

DISCLAIMER

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DAY 5
9:26am

Monday 20th September 2021

I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY
APPROPRIATION BILL 2021/2022 – debate on second reading (Cont.) Day 4

LEADER OF OPPOSITION:

Hon TUILAEPa, sought the Speaker's clarification as to the process of the House when considering the Appropriation Bill; which was granted by Hon Mr Speaker.

Hon Opposition Leader greeted the House and acknowledged Mr Speaker for the prayers offered this morning, emphasising that all should be more forgiving and in the spirit of working together and moving forward.

He then sought clarifications on certain Orders of the House, specifically S.O 133 which was set aside by a motion moved and approved by those who were present in the House at the time, and emphasised that there were certain guidelines followed and adhered to during HRPP's time in government. Hon TUILAEPa, asserted that as the motion has passed, it should be made clear that the normal process is that any Appropriation Bill needs to be referred to the Finance & Expenditure Committee to deliberate on, calling in respective CEO's for Government Ministries/Offices/Corporations to clarify their proposed budgets and projects, as well as to respond to queries and concerns raised by the Committee.

HON MR. SPEAKER – RULING

Hon Speaker confirmed to the leader of the opposition that his views have been heard, and according to the S.O 78 (8) which states that whatever motion set and finalised within the sitting cannot be revoked. Thus, in the spirit of working together, Parliament must move forward and continue with the session.

LEADER OF OPPOSITION

The Opposition Leader clarified that despite Standing Orders 35 and 45, it should be noted that despite Government's authority to determine the arrangement of business in any sitting day, it is not the case when dealing with Appropriation Bills noting Standing Order 139.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE – Hon PM

The Hon PM clarified that there are other opportunities afforded to the Opposition Members to speak on the budget and raise concerns during the Consideration in Detail of the Appropriation. Hon PM further added that despite not referring the Appropriation Bill to the Finance and Expenditure Committee, there is no greater deliberation than that which occurs in the House.

HON MR SPEAKER – RULING

Mr Speaker emphasised that the Motion has been put forward and passed in the House and accentuated that the Speaker is the only authority who is responsible to interpret the Standing Orders. Hon Speaker urged the House to work together and move forward.

LEADER OF OPPOSITION

The Opposition Leader continued to seek the Speakers approval to reconsider Standing Order 139, as the referral to Committee stage has been bypassed, noting that the Government of the day does not have the power to remove the referral stage.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE - PM

The Hon PM asserted that the Leader of the Opposition has disrespected the authority of the Speaker and reminded the Opposition Leader that his seat has changed, and he should accept the Speaker's ruling.

1. Afioga TOEOLESULUSULU Cedric Pose Salesa Schuster, Member for Aana Alofi No.4 (cont.)

The Member informed the House, that it is his personal goal for the next 5 years of the parliamentary term to increase the number of individuals within his constituency to attend school, which will in turn increase the employment rate. He then spoke directly to the following Ministers:

- **Minister for Communication and Information Technology:**

The Member noted numerous allocations made to the SNBH regardless of the cable not providing the expected result; the Member urged the Government to reconsider the matter and possible re-allocation of the funds to more relevant and rewarding projects. Afioga Toeolesulusulu sought an update of the progress of the SNBH to determine whether the nation is gaining revenues from this project and whether Government Ministries are utilizing this cable.

- **Minister for Education, Sports and Culture:**
 - Queried whether the Government has considered an alternative route in bringing our children who are studying in Fiji safely home at these trying times due to the pandemic.
 - The Member noted the One Government Grant for schools, and suggested the feasibility of increasing this grant.
 - Raised the issue of teacher shortage, noting that there have been schools with 60+ students to one teacher, therefore suggested possible employment of part-time teachers to help lessen the load on teachers and ensure students receive decent education.
 - Consider the development of pre-schools and encouraging the government to increase the grants towards pre-schools as it is an important stage in the development of the child's brain.
 - The Member encouraged the development of sports in schools, enforce expanding of sports tourism so the sports learning in schools can be lifted.

