

DISCLAIMER

This Report provides a brief of the Proceedings of Parliament on **Wednesday 8 March 2023**. 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 **Wednesday 8 March 2023**, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

DAY 2 9:30am

Mr Speaker took his Chair and commenced proceedings with a prayer; he then greeted the Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet Members, Opposition Leader and all Members of Parliament present. He informed Members that there are few Members absent due to poor health and acknowledged the presence of public Members in Chamber.

I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

- **Consideration of Parliamentary Committee Reports and Government Responses**

1. **P.P. 2022/2023 No. 11, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 106 and P.P. 2021/2022 No.24, Annual Reports of the Central Bank of Samoa for Financial Years 2019/2020 & 2020/2021; - P.P. 2022/2023 No.61, Government Responses on P.P. 2022/2023 No. 11 (cont.)**

Mr. Speaker announced that the floor is open for Members who wish to raise issues or make queries on the recommendations and responses put forth.

- i. Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo - Member for Anoamaa 2**

The Hon. Member greeted Mr. Speaker, fellow Parliamentarians and all Samoans listening in. He also acknowledged Government Officials present in Chamber, then made the following comments and queries on the Recommendations and Responses provided. Hon LAUOFO recalled the revenues earned by the Tourism Industry in the FY2019/2020, which was approximately \$375 million, however in 2020/2021 there was no revenue recorded due to the seismic effects of the pandemic. Due to the loss received, Hon LAUOFO iterated the importance of reviving the Tourism industry as international borders are opened. The Hon. Member asserted the importance of this industry as it involves and develops the country as a whole as several tourists tend to travel to Savaii and remote areas away from Apia for attractions or book accommodations with resorts and hotels in rural areas. Tourism has a rippling effect and contribution on the development of the

entire country, through its support on local businesses, villages and families in the rural areas. He further encouraged the Ministry to recognize local products such as handicrafts and local food and to renovate and repair accommodations for our tourists to have a lasting positive experience in our country.

The member urged the Government to consider providing financial assistance for hotels and businesses which contribute to the operation of tourism in the country; as these businesses were severely affected since the lockdown and therefore are in no position to fund necessary renovations and upgrade for their services. Furthermore, the member noted the increase in remittances from 567 million to 606 million during the lockdown period. Hon LAUOFO was pleased to note that overseas debts have not exceeded the 50% mark, however the inflation rate is concerning as it has dropped from 1.5% in 2019/2020 to -12% in the current financial year. The Hon member urged the Government to consider possible strategies and measures to improve the inflation rate as it has also contributed to the increase in the cost of the living.

ii. Afioga SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tuiliili Tuivasa - Member for Vaimauga 1

The member greeted the House and acknowledged Government officials for their work and service to the country. Also acknowledged the newly elected Vice Chancellor of the National University of Samoa. He then commended the Governor of CBS and her Office for the continuous service to the economy of Samoa. Also, acknowledged the responsible Committee for preparing the report and the provision of audit reports to verify financial statements in the report. The member expressed his support for one of the recommendations in the Committee report outlining benefits for workers and touched on how Covid-19 has fostered new businesses particularly Media, for instance several fundraising activities and events have been broadcasted on social media platforms for Samoans overseas. Afioga SULAMANAIA further expressed his support for the report and its recommendations, including the provision of audited reports and then queried whether there were any vacancies that have yet to be filled. The Member concluded by commending the Minister of Works for road works at Fagalii and Vailele.

iii. Afioga LUPEMATASILA Galumalemana Tologata Tile Leia - Member for Falelatai & Samatau

The Member addressed the House and commended the Chairperson and his committee for the report and noted the importance of committee recommendations. Furthermore, he acknowledged the stimulus packages offered to the tourism industry especially to hotels/accommodation that were greatly affected by the pandemic. He also noted the assistance from international financial institutions during the pandemic and queried if there is assistance from commercial banks to the private sector and small businesses in the country. Furthermore, the Member queried on what strategies were in place to help the private sector as interests on loans are quite high. Afioga LUPEMATASILA stated an increase in liquidity of commercial banks causing fewer people to make

loans and asked if there was any assistance from international banks such as ADB to increase the period for loan repayments with low interest rates.

