

DISCLAIMER

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DAY 3

9:29am

I. PRESENTATION OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE REPORTS

1 Report from the Standing Orders, Electoral, Petitions and Constitutional Offices Committee was presented to Parliament.

II. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY - Reading of Bills

1. Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2022/2023 – debate on second reading (cont.)

i. Tofa Hon TUUU Anasii Leota, Member for Siumu

The Hon Member greeted the House, the Almighty, and Samoa in all her honorific salutations. He then acknowledged his constituency for their continuous support in him to express their views in Parliament. He then acknowledged the Minister of Finance and her Ministry for the tabled Supplementary and expressed his support for the Bill. The Hon Member raised the following issues:

- Scholarship opportunities – Ministry of Education and the Public Service Commission

The Member raised his concerns on the process of awarding scholarships, as he has received several complaints from parents whose children scored high marks but have not been awarded a scholarship, thus urged the relevant ministries to review policies for an appropriate solution. The Hon Member also recommended prioritizing our citizens over foreigners with scholarships abroad as foreigners are able to attend overseas universities at a lesser fee compared to Samoan citizens.

In regards to the appointment of CEO's for respective Ministries, the Member commended the Public Service Commission for proceeding with these appointments.

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member requested for road maintenance within his constituency, made specific mention of the Cross Island Road that runs from Tanugamanono to Siumu. He then spoke on the issue of his resignation from his political party to become an independent member, the Hon Member asserted that this was his freedom and right to choose as he pleases.

Several Members spoke in regards to the issue raised by the Member for Siumu (referring to his resignation from the Political Party HRPP); The Hon Speaker in his authority to maintain order and decorum in the House advised the Member for Siumu to refrain from speaking on such matters, especially matters before the Court and urged Members to observe peace and respect within the House.

ii. Afioga Hon LOAU Solamalemalo Keneti Sio – Member for Sagaga 1

The Hon Member addressed Mr. Speaker, greeted his fellow Parliamentarians and our neighbours listening in from Tutuila and Manua. He sought the Government's forbearance of the numerous requests and concerns raised by the Opposition, as the hope is to work in unison with the best interests and developments for the people of Samoa. Hon LOAU acknowledged the Deputy Prime Minister and Cabinet for leading the country as he is aware it is not an easy duty to run the affairs of the country. He then raised the following matters with specific Ministers:

- Minister of Education, Sports and Culture

Raised his concerns with the progress of Early Childhood Education Program, he was informed that the program has ceased due to the lack of qualified teachers to deliver this important course to those who are interested. Hon LOAU urged the Ministry to continue pursuing this program as it is crucial for the development of our children. The Member noted that other countries have proven the importance of this program, therefore should be prioritized by the Ministry.

Another issue raised by the Member was the shortage of teachers. Hon LOAU asserted that this is a recurring issue, thus raising the need to offer good and attractive compensation and salaries for teachers to not only attract but also retain teachers.

- Minister of Health

Hon Member commends the Hon Minister for his work since his appointment and his usual visitations to district hospitals. Noted his agreement with statement made by the Minister that they are Parliamentarians who should constantly pay visits to the hospital. The Member requested for enough specialists for our dental clinic and obstetrician and further improvement for the Service

- Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries

Afioga LOAU acknowledged the Minister's efforts to urge and encourage the public to work the lands as a means to provide for themselves and their families (subsistence living).

He then touched on the 1million initiative by Government and was supportive of this initiative as it is for the purpose of building and developing our constituencies; he further stated that his constituency is patiently waiting for their funds.

**There were statements made by the Hon Member regarding the Hon Prime Minister who is seeking medical treatment overseas; he advised Cabinet to not cause stress to the Hon Prime Minister – these statements gave rise to Hon Mr Speaker advising Members to refrain from making statements with dual meanings, especially for Members who are seeking medical treatments abroad.*

Afioga Hon LOAU Solamalemalo Keneti Sio – Member for Sagaga 1 (cont.)

The Hon Member again raised the importance of Early Childhood Education and suggested that students who graduated with ECE Certificates can be utilized as teachers in other schools to counter the shortage of teachers. Furthermore the Member mentioned the need for a Primary school for students in his constituency, suggested a school to be constructed at Tafaigata for convenience and easier access for those residing in his constituency.