- **Minister for Justice and Courts Administration**
 - The Member emphasised the independence of the court in carrying out its duties, he then queried the progress of the newly enacted Land and Titles Act 2020.
 - Addressed the Samoa Law Reform Commission and raised the issue of having duplicated and inter-related laws that contradict other laws made, and urged the Commission to look at this issue and identify a solution to assist with the Judiciary.

- **Minister for Women, Community and Social Development:**
 - The Member commended the Minister of Finance with the initiative included in the budget to raise allowance for Sui Tamaitai and Sui o Nuu.
 - Encouraged programmes regarding, to curb the increasing youth drop-out rate in schools at an early age. Thus, having programmes targeting these individuals is important for their development in other areas outside of the academic realm.

- **Minister for Police**
 - The Member noted whether it was an appropriate time to establish a Police Academy as intended, and urged that more trainings provided for officers to increase their knowledge

and skills. Consider looking at neighbouring countries and partnerships for training attachments to build capacity and skills of our local service.

- Addressed the Office of the Electoral Commission and requested a review on the recent electoral laws enacted.

- Minister of Health:
 - The Member commended the efforts of the Ministry and previous government for their services. He also noted that it is not clarified in the Budget whether there was an appropriation for overseas medical schemes. Afioga Toeolesulusulu noted only 1 doctor overseas to give recommendations for this scheme, and suggested whether we can utilise our own people to give recommendations.
 - The Member noted a shortage of doctors in rural areas and requested specialists to be provided to ensure adequate healthcare is provided to all of Samoa. He then mentioned the diaspora overseas who are highly qualified specialist doctors, and whether there was a way that they can be brought back home to help our local doctors. He also suggested to relax border closure policies to allow for overseas doctors to come to Samoa and build the capacities of our local doctors. In assisting with unemployment status, suggested to provide securities for district hospitals to ensure safety and security of resources.
 - The Member noted an appropriation of 1.2million for plumbing works, and asserted that this was too high for plumbing works.

- Minister for Public Enterprise and Commerce, Industry and Labour:
 - The Member addressed the responsible Minister and noted the importance of increasing employment opportunities for our people. Suggested other ways which our people can go overseas for employment, such as the Star Kist Company in American Samoa. Urged the Minister and Ministry to enhance the scope of opportunities, expanding to carpentry and apprenticeship opportunities as opposed to only seasonal employment through the RSE scheme.

- Minister for Works Transport and Infrastructure:
 - Expressed disappointment with the new roads developed which only lasts 2-3 years, he then called to consider their vetting process to thoroughly select contractors who are able to pave solid roads that last longer rather than a 'quick fix' as the impacts on vehicles are detrimental.

The Member from Aana Alofi No.4 concluded by acknowledging his constituency especially those who voted for him.

2. Tofa MAUU Siaosi Puepuemai, Member for Vaa o Fonoti

The Member greeted the House and addressed Samoa in all her honorific salutations, he addressed his Constituency in all her glory, and acknowledged with much gratitude this great honour to represent their constituency in the highest form of decision making in the land.

The Member then greeted, the Hon PM, her Deputy and Cabinet and Associate Ministers. He acknowledged the Leader of Opposition, Hon TUILAEPa Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, Deputy Leader and Members of the HRPP. He then addressed Mr Speaker, and the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. He acknowledged the Chief Justice and the Judiciary, all CEO's and respective Ministries who are the 'action body' of all policy direction by the Executive. The Member greeted the different denominations of Samoa, neighbouring country Tutuila, addressed the Governor and the two Houses.

He then addressed his constituency, the villages of Uafato, Lona, Maasina, Taelefaga, Salimu, Musumusu, Savago, Saletele and Samamea in all their honorific salutations. He also acknowledged all the church ministers within his constituency. Acknowledged the former MP Tialavea Seigafolava Hunt who represented his constituency in the previous parliamentary term. He acknowledged his committee, their efforts and hard work which has now secured him a seat in the Chamber. Commended the Minister of Finance and the Ministry for their work in preparing the Budget. Then addressed the following Ministers.

