

### DISCLAIMER

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### Day 2: Wednesday 24th January 2018

#### [PART B]

7:00pm

#### I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY – reading of Bills continued

##### 1. Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2016/2017 – debate on second reading continued

##### 10. TAFUA Maluelue Tafua, Member for Aleipata Itupa i Lalo

The Member queried the Minister of Finance in regards to the progress of projects funded from overseas grants. In regards to the recently introduced Alienation of Customary Land Amendment Bill, the Member stated that recent uproar was due to a lack of public awareness and understanding of the Bill's purpose and mechanics. Despite this, the Member noted that even when given the chance to voice their opinions, not all members of the public take up the opportunity to do so. He then suggested that the Ministry of Environment implement relevant awareness programs to inform the public of the purpose and benefits of the amendment Bill.

##### ▪ Mr Speaker – point of order

Hon Mr Speaker noted that the Bill to which the Member referred had yet to be second read in the House; therefore, the comments on the Bill were restricted.

▪ **TAFUA Maluelue Tafua - *continued***

The Member queried the process for granting citizenship. He suggested that a provision be inserted into the Citizenship Investment Act which will properly safeguard customary land from foreigners granted citizenship through investment.

In regards to the election process of the Head of State and the Council of Deputies, the Member stated that considerations should include whether a candidate was a former senior Member of Parliament or a former Prime Minister. He also suggested that these posts include end of term benefits such as vehicles or medical care. In the same vein, the Member stated that employees who are to be made redundant after the National Health Services and Ministry of Health merger should be given severance packages.

The Member stated that the minimum age requirement to join the Police Service should be raised, as permitting entry from Year 13 aged youths was not appropriate. TAFUA then acknowledged the good work of the Minister for Communications and requested that he review radio and television transmission issues in his constituency.

TAFUA requested the addition of two teachers for the Primary school and College in his constituency in addition to a road repairs required for better access to the Saleaumua Primary school. He did, however, acknowledge the redevelopment of the roads servicing the 5 existing schools and improvements completed for the Tiavea road. He continued by commenting on the overlapping functions between the LTA and the MWTI. The Member then requested that additional funds be appropriated for SOE's such as the LTA, SWA and the EPC - as their functions were crucial for national safety and electricity and water supplies.

In addressing the Minister for Education, the Member noted his support for the Minister attending the upcoming Joseph Parker fight, stating that a prize should be given to the top high school student in his constituency to accompany the Hon Minister. The Member then addressed the Minister for Women and emphasised the importance of reviving Committee Houses and Komiti Tumama, to aid health services via first aid care and the treatment of minor wounds and illnesses. The Member also requested that Doctors visit his constituency to tend to villager's medical ailments.

The Member then acknowledged the good work of Hon LAAULI during his time as Minister of Agriculture, and requested that the current Minister address the ongoing issue of rhinoceros beetles. He suggested that perhaps a community project could be implemented, where prizes were awarded to those who collected the most beetles. In concluding his speech, the Member acknowledged his constituency in addition to the work of all Ministry Chief Executives.

**11. ALAIASA Moefaauouo Malagaitutogia'i Sepulona Moananu, Member for Anoamaa East**

The Member noted the importance of Supplementary Appropriation Bills, stating that it was an additional means of scrutinising Government spending. He then noted that there were some Ministries, Authorities and so forth, which had not been allocated funding. The Member then stated that poverty was a “mindset”, stating that Samoa had an abundance of natural resources and therefore was a wealthy State. The Member provided several examples of the stability of the Samoan economy, for example, the constant availability of petrol despite the increasing number of imported vehicles. The Member urged the public to be patient as the Government was doing its best with the limited resources available to it.

ALAIASA stated that the new Samoa Air venture required transparency and accountability to ensure ongoing public confidence in the Government. The Member then noted his concern as to the ability of non-title holders to bring claims to the Lands and Titles Court against existing title holders. On another note, the Member stated that recent requests to legalise marijuana were not in the best interests of the general public, stating that the drug has been the cause of many social problems including domestic violence. He stated that marijuana should never be legalised in Samoa.

