

DISCLAIMER

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Thursday 23rd June 2022

**PART B
6:03pm**

5. Afioga MASINALUPE Makesi Masinalupe – Member for Lefaga & Faleaseela

The Member greeted Mr Speaker and Parliament, as well as all government officials present in the House. The member further addressed Samoa in all her honorific salutations. He acknowledged the Hon Minister of Finance and her Ministry in preparing the tabled budget. Afioga MASINALUPE also acknowledged the diligent scrutiny and analysis of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on the budget. The Member touched on the Pathway for the Development of Samoa (PDS) and its strategic objectives which all reflect an effort to improve Samoa’s economy, and this is a collective effort by the Ministry of Finance and the Finance and Expenditure Committee. He was pleased to note that the tabled budget (appropriation bill) is straight-forward, and easy to understand.

The Member then addressed specific Ministers:

- Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure (MWTI):

The member requested to the Minister the dire need for repairs in his constituency, furthermore, the member explained that a certain part of his village cannot be accessed during times of torrential rain. The Member mentioned certain public roads which urgently need attention for the safety of the public, as well as the need to fix the roads leading to Return to Paradise and Matareva, especially since borders will open in August.

- Minister for Police:

The Member queried the rationale for the registration of buses and taxis four times a year, noting the expensive fuel prices. The Member urged the Minister to reduce the registration to twice a year to assist the public with the increasing cost of living.

- Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries:

The Member commended the minister for the Talomua Program, noting that 2 villages from his constituency have benefited from this program; in regards to the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa, the Member commended the Organisation's efforts in rolling out traps for wild boars. The Member noted his appreciation for the traps received by his constituency and suggested ways to improve the traps to cater for at least 20 wild boars, as it can only trap one at a time.

In regards to the Electric Power Corporation, the Member noted his concern for the reduction of the Community Service Obligation appropriation, as he believes that numerous street lights need fixing, and reminded the Minister of his request for streetlights in his constituency.

- Minister for Customs and Revenue:

The Member commended the Minister for efforts made with the Liquor Board to ban certain alcohol beverages that were detrimental to the public. The member asserted that there were certain drinks that contain high amount of alcohol sold at a cheap price which was easy to purchase for students and the youth. The decision of the Liquor Board has assisted with curbing crime rate and accidents between drinking groups of families and friends who consume this alcoholic beverage.

The member concluded his address by acknowledging the Government on their 1million project, which will reap many benefits for respective constituencies, he further noted that his constituency has already formed their working committee responsible for managing the fund.

6. Afioga TEA Tooala Peato – Member for Faasaleleaga 4

The Member for Faasaleleaga 4, acknowledged the work of the Speaker in presiding over Parliament and advised him to be calm during storms. He also acknowledge the absence of the Prime Minister and thanked the Deputy Prime Minister for taking over the reins in this time. He continued to acknowledge the Minister of Finance and her Ministry for the compilation of the budget. Afioga TEA addressed the following Ministers:

- Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade:

The Member commented on the complex procedures involved in seeking a permit for travel to American Samoa. He then suggested possible avenues to waive such requirements for our country and vice versa for those travelling to Samoa, making the process convenient and accessible to our people. The Member then queried the Deputy Prime Minister on Samoa's relations with our neighbouring islands, and suggested to use our ties to foster good working relationships to provide permits in an easier way, as well as strengthen our trading relations with our neighbours to ensure trade is made easier.

Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Laufo - interjection:

The Hon member noted his support on the issue raised by the member for Faasaleleaga 4, and echoed the need to make the process simpler. He recalled his recent trip to American Samoa and stated that the paperwork involved to getting a permit was conducted online, and it also required a police report before receiving a permit to travel. The Hon Member mentioned the geographical proximity of our nations, yet the requirements for entry are complex. Furthermore, the Member recommended increasing the number of flights between the two nations as there are currently only three trips a week.

Susuga Hon LAAULI Leuatea Polataivao – Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

The Hon Minister clarified that there were negotiations planned, however due to covid lockdown, these were postponed, and the Government waits for the arrival of the Prime Minister to ensure an agreement and understanding can be made between our two nations for the benefit of our people.

Afioga TEA Tooala Peato – Member for Faasaleleaga 4 (cont.)

The Member commended the 1million initiative proposed by Government and echoed concerns raised by previous members, of having not enough land to develop; then requested to the Samoa Land Corporation for lands at Vaiaata to Patamea to be leased to his constituency so they may cultivate these land and assist the country with garnering revenue and economic development.

- Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure (MWTI):

The Member requested for road repairs and a seawall for his constituency.

- Minister of Health (MOH):

The Member commended the front line staff who worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic and urged the Minister for proper payment of overtime for these patriotic citizens.