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure:

- The member raised that the roads from le Mafa to Uafato on the other side of Fagaloa as well as from Savago to Musumusu needs serious maintenance. He then requested to repair the connecting road between Musumusu and Le Mafa as this continues to be problematic during torrential rain, and erosion occurs. The Member requested that the Bridge in Uafato needs to be maintained and built higher.
- In regards to seawalls, the member requested a seawall for his Constituency as they are easily affected by natural Disasters and sea level rise and cyclones. Noted an appropriation of \$250,000 set aside for seawalls without clarification in the budget if this includes a seawall for his constituency, to assist with curbing the impacts of sea level rise.

Samoa Water Authority:

- The Member noted collaborative efforts of the Authority and the community and urged its services to be maintained and improved; he also mentioned the allocation for the SWA which has been decreased from 16 million to 11 million and urged to consider the reduction to ensure the public have access to good quality water.

Electricity Power Corporation:

- Commended the EPC for the 24/7 service carried out to ensure all of Samoa receive electricity, and requested for more street lights in his constituency.

- Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries:

The Member emphasised that in his constituency they rely heavily on agriculture. Thus, encouraged the minister on carrying out programs which showcase and market local farmers' products.

- Urged to maintain the conservative plant in Nu'u as it nurtures Samoa's exported goods.
- Queried whether the Ministry is looking at other potential markets for our local products
- Minister of Health:
 - Noted that there was no district hospital for his constituency, and raised the need for a clinic for convenience of his constituents, as the Lufilufi clinic is far and distance is important as it can save a life.

- Minister for Education, Sports and Culture:
 - Commended the minister and ministry for the newly erected school building in his constituency, and requested for more teachers
 - The member noted the decrease of appropriation from 18m to 17.7m for this FY, and mentioned the low stats of children in schools within the 3 year period of 2017-2020 which came from 215,000 to 197,000.
 - Commended the government on the inclusion of sports development in the budget and noted the decrease of funds allocated for the development of sports facilities within the constituencies from 450k to 300k and urged the ministry to reconsider.

- Minister for Natural Resources and Environment:
 - The member commended efforts taken by the Ministry and expressed disappointment on contractors for rubbish collectors, and queried whether there are safety gears provided for them. The Member queried the health and safety of those employees who are collecting the rubbish and suggests they wear appropriate safety gear to ensure their health and wellbeing.

The Member then concluded his speech and wished all well.

**Proceedings were set aside at 10:56; and
resumed at 11:31 pm**

3. Tofa ALE Vena Ale, Member for Faleata 4

The Member greeted the Hon Speaker, Hon Prime Minister, Deputy, Cabinet Members, Associate Ministers and the whole of parliament. He addressed the Head of State, Council of Deputies, the Chief Justice and the Judiciary. He then greeted Samoa in all her honorific salutations. Then greeted his constituency in all honorific salutations, greeted our neighbouring islands Tutuila and Manua. Then the Member urged the House to review and amend certain Articles of the Constitution so the events post-election does not repeat for the sake of our future generations. The Member then addressed specific Ministers and spoke on their respective portfolios.

- Minister of Health:
 - The Member reminded the Minister about the confirmed case in our neighbouring country (Tutuila), emphasising to the minister and cabinet to keep our borders closed, and ensure that our Health authorities are well prepared to fight the virus. Again urged the Ministry to keep borders closed as the new delta variant has made its way to American Samoa, emphasising that it is hitting closer to home, therefore we must remain vigilant in all efforts to ensure the safety of our people.

- Minister of Finance:
 - Queried the 1 million as promised by FAST in their manifesto, further noted that only \$200,000 is allocated in the budget for each constituency but also noticed that this allocation must be applied for before it is awarded, and therefore sought clarification on the matter.

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure:
 - The Member queried Smart meters and its effectiveness;
 - To please consider the access road inland Saina and Toamua which needs to be tar sealed.
 - The member requested the maintenance of certain access roads.

The Member noted that he does not have any comments on the Appropriation Bill because it has not gone through the usual process of Committee referral for thorough and proper analysis and clarification

Hon Mr Speaker – point of interjection

Mr Speaker reminded the member that the matter raised has already been discussed and resolved, and therefore advised the Member to refrain from speaking on the matter.

Tofa ALE Vena Ale, Member for Faleata 4 (cont.)

