



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIFTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 5TH DECEMBER, 2017

SESSION – 2016/2017



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMEN TARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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First Meeting of the Fifth Session of the Fourth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Tuesday, 5th December, 2017.

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[FIRST AND FINAL ALLOTTED DAY]



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

FIFTH SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Tuesday, 5th December, 2017.

I. PRAYERS

[The Clerk of Parliament, Mr Ibrahim Sulaiman Sesay, Read the Prayers].

[The House met at 10:55 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown].

[The Speaker, Hon. Sheku Badara Basiru Dumbuya in the Chair].

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON MONDAY 4TH DECEMBER, 2017

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Monday, 4th December, 2017. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4 and Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8 and Page 9? There being no corrections or amendments could somebody move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Monday, 4th December, 2017 as presented?

HON. MOSES JORKIE: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. KUSAN SESAY: Mr Speaker, I so second.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for parliamentary sitting, held on Monday, 4th December, 2017 has been adopted as presented]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, may I have your attention please. My attention has been drawn to the fact that Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally had an interview on 98.1 FM Radio station in which he said many things that are wrong. He said that the Speaker threw out this Statutory Instrument on Nomination Fee, and that the Speaker acted unconstitutionally on this matter. Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally, did you say that?

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I said what I said in this Well the other day when the Statutory Instrument on Nomination Fees was thrown out. I said the document was not properly thrown out and that was what I said on radio.

THE SPEAKER: Why do you think it was not properly thrown out?

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Because it was in violation of Section 170, Sub-section 7 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone.

THE SPEAKER: No it was not and the House resolved that it should be thrown out.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, it should be thrown out by moving a motion of two/third majority of Members present.

THE SPEAKER: No.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: That's true, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: No. Honourable Member, it is the total rejection of a Statutory Instrument that requires what you are now talking about. You are acting in ignorance. I understand you did law, but my question is did you really do law? You are acting out of ignorance Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally. Sit down! This is a deliberate mischief on your part.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: You are not correct, Mr Speaker. I am acting on an informed decision of the Constitution.

THE SPEAKER: And what does it say?

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, Section 170[7] requires a Statutory Instrument which is about to be thrown out to be thrown out by a vote of two/third majority of Members present.

THE SPEAKER: Which section are you referring to, Honourable Member?

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, Section 170[7].

THE SPEAKER: Section 170[7] reads: "**Any other rules or regulations made by any person or authority pursuant to a power conferred in that behalf by this Constitution or any other law:-**

[a] shall be laid before Parliament;

[b] shall be published in the Gazette on or before the day they are so laid before Parliament;

[c] shall come into force at the expiration of a period of twenty-one days of being so laid unless Parliament, before the expiration of the said period of twenty-one days, annuls any such orders, rules or regulations by the votes of not less than two/third of the Members of Parliament."

Honourable Members, according to our Standing Orders, any document that comes before Parliament has to be very properly presented before the House and that is the rule. In the case of the said Statutory Instrument, it was noted that it was not properly before the House. For instance, the Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 3rd October, 2017 reads: **"Statutory Instrument No.115 of 2017 published on 13th July in the supplement to the Sierra Leone Gazette and laid on the Table of the House of Parliament be debated, pursuant to Section 170[7] of the Constitution of Sierra Leone."** The contribution of Honourable Ansumana J. Kaikai stated that he had never moved a parliamentary motion in the House and as far as the issues are concerned, he had effectively informed the House earlier under S.O 25[2] that whatever motion under his name in the House was not matured because it did not carry his signature as stipulated under S.O. 25 [2]. In that regard, he asked Mr Speaker under what Standing Order the parliamentary motion had been placed under his name because he did not have a motion legitimately as it is on the Order Paper.

In his response, the Speaker reminded Honourable Ansumana J. Kaikai that the Motion was going to be moved by Honourable Frederick S. Sourie, who initially gave a notice of Motion for Parliament to debate the Statutory Instrument immediately it was laid, but Honourable Ansumana J. Kaikai hurriedly and excitedly moved a motion to debate the Statutory Instrument. That action was described by the Majority Leader as being hijacked. Mr Speaker also mentioned that the Honourable Member stood on S.O 31[1] to withdraw his Motion, but never knew the implication of it as there were dissenting voices. Therefore, the Motion was at the moment owned by the House as by removing the previous mover does not kill the motion. Mr Speaker added by saying that how could a Proposer of a Motion ask for the withdrawal of that Motion which he did not

sign. He emphasised that although the Motion had been disclaimed and disowned by the Honourable Member, it is still before the House as per S.O 31[1].

Honourable Karifala S. Conteh stood on S.O. 25[1] and moved that the Statutory Instrument No.115 of 2017 published on the 13th July, as supplement to the Gazette, which was laid on the Table of the House be debated pursuant to Section 17 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone.

Honourable Members, the Speaker also said that since the Motion was with the House and it had been disclaimed by the previous Mover, it has now been owned by Honourable Karifala S. Conteh; and as the new Mover of the Motion, Mr Speaker added that S.O. 25[1][1] does not require a notice as it is one of the exceptions. It reads: **“Notice of Motion; unless these Orders otherwise direct, notice shall be given of any motion or amendment which it is proposed to move with the exception of the following:**

[a] a motion for the amendment of any motion.”

Honourable Foday Rado: A motion which has been withdrawn may be proposed again, at any time during the session but no motion shall be proposed which is the same in substance as any motion which during the same session has been resolved in the affirmative or negative. That was what Honourable Rado said, and take note of that Paran and be educated on this.

Honourable Chernor R.M. Bah, Deputy Speaker rose on a Point of order and responded to Honourable Foday Rado Yokie by explaining to him that the Motion has not yet been resolved either in the affirmative or negative as at the moment. Honourable Alhassan Kamara drew the attention of the House to the Statutory Instrument in question that it was not properly before the House as it did not have an explanatory memorandum of objects and reasons attached to it, and it is not complete as it failed to capture Paramount Chief Members of Parliament as was done in the case of the Statutory Instrument No.13 of 2012. The Honourable Member ended by invoking Section 94[2] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone.

That was principally the reason why this document was thrown out. It was not properly before the House specifically. Who said 'just like carpenters? Honourable Mohamed K. Tholley, stand up and withdraw that statement.

HON. MOHAMED K. THOLLEY: Mr Speaker, I withdraw.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members please listen carefully. **"The Honourable Chernor R.M. Bah, quoted Section 74[1] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No.6 that there is a clear distinction between an Ordinary Member of Parliament and a Paramount Chief Member of Parliament. The Honourable Member made reference to Statutory Instrument No.13 of 2012, which clearly separated Paramount Chief Members from elected Members of Parliament. He ended by saying that the first Statutory Instrument No.115 of 2017 that was sent to the House was accompanied by an explanatory memorandum, while the second one was not. Therefore, the Statutory Instrument was not properly before the House."** Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally, those were the reasons and we did not need two-thirds majority on that issue. Any document that is not properly before the House, the House will resolve, and it was resolved by this House that it was not properly before the House.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am clear in my mind that there were few reasons why a Motion was moved for this particular Statutory Instrument to be debated. In the very first instance, the Honourable Ansumana J. Kaikai moved a Motion and this tells you that the Statutory Instrument was before this House.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, do not quote or associate Honourable Ansumana J. Kaikai with that Motion any more.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: The Statutory Instrument was before this House and Motions were moved for the debate of that particular Statutory Instrument. And by the Constitution, which is backed up by Constitutional and Statutory Instrument Act of

1999, the only way a Statutory Instrument that has been laid on the Table of this Well be withdrawn or thrown out of this House is by two third majority.

THE SPEAKER: No, you are wrong, Honourable Member.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, I am not wrong and I am quoting the Constitution directly.

THE SPEAKER: No, you are wrong.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: What I am reading is not something I have written. I am quoting the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, which was drafted and promulgated by this Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally, whatever document comes before this House has to be ensured that it is properly before the House. If it is not, you do not need any vote. You only need somebody to stand on a Point of Order that the document is not properly before the House.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, I refer you to Section 170[7], Paragraph [c]. With your leave, it reads: **"Any orders, rules or regulations made by any person or authority pursuant to a power conferred in that behalf by this Constitution or any other law shall come into force at the expiration of a period of 21 days of being so laid, unless Parliament before the expiration of the said period of 21 days annuls any such orders, rules or regulations by the votes of not less than two/third of the Members of Parliament."**

THE SPEAKER: No! Honourable Member, you are completely out of order. And lamentably, you are reading something in the Constitution written in English that you do not understand. It is pathetic and I was told that you did law. What law did you read? Sit down. I am talking.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: It is personal, Mr Speaker. I will sit down, but your question is too personal.