7. Tofa Hon FAIMALOTOA Kika Stowers-Ah Kau – Member for Gagaifomauga No.1

The Hon Member addressed the House, and Samoa in all her honorific salutations, she then acknowledged her constituency and Clergies then made the following requests to respective Ministers.

- Samoa Water Authority:

The Member queried the time schedules of water supply for the villages of Safotu and Manase and reminded the Minister that the village of Safotu is where the District hospital is located, as well as several hotels and resorts and schools, hence the need for proper water supply.

The member requested to the minister for water tanks in Manase to supply water for families in this area as well as the resorts and hotels. She then requested for an escape route for Manase as this village is along the coastal area, therefore the people will need to build inland to avoid the impacts of sea level rise.

The Hon member mentioned the road to Matavanu as this is a very popular tourism site in Savaii and is located in her constituency, the Member requests to have a connecting road towards the site (mata o le afi) so that people may access to this historical site. She further explains that, with the boarders being open soon, she encouraged that many would want to visit this area and this is why she is requesting for connecting roads to ensure the mountain side is accessible. The Member also reminded the Minister

- Minister of Natural Resources and Environment:

The member reminded the Minister about her request for seawalls.

- Minister of Health:

The member commended the minister for his continuous work to address Covid19 and queried when renovations will begin for their district hospital and housing for doctors.

The Hon Member commended the Minister of Finance, the ministry and all those who worked to prepare the Budget. She also acknowledged the challenges Samoa is currently facing with the pandemic and war between countries overseas which have all contributed to the global economic crisis. The Member emphasized the importance of women and health thus, encouraged the government to strengthen efforts in protecting our people against numerous challenges and viruses spreading throughout the world. The Member further implies that there would be no use rushing opening borders and then another variant of the COVID will be introduced and will affect our country

-The member further pressed the importance of working together for the betterment of our national economy, and moving forward with unity to protect our health. Additionally, the member advised that we should not worry about what is currently happening in our country and to rely on God. She then queried the rationale for reducing funds appropriated for overseas medical referral. Then noted her disappointment with statements insinuating that Members and constituencies who go against the 1million project will be struck off from development, the Member asserted that the money for development does not belong to a political party rather to the nation as it is the people's money.

**Proceedings suspended at 7:52pm; and
resumed at 8:34pm**

Mr. SPEAKER

Hon Speaker reminded the House that Standing Orders 192 provide for a Members speaking time on the Appropriation Bill; noting that a Member has two chances to speak on the appropriation worth 15 minutes each. Mr Speaker raised the matter to provide clarity for some Members who have questioned their time limits.

8. Afioga LAUMATIAMANU Ringo M Purcell – Member for Safata 2

The Member greeted and addressed the House, and Samoa in all her honorific salutations. He then acknowledged the efforts of the Minister of Finance and her Ministry in preparing the budget. He also commended the Ministry of Health for their dedication and service to Samoa. The Member then addressed specific Ministers.

- **Ministry of Police:**

The member commended the ministry's work especially during the enforcement of COVID restrictions. He then requested for a Fire Emergency Service in his constituency as the station in town is too far in cases of emergencies. The Member queried the usage and differentiation of the emergency lights that he sees being used. He then advised the Minister regarding the provision of insurance for police officers especially considering their 'line of duty'. The member expressed this as he reflected on the recent accident which claimed the lives of 3 policemen however, after investigations it was discovered that there was no insurance cover. The Member emphasized the importance of an insurance plan for police officers, to assist with their families whose lives have been suddenly affected due to the loss of life on the line of duty.

Another issue raised by the Member was the purchasing of the national flag of Samoa in retail stores and recommended an Act to provide the sale of our national flag to be treasured and not treated as a regular item.

- **Minister of Education Sports and Culture:**

The Member noted the problems and challenges in the education sector, such as teacher shortage; he also mentioned the incident where Loto Taumafai teachers went on strike due to the poor salary, he urged the Minister for proper solution as if there are no teachers, then who will we entrust the future of our nation.

- **Minister of Works Transport and Infrastructure:**

The Member stated the need for road repair works, road maintenance and there were some access roads which need to be cleared so that the constituents can easily access their plantations. He further noted that other access roads needs to be tar sealed, as it is very dusty for the children who walk on this road to get to their school.

- Minister of Women Community and Social Development:

The Member commended the minister for the 1 million initiative, and the disbursement of the 200k to kick start development in respective constituencies.

- Attorney General:

The member commended the Attorney General on the approval of pathologists in the country via partnership with Fiji. Stressed that this will be beneficial for the country considering the delay which has been the norm over the years.

- Minister for Communication and Information Technology:

Requested to the Minister for proper internet access and free internet and for the schools in his constituency.