The Member continued by addressing the Hon PM, Cabinet and Members of FAST and advised the newly appointed Government to carry out their duties with honesty and integrity. The Member acknowledged that the CEO's and Ministries are the 'doers' of Cabinet direction. He mentioned that there have been notable instances which question the integrity of the selection and recruitment process which has been overlooked by the Executive with recent direct appointment.

He then concluded his speech by stating his support on the budget and his acknowledgement to his constituency in its honorific salutations.

Hon LAAULI Leuatea Polataivao Fosi, Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries - Clarification

The Hon Minister stood to clarify that the \$1 million as queried by members and emphasised that they did not promise any \$1 million to each constituency but only mentioned that they will allocate \$1 million for any developments for constituency.

4. Afioga FUAAVA Suluimalo Amataga - Member for Aleipata Itupa i Luga.

The Member greeted the House and Samoa in all her honorific salutations, acknowledged his constituency especially his dear village Lalomanu and addressed her in her honorifics. Acknowledged clergy members in his constituency and his family and friends. He commended his political party HRPP for their work, for keeping the peace, for not doing police blocks, for raising our nations' status from Least developed countries to Developing countries during their time as government. In regards to the budget 2021/2022, the Member commended the Minister and her Ministry for the tabled budget and spoke specifically to the following Ministers:

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure:
 - Noted the reduction of approximately 15% for the Ministry, and asserted that the social sector holds government's priority in this budget.
 - The Member then requested for water supply from Lalomanu (stated that roads have been paved but Vailoa still has roads to be fixed). And requested for water tanks in other parts of his constituency.
 - The Member believes these were in the pipeline for the previous Government projects as he was a member in the board and was able to see phase 1 of the project being implemented.
 - The Member asserted that these developments are much needed by the villagers who migrated inland after the 2009 tsunami.
 - Noted that there is only one access road towards the school and another road that needs to be paved to provide ease of access and travel to and from students and farmers.
 - The Member noted that some areas in Lotofaga still have no seawalls which makes it prone to the impacts of sea level rise especially when cars go pass and through the area
 - Noted that there are no evacuation routes in areas prone to natural disasters and requested for evacuation routes for the people in times of natural disasters.

Samoa Tourism Authority:

- The Member noted the main revenue for the Constituency is tourism and therefore urged the Government to consider other initiatives to assist the tourism sector stay afloat in these challenging times.
- Minister of Health:
 - The Member noted the need for renovations and cleaning of the hospitals, especially the district hospital at Lalomanu

- He recalled an unfortunate incident which claimed the life of a relative of his, who was waiting for an ambulance during an emergency; however, the ambulance went to cater for other matters first and came later but it was too late to revive the patient. Suggested whether another ambulance can be on stand-by to avoid such instances for occurring.
- The member noted the Covid19 and its effects, as well as the new variant also spreading throughout the world, and urged to keep borders closed especially since American Samoa has one confirmed case and his constituency is closest to American Samoa.

- Minister of Education, Sports and Culture:
 - The Member commended the increase of allocation to the Ministry, specifically the 2.5million distributed for the teachers' pay increments.
 - He then reminded the Minister about the shortage of teachers in his constituency where there is only the principal and few teachers, noting that the Schools at Vailoa and Ulutogia do not have enough teachers. The Member further mentioned that the schools only have a Principal and two teachers therefore if the principal has a meeting in town then the school is left with only 2 teachers to carry out the lessons for all classes from Year1 - 8.
 - He then requested for pre-school teachers and advised constituents to attend teaching trainings in order to find employment and assist with the schools shortage of teachers.
 - In regards to the One Government Grant, the member noted that it was previously 18million and has been reduced to 17.7 million; he queried whether there was another increase as revenues depend on the numbers of students attending schools.

- Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour:
 - The Member noted the increase of 7.6m allocated for this sector, noting that the Tourism sector had the highest allocation. Commended the Minister for this allocation as his constituency relies heavily on tourism and it is where most beach fales and resorts are located and have been the most vulnerable to the impacts of COVID. Therefore the appropriation will assist with repayment of debts and boost their businesses during the pandemic.
 - The Member noted the RSE scheme and queried if there was any other employment opportunities for our people in Australia and New Zealand, noting the over-crowded turn up from the public when registering for the scheme.

- Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries:
 - The Member noted that this Ministry does not have much money allocated to it for this FY and suggested the minister to improve ways that local farmers can utilize to sell and market their products when they cannot be sold overseas.

- Minister for Communication and Information Technology:

- Queried the Government channel on the digital TV whether there was an allocation in the budget.

- Minister for Natural Resources and Environment:
 - Noted the allocation of 1 Million in the budget is specifically to rainforest

- Minister of Police:
 - The Member commended the services and checkpoints done by the police force at Lalomanu to ensure the public abides by the laws and no one is drinking and driving

- Minister for Customs and Revenue:
 - The Member noted that only 1% increase on revenues collected

- Minister for Women, Community and Social Development:
 - The Member checked whether there was an application for constituency to claim the promises made by the FAST Party.

**Proceedings were suspended at 1:03pm;
and will resume at 2pm.**

Afioga FUAAVA Suluimalo Amataga - Member for Aleipata Itupa i Luga. (cont.)

The Member continued by noting that the access roads in Ulutogia need maintenance and repair works. He then concluded his speech by acknowledging the Hon PM and Cabinet, the Opposition Party, Hon Mr Speaker and all.

5. Afioga PESETA Vaifou Tevagaena, Member for Faasaleleaga No.5

The Member greeted Hon Mr Speaker and both parties, Members and Cabinet. Greeted the Deputy Clerk and Clerk Assistance. He then addressed the Head of State and his good lady, the Council of Deputies, Chief Justice and the Judiciary. He also acknowledged all the church ministers, and also acknowledged Mr Speaker's gift (Holy Bible) to each Member during swearing in, as it reminds the Members' that Mr Speaker is thoughtful and walks in the right path. He then addressed specific Ministers:

- Minister of Finance:

- The Member stated that his constituents have been continuously calling him to ask about the 1 million promise by FAST; he therefore queried the Minister for the status of this promise and whether it will be funded from the government's budget or the Political Party.
- The Member further queried whether the \$300 senior citizen's pension will be distributed twice a month.

Tof Hon OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai, Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure: Interjection

- The Member asked the Member who gave the Member the false information that they get to withdraw their pension twice a month and that the 1 million was in cash.

Susuga Hon LA'AULI Leuatea Polataivao Fosi, Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries:

- Hon Minister, clarified that the FAST Political Party did not announce that 1 million will be disbursed, rather that 1 million is for village developments, and that the pension would only be increased to \$200 and not withdrawn twice.

Afioga Fepulea'i Fa'asavalu Faimata Sua, Member for Salega No.1 – interjection

The Member stated that he raised the issue not as a FAST member but as a representative of his constituency, he is to voice concerns of his constituency and that was one of the issues that they want clarifications on.

Afioga PESETA VAIFOU Tevagaena, Member for Faasaleleaga No.5 (cont.)

- The Member requested a seawall for his constituency, this was an issue raised awhile back when the Hon Prime Minister was the Minister for MNRE, requesting seawalls for Pu'apu'a village.
- Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries:
 - The Member reflected on the impacts of COVID on local farmers and agricultural products and noted that he has heard the demand for certain vegetables from overseas (NZ & Australia) such as; laupele, manioka, this can be an alternate export from taro which is currently low in supply
 - Queried the exportation of taro and sought whether there was a way forward from this shortage of taro exported to NZ and Australia, and also suggested the spinach and tapioca as alternatives to be exported while there is a low demand for taro.
 - The Member suggested an increase supply of pawpaw from Savaii, which is another way forward for Samoa.
- Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour:
 - The Member commended the Minister and suggested to bring the airplane, our Samoa Airways.

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure:
 - The Member expressed concern with continuous traffic congestion, noting the 'bumper to bumper' traffic every morning; and suggested that there be another connecting road to solve this issue.

- Minister of Education, Sports and Culture:
 - The Member commended the Minister for the successful initiative done by the National University of Samoa to expand programs offered by the University to enhance the skills of students and provide an option for students to choose from.

