

**DISCLAIMER**

This Report provides a brief of the Proceedings of Parliament on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020. 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 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

**PART A**

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020**

**9:06am**

**i. NOTICE FROM THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE**

Pursuant to S.O 76 Mr Speaker read the Notice from the Leader of the House to permit the progress of the following Bill:

- Electoral Amendment Bill 2020.

**ii. PAPERS PRESENTED:**

A total of 19 Papers were presented in Parliament: 18 Annual reports, 1 report of the Samoa Law Reform Commission Report on the Review of the Judgement Summonses Act 1965- Final Report 23/19.

**iii. PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE REPORTS TABLED:**

A total of 6 Committee reports were tabled in Parliament: 1 Report by the Finance and Expenditure Committee; 3 Reports by the Infrastructure Sector Committee and 2 Reports by the Standing Orders, Electoral, Petition & Constitutional Offices Committee.

**iv. PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION MOTION**

Deputy Chairperson of the Parliamentary Commission, Tofa Nafaitoa Talaimanu Ketu moved a motion for the Assembly to approve the sitting calendar for 2020.

Proposed sitting days are as follows:

March 17  
May 26  
June 16  
August 18  
October 6  
December 15

January 19 - 2021

*Motion seconded and approved*

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

**1. ELECTORAL AMENDMENT BILL 2020 – *first reading***

**MOTION**

Afioga Hon. Faaolesa Katopau Ainuu moved a motion for the Electoral Amendment Bill 2020 to be first read.

Motion seconded  
Bill was first read

**2. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2019/2020- *debate on second reading***

**i. Tofa OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai- Member for Salega East**

The Member greeted Samoa in all her honorifics salutations. Before commencing his speech on the Bill, the member presented to the Minister of Health a donation by the Avele College Class of 1980 of \$6,000 tala to assist with the measles relief.

The Member also raised that vans which were donated for the South Pacific Games can be utilized as Ambulance for the Ministry of Health. The member then raised the severity of the measles outbreak which occurred near the end of last year and stated that this should not be taken lightly as Samoa lost many lives to this tragedy. Questions must be asked as to what caused this tragedy. He noted that if the measles took many lives, there is a possibility that many other serious illnesses can make its way into Samoa and may cause more damage, therefore stringent policies should be developed to ensure that future incidences can be avoided. He further urged the government, that a report should be tabled before Parliament noting the causes of the measles outbreak and a way forward for Samoa in regards to responses similar to this.

The Member recalled that when the measles outbreak hit New Zealand in March 2019 Samoa was too laid back and had no Emergency Response Plan, unlike New Zealand, Tonga and American Samoa whereby once the outbreak was noted an effective plan was implemented thus leading to fewer casualties. The Member further reminded Government of the pneumonia illness spreading in China and stated that foreign nations are currently screening all passengers from China to ensure the illness does not enter their nations (he noted that these foreign nations are enforcing their pandemic plans) and suggests that Samoa does the same, we should be vigilant at monitoring our ports of entry into Samoa.

**Interjection- Prime Minister**

The Hon Prime Minister interjected that there is a Committee responsible for the emergency services that was provided for the public during the outbreak of the measles. He further clarified that the flu-like virus in China attacks the respiratory system and that the Ministry are currently implementing plans to ensure the safety of our people.

The Hon PM commented that the incident in December was also partly blamed on individual decision making and choices whereby mothers chose to not have their children immunized due to an incident in Savaii when 2 infants lost their lives due to being wrongly vaccinated.

**Tofa OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai- Member for Salega East**

The Member further continued and noted that those who travelled from overseas at the time brought with them confirmation papers to ensure that they have already been vaccinated unfortunately we did not have people at the airport to check and verify the papers, so we did not do our job.

The Member further clarified that he is only voicing concerns and giving an outsiders point of view on what happened during the measles outbreak in Samoa.

**MR SPEAKER- POINT OF ORDER**

*The Hon Speaker reminded the Member of the Standing Orders and the Speaker's authority to stop the Member from speaking if the Member does not abide by the conduct within the House.*

*Mr. Speaker gave the Member another chance to speak, however if he still brings up the same matter again he will not be given another opportunity.*

**Tofa OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai- Member for Salega East**

The Member asserted that he is voicing his constituency's request to set up a Commission of Inquiry to ensure the root of the problem is found whereby better policies and solutions can be formulated to ensure it does not occur again in the future.