THE SPEAKER: And if you persist in doing what is wrong, I will send you out of this House. And I want to inform you that a responsible and truly Honourable Member of Parliament should enlighten the public and do not mislead them at all. I wonder what type of Member of Parliament you are.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, I take exception to that. This is Parliament and you cannot talk to me anyhow. I take exception to that, Mr Speaker. This is grossly unethical.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. Mr Speaker, I do not like the direction and the momentum of the debate or your personal advice is taking. It is getting from parliamentary to personality. And the Member of Parliament in question is an Honourable Member of Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally, sit down.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: I will sit down, but I am Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally sir.

THE SPEAKER: I said earlier that a responsible and a truly Honourable Member of Parliament should enlighten the public and not to misinform them. An Honourable Member of Parliament should inform and not to mislead the public. You have misled and misinformed the public.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: I have not misled or misinformed the public. I have informed and educated the public. I have given information to the public and that is the true position of the Constitution.

THE SPEAKER: You have given out the wrong piece of information to the public.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: It is not, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally, I want you to keep quiet at this very moment or I will be left with no option but to send you out of Parliament. At this very moment, you either hold your peace or I send you out for being unruly and un-parliamentary.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: I think those words are very harsh and I am an Honourable Member of Parliament. Therefore, if an Honourable Speaker is addressing an Honourable Member of Parliament, he should do that with dignity.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally, leave the Chamber now.

HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, I will take you to court.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable 'Bash,' keep quiet or I will send you out if you say anything again.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Correction, Mr Speaker, I am Honourable Bashiru Silikie.

THE SPEAKER: What is the correction? So if somebody calls you 'Bash' is it not your name? It is a point of reference, unless somebody wants to be an illiterate. A name is a name and a point of reference unless that person wants to be an illiterate.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, you are going personal in this discussion.

THE SPEAKER: I am not, Honourable Member. I know I have been encouraging them too much. Honourable Bashiru Silikie, you are talking about advantage when the Speaker has come to your rescue on many occasions. Do you want the Speaker to say it? Keep quiet, Honourable Member. How many times had the Speaker come to your rescue.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I crave your indulgence to amend the Order Paper after item II, so that we insert item III, which has to do with laying of Paper by the Honourable Minister of Finance:

'Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone [GoSL] and Compagnie Sahelienne D'Entreprises [CSE] for the settlement of debts by [GoSL] owed to the Company.'

HON. EDWARD S. JENGO: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. This Paper is not too clear to us, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Majority Leader, please explain.

HON LEONARD S. FOFANAH: This is an Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone [GoSL] and Compangnie Sahelienne D'Entreprises [CSE] for the settlement of debts by GoSL owed to the Company. That is the title of the paper I have just laid. And on the Order Paper, it comes after item II and item II is 'Record of Votes and Proceedings...' Therefore, the paper I have just laid is now item III.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, for the edification of all Members of Parliament that whenever a question in Parliament has been resolved, no Member of Parliament, whatever your intention, has no right to discuss a matter out of Parliament or even in the media. It is wrong according to S.O 31[2]. People come here they read the Standing Orders, but they do not understand. S.O. 31[2] says: **"once an issue has been resolved, whether in the negative or affirmative, it should not be discussed by any other person."** That is a rule and it is therefore a law. Please be reminded and please be educated. To understand a question is part of the answer because if you do not understand the question, how can you attempt to answer it *[Undertone]*.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Speaker, you made reference to 31[2]. I do not know if my own Standing Orders is different from yours. **"A Motion which has been withdrawn may be proposed again at any time during the session, but no Motion shall be proposed which is the same in substance as any Motion which, during the same session, has been resolved in the affirmative or negative."**

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member that is exactly what I was saying. I was saying that 'any issue that has been resolved...' And for your information, Honourable Member, every Bill is a Motion or any issue in this House is a Motion. I am bringing this because most people do not know that at all. I am educating you now that any issue in the House is a Motion. Honourable Bashiru Silikie, if you cannot take the matter again in the Chamber, you should not discuss it out, particularly where you are a part of the decision in the House. Honourable Member, whether you attended the sitting or not, that is the rule.

III. PAPER LAID

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MR MOMODU KARGBO [*Minister of Finance and Economic Development*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am pleased to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following Paper:

Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone [GoSL] and Compangnie Sahelienne D'Entreprises [CSE] for the settlement of debts by GoSL owed to the Company.

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTIONS:

[A] THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MR MOMODU KARGBO [*Minister of Finance and Economic Development*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 4th December, 2017:

Financing Agreement [Extractive Industries Technical Assistance Project Phase II] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association [IDA].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a Motion and I am asking Parliament to ratify this Motion, which is an affiliate of the World Bank and it was laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Monday, 4th December, 2017. Mr Speaker, the mining sector continues to be the dominant sector in this country. The governance of this sector and various related factors have been challenging. In 2009, government approached the IDA and had final agreement with them for **US\$8,000,000** to support and improve the mining sector. Among the creation of this support was the National Mineral Agency [NMA] as the regulatory body and a survey institution. Substantial progress was made during the implementation of this project, but as implementation progressed, several gaps emerged that needed additional attention. Therefore, at the end of the project, which is now ending, government asked again the World Bank, IDA for additional

support and this motion this morning is about this second support which is a grant for **US\$20,000,000** from the World Bank. This money is going to be used for further investment in the mining sector to ensure that we strengthen the governance of this sector, improve knowledge of the sector, develop a sustainable extractive sector in Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I have already mentioned, this Project is meant to improve governance of the mineral sector and enhance geological knowledge. This is because as wide spread as we think, minerals are in this country but we still do not have a comprehensive layout. Therefore, this sub-component that is meant to enhance geological knowledge will do airborne geophysical survey, geological mapping and geo-data integration, and supervise airborne geo-physics campaign for quality control of light and data.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Part [C] of this Project will also address the issue of artisanal mining, which is a dominant sector in this country. It will strengthen governance in the artisanal sector, strengthen health safety and environmental management and establish a green goal pilot. Again, you cannot do all these without having a management component. In that regard, this Project provides for a management component and contingency for what will happen in future.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I have already mentioned, under phase 1 of this Project, which was the original **US\$8,000,000**, we established the NMA, strengthened the Mines and Mineral Resource Ministry, strengthened the Petroleum Directorate, developed regulation for transparency and ensuring good governance of the sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the evidence of all of these investments are very visible. What is of concern to all of us leading to this second phase is that if the gains that have been made are not consolidated, retraction will start, there would be regression and our gains would become susceptible to regression and maybe this is why this effort is now being made to establish a second phase of the project. The key elements of this Project are:

- to strengthen the governance of the mining sector;

- to improve knowledge of our mines and minerals across the country; and
- to ensure sustainability of the extractive industry sector.

The amount of money we are discussing this morning, which is a grant, has a maximum charge of half of **1%** per annum on the withdrawn amount. This is to ensure efficient utilisation of resources.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that this Honourable House ratify the Financing Agreement [Extractive Industries Technical Assistance Project Phase II] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association [IDA], dated 1st December, 2017 which was laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Monday, 4th December, 2017. I thank you all for your attention.

[Question Proposed]

HON. HASSAN B. SHERIFF: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Agreement before us is simple and straight forward and it is meant to improve technical knowledge of the office of the NMA that supervises the extractive industry in this country. They have done their best, but I think more needs to be done. The administration has a lot more to do to achieve what NMA intends to achieve. We can do everything possible within our power, but if it is not done properly, we will not be able to add value to what we are doing under the extractive industry. I think the **\$20,000,000** is a very good idea for this country. It is also going to improve revenue mobilisation in this industry and to bring more technical people to improve this sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to call on my colleagues to be very brief in their contributions. I want to state here this is not a loan, but a grant. However, it is not going to be released in bulk because they too want to be sure that the money is judiciously used. As a nation, we should prepare our minds to make sure that we make use of this facility.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I call on my colleagues to support the Minister's Motion and have this Agreement ratified as quickly as possible. I thank you.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. As a new parliamentarian, I am worried and concerned about the state of this country. Since I became an Honourable Member for the past one year and 5 months, it has been Agreement after Agreement, loan after loan, grant after grant. As far as I am concerned, this country is still in recession. Even though the Minister Finance has promised to come back and explain to us about the situation of the economy, he has still not done that. So, we do not know the state of the economy, but we continue to sign Agreements.