**Proceedings set aside at 10:46am; and
Resumed at 11:28am**

iii. Afioga FAAGASEALII Sapoa Feagiai – Member for Aleipata itup i lalo

The Member greeted the House and her constituency listening in, she then raised the following issues:

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member commended the Minister for the seawall constructed in her constituency and requested for better access roads as well as the need to review contracts for those who have been chosen to carry out road maintenance as the windshield of her car has cracked due to the poor maintenance of the road by selected contractors.

Tofa Hon OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai – Minister for Works

The Hon Minister assured the Member that once the weather clears off, the contractors will return to reseal and properly maintain the damages on certain parts of the road.

Afioga FAAGASEALII Sapoa Feagiai - Aleipata itupa i lalo (cont.)

The Member raised concern regarding the ford at Eva, she explained that during torrential rain, cars cannot pass this ford as it is flooded; the Member believes this should be a priority as this is the only route to get to villages after Eva.

Tofa Hon OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai – Hon Minister (Interjection)

The Hon Minister commended the Member for raising this important matter that he believes will be prioritized by the Ministry.

Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo

The Member jested that he raised this matter in the past and there were funds appropriated to solve this issue, yet nothing has happened to date.

Afioga FAAGASEALII Sapoa Feagiai - Aleipata itupa i lalo (cont.)

The Member continued her address: commended the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and his Ministry for his continuous efforts in pushing for agricultural developments. She further advised to continue decentralizing resources (planting materials) to constituencies for further agricultural developments.

- Minister of Health

Commended the minister and his ministry then requested for more health residence(s) at rural district hospitals so male and female health workers have separate places to stay while servicing district hospitals. The Member further advised the minister to consider claims made by other countries, which undermines the ability of our health workers (nurses) and questions their qualifications. The member requested to consider the benefits and allowances for health workers as their work is vital.

Susuga Hon LAAULI Leuatea Polataivao Fosi – Hon Minister (n)

The Hon Minister clarified to the Member that there are nurseries in Poutasi Falealili that she may go to or the main nursery at Nu'u for seedlings, The Hon minister elaborated further that there are plans in the pipeline for funds of approximately 10k for constituencies and their projects. Furthermore there are also plans to establish other nurseries between Aleipata and Falealii as well as between Falefa & Falevaimauga

Afioga FUAAVA Suluimalo Amataga, Aleipata Itupa i Luga

The Member reminded the Minister of MAF for an internal agricultural office to service his constituency and other villages nearby.

Afioga FAAGASEALII Sapoa Feagiai - Aleipata itupa i lalo (cont.)

The Member expressed her disappointment in regards to claims made about how nurses standards in Samoa are low and she asserted looking back during the Measle and Covid-19 outbreak, Samoa witnessed the efforts and works put in by all front-liners most especially nurses.

Afioga Hon Valasi Luapitofanua Tafito Selesele - Minister MOH

The Hon. Minister agreed with the Member with regards the issue raised, and he explained that he met with the consular of American Samoa and the Governor and discussed the issue with them. He also noted that the Governor conveyed apologies and asserted that they have dealt with this. The Hon Minister also expressed appreciation for the hard work they are doing in making sure that we are kept safe from all diseases of the world.

Afioga FAAGASEALII Sapoa Feagiai - Aleipata itupa i lalo (cont.)

The Member acknowledged the Minister for his clarification and concluded by acknowledged all the developments implemented by the new Government and wished them well for the progress of further plans in the pipeline.

Mr Speaker – Point of Order

Mr Speaker cautioned Members to be mindful of informal conversations amongst themselves as it can be heard publically by the online viewers.

iv. Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Member for Satupaitea

The Hon Member addressed Mr Speaker and all present in the House, he then greeted his constituency and encouraged them to make known their requests and interests so that he can voice in Parliament. He mentioned having visited the Hon Prime Minister in New Zealand and was pleased to find out that she had been discharged as this would only mean she is recovering. Hon Member commended the Finance minister and her ministry for preparing the supplementary budget and reasserted that each member's contribution to the budget is essential. He commended Government for the newly appointed CEOs for the Ministry of Education and Health.

The Hon Member then raised the following issues with respective Ministers:

- Minister of Health:
 - Commended the minister and ministry for their continuous efforts in ensuring the health and safety of people. Further advised the minister to be diligent with the ministry's response towards another major outbreak of covid19.
 - Advise the minister about the importance of having doctors' residence around district hospitals. The member emphasized that this will be convenient for doctors to commute to work in rural areas (away from their families)

Afioga Hon VALASI Luapitofanua Tafito Selesele - Minister of Health (Clarification)

The Hon Minister clarified that the committee went on their official visit at the constituency and noticed work on septic tanks have been done without the knowledge of specialist engineers, which then caused much problems, as the air was polluted and unsafe for those nearby, The Hon Minister asserted that it is imperative to leave this kind of work to those with the appropriate knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the Hon Minister noted that the delay in constructing proper housing for doctors in the member's district hospital was sue to the district's incompilance with the location advised by special engineers to build the house, as the location requested by the constituency is not suitable and does not meet health requirement.