The Member noted current road works being carried out on the roads towards Faleolo Airport, but stated that repairs were required for the roads servicing Luatuanuu to Falefa. The Member stated that these roads were frequently used by tourists to access the Eastern side of the island. The Member requested the Minister of Health to consider allocating a doctor to the Lufilufi clinic. In concluding his speech, the Member thanked his constituency for their continued support, and also the Minister for Education for his guidance and support.

**12. Hon GATOLOAIFAANA Amataga Alesana-Gidlow, Member for Faasaleleaga No.1**

The Member made several requests including a cement road to service Lalomalava and Sapaalii, as in its current state – travel time was hampered by the rough conditions. Hon GATOLOAIFAANA also requested maintenance work to be carried out at the Tuasivi hospital.

The Member commented on various traffic issues, stating that the licensing process should be reviewed as it had become easier for people to drive owing to the increase in automatic cars. She stated that driving an automatic car did not require as much patience as when driving a car with a manual transmission. The Member suggested that the licensing process should not only be reviewed, but should include more provisions to ensure only suitably skilled people are afforded licenses.

In addressing the Samoa Shipping Corporation, the Hon Member stated that bookings should be more flexible, while in turn requesting the creation of more jobs for Savaii residents owing to high travel costs to commute to Apia for work.

### **13. Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo, Member for Anoamaa West**

The Member commented on the prison development, noting that the Minister had stated that remaining works had yet to be tendered and that presently, there were no contractual variations. The Member continued to note his support for the project, and reiterated its importance due to the increasing number of prisons each year, all of whom would require secure housing. Some suggestions offered by Hon LAUOFO including separate housing for inmate's education, noting his support for the focus on *reform*. In terms of juvenile offenders, he noted the importance of continuing the projects which focused on skill development should be centred on how to effectively reintegrate offenders into society after sentences have been served. The Member also suggested the establishment of a recreation space, including a gym and adequate areas for shift workers.

In addressing the Minister for Works, the Member noted that the Samoa Airways website was not functional during the festive season; however, the website must be functional at all times to ensure customers can make online bookings. He also stated that the Government should purchase an additional plane to adequately service all customers and routes. Furthermore, the Member suggested that it be compulsory for all Government Officials to travel exclusively on Samoa Airways for official travel duty.

Commenting on health issues, the Member noted an increasing trend of "painkiller reliance"; whereby focus had shifted dramatically from prevention, to cure. The Member stated that the Ministry of Health should endeavour to increase public awareness on the importance of illness "prevention". Hon LAUOFO then noted that in the past, nurses would visit villages for medical checkups, and suggested that this practice be revived, particularly for basic illnesses and infant care.

In concluding his speech, the Member requested road works be carried out in his constituency, noting that his previous requests had been sidelined due to insufficient Government funds. He stated that the main roads in need of repair were those servicing Eva, Salelesi and Fusi, which required resealing.

### **14. Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga, Member for Palauli le Falefa**

The Member acknowledged the Hon Prime Minister and his Cabinet for the various projects implemented to date, particularly noting works carried out at the Faleolo Airport. The Member

requested that the Minister of Works consider his request for road works in his constituency, noting that his previous request had been approved but not yet actioned.

▪ **Hon Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure**

The Minister stated that the request that the Member was referring to had been approved by his predecessor; however, he would endeavour to review his request—pointing out that at the time he took Office, he was unaware of any outstanding work.

▪ **Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga**

The Member stated that road works had been completed at Taufusi. The Member requested that the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Works review specifications for roads, particularly for coastal roads. He noted that funds had been acquired within the past 5 years from international donors; however, these have not been fully utilised for road developments. The Member advised the Minister to ensure that his responsibilities did not overlap with that of the Chief Executive.

▪ **Hon Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure**

The Hon Minister stated that the Chief Executive's work functions and responsibilities were clearly defined.

▪ **Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga**

The Member continued by stating that local companies were not being considered by the Tenders Board for World Bank funded projects. He referred to a specific project which he was involved in and assisted with negotiations with an eligible local company. He stated that his involvement was the sole reason the local company was able to enter the bidding process and was ultimately awarded the project.

▪ **Hon Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure**

Minister replied that donor grants have attached conditions, and oftentimes the donor will already have a contractor in mind for a given project. He stated that if Samoa were to limit itself to local contractors, there was a risk that donors would not continue to provide grants. This is the crucial issue – securing grants, as without the grants there are no projects and therefore no development.