- **Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua: Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee**

The Chairperson greeted Mr. Speaker, Prime Minister, all Members present and the public in attendance. He also extended his greetings to the Church minister and his wife present at the sitting. Then conveyed condolences to the family of certain deceased members he is acquainted with. The Chairperson acknowledged the recommendations and issues raised by the Leader of Opposition; then touched on the matter raised on tourism and asserted that the Government is continuing to offer funding assistance to hotels in the country. In regards to the inflation rates mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, the Chairman asserted the whole world is affected and that the figures mentioned by the Opposition Leader has been made transparent and the country are well aware of these figures. The member also clarified the provision which outlines the benefits for workers at the CBS noting that they recommended this to avoid workers from going to loan from other banks and also as a means of recognition for the service offered by the CBS to Samoa. The Member assured the Member of Falelatai and Samatau that government grants [stimulus packages] through the Central Bank are included and detailed in the Annual Report for FY2019-2020. The Chairperson also noted that the CBS has policies and guidelines in place to administer and regulate commercial banks in the country on the amount of interest they impose on its customers.

- i. **Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo - Member for Anoamaa 2**

The Opposition Leader queried the government assistance of 5million offered to Hotels and Accommodations which was outlined in the previous FY. The member raised concerns with this assistance as it is through the Development Bank where hotels will need to request to the Bank and must meet all requirements which can be a lengthy process, up to 2 years meaning that hotels and accommodations will only receive this money later on. Therefore, he queried whether there were alternative processes to help make access to funding more simplified.

- **Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua: Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee**

The Chairperson clarified that the 5 million passed in the previous year have been distributed to accommodations to help generate their business which is different from the 5 million in the bank.

- ii. **Afioga ALIIMALEMANU Moti Momoemausu Alofa Tuuau – Member for Alataua West**

The Member spoke to address a matter raised from the Member for Falelatai, he asked whether we had an assistance from ADB, the Member noted that we had assistance from ADB, through

commercial banks in the country. In regards to the question from Member for Vaimuaga 1, the Member stated that CBS is responsible for their own budget, it does not come through parliament, so whatever fund/money that is left unspent in their budget, it stays within their budget for their operations.

- **Susuga Hon LEOTA Laki Lamositele - Acting Minister of Finance**

Hon Minister noted his support for the recommendation to help tourism industry and the effectiveness of remittances to the development of our country. He then mentioned that Government debt is below a billion which is good given the challenges the world is facing with the pandemic but also ensured that the Government continues to monitor our debts vigilantly.

The Minister acknowledged the recommendations provided and issues raised on the rapid increase in the cost of living and noted that everyone is well aware of the reasons behind this. However, he noted that a solution is to reinforce the Price Control to keep all shops and retails on track with the prices of their goods and services. He further emphasized that despite the government's effort to decrease duty/tax on goods the prices are still controlled by each retail shop/wholesale. In regards to the 1 million district project, the Government aims to increase the export of local products and encourage districts to grow and harvest local products to substitute imported products [import substitution] that are known to be expensive and unhealthy. Hon Minister also touched on the recommendation which outlines the benefits to workers for CBS. The member clarified that one of the reasons behind this is to encourage good work-relations in the office and ensure that workers do not resign from the Office and go to other Commercial banks who offer much higher benefits. In regards to interest rate, noted that this provision is open especially with the competitions and further emphasized there is no legislation to pose a limit on interest rate. He also mentioned the loans approved by the DBS and its repayment policy.

- **Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua: Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee**

The Chairperson moved a motion for the Assembly to approve the following reports; motion seconded and approved.

P.P. 2022/2023 No. 11, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 106 and P.P. 2021/2022 No.24, Annual Reports of the Central Bank of Samoa for Financial Years 2019/2020 & 2020/2021

***P.P. 2022/2023 No.75, Government Responses on P.P. 2022/2023 No. 12**

Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua: Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee moved a motion to approve its reports; Annual Report for the National Provident Fund 2020/2021; motion seconded and approved.