- Minister of Works:
 - The member requested to consider proper action along the coastal areas of his constituency, which are prone to flooding. Hon LAUTAFI, explained that during torrential rain flooding has severely impacted families residing in low-lying areas; he elaborated that similar requests have been made to the Minister of Natural

resources and environment on possible way-forward and solution for his people. The Hon member further advised the minister to use Savaii based mow lawn contractors for works around Savaii instead of bringing over Upolu contractors for work in Savaii.

The Hon member further requested for a wharf at Vaiusu to be built so that it could take the capacity of the ships coming into our harbor and expressed his satisfaction with the amount of freighters and cruise ships entering the country and further commended the minister on regular maintenance and servicing of the wharves and ports.

Tofa Hon OLO FITI AFOA VAAI – Minister for Works

The Hon minister commended the member for his input and noted that it is important to support the growth of small business however, the decision is mainly based around the price which comes from the tenders board. The member noted that the cabinet will review the selection of contractors to ensure small businesses do not lose out in the market. The Minister stated that Cabinet are negotiating ways to amend the threshold between the contracts and works available for major projects in Samoa. Furthermore, the Hon Minister emphasized that small businesses do not have the specific machines needed for these works Hon Minister explained that Government aims to distribute all opportunities evenly on all contractors.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Member for Satupaitea (cont.)

- Public Service Commission:
 - The Hon Member commended the minister for conducting the overall organizational review of all ministries and corporations. However, the member noted the importance of how the review is conducted, noting that this may cause most public servants to be anxious time for the public servants. Additionally, the member noted that the review should be conducted in a manner that will not impact people's jobs.

Afioga Hon TUALA Tevaga Iosefo Ponifasoi – Deputy Prime Minister

The Deputy PM asserted that the review will not affect the people and their work or will cause any redundancy but the idea is to move forward. Furthermore the Hon Deputy PM, clarified that the Member raised the issue of uncertainty and he explains that the review will not raise any uncertainties as it continues to secure employment opportunities for our people.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Member for Satupaitea (cont.)

- Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour:
The member expressed his support for the overall review of the Seasonal Work Scheme. However, the member noted the importance of conducting the review in a manner which does not affect job opportunities for our people. The member highlighted that this is a very crucial time for seasonal work overseas. The Hon Member elaborated that Samoa was ranked 1 for reliable provision and supply of labour for the RSE, and this achievement was not easy to reach; hence the importance of the Government to ensure we maintain this standing and continue being the nation that provides reliable workforce.

Afioga Hon TUALA Tevaga Iosefo Ponifasoi – Deputy Prime Minister

The Deputy PM clarified that there is still employment and opportunities for RSE and that correspondences continue between Samoa and New Zealand and Australia. It will just be on hold for a month because the works depend on the season and weather of New Zealand.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Member for Satupaitea (cont.)

- Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour

The member briefly touched on the national airline highlighting that any national carrier experiences bankrupt nevertheless, it should not hinder Samoa from running a national carrier, which will have numerous benefits for our people.

The Member requested to conclude his address with the 1million project; however Mr Speaker advised that his time has ended.

v. Tofa Ale Vena Ale – Member for Faleata 4

The Member greeted the House then raised the following issues:

- The member expressed his support with the Government’s decision to cancel the operation of a national airline.
- The member raised concerns with the treatment of our locals going overseas under the Seasonal Work Scheme. Thus, the member advised the government to review contractors who are offering job opportunities for our people to ensure the safety and well-being of our people employed in the scheme.
- He further advised the independence of the PSC to avoid the bias selection of public servants officers especially in regards to CEO’s and ACEOs. Noting that there have been instances where these appointments have been politically influenced.
- Commended the 1million initiative.
- The member briefly outlined his constituency’s development plans for the 1million fund.

- The member requested for an overall review of the Constitution to ensure it aligns with any passed legislation(s). This is specifically about member's rights to resign and become independent instead of going to court.

**Proceedings adjourned at 1:04pm and will reconvene on Friday 20 January
2023 at 9:30am**