As a new parliamentarian, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one of my roles is to go back and talk with my constituents on every Agreement or Bill that is discussed here. However, if an Agreement of this nature was laid on the Table of this House yesterday and we are expected to ratify it today when majority of us have not read it properly, it is not fair. What are we going to tell the people of this country? It seems as if things are being done deliberately. We only have two days for the dissolution of Parliament, but we have been bombarded with Agreements or documents that would have taken us months to read and understand. Personally, I feel disappointed that being a new parliamentarian, I have not been given the opportunity to do the job I am supposed to do. I am expected to discuss some of these issues with my people. To go to Kailahun, it takes me a day and a day to come back. Our constituents should be informed about these Agreements before we make decisions.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not a party to this Agreement because we can have not been given the opportunity to read and understand this Agreement, so that we explain to our constituents. I thank you very much.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a novelty. A novelty in the sense that we are hearing admissions from Members of Parliament that they do not understand Bills and Agreements that are being laid in this House. It is indeed ridiculous to hear such.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Alhassan Kamara, she did not say that. She did not say she did not understand the Agreement. She said that she did not have enough time to read this document.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a 10 to 15 pages document and it can be read in one hour maximum. The importance of this Agreement has already been explained by the Minister. This Agreement is meant to improve the mineral sector governance. This is a grant and not a loan. There is a difference between a loan and a grant. S.O. 2 dis na fo natin [It is a given to us free of charge].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would all agree with me that the mining sector needs to be strengthened. We need to realise the benefits of the minerals we have in this country and this government is determined to ensure that the people of this country benefit from our God given natural resources. Any Agreement that is geared towards that direction must be a welcome idea, whether late or early, or two days to the dissolution of Parliament or not.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to read through few sentences in this Agreement. If you go to Page 4, Part 'A,' bullet point 1 says: **"Strengthening governance, transparency, accountability and administration of the extractive sector, including building the capacity of government institutions to more efficiently and effectively implement their mandate."** That is just the first part of this Agreement. The second part of this Agreement is to improve the legal regulatory framework governing the extractive industry. Therefore, this is one of the Agreements that is geared towards developing this country and the mining sector. So, if an Honourable Member is distancing herself from it, it means she does not want to be part of history making. I am pretty sure that majority of Members of Parliament, including those on that side wants to be part of this history making process.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge my colleagues Members of Parliament on this side to speedily ratify this Agreement. I thank you.

HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to be very brief and I want to start by congratulating the Minister and the government of Sierra Leone for identifying a very important aspect of our economy, which must be beefed up for the development of the people of this country. All of us know more than

anybody else that even our donors are very concerned about how we handle the extractive industry in this country. In other words, it is not enough to merely state that we have gold, diamonds, iron ore, bauxite etc. without a regulatory Authority to make sure that we utilise these minerals in the interest of the state.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was in the company of former President Carter sometime last year in Atlanta, Georgia when he asked me about the benefits we are deriving from your minerals. I told him that we are doing our best to utilise our minerals. I said we saw the need to benefit from our minerals and that was why the GGDO was set up years back by our former President, Dr Joseph Saidu Momoh. His argument at the time was that we cannot allow foreigners to come and grab our gold and diamonds without us knowing how they are utilising this gold and how they are marketing this gold. Therefore, the GGDO was set up; and today, the GGDO is here and it has become a very important component of our minerals sector. However, it later became necessary for us to have a regulatory Authority; i.e., the Mines and Minerals Agency. Today, we have an institution that can regulate the sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the reason behind the promulgation of the Freedom of Information Act by this Parliament was to give an opportunity to the people of this country, including the authorities and donor to have a legal status to be able to ask questions. For example, after the closure of the African Minerals, we should have been in a position to ask them what went wrong. Presently, we are trying to put in place a framework for corporate governance, so as to provide the necessary regulatory body. Therefore, when the Minister said he was going to go along with the second phase, it was to give us this kind of strength, so that nobody will come to this country and take away our minerals without us knowing what is happening. In other words, we must have a regulatory Authority.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was watching the auctioning process of the diamond that was extracted in Sierra Leone and I saw the role that the Minerals Agency played. The process was a very transparent yesterday and some of us are satisfied. I think this Agreement should be ratified because it is now clear that we need to put in

place a structure for effective corporate management. To us, this is very important and the amount that is going to be made available to us will be used for the expansion of this regulatory Authority, so as to make sure that the ordinary Sierra Leonean benefits from the resources of this country. It is not enough to state that I have been given the document, but I do not understand it or I cannot read it. If you cannot read and understand this document, ask the next person to explain to you. It is just possible that the next person sitting by you understands and that would give you an opportunity to be part of this whole process.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a good Agreement and I want to congratulate the Minister for pursuing this matter. I also want to thank this Government for ensuring that we protect our minerals in this country and to ensure that we put in place a mechanism for us to benefit from the resources given to us by God. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI [*Minority Leader of the House*]: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what we have before us is grant with the No. D268-SL. It is a grant for the improvement of the governance and capacity building in the extractives sector. When you take out agriculture, the next sector in Sierra Leone that contributes to our economy is the extractive sector. Within the extractive sector, you have the oil sector, which is yet to be developed. Few days ago, we extended the period for the exploration of two oil blocks. Within the mining sector also, we have certain minerals like diamond, rutile, bauxite, titanium and other minerals which is put together, they should be able to propel this country's development. But this is not so as we wish it to be; and one of the reasons is the governance of the mining sector in terms of how the mining sector is regulated, who is there, what is being done and the policies to regulates the extractive industry. All of these need to be looked at from a holistic point of view.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will just go to the project description, which is very important. Part 'A' talks about improving the mineral sector through strengthening the governance system, ensuring transparency and accountability, and administration of the

extractive sector, including inter alia building the capacity of government institutions to more effectively and efficiently implement their mandate. We have government institutions such as the Ministry itself, the NMA we have established and other subsidiary institutions. If we want to get the requisite and commensurate benefit, these institutions need to work effectively by knowing what they are doing or what they are not supposed to do. This can only be achieved if the institutions have the requisite staff or personnel and putting in place 'local oversight committees' in mining communities to monitor the use of local funds, so that local development is promoted.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for some of us who come from the mining areas [be it diamond, iron ore or bauxite], we always have the problem of managing the resources that go to the communities for their development. I know that every community has been negotiating individually with the mining companies for the community development. I also know that when we established the NMA, one of their functions was to see how they could create a template wherein there would be uniformity in the community development agreements between different entities and the communities. This is because what we have seen over the years is the fact that some are getting enormous benefits from the proceeds of their minerals; but that depends on the strength of the community to negotiate from a position of strength. Some communities are getting virtually nothing and that is why I said it depends on the negotiating power of the community. But if we have a uniform template, it will help to ensure that the people benefit greatly. For instance, if the agreement for communities residing around diamondiferous areas is the same, nobody will say he/she has not been treated fairly. This is very important because sometimes you have a lease area that is small, but because of the strength and power of the people in that community to negotiate, they are getting returns, but in a situation wherein you have a community that has a big surface area but it is not getting good deal. So, I think this grant is here to build the capacities of the different communities and Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have Members of Parliament who are coming from a diamond mining areas or a bauxite areas or an iron ore areas and they should

be also be in a better position to build their capacities, so that we will help our people to negotiate and get the maximum out of our God given resources. This Agreement is also going to strengthen the role of the Mineral Advisory Board [MAB], which is also an institution we have established. We need to make sure that their roles are very clear and that there is no role ambiguity or duplication of roles between the MAB, the NMA or the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is going to support transparent revenue management by developing the mineral revenue management programme, which entails convening meetings of mines operators to review revenue rules and gather potential issues and develop policy frameworks for mineral revenue management and appropriate fiscal regime. We are operating under the EITI, which is one of those institutions we have put in place to ensure that companies show what they can offer. I am sure, as we are now coming to the end of the year, documents have been given to Members of Parliament, institutions and communities to report what they have received in terms of surface rent, constituency percentage in terms of those surface rents, etc. So, the EITI as an organisation will also collaborate with the companies in terms of informing the people of this nation that this is what we have got from the community and if there are gaps, then those gaps should be the basis for discussion.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about artisanal mining. We do not have artisanal miners in iron ore or bauxite industry, but the two major minerals are diamond and gold and those are the areas where we have artisanal miners. Apart from the few big companies in Sierra Leone that are mining diamond, i.e., OCTEA Mining Company and Stella Diamond Mining in Tongo Fields [which is very capital incentive Kimberlite mining], most of the mining activities in this country are artisanal and alluvial surface mining. I think this is where we have the most unregulated and disorganised mining activities. Our artisanal miners are not protected, but at the same time they are not protecting the environment; and at the end of the day, you pay a fee into a fund but the money is so small that you cannot even compare to the damage these artisanal