The Member acknowledged and greeted his constituency in all its honoric salutations, acknowledged the support of his village Puapua during his time in parliament and wished Samoa well.

6. Afioga LUPEMATASILA Galumalemana Tologata Togia Tile Leia, Falelatai & Samatau

The Member greeted the 3 arms of government, Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Prime Minister, Government of the day and the opposition party. He then greeted the DC, sergeant at arms, and the Legislative Assembly; greeted his constituency in its honorific salutations and expressed his gratitude to his constituency for voting him in during General Elections. He commended the Speaker and first female PM for their work, and wished them well on their calling. The Member then raised the bad maintenance of roads in his Constituency and requested proper road access directly from Faleolo to Falelatai & Samatau. He then stated that Faleolo is riched with water, however some parts of his constituency has no water supply while other parts are supplied with the independent water scheme which sometimes runs out (Pata and Matautu's water is supply from the Independent Water Scheme).

- Minister of Health:
 - The Member reminded the proposal for a hospital in his constituency and emphasised to put aside political parties' differences but consider their request.

- Minister of Education, Sports and Culture:
 - The Member noted that school buildings and sports fields are an important aspect for all schools, raising the importance to our students with sporting talent in his village in sports however they have no area or a well maintained field to nurture the talents that they have in the youths.
 - The Member asked the government to consider funding a sports field for his constituency. The Member noted that 2 school buildings within his constituency are prone to natural disaster as they are close to the coastal area, requesting the minister that they need to shift these schools to another location.

- Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries:
 - Noted that our local farmers continue to improve our local taro produce but Fiji continues to exceed our marketable ability

- He then noted that there is no budget or allocation to market our local products abroad, then suggested to focus on aspect of the industry and develop it, rather than adding more projects that are costly to the economy.
- Minister of Natural, Resources and Environment:
 - The Member noted the need for seawalls in his constituency to combat the impacts of sea level rise.
- Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour:

In regards to Seasonal employment, the Member expressed disappointment regarding the process of seasonal work which, emphasising that this initiative is for the benefit of all Samoans eligible, rather than for personal profit of those conducting the initiative.

The Member then spoke on the BUDGET 2021/2022:

The Member quoted the theme of the budget and queried why it should be restructured, he also noted that during HRPPs time it mainly focused and prioritised that 'health' noting that 'wealth is health'. The Member noted that the prioritisation of the Budget is on the 'Social Sector' and stated that we should be mindful not to instil a sense of dependency from our people, and urged to avoid giving free gifts rather to focus on generating revenues. The Member also noted an appropriation in the budget, that there was a decrease in electricity and water charge, which means that the revenues of these corporations will also decline. He then clarified that we should be careful on giving promises as there are set bodies to maintain the assets, and accentuated that these assets are expensive to maintain therefore we should avoid reducing fees for such services.

- Minister for Natural Resources and Environment:

The Member accentuated that there is already a project in place namely "1 million tree"

The Member concluded his speech by conveying his best wishes to Members of the House.

7. Afioga LEAANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata 1

The Member acknowledged the Ao ole Malo, Council of Deputies, Judiciary, Hon PM and Cabinet. Greeted Samoa in all her honorific salutations; acknowledged the Governor of American Samoa, greeted all CEO's present in the House and the Hon Mr Speaker who is the supreme authority of Parliament. The Member commended the Hon Minister for Finance for the tabled budget; he then quoted the Hon Ministers statement on the budget: improve health (faalelei soifua manuia) and the pension amount of \$200. He then raised that his constituency was also vocal on the \$300 pension however it is said that it is only 200.

Hon Mr Speaker – Interjection:

The Member clarified to the Member for Safata 1 that the budget provides the amount for pension.

Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon LAAULI Leuatea Polataivao Fosi – Clarification:

Hon Minister clarified the matter that only \$200 per month for pension was stated, there was never a time where the Political Party announced \$300.

- **LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION:**

The Member stated that we did not spread anything but we only noted the manifesto noting that an allocation for pensions.

Afioga LEAANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata 1 (cont.)