**Proceedings were suspended at 8:41 pm**

**Proceedings reconvened at 9:16 pm**

▪ **Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga - *continued***

The Member made several comments regarding the purpose of overseas funding for projects, noting that the previous budget had a hefty surplus. The Member then highlighted key differences between “leadership” and “management”. He suggested that Output Managers were not working collaboratively, noting that there was a 10 million in above the line funds, yet this amount had not been fully utilised by Ministries.

▪ **Mr Speaker**

Mr Speaker reminded the Member that Members did not have the authority to instruct Cabinet.

▪ **Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga**

The Member stated that the reason why there was an excess of unfilled vacancies was that the positions were not inherently necessary, and therefore made it difficult to attract the right candidates with the requisite skills to fill the vacancies.

▪ **Hon PRIME MINISTER**

The Hon Prime Minister stated that these issues were not new, noting that Cabinet continued to fulfil its responsibility of providing the appropriate advice to Government Ministries and Entities in regards to staffing issues. He advised the Member to focus his speech on the needs of his constituency.

▪ **Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga**

In regards to the Project Management Unit (PMU), the Member stated that the Unit’s authority should be decentralised, and that the Unit should be transferred to the Ministry of Finance.

▪ **Hon Minister of Finance**

The Minister stated that this would be a difficult process, particularly in terms of procurement. The Hon Minister then stated that Cabinet had already approved recommendations relating to such issues ,which had been put before it by the Unit.

▪ **Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga**

The Member acknowledged the Minister of Finance for his clarification, and also the Hon Prime Minister and his Cabinet for their efforts. The Hon Member stated that all Members of Parliament play an integral role in Samoa’s development. He then requested that road works be carried out in his constituency; specifically for the roads leading to the prison.

The Member continued by acknowledging the work of the Minister of Education, echoing earlier sentiments made by other Members as to issues pertaining to the Polytechnic and the National University. The Member recommended the Minister to focus on “simplicity of presentation”.

**15. Member for Alataua West - ALIIMALEMANU Alofa Tuuau**

In recounting various issues pertaining to world poverty, the Member remarked that this fiscal year had recorded the lowest debt rates. She stated that she continued to inform her constituents of why there was a need for loans for national development, stating that Samoa could not viably function without these funds. The Member recounted the *Member's Induction Programme* in March 2016, where she learnt about the roles of the three pillars of Government and the Democratic system. She stated that since that time, she had resolved to fully enact her responsibilities and duties as a Committee Member; more specifically, as a Member of the Finance Committee, she stated that she now had a better understanding of Samoa's financial needs.

The Member continued by acknowledging Government efforts in establishing Samoa Airways, noting that she had queried the cost of the aircraft, stating that she was informed that it had been purchased on a lease payment. She suggested that 2 or 3 additional planes be purchased to account for losses caused by delayed flights or limited seats/flights for potential flyers.

The Member then acknowledged the progress of the prison developments, noting that it was progressing well. She queried whether the 3.7 million had been properly utilised. The honourable Member recommended the Minister for Prisons to review the 20 million allocated for the works, as to whether or not it was necessary. She then commented that if the prison was constructed in such a way as to make it "too comfortable", whether or not this would influence to an extent, a higher crime rate, as people would not want to leave the facilities. The Member then recommended that the Minister for Women take an active approach in community work to aid crime reduction, while suggesting that the Minister of Environment seek out ways to reduce paper waste due to its harmful effects on trees.

The Member thanked the Minister of Communications for work carried out in her constituency, stating that many residents now had television reception. Other issues raised by the Member included the need for maritime qualifications to be recognised, and requested the construction of a school in her constituency, noting that land had already been cleared yet work has yet to begin in Alataua. In addressing the Minister of Finance, the Member queried the use of surplus funds, noting that the surplus was a result of soft loans. She suggested using these funds to increase salaries and wages.

**▪ Hon PRIME MINISTER**

The Hon Prime Minister acknowledged all Members who spoke on the Supplementary Appropriation Bill, stating that comments made over the last two days was evidence of Member's extensive knowledge on national issues. The Hon Prime Minister then stated that the Government did not make it a practice to lend from the open market, as rates were too high. He then noted the vast knowledge of Members on loan processes and stated that their contributions have helped to ease Cabinet's work load.