miners cause. They need to be regulated and we need to have a policy that should be well implemented. So, these are some of the things this grant is meant to address. In other words, it is meant to improve our artisanal mining sector, so that while our people benefit from the minerals, they must also responsibly do their job.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this document is also meant to support the minerals policy and artisanal mining policy. I have said that these policies need to be communicated to the people. They need to know about these policies. So, this is more of a capacity building.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Part 'B' is very important because it talks about enhance our geological knowledge. The geological survey of our minerals is very old and we need to continuously build our knowledge of our minerals. Therefore, there would be area survey using technology to capture our minerals rights across the country. That information is going to be very critical for investors who would want to come because when they come, they would ask for certain information. They would want to know the state of our mineral in terms of economic deposits and where are they located. They need this information to decide whether they would go through exploration or not. So, Part 'B' is very important. I have spoken about the artisanal mining and it is also meant to improve on the Project Implementing Unit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a grant and like all other grants, they are free in the sense that we are not going to pay back. However, this does not mean that because it is a grant, we are not going to use the money wisely. We have to ensure that this money is used for the purpose for which it is given to us. That is where the role of Parliament, especially the role of the Committee on Mines and Mineral Resources should ensure that when we shall have passed this Agreement, we expect the Committee to come back to this Parliament and give us periodic reports. We also expect the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources to periodically and proactively come and give report to this House that since the time this House approved this Agreement, we want to give you an update as to how we have managed these funds. We have civil

societies that are in the extractive industry and other civil societies that are in transparency and accountability and they should be seen performing their roles.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a grant and it is in place, but we have to ensure that it is used appropriately for the purpose for which it is meant. That should be our business as Members of Parliament, but it is good for the people of Sierra Leone. We have to perform our oversight work effectively. I thank you very much.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, after the Honourable Minority Leader has spoken, I am left with no other option but to concur and support what she has said. On that note, I want to call on my colleagues to speedily ratify this grant Agreement immediately. Thank you, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

MR MOMODU KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I cannot add more to all what have been said, but to ask this Honourable House to ratify the Financing Agreement [Extractive Industries Technical Assistance Project Phase II], between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association [IDA], dated 1st December, 2017 that was laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Monday, 4th December, 2017.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

*[Government Motion by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development
has been ratified]*

[B] THE MINISTER OF ENERGY

Suspension of S.O. 5[2]

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULEY *[Minister of Energy]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 31st January, 2017 and Monday, 4th December, 2017 respectively:

- i. Power Purchase Agreement;
- ii. The Power Purchase Agreement Direct Agreement;
- iii. The Power Purchase Agreement Deed of Termination;
- iv. Power Purchase Agreement General Consent Letter;

- v. The Power Purchase Change of Control Letter;
- vi. The Generation Licence Direct Agreement;
- vii. The Main Site Lease;
- viii. The Site Lease Direct Agreement;
- ix. The Cooperation Agreement;
- x. The Re-Imbursement And Credit Agreement; and
- xi. The Indemnity Agreement;
- xii. Amendment and Restatement Agreement Relating to the Acknowledgement and Consent Agreement in relation of the Power Purchase Agreement; and
- xiii. Generation Licence Direct Agreement [Amended Agreement].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the government of Sierra Leone has been engaging private investors to support the energy sector in the areas of generating power for sale to the general public through EDSA. This project would ensure the installation of 57 megawatts of Watsilla Generating Plants at Kissy, which will supply stable electricity in the East end of Freetown, especially the manufacturing enclave. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this project will also ensure the construction of a 33 KV Sub-stations. We have already got 8 kilometre transmission line and the 33 KV has been constructed between Black Hall Road and Wellington in anticipation of this project. This project will also ensure fuel pipe lines are constructed to ensure the provision of adequate fuel and continued power supply.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish to appreciate this Honourable House for taking due time to go through these Agreements from the time they were laid. The House has thought it fit to consider the ratification of these documents.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is supported by the World Bank and the World Bank has already provided a partial lease guarantee in anticipation of this Agreement being ratified. On the side of the government of Sierra Leone, we are going to improve on the commercial and technical loss of EDSA. Again, this Agreement is going to improve on EDSA's management which we have already started by employing the services of a Contractor. Taxes have been removed on HFO to ensure that the produced power becomes affordable.

Also, there is no gainsaying that we still have a lot of power gaps that needs to be filled in this country. We still need the support of the private institutions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this project is expected to provide a base load of HFO. And if I could borrow the words of the Minority Leader during my last visit here when she mentioned the energy mix, in as much as we are pushing renewable energy, we still need HFO to provide base load which will stimulate activity in the manufacturing and mining sector. Therefore, we are hopeful, as we embark on this project that we would see the provision of stable electricity very soon. As I speak, we have many industries that are neither on EDSA nor on government grid because of the unreliability of power supply to those areas. Agreeably, if we are to stimulate this economy, boost economic activity, create jobs and boost small and medium enterprise business activities, we need to supply stable power at affordable rates.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these Agreements, having been laid on the Table of this Honourable House for some time now, and knowing the meticulous nature of Honourable Members of this House, I believe that sufficient due diligence has been done. I therefore move that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 31st January, 2017 and Monday, 4th December, 2017 respectively:

- i. Power Purchase Agreement;
- ii. The Power Purchase Agreement Direct Agreement;
- iii. The Power Purchase Agreement Deed of Termination;
- iv. Power Purchase Agreement General Consent Letter;
- v. The Power Purchase Change of Control Letter;
- vi. The Generation Licence Direct Agreement;
- vii. The Main Site Lease;
- viii. The Site Lease Direct Agreement;
- ix. The Cooperation Agreement;
- x. The Reimbursement and Credit Agreement; and
- xi. The Indemnity Agreement;
- xii. Amendment and Restatement Agreement Relating to the Acknowledgement and Consent Agreement in relation of the Power Purchase Agreement; and
- xiii. Generation Licence Direct Agreement [Amended Agreement].

I thank you, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed]

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I will endeavour to be brief in making my contributions. With the exception of the two documents that were laid yesterday, all other documents have been in our possession since the start of this year. They were laid on the Table of this House on the 31st January, 2017.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are several reasons why these documents are before us for ratification. That was what led to those two documents that were laid yesterday to be discussed today. One of the items on today's Order Paper has to do with a Bill that is attempting to amend the National Electricity Act. This is also part of the broader discussions because it is a condition from the World Bank that those accounts must be setup. We have invested a lot in the energy sector, but a lot more investment is required and this is one of them. We hope that after the ratification of these documents, which is not too long from now, the Western Area would be fully covered, as well as other parts of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think all of us have been in possession of these documents since January, 2017 and we have had a pre-legislative hearing on them. In other words, we have discussed these documents in Room 1, extensively. The Minister spent almost two hours with us in that Room on that day. So, I want to encourage colleagues to ratify these documents. Again, these documents have been with us for a very long time now. When I was presiding in yesterday's sitting, the light went off for few minutes; but fortunately, we survived. So, we hope that when these projects are implemented, some of those challenges would be outweighed.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to encourage all of us to pay attention and ratify these Agreements. I thank you very much.

HON. KARIFALA CONTEH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we ratified an energy Agreement last week which has to do with Bumbuna II. We also ratified the Agreement on solar; and today, we have Agreements in front of us

that are related to the HFO at Kissy, the East end of Freetown where we are greatly disadvantaged.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is geared towards providing about 128 megawatts for the people of Sierra Leone. Energy studies have shown that we need 100 megawatts, but we are about to ratify an Agreement that will provide 128 megawatts, which is above what is actually required. For that reason, I want to commend the Minister for this initiative and for being proactive.