**Minister of Health, Tofa Faimalotoa Kika Iemaima Stowers**

The Minister responded noting that vaccines were put on hold due to the incident which happened in Savaii and investigations were ongoing. She further clarified that the Ministry of Health have implemented plans to ensure that Samoa is safe and that this never happens again.

She acknowledged the concerns raised by the Member for Salega and stated that this is not the time to point fingers and name blaming rather to stand together and make Samoa safer.

**Tofa OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai- Member for Salega East**

The member pinpointed that the immunization was put on hold for eight months which is quite an extensive period and the plans which were stated by the Minister was only laid out in November 2019, while Samoa lost seventy lives due to the measles outbreak.

**ii. Afioga FAUMUINA ASI PAULI Wayne Fong- Member for Urban West**

The Member raised concerns with the Office of the Legislative Assembly and stated that during the rainy season, there needs to be proper facilities for Members during Parliament sittings and in regards to Committee meetings there are not enough rooms to service Parliament and its various roles.

***Interjection- Prime Minister***

Prime Minister stated that the facility to service Members during sittings and Committee meetings is ongoing and will be implemented soon.

**Afioga FAUMUINA ASI PAULI Wayne Fong- Member for Urban West**

The Member continued and acknowledged the Minister of Finance with assisting with the completion of the constituency's school building which was destroyed by fire. The Member noted that the school building was funded by the insurance. He further stated that the Vaiusu primary school needs a playing field for the student's activities.

He acknowledged the initiative to develop the Fiafia Park at Tafaigata as these are positive developments for his constituents and then requested for proper road works for the Falelauniu roads which are in poor condition and is further worsened during the rainy season. He raised the issue where ferries are stopped from travelling to and from Savaii when conditions are unfavorable (which he agrees with for safety reasons) then raised that it might be a good idea to have other options of travelling which can continue to operate regardless of changing weather conditions.

The Member also acknowledged those travelling from overseas throughout the years for contributing to the economic development of Samoa and concluded by requesting to the Samoa Land Corporation for more land to cater for a growing constituency.

**iii. Afioga TOLEAFOA Ken Vaafusuaga Poutoa- Member for Lefaga & Faleseela**

The Member acknowledged all those who were involved during the measles outbreak; acknowledged foreigners who flew in to personally assist in our dark times; acknowledged all who worked voluntarily to assist the Ministry of Health with its plans to counter the spread of the virus in our nation. He further acknowledged local businesses for assisting the Government during the measles outbreak.

The Member raised the quality of beds used in the hospitals and recommend to the Ministry of Health to procure hospital beds from NZ. The Member voiced his constituency's support for the Supplementary Appropriation Bill. He addressed his constituency and acknowledged the support given to him and his family during the time he has served as their Member and apologised for his shortcomings in the past.

**iv. Afioga FAAULUSAU Rosa Duffy-Stowers- Member for Gagaifomauga No.3**

The Member for Gagaifomauga No.3 acknowledged the Government and the Minister of Health and all who were involved for their efforts during the measles outbreak. She then went on to query whether there can be a standardised system utilised when recruiting individuals for recognizable seasonal employment opportunities; noting that there are certain villages with numerous individuals successful in the scheme while other villages have none.

The Member highlighted that MCIL who is responsible for inspecting goods being sold by local shops should monitor goods being delivered to the local shops in the villages to ensure that the goods have not expired for the safety and health of our people. A good example is the fish can (apa elegi) that is circulating around the country in local shops more than a few times these fish cans are expired and pointed that the Ministry is not following its own procedures and process of monitoring.

She further queried the government as to why the number of shops owned and run by the Chinese is increasing while shops owned by our very own people are becoming very few. She then suggested for measures to be put in place to encourage our local retailers to progress and continue with their shops (such as possibly assisting local retailers at the port of entry from customs) to ensure canned products are consumed earlier rather than later when the risk of contamination is higher. The member also informed the government to ensure that deliveries to shops and businesses in villages distribute receipts as most Chinese deliveries do not provide receipts which can be a problem for the Ministry of Customs and Revenue in asserting collection of taxes.

She also acknowledged the Minister of Prisons for the improvement of the facilities for the prisoners and urged the Ministry of Police to put an end to the growing number of illegal substance in our nation, she stated that it is a collective responsibility to put a stop to drugs from entering and growing in our country.