\*\*\*\*\* **GOVERNMENT RESPONSES** \*\*\*\*\*

**i. Minister of Communications, Information and Technology, Hon AFAMASAGA Lepuiai Rico Tupai**

The Hon Minister noted that few Members raised issues specific to his portfolio which he took to be a positive sign of his Ministry's work. He then acknowledged the work of his Ministry and the Samoa Post Office. The Minister then gave examples of how his Ministry are able to achieve its work objectives, despite the many challenges it faced owing to external factors (broadcast interruptions etc.), and then commented on the issue of marijuana farming.

**ii. 2. Minister of Justice, Courts and Administration, Hon FAÁOLESA Katopau T. Ainuu**

The Hon Minister noted that few Members raised issues specific to his portfolio, with the exception of the Member for Anoamaa East. In response to the Member's query about non-title holders, the Hon Minister stated that matters may be brought before the Land and Titles Court by all citizens.

**iii. Minister of Education, Sports and Culture, Hon LOAU Sola Keneti Sio**

The Hon Minister stated that his Ministry had received constant praise during the two day sitting, to which he attributed to his Ministry's hard work. He stated that during the previous financial year, his Ministry had worked on various activities which have resulted in overall Ministry improvements.

In response to specific matters raised by Members, the Hon Minister made several comments:

- NUS and Polytechnic - the Minister noted that a Member had commented that the language used by both himself and the Chief Executive was too technical. The Hon Minister then stated that the CEO was a mathematician.

▪ **Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faolatane Liuga, Member for Palauli le Falefa**

Hon FAUMUINA sought to clarify his statement by stating that he was in fact referring to the language used by the Ministry to communicate with schools, principals and teachers.

- The **Hon Minister** stated that these were all factors which have contributed to the improvement of results, as it reflected an overall move to improve higher educational language (i.e. higher quality of language). The Hon Minister further emphasised the adage that "it takes an entire village to raise a child", stating that everyone has a role in education, including Members of Parliament. He encouraged Members to take an active role in their local schools.

**iv. Minister of Finance, Hon SILLI Epa Tuioti**

The Hon Minister noted that all Government projects required money and therefore urged Members to be patient as the Government attempted to review the many project requests put before it, despite its limited budget. In terms of major works, the Hon Minister stated that there was a continued need for specialists such as engineers and finance managers, to see these projects through to completion. This, noted the Hon Minister, was one of the primary reasons the PMU was necessary, as they assisted in speeding up the relevant financial processes. The Hon Minister further commented that the lack of local expertise needed to ensure projects meet set standards was a major cause of delay.

In terms of debt to income ratios, the Hon Minister stated that there is no cause for public concern in regards to the national standard of living. He stated that the surplus was sufficient to fund ongoing operations. In regards to a Member's query regarding assistance provided to the Federal and Sleepwell companies, the Hon Minister stated that this was in the form of free lease for the first year of operations.

**▪ OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai, Member for Salega East**

The Member for Salega thanked the Hon Minister for his clarification and stated that the new prison facilities should not be too comfortable as it may encourage people to commit crimes so that they may stay at the prison.

**▪ Hon Minister of Finance**

In terms of road and water requests, Hon SILLI stated that each request would be assessed for feasibility, and if deemed appropriate and funds permitted, they would be allocated funds in the budget.

Other comments made by the Hon Minister were:

- that the macro economic framework would be finalised this year (2018); and
- heads of Ministries/Corporations/SOEs etc. would be invited to attend a workshop which would clarify Government projects on the agenda for the next financial year;

The Hon Minister acknowledged all comments made by Members, and thanked them for their support. He then thanked Cabinet for its ongoing efforts and support, and concluded his speech by thanking his constituency.

v. **Minister of Women, Community and Social Development, Hon FAIMALOTOA Iemaia Kika Stowers**

The Hon Minister noted that no queries had been raised by Members in regards to the services of her Ministry. She then took the opportunity to note the importance of Village Fono taking a collective stance in addressing domestic violence. She also commented on the social dangers of marijuana and noted that the Ministry was working with Alii and Faipule to tackle this issue.

**Proceedings were adjourned at 11:00pm  
The Assembly will reconvene at 9:00am, Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018.**