Currently, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have the following sources of electricity; i.e., 10 megawatts from Kingtom, 16.5 megawatts from Black Hall Road 49 megawatts from Bumbuna. If you add the current sources of electricity, you will have 75.5 megawatts. With the 75.5 megawatts, we are enjoying electricity presently and if we have a situation wherein we would be benefiting from a source of 128 megawatts, I am strongly convinced that we would not be facing electricity shortages, except if we experience technical faults, which are inevitable.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, apart from the sources, but when you look at what is involved, we are not au fait with heavy machines or machines that are Heavy Fuel Oil [HFO]. However, when once it is located at Kissy, it is but obvious that Sierra Leoneans would increase their expertise and this is a concern for the people of this country. The HFO would be installed, maintained and controlled by a reputable institution in the form of Copper belt Energy Corporation [CEC]. It will be in the hands of critical people; i.e., the British. They would come with their expertise, but they would not be employing British citizens to work in these installations, but rather they would be employing Sierra Leonean engineers and that would increase the base of our knowledge, particularly our students.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when once an institution like this is being installed, you have the tendency of increasing access to job, we will benefit because whenever you have a company being located in your area, it is clear that you would benefit from corporate social responsibilities. Interestingly, these people have conducted several

meetings in the East End of Freetown, where they have made disclosures as to the potential benefits for the people in the East.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members I want to say kudos to the Minister for this document. We would be looking forward to cooperating with these people and also we would be looking forward to having our constituents benefitting from these Agreements. I thank you very much.

HON. ALHAJI SERAY DUMBUYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity. My constituency is beneficiary of the increased power supply in the country. Lenin in the Soviet Union once said: **"For a country to develop, it must be electrified."** And there is a slogan in Russia that says 'electrification of the country was his basic principle that led to the development of the Soviet Union.' We have seen tremendous development in our country because of electricity. Just like my colleague was saying, we are enjoying 75.5 megawatts, but with the implementation of this Agreement, we would be enjoying over 128 megawatts. It is interesting to note that by next week, my constituency in Port Loko would benefit from the Bankasoka Power Project, which is the brain child of His Excellency the President supported by the Minister. Makali and Leicester would also be beneficiaries of this project.

Mr Speaker, with enough electricity in the country our people's standard of living would improve, businesses will grow and money will flow. This will reduce poverty and the Agenda for Prosperity would be easily achieved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I do not want to waste the precious time of this Honourable House, but I feel that this Agreement is very good and we should do all we can to ratify it. I thank you.

HON. ALBERT DEEN KAMARA: I thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Agreement before us is very important, unique and timely. Last week, we ratified the Bumbuna Phase II Agreement, which would add to the megawatts we already have.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said earlier, the Bumbuna Phase II, the Copper Belt Energy and the Heavy Fuel Oil [HFO] are very unique Agreements in the sense that we call them the DFCCO, which means to Design, Finance, Construct, Own and Operate. This later became BMTO, which means to Build, Maintain, Transfer and Own. The people of this country will enjoy electricity from the Bumbuna Phase II. After a period of time it would become a property of the Republic of Sierra Leone, including the projects. However, I want to state here that even in the construction process, over 2,000 Sierra Leoneans will benefit from this project; and by extension, over 8,000 Sierra Leoneans will benefit during the construction process. In fact, thousands of Sierra Leoneans in the interior of Sierra Leone will enjoy constant and affordable electricity supply. The people of Bombali and Koinadugu will also enjoy Bumbuna Phase II.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is non-controversial and I pray that this House will quickly ratify it. I thank you very much.

HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to follow the cue from where my colleague stopped. My colleague is aware of the fact that Bombali is enjoying 24 hours electricity supply. I am coming from a place where we do not have electricity and that is the place we usually called the second city of Sierra Leone, which is Bo.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, what is happening with the Bo/Kenema Power Supply [BKPS]?

HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, BKPS is a sleeping dog and I do not want to talk about it. However, I want to categorically state here that Bo is not enjoying any form of electricity. I am saying this because exactly ten years ago, we used to enjoy electricity during the raining season, but because of the population growth in Bo and Kenema, it is no longer possible for BKPS to adequately supply electricity to those cities. This is due to the fact that BKPS is still generating the same megawatts it used to provide to the people of both cities. Again, we are also experiencing transmission problem. And I want to remind my colleagues that electricity supply does not only stop at 'electricity generation,' but it has to do with 'transmission.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am presently living at Leicester Village and we can boast of constant electricity supply, but I cannot even put on my air conditioner. I can only use my air conditioner when my generator is lit up. This is a problem for electricity supply in this country. It is a Sierra Leonean problem and I am not trying to politicise anything. I want the Minister to listen very carefully, so that we can have solution to these problems.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other thing I want to talk about is the rate at which we have signed Agreements for electricity and other related issues in this House. What I think is lacking is the feedback to this House. We represent the people of this country and we approve Agreements on behalf of our people. Therefore, whenever these Agreements are implemented, no Minister would come back to this Parliament to report to us their successes and challenges, including the Minister of Finance. In fact, the Minister of Finance promised to come back and update us on the Finance Act that was ratified by this Parliament. That did not happen at all. The Ministers have never come back to tell us how far they have implemented their projects in terms of their achievements and challenges. This is a very important issue I am raising here and we are not just here to approve Agreements. We should be informed whether these Agreements have impacted positively on the lives of our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to caution all of us that we are not just here to approve Agreements, but we also want to ask the Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs] that they have a responsibility to come here and give us feedback on how far they have gone with the implementation of these Agreements. I am not oblivious of the fact that energy is the engine for economic growth in a country. I have no doubt that this Agreement is good for the development of this country. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Suahilo M. Koroma, I am surprised to hear that the BKPS is no more effective. When I was the Chairman of the Committee on Energy in this Parliament between 2002 and 2007, Bo was enjoying more electricity than Freetown. I

am saying what I knew then or what has happened. Perhaps, the Minister would have to comment on that.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. When we talk about electricity, we are talking about national growth. I have always said in this House that issue of electricity is always considered for the cities. I want the Minister to understand that we in the rural areas need electricity, so that the economic growth we are talking about can move to those areas. When you leave Bo City, the only big town you will access in Bo District is Koribondo. I am a Member on the Committee of Energy; regrettably we cannot even access solar light in that part of the country. This is very unfortunate and that should not continue like that. If you go to other areas, you will see positive development. We have been very supportive of whatever is good for this nation, irrespective of where you come from. Every Sierra Leonean should have access to the national cake.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, my colleague was talking about just eight to twenty thousand people who are enjoying electricity. That is very unfortunate because we are talking about a population of seven million people in this country. I have a house in Bo, but we have not been accessing stable electricity. Electricity is intermittently supplied in Bo City. We have to move as a nation and we have to ensure that things are done for the good of this nation. The resources of this country should be evenly distributed. This Government has tried a lot, but if you go the Southern part of this nation, we still lack electricity and our people are yearning for equal access to these facilities which others are enjoying. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will not take long because the issue of energy is an issue of development. In as much as we would wish that everywhere in Sierra Leone would be lit, that has not been the case. Despite the fact that the energy situation has improved, we still have challenges even in Freetown. We still have places where electricity is badly needed. Of course, as you move from Freetown to the other provincial cities and towns, the need for electricity is growing every day; and if we look at what Sierra Leone needs