**v. Afioga LEAANA Ronnie Posini- Member for Safata West**

The Member noted the changes made to electoral boundaries noting that the Salamumu village is now included in the constituency of Safata. The member acknowledged the support from his constituency to the changes made to the boundaries for development purposes. He noted that there are 2 religious denominations in the village of Salamumu and that the road leading to the church located in the inner village needs serious repair work.

The Member thanked the Government that part of their roads have been fixed except for the road that leads to the south side of village that needs repair.

***Interjection- Prime Minister***

The Prime Minister stated that the road mentioned by the member can be easily improved by the government however there are no developments nor any houses in that area.

**PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang - Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure**

The Hon Minister noted that the road which the Member mentioned is quite long and without development, however it needs proper construction as it leads to resorts in Salamumu. The Minister also noted that he has received all requests for the roads within the constituency including Matareva Beach and other resorts which all need serious development. He advised the Member to at least grow crops near the roads to try and have a purpose for maintaining these roads.

**Afioga LEAANA Ronnie Posini- Member for Safata West**

The Member continued his requests for hospital extension in Saanapu. The Member noted that his constituents continue to grow plants along the coastline to try and prevent the waves from coming inward, but with the continuous sea level rise there needs to be a proper sea wall constructed to counter the effects of the waves. Road works are needed for access roads in Vaiee and Lotofaga.

**Proceedings were adjourned for  
normal Parliament recess at 10:46am and resumed at 11:47 am**

**MOTION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME**

Due to the numerous amount of work needed for the Assembly to pass, the Prime Minister moved a motion to change times for the sitting as follows:

9:00am – 1:00pm

6:00pm – 11:00pm

Motion seconded

Approved

**Afioga LEAANA Ronnie Posini- Member for Safata West- cont.**

Acknowledged the Minister and Ministry of Health for working tirelessly to ensure the measles outbreak was dealt with quickly. Conveyed sympathies to his constituents who lost loved ones to the measles tragedy. The Member addressed several Ministers and their Ministries:

Ministry of Education Sports and Culture (MESC) - commended the Minister for the Ministry's work. In regards to overdue school fees, there is a policy that children that has yet paid their school fees will be dismissed from school. He then suggested whether it is

possible to do quarterly payments so that come the end of the school year, the parents are able to pay their children's school fees. He further advised the Minister to be lenient and flexible with parents and students in paying their fees- as not all parents have the same financial ability to pay the full costs of school fees in stipulated times.

Leaana further suggested whether it was possible to part pay school fees for local scholars so as to have more students afforded the opportunity to continue studies with assistance on their school fees, the member is specifically speaking on the fees for the National University of Samoa as these costs are quite high for parents.

Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure: Traffic lights need to be maintained so as to ensure the safety of public transporters; He further acknowledged that the recent road construction at Samasoni was useful however it would be even better to further extend this project to reach a road at Faatoia instead of having to take several turns to get to the main road.

**Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure- Susuga Hon. PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang**

Minister of Works clarified on the traffic lights and urged the Land Transport Authority to look into the issue raised by the Member as these lights operate on timers and noted that there are traffic lights which take longer before it changes.

**Minister of Education, Sports and Culture- Afioga LOAU SOLA Keneti Sio**

The Minister spoke on funds which have been saved from previous developments that are being put into funding scholarships for students, however these scholarships have certain criteria that need to be satisfied in order for students to be eligible. The Minister also advised the Assembly of the new Vice Chancellor for the National University of Samoa.

**Afioga LEAANA Ronnie Posini- Member for Safata West- cont.**

The Member for Safata raised concerns on the increase of road accidents on the roads heading towards the Faleolo Airport, which he believes this is caused from individuals racing on the roads and therefore suggested whether it was appropriate to have street cameras installed to avoid these racings.

He addressed the Minister for Police and the Ministry of Prison in regard to the safety of police officers and suggested to review their penalties towards convicts selling drugs and marijuana.

Ministry of Women Social Community and Development- Member suggested to the Minister to look into villages that are not headed by chiefs (pitonu'u) to see whether they too can have regular meetings to solve arising youth issues in those areas.

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries – in regards to marketing local products overseas specifically the nonu product must have proper bins for storage.