9. Afioga Aliimalemanu Moti Momoemaasu Alofa Tuuau - Member for Alataua sisifo

The Member greeted the House and her constituency in all her honorific salutations. She then thanked God for choosing her to be the voice of her people in parliament, to serve her village, as well as the women of Samoa and especially her duties to her constituency. The Member greeted and acknowledge her constituency in all her honorific salutation. The Member also greeted the women of Samoa, as she is one of the women seated in the Assembly represents all the women of Samoa. As a Member of Parliament for her constituency, for women and for her family, she will do her best to represent their interests in the political sphere and Parliament of Samoa.

Furthermore, the Member expressed gratitude to her family for their unwavering support and love for her during the elections as well as trying to fight for women seat in Parliament. She acknowledged her husband for his support and encouragement for her to run for Parliament. She then recalled when the pandemic entered our shores, forcing the government to rearrange its priorities in order to counter the effects caused by Covid19. However, she emphasized that our faithful and loving God continues to provide for us.

The member then spoke on specific figures reflected in the overall budget and noted that there was a decrease of 28million of revenue for the next financial year compared to the current FY. She then highlighted minor changes such as:

- Excess expenditure over revenue by 3.5% of GDP
- Salaries of employees: to be fixed within 35% of overall operational expenditures which is a decrease from 45% in the previous FY.
- 3.Total expenditure for Operations to be fixed within 40% of GDP
- Loans should be less than 50% of the GDP
- Loan Repayments (tupe totogi mo nonogatupe) to be below 20% of Revenue

- Not less than 70% of revenue the expenditures?? Revenue should not be less than 70% of Total Operational Expenses.

The Member requested to revisit Government's 'fiscal policy' and strategic focus so as to align with the Sustainable Development Goals as this is one of the factors that donor countries and international organizations assess when determining financial assistance for our country. Afioga ALIIMALEMANU further recommended the Government to outline their policies so that the reporting back and monitoring of the cash flow of spending and revenues are well monitored.

- **Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure**

The Member acknowledged the Hon Minister for road repairs in her constituency. Then queried the process of monitoring the 1 million fund for constituencies given that any development is opened to be funded under the project. She queried the process for acquiring funds for a project for her constituency that adds up to \$600,000. The Member requested for copies of the policies that the government has for clarity and to avoid raising many questions. The member also queried the cost of gas, raised the possibility of a contract for the contractors which monitors the tanks we have if they should look for other contractors to continue that project.

- **Minister of Finance:**

The member sought clarification from the Hon Minister on forensic audit, performance audit and financial audit.

She concluded by wishing the Parliament well.

10 Afioga MAGELE Sekati Fiaui - Associate Minister for MOF - Member for Faasaleleaga 2

The Member addressed the House, greeted Samoa in all her honorific salutations and spoke specifically on certain Ministries:

- **Minister of Finance**

The Member commended the Hon Minister for the budget and emphasized that compiling the budget was not an easy task. He accentuated that he believes the tabled budget will not face any dilemma, however if there are risks as raised by fellow Parliamentarians the it is imperative to live within ones means and not wanting more.

The member stressed that the budget 22/23 does not have any flaws, and although there have been minor changes made from the previous FY hence, resulting in the decrease in estimated revenue, it is because we are facing challenging times, and must learn to live and appreciate what we have at our hands, and have been blessed with by God. The Member further claimed that there is no use of talking about millions of projected revenues when there are still families that live below the poverty line, families without power and water supply.

- **Minister for Customs and Revenue:**

The Member clarified on the sales tax/sin tax which was brought about after consultations with the NKF. The NKF records show there are more than 100 people undergoing dialysis and more awaiting, with the youngest being less than 20year olds further insinuating the risks and effects of foods which causes these sickness.

The Member therefore expressed support on the proposed tax, on certain goods and products which can help reduce the risks and factors which leads to these sickness, noting that the tax is set to deter the public from purchasing and consuming such products which are harmful to their health. The Member urged the House to live within our means and work hard so we can get food for our nourishment. The member further emphasized his point by encouraging subsistence living; which can help with the increasing cost of living as well as provide nourishment for us in the future and cater for our needs especially during hard times.

- **Samoa Land Corporation:**

The member requested for certain pieces of land in Iva to be allotted to his constituency to harvest and develop using the 1million project. The member requested to fix the road from Iva to Vaifou and the Mataivave College as it is usually crossed by the public and busy with traffic. Also noted that there is a primary school at the area and the Prince Edward Park. Highlighted that this area is also where they will conduct their projects thus, it must be safe for everyone.

**Proceedings were set aside at 9:58pm;
and will reconvene at 9:30am on Friday 24th June 2022**