and what we have now, we are far from self-sufficiency. We are approving energy projects almost on a daily basis. However, we are gradually moving towards self-sufficiency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that the document we have before us is for thermal energy generation and is meant to increase access of electricity by many Sierra Leoneans. However, I have been saying here that we need to go beyond the national grid. We have a lot of bigger towns and that is why I want to agree with the Honourable Member from Bo, when he said that Bo needs constant electricity supply because that is where we get electricity to supply to the rural areas and bigger towns. We are trying to reverse the rural/urban migration. We are improving on agro processing and value addition to our agricultural produce, which is very important. We are also trying to stimulate economic growth. Therefore, these three issues are very key because if we provide electricity to the rural areas, we would reverse the rural/urban migration. This would also engage our youth in lucrative activities. In that regard, let us continue to explore whatever means we can to bring electricity to those areas. Again, we should also try to ensure that we incrementally take electricity to the Chiefdom headquarters towns. This is because after the District headquarters towns, we should also start looking at the Chiefdom headquarters towns in terms of providing electricity to those areas, be it thermal, solar or hydro. It is very important for this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Suahilo M. Koroma said something I would like to re-echo. We have our oversight Committees in this House, but when Ministers come to this House, they usually make a lot of promises and assurances that the oversight Committees may not be in a position to follow. Well, in other jurisdictions, they have the Committee on Government Assurances. While individual Committees would focus on the ministries under their purview, the Committee on Government Assurances would focus on all assurances and promises Government Ministers and other individuals make before us. They follow them to see the extent to which those promises and assurances have been implemented or not. This is very important.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we are also going to be working as a regional Parliament or at the continental and sub-continental levels, there are other best practices we need to bring to this Parliament. I may not be here in the next Parliament, but whoever that is going to come in the next Parliament, I will come here and remind him that we should establish the Committee on Government Assurances because it is very important. I have said it over and over in this House. Maybe what the next Parliament needs to do is to make a study visit to India, Ghana, and South Africa, where they have established the Committee on Government Assurances to see how it is working.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this would be my own contribution. Let us ensure that we encourage the Ministry to do more because electricity is the basis of development. We are not going to move from where we are to where we want to go if we do not have sustainable and clean energy. No money or effort is too small, be it a loan, grant or our own natural resources, we must ensure that we electrify Sierra Leone. Internationally, there is a target that Africa must be lit by 2050 and that is ambitious, but I am sure it is not unattainable if we just focus on what we are doing. I thank you very much.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if there is one issue I should mention is the fact that the Minority Leader of this House has been very consistent throughout her stay in this present Parliament in terms of establishing a Committee on Government Assurances. She has repeatedly spoken about establishing that Committee. In other words, she has been stoutly advocating for the creation of a Committee on Government Assurances. Unfortunately, we did not go down that way until we have now come almost to the end of the life of this Parliament. I hope we would be able to pursue this issue in the next Parliament after the 2018 general elections.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if there was no reason for the results that have been achieved in those other parliaments where the Committees on Government Assurances were established, she should not have been so adamant about the suggestions she has

been pursuing. I hope that those who will be elected in the next Parliament will pursue this matter with vigour and commitment, so that we would be able to have a Committee on Assurances that can liaise with the various ministries.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to move to the question of electricity on which all the papers we are about to ratify are talking about. We are building a firm foundation for socio-economic development to come. I cannot prioritise the issues that President has developed since he came back to office the second time. His concentration has been not only roads, but electricity. I do not know what the Economists would say in terms of which one is more important than the other, but fortunately the Government has pursued both electrification and road infrastructural development relentlessly on equal basis. We are laying a solid foundation for socio-economic development because once we have electricity and roads linking communities, I want to believe that the development of this nation will not be far-fetched. Therefore, I want to implore Honourable Members to ratify these Agreements. We are not making a promise now because we have already started seen the electricity. We are almost at the end of the tunnel in our electricity generation and all we might need is to keep increasing its supply. We have seen it and we will keep increasing it. Perhaps we will continue even during the general elections. I want to assure the Honourable Deputy Minority Leader that Pujehun is going to be electrified. Fortunately, we hope to get one or two seats from Pujehun District from this end. We do not know whether the Deputy Minority Leader is also going to come back.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge this Honourable House to ratify these Agreements. They are here for a purpose and we have seen positive results being delivered. Therefore, you should have no doubt in your minds that we will deliver. I thank you very much, Honourable Members.

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULRY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me with humility express how impressed I have always been with this Honourable House when it comes to issues relating to energy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would speedily address the concerns raised by members of Parliament. I want to start by thanking the Honourable Deputy Speaker for making the observation that indeed these documents have received our attention couple of months ago. I also want to thank Honourable Karifala Conteh for clearly stating what we are now producing. I want to add that we now experience a lot of demands for electricity. Arguably, because this Government is doing well in terms of electricity supply, that is why we are experiencing excess demand for electricity and that is why we are here to ensure that we increase power supply. Customers are just waiting for electricity to be available. He also mentioned the uniqueness and timeliness of this project. He stated that this project would provide jobs for thousands of Sierra Leoneans, especially during construction stage. Again, about **80%** of civil works are going to be done by Sierra Leoneans. I want to believe that during the five years transition, about **60%** of the managerial jobs will be held by Sierra Leoneans and we should watch that clause to make sure that it is fully implemented.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to thank Honourable Alhaji Serray Dumbuya for his comment. Indeed, we hope that by next week, the people of Port Loko will be enjoying twenty-four hours electricity supply. I want to remind us all that electricity has the tendency to reduce poverty these days and it is also capable to create wealth, which is the direction we are heading to.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member from Bo spoke about Bo District. I must humbly say that indeed the population in Bo has grown very rapidly and it is in the anticipation of this that my Ministry has sought and secured a **\$55m** to improve on the entire distribution system in Bo and Kenema. That fund has already been secured and I reported it to you during my last visit. In relation to the low voltage at your home, we shall look into it but obviously, it is as a result of the population growth which was not anticipated. The transformer is now undersized and overloaded, but we shall look into that issue. However, that area has benefitted from well-funded and well-constructed distribution projects. I am sure in the next few weeks, there will be improvement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, somebody spoke about the BKPS. The BKPS was absorbed during the unbundling process and that is why it is no longer existing, but indeed the provision of services exist and has been augmented because we have three new power Plants of 4.8 megawatts and 2.3 megawatts plants and caterpillars and Guma, which is 6 megawatts. These Plants are still supplying Bo and Kenema as and when it is necessary. So, power supply has increased, but it is unfortunate to note here that the demand has also increased.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, an Honourable Member mentioned that electricity is always considered in the cities. Honourable Members would recall that we have a project meant for the electrification of the provinces. However, we experienced some delays, but that project seeks to ensure proper electrification of the district headquarters towns. We hope to commence that project very soon, but the UNOPS Project will be providing twenty-four hours electricity to fifty-four different locations around the country and it is going to be increased. Already, there are many examples of districts that are enjoying that project. For example, Bonthe District is presently enjoying that project. If you go to the Hospital at Matru Jong, you will find out that they have twenty-four hours electricity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Honourable Minority Leader for her comments and supports. We are moving to self-sufficiency, electricity adequacy and then hopefully energy security. The Majority Leader was talking about laying the foundation and I want to state here that we are trying to create the foundation for the future of this country that would lead us to sustainable development, attainment of the SGG goals and universal access to electricity by 2030.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to once again thank you for giving me this opportunity. I am delighted to announce here that we have been able to increase energy access within these few years in this country by **20%**. I think that is a very big achievement. Again, if the Bill we are about to discuss [after the ratification of these Agreements], is passed into law today, we will be able to increase electricity

supply and energy access. In fact, we are anticipating energy access by **50%** in the next two years. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker and Honourable Members.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 31st January, 2017 and Monday, 4th December, 2017 respectively:

- i. Power Purchase Agreement;
- ii. The Power Purchase Agreement Direct Agreement;
- iii. The Power Purchase Agreement Deed of Termination;
- iv. Power Purchase Agreement General Consent Letter;
- v. The Power Purchase Change of Control Letter;
- vi. The Generation Licence Direct Agreement;
- vii. The Main Site Lease;
- viii. The Site Lease Direct Agreement;
- ix. The Cooperation Agreement;
- x. The Reimbursement and Credit Agreement; and
- xi. The Indemnity Agreement;
- xii. Amendment and Restatement Agreement Relating to the Acknowledgement and Consent Agreement in relation of the Power Purchase Agreement; and
- xiii. Generation Licence Direct Agreement [Amended Agreement].

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Government Motion by the Minister of Energy has been ratified]

BILLS:

[A] THE NATIONAL ELECTRICITY [AMENDMENT] ACT 2017

[INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING]

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULEY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, 'the National Electricity [Amendment] Act, 2017 be read the first time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, 'the National Electricity [Amendment] Act, 2017 has been read the first time]

[SECOND READING]

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULEY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, 'the National Electricity [Amendment] Act, 2017 be read the second time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would recall that in February, 2016 the Government of Sierra Leone signed a **USD44mln** grant with the United States Government through the Millennium Challenge Cooperation and this grant was a threshold grant which was meant to provide effective and sustainable improvement in the services of electricity and water provision by strengthen key institutions to improve on customer service, increase transparency and accountability, and service delivery. The threshold Agreement was meant to strengthen the regulatory processes and to provide Electricity Sector Reform Project and Water Sector Reform Project. Activities commenced in January, 2017 and the foundation for Sierra Leone to receive a compact, which is a transformation grant to the tune of **\$300mln** from U.S Government is dependent on the successful pursuit of this threshold Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, included in the Electricity Sector Reform Agreement, which was endorsed by Cabinet last month, is the enactment of the collection account, which is one of the conditions that was placed by the World Bank for the support of the energy project that this Honourable House has just ratified. In addition, this reform and this Bill that is now being brought before this Honourable House would seek to encourage private sector partnership, thereby encouraging private sector development across the country. I must state here that the dream of the President is to ensure that electricity is provided across the country.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill seeks to ensure that there is transparency and progress, cooperation and collaboration between the private and public sectors in the installation and provision of electricity services which will make it affordable and reliable. With those few words, I move that the Bill entitled, 'the National Electricity [Amendment] Act, 2017' be read the second time. Thank you.