**vi. Afioga FUIMAONO TEO Samuelu Teo- Member for Falealili East**

The Member for Falealili East addressed all of Samoa and commended on all the collective works of each Ministries. He then acknowledged the Minister for Finance for the tabled Budget and highlighted a notable surplus for this years' budget again. The Member went on to address several issues relevant to each Minister:

Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT) - requested for his area to be surveyed as the Blue-sky network is not clear and there are TV channels which continue to have poor coverage;

Ministry of Justice Courts and Administration - queried whether the Judges for the Land and Titles Court who have been terminated will face penalties if proven to have broken the law as they took an oath to uphold justice;

MESC- The Member firstly acknowledged the work of the Ministry and made the Ministry aware that on pay day teachers are found to be collecting their pay before schools are finished. He further mentioned that the penalty to terminate children from school when found smoking in the school compound is unfair when teachers are allowed to smoke in the school premises and made the point that if there are consequences for students found smoking, then there should also be penalties on teachers and parents smoking near and around school compound. Smoking should be prohibited for everyone on school compound;

Ministry of Finance - acknowledged the Minister and the Ministry for the preparation of the supplementary budget;

Ministry of Health - commended the Minister and the Ministry for their patience during the measles crisis and urged the public to always cherish the services rendered by these professions.

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries - acknowledged the efforts of the Ministry to promote agricultural development and reaffirmed that within his constituency planting of coconuts is encouraged;

MWTI – The Utulaelae road (less than 100meters) needs construction and repair work as well as the roads at Lotofaga. The village of Salani requests for water supply. The Member explained that there were two census conducted in this area and one report stated that water can be supplied towards the mentioned road; however, one census stated that water connection is poor. Member queried which census is correct and urged the Ministry that help is needed in this village in terms of water supply;

The Member queried whether there was a Climate Change fund available to families who have been uprooted to move inland due to the impacts of changes in the climate.

MWCSD- requested whether it is possible for the villages to have both (sui o nuu) and (pulenuu) and to clearly demarcate Sui o Tamaitai and Sui o Nuu for each village;

Samoa Land Corporation- requested for lands to implement development in his constituency, and suggested to have a limit on how many hectares of land can be given to those requesting land, e.g. have a limit of only 50 or 100 hectares that can be given to ensure that all have access to these lands;

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment – requests for more seawalls to be constructed in vulnerable areas in his constituency;

The Member then concluded his speech by acknowledging his constituency for their prayers and support.

**vii. Afioga TAPULESATELE Mauteni Tamasone Metuli II Esera- Member for Vaisigano No.2**

The Member for Vaisigano No.2 greeted the House and Samoa in all her honorific salutations. He then acknowledged the Office of the Legislative Assembly for their work. Noted God's love for Samoa with the end of the measles tragedy. He also mentioned that there were also Tropical cyclones affecting our neighbors however Samoa was still safe from these cyclones.

He stated his support for the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2019/2020 and spoke on the tax charged on petrol, diesel and kerosene and queried whether there is an intention to supply more diesel.

**Minister of Finance, Afioga SILI Epa Tuioti - interruption**

The Minister clarified on the issue raised by the Members stating that it is expected to increase petrol and diesel by .2cents when the Budget is passed with the intention that the money attained will be utilised for road improvements.

**Afioga TAPULESATELE Mauteni Tamasone Metuli II Esera- Member for Vaisigano No.2**

The member then advised for an additional charge to be placed onto diesel operated vehicles (specifically heavy trucks, busses and large vehicles) because they cause more damage on the roads.

**Minister of Finance, Afioga SILI Epa Tuioti – interruption**

The Minister further clarified that the main purpose of increasing tax on petrol, diesel and kerosene is for road developments; however, if the government requires for more funding then it is possible to propose for another additional tax fee on the 2020/2021 budget.

The member queried to specify on the allocation of the appropriated amount for a new Court Building in Savaii.

The Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee responded to clarify that the total of \$92,000 is allocated for a Court Building in Salelologa specifically in clearing out the land and fencing it (preparation work).

MESC - The Member suggested that the scholarship fund be utilised by both the academic and vocational studies rather than solely focusing on the academic and tertiary studies.

Ministry of Police- The Member raised his concern on the road safety and that the police officers must be committed to their work as they are now responsible for the safety of the public on the roads. He pinpointed to the issuance of drivers' licenses to individuals that they must be done in utmost accuracy to ensure drivers prioritize safety for the good of pedestrians and the public at large. The Member concluded by conveying his appreciation to his constituency.

**Proceedings were adjourned  
at 12:56pm and will reconvene at 6:00pm**