The Chairperson presented the overall findings and its recommendations as follow:

Recommendation 1:

The Committee recommends the Fund to look into ways to strengthen the collection of arrears recorded in its Annual Report 2020/2021.

Recommendation 2:

The Committee recommends the Fund to urge Companies and Businesses to promptly pay their staff members contributions that have been deducted from their staff's salaries, as well as taking into account the effects of regulations used for collecting the employees contributions.

Recommendation 3:

The Committee recommends the Fund to include the dividend benefit under the Parliamentary Pension Scheme for Members of Parliament.

Recommendation 4:

The Committee recommends the Fund to increase all Members of Parliament contributions to 15%.

- **Susuga Hon LEOTA Laki Lamositele - Acting Minister of Finance**

Hon Minister moved motion for the Assembly to approve its Government Responses; motion seconded and approved.

P.P. 2022/2023 No. 12, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2021/2022 No. 17, Annual Report of the Samoa National Provident Fund for the Financial Year 2020/2021

The Hon Minister presented responses in accordance to recommendations put forth by the Committee as follows:

Response to Recommendation 1:

Recommendation is noted. The Fund maintains a minimal level of arrears with Non-Performing Loans portfolio less than 1% of total.

Response to Recommendation 2:

The recommendation is noted. The Fund continues to pursue a balanced approach in the interest of both members and employers. We provide flexible payment terms to employers to ensure that they meet their obligations to pay in contributions and do it in a sustainable way considering the recovery mode our economy is currently facing.

Response to Recommendation 3:

Parliamentarians are also paid a dividend annually. However, this is paid into their contribution accounts in accordance with the Parliamentary Pension Scheme Act.

Response to Recommendation 4:

Recommendation is well noted. The Fund will ensure to put this request through in the next Parliamentary Pension Scheme Board meeting.

**Proceedings set aside at 10:44am; and
Resumed at 11:26am**

Mr. Speaker announced that the floor is open for Members who wish to raise issues or make queries on the recommendations and responses put forth.

i. Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo – Opposition Leader

The Member acknowledged the Committee and the Samoa National Provident Fund in regards to the report, he then requested clarification for Recommendation 3 noting that he believes Parliament members are not eligible for the NPF's % The Member touched on Recommendation 4 of the report which is the 15% increase for Members and also mentioned the Senior Citizens Pension Scheme whereby they have their own separate Annual Report and is under the Standing Orders Committee, the member then highlighted that a consultant advised for a 17.3% increase in parliament member's contribution to NPF however, he noticed that in the report it outlines a 15% increase instead. The Member commended the NPF for the noted surplus in the Annual Report. Furthermore, Hon LAUOFO mentioned that in 2020, 9.1% was given to contributors and 8% in 2021 but suggests whether it is time to raise this to 10% for this FY. The Hon. Member highlighted the positive return for our money invested in Fiji and Australia where we received more than 400k dividend for our investment in Fiji and suggested whether this amount can increase from 5k for deceased contributors so that it can reflect the changes we are currently experiencing and the increase in cost of living. Furthermore, the Member queried on the Funds invested in Mulifanua Beach Resort as he believes there's a loss from this and therefore queried the status of this investment.

ii. Afioga AUUAPAAU Mulipola Aloitafua: Member for Aiga ile Tai

The Member acknowledged the Chairperson for the Report and clarification provided then elaborated to the Member for Anoamaa that in reference to recommendation 3 and 4 where he mentioned that a consultant recommended for a 17.3% increase for Members of Parliament contribution was mentioned on a matter considered under the Standing Orders Committee. Therefore, the Member is concerned that such recommendation on the increase in % for the Members is reflected under the report of the Standing Orders Committee, thus the question should not be addressed in the current report as this is not the Committee that deals with Members Parliamentary Scheme.