[Question Proposed]

HON. KARIFALA S. CONTEH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Agreements that we have just ratified and this Bill are not mutually exclusive. This means that they should go together and I want to commend the Minister again. He is not allowing loopholes within his Ministry. We now have the PPIE and the books of Sierra Leone do not make provision for international investors to come to this country and deal with customers directly. Principally, this Bill is trying to set the records straight. We are now talking about the CEC we have just ratified, but when they generate, the off-taker will not be the CEC but rather the EGCT or EDSA. And the customers of Sierra Leone do business directly with the EDSA, but we do not do business with CEC. So, in view of getting records straight and getting laws of the land corrected, the Minister comes up with this Bill, which I am very much impressed about.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one good aspect of this Bill is proper accounting, transparency and accountability. This is a very big business wherein they have huge sum of money and this money needs to be managed properly, particularly at a time like this, when the international community do have confidence in this country.

In view of that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill gears towards benefitting Sierra Leoneans. With those few words, I want to ask that we move along with the process. I thank you.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is an amendment to the National Electricity Act of 2011. I have read its import or the object and memorandum and that is the area I want to discuss. Mr Minister, I will not go into the importance of electricity or why it is important for us to generate and transmit electricity. If you look at the memorandum of understanding in the first paragraph, you mentioned that the object of this Bill is to amend the National Electricity Act No. 16 of 2011, so as to improve the availability of EDSA and EGTC. You said this is 'in accordance with the road map for the reform of electricity sector signed by stakeholders of the electricity sector on the 17th September, 2017 and approved by Cabinet conclusion of 15th November.' The last paragraph states that the road map for the reform of the electricity sector was the result of a large consultation with institutions

and utilities of the electricity sector, including development financing institutions and bilateral development agencies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have been supporting the Minister in many occasions and I will continue to do that. However, in normal circumstance, you should have provided us with the report of this consultation to guide us through this process. We should have been looking at the recommendations that triggered this amendment. It is very important that we are previewed to those consultations. We really need the report and the Parent Act. As we speak, not all Members of Parliament in this House were here when the Parent Act was enacted, especially for the first time Members of who came here in December, 2012. They may not be previewed to it at all. So, we would have asked you to provide all those documents under normal circumstances. Some of us want to get background information in order to improve our knowledge and understanding of the issue. We want to know where the amendment is coming from.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the object is to ensure that we improve on the electricity generation and to also ensure that we collect the dues in an effective manner, so that there is transparency, accountability in the process. I have said over and over that electricity is not something that we should gamble with because it is a necessity. We can no longer take it as a luxury because it is the basic commodity that individuals are craving to get. It changes one's life in many ways when you have assured, clean, and cheap energy. This is not something we should gamble with at all. It is part of the STGs and the STGs are very important. You cannot achieve food security and nutrition if we do not have assured energy; you are not going to achieve quality education if we do not have access to energy; and you are not going to achieve quality health if you do not have sustained energy. So, everything centres on energy and that is why I will forgive you this time, but in your subsequent visits to this House [I may not be here again], but make sure that a document of this nature is submitted with all background information to Members of Parliament. If the Parent Act is older than most of the sitting Members of Parliament, then those documents must be made available. It is very important for us.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to reiterate here that energy is life and life is energy. We should strive to make energy sustainable and accessible. I thank you.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think the intention of this Amendment is very clear to all of us because it has been thoroughly explained. I want to urge that we approve this amendment, so that so that we can pursue other legitimate issues that are before us. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULEY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you for those relevant comments. I want to thank Honourable Karifala S. Conteh as usual. You spoke about the nexus between the amendment of the National Electricity Act and the attraction of the private sector to our energy. In fact, it will see us catapulting energy access for the benefit of our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Honourable Minority Leader as usual. Indeed, I should have provided or at least have in my possession the Parent Act, but I want to apologise for that omission. It was an oversight and I was with the opinion that since it is a public document, it might have been in the hands of Members of Parliament. I thank you very much for your leniency. Again, I want to thank you for your insight into the light changing qualities of electricity. During my last visit, you said that optimum energy mix is very important. And if this House could recall, you have already ratified the hydro and solar Agreements; and today, you have ratified this Agreement. I think this Honourable House has been the biggest supporter of electricity and it would not be forgotten at all. I thank you all for your supports.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to thank the Majority Leader for his support and we believe that the amendment of this Bill will make this a viable sector which will end up providing sustainable electricity for our people. Therefore, I move that the Bill entitled, 'the National Electricity [Amendment], Act 2017 be read the second time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

*[The Bill entitled, 'the National Electricity [Amendment], Act 2017' has been read
the second time]*

[COMMITTEE STAGE]

[THE RESOLVES INTO COMMITTEE]

Clauses 1 to 3 proposed.

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULEY: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that clauses 1-3 stand part of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we go page by page. Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 5, Paragraphs 'e' and 'g.' I want to start with Paragraph 'e' the second line. It says, 'with electricity distribution.' It should not be a compound word, Mr Chairman. And Paragraph 'g' says 'the receipt administration.' That again should not be a compound word.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Page 6? Page 7?

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULEY: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I take note of the correction. Therefore, I move that clauses 1-3 stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Clauses 1-3 stand part of the Bill as amended]

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULEY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled, 'the National Electricity [Amendment] Act, 2017 having gone through the Committee of the whole House with some amendments be read the third time and passed into law.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

*[The Bill entitled, 'the National Electricity [Amendment] Act, 2017 has been read
the third time and passed into law]*

[The House was adjourned at 11:40 for lunch and resumed at 3:00 p.m.]

[The Deputy Speaker, Honourable Chernor R. M. Bah, in the Chair]

[Suspension of S.O. 5[2]]

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to amend the Order Paper. I want to lay two more documents on the Table even if they are not going to be considered today. These documents are:

Concession Agreement by and between the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, the Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority and Autospect Sierra Leone Limited, relating to the Development Operation and Implementation of Vehicle Inspection Stations and Systems Deployment of the Vehicle Registration Car System [VRC], the Radio Frequency Identification [RFID] Wheezing Stickers and Secure Registration Place [SRP] Systems as well as the Automation of the related processes, then transferring their Ownership to the Sierra Leone State on a Built Operate and Transfer [BOT] Sierra Leone; and

The Sign Ocean Cover Facility Agreement National Port Development Sierra Leone Limited as the Borrower the Republic of Sierra Leone, represented by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development of the Republic of Sierra Leone as the Guarantor, the Banks and Financial Institutions from time to time party to this Agreement as lenders under the facility Industrial and Commercial Banks of China Limited as the Mandated Lend Arranger and the Facility Agent and ICBC London BLC as the Security Agent.

MR LEONARD B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table the following documents:

Concession Agreement by and between the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, the Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority and Autospect Sierra Leone Limited, relating to the Development Operation and Implementation of Vehicle Inspection Stations and Systems Deployment of the Vehicle Registration Car System [VRC], the Radio Frequency Identification [RFID] Wheezing Stickers and Secure Registration Place [SRP] Systems as

well as the Automation of the related processes, then transferring their Ownership to the Sierra Leone State on a Built Operate and Transfer [BOT] Sierra Leone; and

The Sign Ocean Cover Facility Agreement National Port Development Sierra Leone Limited as the Borrower the Republic of Sierra Leone, represented by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development of the Republic of Sierra Leone as the Guarantor, the Banks and Financial Institutions from time to time party to this Agreement as lenders under the facility Industrial and Commercial Banks of China Limited as the Mandated Lend Arranger and the Facility Agent and ICBC London BLC as the Security Agent.