The Member noted that he is here to voice the concerns and opinions of his constituency and reiterated on the \$300 as promised by the FAST party. He then raised benefits for disability, he is happy with the continuation of this very important project. The member touched upon the importance of awareness against domestic violence including verbal abuse.

- **Minister of Health:**

The member noted the increasing level of healthy diets and meals in hospitals as it promotes healthy living that it should also be practised in respective villages.

**Proceedings were suspended at 3:46pm;
and resumed at 4:26pm.**

Afioga LEAANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata 1 (cont.)

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

The Member queried the teachers' pay increments which were not reflected in the budget, noting that only the One Grant was noted as being reduced. In regards to Sports, the Member noted the importance of this in the overall education system. He further raised that sports as a career have blessed the youths of our country and it has also contributed to the economy. The Member further raised that Samoa has very talented youths and if we invest more in their physical life, it can assist develop them and their talents and in turn provide means to support themselves and their families.

The Member also noted an increase in allocations for private businesses and asserted that there was a stimulus package earlier during HRPP's time (implemented phase 1 and phase 2) while Phase 3 is currently implemented; however, the fund to assist businesses has reduced. The Member reiterated to clarify the \$1 million as promised as the budget provides 11m in the budget but not 51 million as promised in their manifesto.

The Member addressed the Minister for Natural Resources and Environment, and noted that more than 2 million trees have been planted through the '1 million tree project'. Suggested whether funding should be allocating to this important project; he further spoke on the process of reforestation and its importance to combatting climate change. The Member also requested for seawalls for Manono and Apolima and commended the appropriation for such projects.

He then addressed the Electric Power Corporation, and noted the decrease in electricity charge, mentioned that this reduction has its pros and cons; noting whether this can be sustained throughout the years.

The Member mentioned an appropriation for 'School-Net' and queried whether this project was still operational.

Leader of the opposition:

The Opposition Leader stood on a point of clarification, to note the importance of the School-Net project, and that it was ongoing and not out-of-date

Afioga LEANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata 1 (cont.)

The Member accentuated that the previous reigning government also included in its pipeline the reduction of meat supplies given that it was a daily essential for families and expressed appreciation on the low cost for other services.

- Minister of Police & Prison:

The Member recalled the event that happened in Savaii during the party's road show, expressing disappointment towards the actions of these local villagers and their disrespectful words and behaviour from certain villagers.

Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries – point of clarification:

The Hon Minister clarified that the matter is before the Courts and should therefore not be spoken in the House, and that it was a sensitive matter, as the Members are aware that Savaii had already informed them not to come over but they did not take the advise and continued to Savaii.

Afioga LEAANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata 1 (cont.)

The Member acknowledged the Ministry of Health and all frontline workers, NEOC and the SOE's involved to keep Samoa safe from covid. The Member believes that the virus will enter our shores if we open our borders, therefore we must keep our borders closed. The Member then addressed the Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour and acknowledged the RSE Scheme which have developed families; he then advised that the Minister should bring the plane in as there are positives of having our own national carrier as there will be reduced air fares for our people.

The Member queried the need for an independent auditor as provided in the budget and asserted that this is a misuse of funds which could be sourced elsewhere. Noting the importance of utilising the local skills and knowledge of our local people. Afioga LEAANA also noted that all the Annual Reports and Audit Reports are all up to date which is a positive indication that our people have the capacity to perform exceptionally.

8. Tofa LENATAI VICTOR FAAFOI TANUMAPUA, Member for VAIMAUGA No. 2

The Member addressed all of Samoa and Tutuila ma Manua, he then greeted his constituency, also acknowledged the candidates who ran with him during the General Election. He also acknowledged the work by the Minister and Ministry of Finance; he emphasised the use of our local talent and people to conduct the specialised tasks noted in the budget as it costs less. He then commended the Minister and Cabinet as well as the Ministry of Health for approving the 2 days public-holiday to push for mass vaccination of the whole population and encourages the public to get vaccinated. The Member then noted the appropriation for constituencies, and suggested that these funds for the development of constituencies should be given to the District Committees as these are the responsible authorities in respective villages to implement developments for the benefit of the constituency.