iii. Afioga FUAAVA Suluimalo Amatag – Member for Aleipata Itupa i Luga

The Member greeted all who were present in the House then echoed condolences offered by the Finance and Expenditure Committee Chairperson to the family of a prominent Church Minister. He then commended the committee and chairperson for their work and preparing the report. The member highlighted the decrease in the number of NPF Contributors from 33k to 32k during the reporting FY as a result of COVID-19 and increase in employment redundancy. However, he noticed an increase in the amount of contributions to NPF as a result of increase in wage as well as, the NPF managed to increase its revenue through other avenues during the uncertainties of covid. The member touched on the % offered by NPF to the public/contributors and sought clarification for % received by members of parliament as he is unsure whether they are entitled to this %. Furthermore, he sought clarification on how much parliament members are paying to NPF as a form of their contribution.

**Mr. Speaker advised Members to raise matters that are factual and substantiated and refrain from talking about matters from conversations during recess.*

Afioga FUAAVA Suluimalo Amatag – Member for Aleipata Itupa i Luga (cont.)

The member acknowledged the assistance provided by NPF for our people, then asserted that recommendation 1 is important for the Office to track the repayment of debts and ensure that there are security assets in place to guarantee loans which cannot be paid in full. Furthermore, the Member also touched on a matter where NPF should remind companies to pay their employees' NPF and advised to reconsider increasing the government's contribution to Members of parliament through their NPF contributions as follows: Ao o le Malo - 30%, Council of Deputy – 25% and Members – 20%

iv. Afioga ALE Vena Ale Member for Faleata 4

The Member greeted the Speaker, PM, cabinet and all members of parliament. He then commended the Committee for the presented report and also conveyed acknowledgement to the NPF for their services and contribution to the development of Samoa. The Member advised the Fund to thoroughly consider the value of all its contributors as the money from these people/public contributes immensely to its operations. Furthermore, the Member noted his full support to increase NPF percentage for the contributors. He then touched on the recommendation by the consultant who reviewed the % paid by the Government to Parliament Members emphasizing the importance of considering the advice given of 17.3%

- **Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua: Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee**

The Chairperson acknowledged all Members who spoke on the Report and Responses, and responded that the percentage increase raised by the Member for Anoamaa was noted and that it will be elaborated further by the Standing Orders Committee report and commended the Member for being vigilant on these matters and asserted that all issues raised will be included in the Minister's response.

- v. **Afioga ALAIASA Moefaauouo Malagaitutogiai Sepulona Moananu – Member for Anoamaa 1**

-commended the chairperson for his response, he further advised to discuss the contribution of Parliament Members by a special committee instead of discussing it in Chamber. The member advised that members should focus on issues that affect the rapid increase in cost of living as requesting for an increase in their contribution will add more expenses to the Government's budget, also advised for an increase in contribution for deceased contributors as 5k is no longer sufficient for funeral preparations. The Member also advised the NPF to reconsider their service of allowing loans to the public as this is where challenges occur. The Member supports the public loaning from their own contribution but not other large amount of loan. He then urged the Committee to look into the benefits as it is not enough to cover emergencies. The Member mentioned the Mulifanua Hotel as it is known to have little profit and urged the Committee to look into this. The Member stated for all pension funds, a specialist, called an actuary who gives advice on these kind of matters, which is an added cost on the Government. The Member stated that when a nation starts using its reserves, this reflects we have overspent.

- vi. **Afioga ALIIMALEMANU Moti Momoemausu Alofa Tuuau: Alataua Sisifo**

The Member clarified on the issue raised by the Member of Anoamaa 1 on the Mulifanua Hotel and conversion of shares, the Member clarified shares were 23 million which decreases to 17 million, then again decreased to 8 million last year due to the Fund putting in place new measures to calculate the share which is reviewed annually. Furthermore, Afioga ALIIMALEMANU clarified that NPF are using methods to value shares and this is carried out on an annual basis, however the Member urges the Committee to reconsider valuing shares annually, as it is costly for NPF and to consider alternative methods such as to value shares every 5 years.

