise: 2,598,323

Approved

Ministry for Revenue: 11,752,982

Approved

Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development: 10,708,066

Approved

Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure: 39,306,694

Approved

Bureau of Statistics: 5,314,479

Approved

Controller and Chief Auditor: 3,522,368

Approved

Samoa Law Reform Commission: 1,291,513

Approved

Office of the Legislative Assembly: 6,940,211

Approved

Office of the Attorney General: 3,132,198

Approved

National Prosecution Office: 1,404,964

Approved

Office of the Electoral Commissioner: 1,963,794

Approved

Ombudsman Office: 1,119,496

Approved

Public Service Commission: 4,938,096

Approved

Land Transport Authority: 35,635,814

Approved

National University of Samoa: 21,213,734

Approved

Office of the Regulator: 1,753,310

Approved

Public Trust Office: 2,584,652

Approved

Fire and Emergency Services Authority: 6,082,729

Approved

National Kidney Foundation of Samoa: 7,280,502

Approved

National Health Services: 75,359,614

Approved

Samoa Qualifications Authority: 5,315,840

Approved

Samoa Sports Facilities Authority: 2,177,629

Approved

Samoa Tourism Authority: 11,482,359

Approved

Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa: 3,410,366

Approved

Electric Power Corporation: 2,000,000

Approved

Samoa Water Authority: 10,644,043

Approved

Samoa Airport Authority: 920,892

Approved

Samoa Trust Estate Corporation: 500,000

Approved

Development Bank of Samoa: 1,931,500

Approved

Total Expenditure: 509,896,272

CLAUSE 2 – motion to amend

Motion seconded and approved

CLAUSE 3 – Approved

CLAUSE 4 – motion to amend

Motion seconded and approved

CLAUSE 1 and Short Title – Approved

The Bill progressed as corrected

3. APPROPRIATION BILL 2017/2018 – third reading

The Hon. Minister of Finance, SILI Epa Tuioti moved a motion for the Appropriation Bill 2017/2018 to be third read; the motion was approved and the bill was third read and passed the Assembly.

4. INCOME TAX AMENDMENT BILL 2017 – first reading

The Hon Minister for Revenue, TIALAVEA Fea Leniu Tionisio Hunt moved a motion to have the Income Tax Amendment Bill 2017 first read; the motion was seconded and approved. The bill was read a first time.

5. EXCISE TAX RATES AMENDMENT BILL 2017 – first reading

The Hon Minister for Reveue, TIALAVEA Fea Leniu Tionisio Hunt moved a motion to have the Excise Tax Rated Amendment Bill 2017 first read; the motion was seconded, approved and the bill was first read.

6. CONVENTIONAL ARMS BILL 2017 – first reading

The Hon. Prime Minister, AUELUA Fatialofa Lupesoliai Tuilaepa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi moved for the Conventional Arms Bill 2017 to be first read; the bill was seconded and approved. The bill was read a first time.

7. POLICE SERVICE AMENDMENT BILL 2017 – first reading

The Hon. Prime Minister, AUELUA Fatialofa Lupesoliai Tuilaepa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi moved for the Police Service Amendment Bill 2017 to be first read; the bill was seconded and approved. The bill was read a first time.

8. SEX OFFENDERS REGISTRATION BILL 2017 – first reading

The Hon. Prime Minister, AUELUA Fatialofa Lupesoliai Tuilaepa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi moved for the Sex Offenders Registration Bill 2017 to be first read; the motion was seconded and approved. The bill was read a first time.

9. FILM PRODUCTION (TAX INCENTIVES) BILL 2017 – first reading

The Minister for Finance, Hon. SILI Epa Tuioti moved a motion to have the Film Production (Tax Incentives) Bill 2017 to be first read; motion seconded and approved; and the bill was read a first time.

10. ENERGY EFFICIENCY BILL 2017 – first reading

The Minister for Finance, Hon. SILI Epa Tuioti moved a motion to have the Energy Efficiency Bill 2017 first read, the motion was seconded and approved; the bill was read a first time.

11. INCOME TAX AMENDMENT BILL 2017 – second reading

The Minister for Revenue, Hon. TIALAVEA Fea Leniu Seigafolava Hunt moved for the bill to be second read and spoke to clarify the objectives of the bill.

The Minister clarified that the bill has one purpose and that is for all Samoans to equally contribute and take part in the development of the nation. He asserted that there were 15 churches involved in the consultation process regarding the provision to incorporate the taxation of religious leaders and these members noted their agreement and support for the proposal.

The Minister further elaborated that if an individual chose to sell an asset within 12 months of purchase he/she is to pay 27% of the capital gains from the transaction. If the individual chose to sell the asset after 12 months 10% of the capital gains should be paid to the Ministry. The Minister concluded by reiterating the importance of collecting revenue as this is the primary means to develop Samoa.

DELIBERATIONS ON THE SECOND READING OF THE INCOME TAX AMENDMENT BILL 2017**i. TAFUA Maluelue Tafua, Member for Aleipata Itupa i Lalo**

The Member was concerned with the number of religious leaders consulted, noting that there are 49 constituencies yet only 15 leaders were sought. The Member requested that the bill be withdrawn to allow for a wider consultation to gauge the views and opinions of our country.

ii. Hon. AUELUA Fatialofa Lupesoliai Tuilaepa Dr. Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Member for Lepa

The Hon. Prime Minister acknowledged the Minister and his boldness to tax religious leaders, noting that from his understanding there were only two religious leaders who rejected the purpose of the bill, who eventually agreed as it was explained that this would be their contribution to the development of Samoa.

The Prime Minister reflected on an incident from the past when the V.A.G.S.T bill was introduced in Parliament. He recalled that the public was outraged with the proposal; however when it was implemented, there were no problems, the presumed effects were not even felt.

The Prime Minister asserted that it is unjust for a Samoan to profess their love for our country but refuse to make a contribution, and collecting taxes is one way to build and develop our beloved Samoa.

Proceedings of the Assembly adjourned at 7:00pm and will reconvene at 9:00am on Tuesday 27 June 2017