The Member then addressed the Minister for Communication and Information Technology, acknowledged the developments so far with the telecommunication sector and noted that there was an appropriation of 2million to further enhance technology in schools, with the use of Netvo company to monitor the services and operation of SchoolNet and internet connectivity in Schools. Afioga LEAANA mentioned that there are other capable people with the relevant expertise and knowledge in this area and therefore raised the possibility of opening up the opportunity so other qualified members of the public can apply.

The Member then concluded by acknowledged the Speaker for the opportunity given to voice his constituency's needs and concerns and expressed gratitude to his constituency for the privilege bestowed on him to represent their constituency in the 17th Parliamentary Term.

9. Afioga SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa, Member for Vaimauga 1

The Member greeted the House, Hon Speaker, Hon PM and Cabinet, Associate Ministers and backbenchers of FAST, the Opposition Leader and the Opposition Member also acknowledged the hard work of the Legislative Assembly Office in providing support to Parliamentarians. The Member also acknowledged the hard work of the Minister of Finance and her Ministry in preparing the tabled Budget, noting that not much has been changed from the previous Parliamentary term. He was pleased to note the increase in salaries for the Puleuu and Sui Tamaitai and hopes that it does not affect the salaries for public servants. The Member then touched on the sensitive issue of numerous CEO's and Office Heads recently terminated, suspended or forced to resign,

Hon Prime Minister – Point of Order:

The Hon PM spoke on the issue raised by the Member for Vaimauga No.1 and highlighted the reasons why the Attorney General was terminated

MR SPEAKER – RULING:

Hon Mr Speaker ruled that Members of the House refrain from raising the matter on the decision made to certain Heads of Offices due to reasons already made known at the time the decision was made.

Afioga SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa - Member for Vaimauga 1 (cont.)

The Member then addressed the Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure and called for maintenance and repair works for the roads of his constituency; he also put forward a request to look into the water supply for Laulii and Letogo, as these villages continue to drink from independent water schemes which is a concern as there have been findings that this water supply is not fit and healthy for human consumption.

The Member also raised the issue of whether the Fagali'i Airport can be reopened as it will provide employment opportunities and revenue for the country; the Member noted that the area

is currently occupied by the transport Division for the Ministry of Police, however, there is much land available which can be used again as an airport.

Afioga SULAMANAIA then addressed the Samoa Land Corporation and requested whether their lands may be returned to their constituency at a lower price; mentioned the airplane for Samoa, and urged the Minister to continue with the plane as the economy stands to reap benefits in the long run. The Member reiterated the need for our people to be more vigilant in keeping our borders closed as the delta variant has made its way to American Samoa and is getting closer to our shores; urged the Minister of Health to close off Samoa's borders. The Member then raised the issue of cyber-bullying and queried whether there were any possible methods to filter the information on social media as there have been numerous problems arising from social media.

He again emphasized the importance of building and maintaining a seawall at Laulii which is the most vulnerable area due to the impacts of sea-level-rising. He then stated that funds for Samoa Victim Support and other societies that develop and help women in society should go through Ministry of Women, so that they can distribute these funds accordingly as they see fit.

In regards to agricultural developments, the Member noted the significance of the Ministry's program which enables local farmers to sell their agricultural products overseas. Afioga SULAMANAIA then addressed the Minister for Police and noted his disappointment with the empowerment of police in regards to their response measures to the HRPP members who were seeking an audience with the Speaker on granting access to enter parliament.

Hon Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries noted the severity of the statement made by the Member for Vaimauga No.1 and moved a motion that they should not be included in parliamentary records; to which lead to the Hon Speaker's Ruling to remove from Parliamentary records the words made by the Member as moved by the Minister for Agriculture.

Afioga SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa - Member for Vaimauga 1 (cont.)

Afioga SULAMANAIA asserted that his statements are not to ignite hate or division but serve as an advice, and concluded by acknowledging the Hon Deputy PM in carrying out his portfolio as Minister for Customs and Revenue and asked him to consider the effectiveness and feasibility of the TMS system recently introduced last year.

**Proceedings were adjourned at 6:02pm;
and will reconvene at Tuesday 21st September at 9:30am.**