- **Afioga Hon. LEOTA Laki Lamositele – Minister for Women, Community and Social Development – Acting Minister for Finance**

The Acting minister clarified some of the issues raised by the members regarding their report such as, arrears noted in the report as a result of Employers who fail to pay NPF contribution of their employees on time. This is different from arrears as a result of delayed loan repayment. The Minister also noted that he will consider the requests by members to increase the contribution to

members of parliament, stressing that these are money spent by the Government thus, they will need to consider this issue thoroughly. This also goes to percentage offered to the public. The NPF will carefully consider these requests as they are all Government expenses but will benefit the public. The acting minister also noted that the NPF will carefully consider investment opportunities to engage in as this also affects the return they receive.

Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua: Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee moved a motion to approve the report P.P. 2022/2023 No. 12, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2021/2022 No. 17, Annual Report of the Samoa National Provident Fund for the Financial Year 2020/2021; motion seconded and approved.

Susuga Hon Leota Laki Lamositele - Acting Minister of Finance moved a motion for the Assembly to approve the Government Response P.P. 2022/2023 No.61, Government Responses on P.P. 2022/2023 No. 11; motion seconded and approved.

- II. **P.P. 2022/2023 No. 13, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 68, Annual Report of the Samoa National Provident Fund for the Financial Year 2019/2020;**
- P.P. 2022/2023 No.76, Government Responses on P.P. 2022/2023 No. 13

Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua: Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee, moved a motion to consider its reports; P.P.2020/2021 No. 68, Annual Report of the Samoa National Provident Fund for the Financial Year 2019/2020; motion seconded and approved.

The Chairperson presented the overall findings and its recommendations on the Annual Report of the SNPF for the FY 2019/2020 as follow:

Recommendation 1:

The Committee recommends the Fund to make suitable amendments to its Principal Act, to ensure the benefits for voluntary members such as farmers/fishermen, church ministers, seasonal workers and others are the same.

Recommendation 2:

The Committee recommends the Fund to conduct awareness programs on benefits the voluntary members are entitled to reflect their valuable contributions not only citizens in Samoa but as well as overseas who also wants to be voluntary members for the organization for the benefit of the members, their families and communities as well as assurance of revenue for the Fund.

Recommendation 3:

The Committee recommends the Fund to review if the members access to online transactions are secured.

- **Susuga Hon LEOTA Laki Lamositele - Acting Minister of Finance**

The Hon Minister presented responses in accordance to recommendations put forth by the Committee as follow:

Response to Recommendation 1:

Recommendation is noted. The Fund will take this into consideration for discussion at the Board level.

Response to Recommendation 2:

Recommendation is noted. The Fund has increased the level of its Press Release and awareness campaigns in the last 3 years and intends to continue to sustain this level. There also exists an intention to open small nodes overseas to encourage overseas voluntary contributions - starting with Auckland, New Zealand.

Response to Recommendation 3:

Recommendation is noted. The Committee can rest assured that the Fund's entire digital infrastructure is protected by the highest level of cyber-security.

**Speaker announced the floor is open for Members to raise any concerns or opinions on the recommendations and responses put forth.*

i. Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo – Opposition Leader

The Hon member queried the interest rate of Short Term Loans, noting that the Fund allows contributors to loan 15% of total Member contribution, yet the interest is 12%, this is considerably high, when it is loaning on the person's own money. The Member continued further and stated that even Banks have interests of 9% and urged the NPF to reconsider this high interest rate to the public as they are loaning from their own contributions. Furthermore, the member advised the NPF to continue their 300 pension payout as part of covid assistance considering our current economic situation.

- **Susuga Hon LEOTA Laki Lamositele - Acting Minister of Finance**

The acting Minister clarified the issue on high interest rates imposed by NPF. The minister noted that any commercial banks has high interest rate for any loans because of its administration cost. The member further clarified that the range of NPF's interest rates is to ensure the generation of sustainable dividend for members of the Fund. However, he accepts the input made by the Member and will take this into consideration. The acting minister further clarified the low interest rate for companies noting that this is because these companies loan out large sums of money

meaning their payment will also be lengthy thus, ensuring the flow of money for the NPF in the long term.

Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua: Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee

moved motion for the Assembly to approve the P.P. 2022/2023 No. 13, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 68, Annual Report of the Samoa National Provident Fund for the Financial Year 2019/2020

Susuga Hon LEOTA Laki Lamositele - Acting Minister of Finance

moved a motion for the Assembly to approve its responses on the committees recommendations.

- III. **P.P. 2022/2023 No. 14, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 78 and P.P. 2021/2022 No.33, Report of Operations and Statement of Accounts of the Samoa Senior Citizens Benefit Fund for Financial Years 2019/2020 & 2020/2021. - P.P. 2022/2023 No.77, Government Responses on P.P. 2022/2023 No. 14**

Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua: Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee moved a motion for the Assembly to consider its report: P.P. 2022/2023 No. 14, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 78 and P.P. 2021/2022 No.33, Report of Operations and Statement of Accounts of the Samoa Senior Citizens Benefit Fund for Financial Years 2019/2020 & 2020/2021; motion seconded and approved.

The Chairperson presented the overall findings and its recommendations on the Annual Report of the SNPF for the FY 2019/2020 as follow:

Recommendation 1:

The Committee recommends the Fund to work collectively with village mayors, to record and report the number of the deceased and those migrated overseas, to ensure the total of pension paid out. it is also importance to work together with the Ministry of Women and the Bureau of Statistics for actual information.

Recommendation 2:

The Committee recommends the Fund to have in place detailed information regarding migrated personnel, which indicates the importance of working together with the Immigration Office to easily highlight pensioners travelling overseas.

Recommendation 3:

The Committee recommends the Fund to implement awareness programs for the pensioners understanding about their benefits and to encourage them to register 3 years earlier, otherwise only 1 year can be claimed.

Susuga Hon LEOTA Laki Lamositele - Acting Minister of Finance

The Hon Minister presented responses in accordance to recommendations put forth by the Committee as follow:

Response to Recommendation 1;

Recommendation is noted. The Fund shall continue to work with villages as well as relevant Ministries such as the MWCSO and SBS (BDM division) to ensure pension data is updated on a regular basis.

Response to Recommendation 2:

Recommendation is noted. The Fund already has a good working relationship with the Immigration division of MPMC and intends to solidify this cooperation with a formal MOU in the future.

Response to Recommendation 3:

Recommendation is noted.

*Speaker announced the floor is open for Members to raise any concerns or opinions on the recommendations and responses put forth.

i. Tofa Hon. LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo: Member for Anoamaa 2

The Opposition Leader commends the Chairperson for Finance for taking note of his recommendation to cash out \$300 from the Fund for the pensioners on a yearly basis, also commended the benefits of free hospital visits and medications to our elderly. Furthermore, Hon LAUOFO commended the inclusion of ferry tickets, however vehicle fees are not included, thus the Member also requested, to consider the feasibility to also include vehicles to be covered for pensioners. The Member commends the Committee for covering in its report the pensioners migrated overseas and those who have passed on, as it is noted their children are receiving their pension benefits. The Member then queried whether there is a partnership with overseas authorities to ensure the pensioners do not claim their pensions twice or thrice.

ii. Tofa Hon. TUUU Anasii Leota: Member for Siumu

The member queried the issue where old people travel overseas for medical check-ups for instance for only 3 months however, they are not entitled to receive their pension.

iii. Afioga SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa: Member for Vaimauga 1

The Member proposed whether its best to use our district committee for the district project to provide a list of pensioners this will also confirm those who have passed away and suggested to include restaurants in these benefits.

iv. Afioga AUUAPAAU Mulipola Aloitafua - Member Aiga i le Tai

The Member noted that the government should increase the pension for his constituency as they are not included in the free travelling benefit between Upolu and Manono Tai considering the expenses of inter-island trips and the lack of ferries available at times.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker announced that there are certain Ministries who are conducting awareness programmes, for instance, the awareness programme for ending violence against women and children; thus he informed Members to wear black tomorrow to show their support on ending violence against women and children.

**Proceedings adjourned at 1:02pm and will reconvene on Thursday 9 March
2023 at 9:30am**