[B] THE SIERRA LEONE SOCIAL HEALTH INSURANCE AUTHORITY ACT, 2017

[INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING]

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO [*Minister of Labour and Social Security*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, 'the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act, 2017' be read the first time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, 'the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act, 2017' has been read the first time]

[SECOND READING]

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, 'the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act, 2017 be read the second time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Members were respectfully informed that one key objective of the Government of Sierra Leone is to ensure that every Sierra Leonean has access to high quality and affordable health insurance care. This objective was underscored in the country's development plans; i.e., the Agenda for Change in 2007 and the Agenda for Prosperity in 2012. His Excellency the President introduction of the Free Health Care Scheme for children under five, pregnant women and lactating

mothers was a step in achieving the ultimate goal of universal health coverage. His Excellency the President recognises the fact that access to good health care does not only entail the physical availability of health care services, but it includes the delivery of same at affordable cost. This is to ensure that the human dignity of Sierra Leoneans is not compromised by the cost of health care service delivery.

In that regard, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, His Excellency the President has always been mindful of the difficulty in ensuring the sustainability of the Free Health Care Policy. This is because implementation and sustainability has been over dependant on donor support. His Excellency wanted a scheme that would cover everybody and which implementation would be affordable and sustainable. He therefore considers it necessary to establish the Social Health Insurance Scheme, which would have a universal coverage for the benefit of all Sierra Leoneans. The preliminary works, including exploratory ventures, have been undertaken by NASSIT in collaboration with some key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and the International Labour Organisation [ILO], which provided a blueprint. The outbreak of the Ebola virus disease disrupted the initial work.

That notwithstanding, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in April 2015, His Excellency the President directed that my Ministry; i.e., the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, takes leadership of the process as it deals with people, the work force of both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. Access to quality and affordable health service has been a critical challenge to every Sierra Leonean. Available information indicates that the health sector in Sierra Leone is not only challenged with the scarcity of qualified health personnel, but the absent of basic tools, equipment and the required resources to render the sector functionally effective. The few privately owned health facilities are rather too expensive and out of the reach of the majority of Sierra Leoneans. The effect had been high mortality rate from even manageable diseases. The establishment of the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Scheme is expected to make available quality and affordable health care to all Sierra Leoneans. Strategically, the scheme will go a long way to addressing a core component of pillar 3 of the Agenda for

Prosperity and grade the country positively in the United Nations assessment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Furthermore, the savings citizens will make from the access to affordable health care will contribute to the poverty reduction strategy of the Government. A technical committee reflecting the diversity experience and expertise required was formed to look at various options and come up with a proposal that can be suitable to the Sierra Leonean situation and needs. The team has undertaken a crucial study and willingness to pay survey by the citizens of this country for the implementation of the scheme. They have also undertaken a comprehensive assessment of the health facilities across the country in readiness to facilitate the implementation when once the project is launched. The constraints in managing the recent outbreak of the Ebola virus disease clearly exposed the vulnerability of the country's health care system.

Against that background, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will submit that the establishment of the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Scheme is urgent and requires the support of this Honourable House. The establishment of the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Scheme is expected to make available quality and affordable health care to all Sierra Leoneans. The facility, when efficiently managed, will benefit the rich and the poor and life expectancy of Sierra Leoneans will generally improve and the savings from the access to affordable health care will go to addressing their other basic needs. The scheme is expected to cover the dependence of the contributors, which will make the general citizens of the country live healthier and have longer lives.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am pleased to inform Honourable Members of this house that a policy that provides a blueprint for the management of the scheme has been developed and approved by Cabinet. It is this policy that informed the preparation of this Bill that has now been tabled for the kind consideration and enactment by this Honourable House. My prayer, therefore, is for this Honourable House to enact this Bill, so as to legitimise the operations of the scheme for the general good of the people of this country. I therefore move that the Bill be read the second time. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

Question Proposed

HON. DR FODAY I. SUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is an Act that concerns the establishment of the Sierra Leone Health Insurance Authority to provide for the administration of a Social Health Insurance Scheme in providing health care insurance services throughout Sierra Leone and to provide for other related matters. In that respect, I want to briefly explain a few things about SLESHI, basing my explanation on the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Policy Documents. But before that, I will like to state here that this is a novelty in the history of this country. It is introducing a development indicator that is used to measure the development of every nation and it is also establishing a firm step within the trajectory of a development that also conforms to the SDGs on health sanitation and poverty eradication. This has been and will continue to remain the priority of this Government in order to provide affordable and accessible health and sanitation structures in this country. With your leave, Mr Speaker, I will just read a paragraph. It says: **“Accessible and affordable health care services are critical component of Sierra Leone’s development priorities. It is the government’s desire that all Sierra Leoneans, including poor and vulnerable population, especially those living in remote and hard to reach areas to have accessible and quality health care.”**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to briefly talk about the vision of this health scheme. The vision of this scheme is to provide accessible and affordable health care services for Sierra Leoneans and to ensure that all Sierra Leoneans are provided with an insurance plan that covers access to quality health care at an affordable cost. This is why I insisted that it is a novelty. We who are properly informed are aware of the debate going on now in rich countries like the United States, where the Obama Care has become a very hot issue in their national policy debate. Today, a country like ours is establishing that system that should be available to all Sierra Leoneans.

That besides, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very much concerned about the affordability and accessibility. We are all aware of the medical cost in this country, especially when your family members or your constituents are sick. We all know how

challenging to get medication for them. To put it mildly, I would say often proof prohibitive when you are confronted with cost in this country. The scheme has six objectives but I would limit myself to two because of time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the first one has to do with increase access, but people often think that accessibility is simply having infrastructure or trained personnel. It goes beyond that because accessibility has to do a lot with affordability and the affordability aspect is very important in this country because of the poverty rate. So, this is why the insurance scheme is very important. It is meant to cover everybody in this country. That is the plan. When we come to discuss the Bill there are financing arrangements in the policy that I would not want to go into because of time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another objective I want to emphasize here is to improve social inclusion. We all know the dangers of exclusion in this country. It has driven us to a senseless war that lasted over a decade and we are aware of that. When we are creating structures for this new Sierra Leone; i.e., post war Sierra Leone, we should be very mindful of inclusion. We should include every sector of this country's population. Without that, we are creating the very forces that pushed us into that senseless war and this is why I said from the beginning that this is a novelty in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to briefly talk about two aspects of the financing possibilities because this is what people are referring to; i.e., health insurance and tax revenue. Health insurance is not just free because you have to pay premium. People will have to contribute and those who can afford it must contribute part of their salaries and also contribution from their employers.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, tax revenues are all spelt out in the policy document and I want to believe they are in this Bill. There will be tax revenues from GST to road maintenance funds. We know that we can rely on some partners to fill in the gaps because from our own payments as contributions, we will have tax revenues, but sometimes there will be gaps and we hope to rely on some credit worthy and key development partners.

With those few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to recommend the passage of this Bill into law because this is a very important Bill that will establish an authority to administer this novelty. I thank you very much.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to respond to my colleague on the other side that novelty does not mean you do not know what you are talking about. In this particular area, I am no novice. I have looked at the document and it is very good as far as our health system is concerned. Primary health care insurance is a good thing but having looked at the document, there are few things I would like to talk about. If you go to Page 9, it talks about providing financial protection for the poor and ensuring the sustainability of the scheme. The question is how are the poor going to benefit from this? We all know that if you are not aware of your rights, there is no way you can access some of these facilities. Some of us are aware that not everyone is benefitting from the Free Health Care. For example, I have come across many people who have been to hospitals, but they were asked to pay where they were not supposed to pay. I want to know if this is going to work.

Mr Speaker Honourable Members, I want to look at Pages 15 and 16. The last paragraph on Page 15 talks about immunisation. I would want to know whether the immunisation will be for children, school health immunisation or travel vaccines. This is because we need to establish what the immunisation covers. Page 14, Paragraph 23 says it is compulsory for an employer to ensure that every person is insured. You should have an alternative whether to join insurance or not. If it is going to be like the National Health Service [where it is compulsory], it is understandable, but I am sure we have the opportunity to be part of it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Page 16 talks about employment contributions; i.e., formal and private sectors, which comprises of **4%** of workers' basic salary and **2%** deducted from workers' salary. In my opinion, I think that is too much. If we are starting something and we want to encourage people to join, I think we should look at that option. Paragraph 27 [a] talks about children under the age of 12. So, after the age of 12, who is going to pay for these children? In this country we still consider those

who have attained the age of 18 as children. If this is limited to the age of 12, then I have a concern that we are discriminating those between the ages of 12 and 18. It also talks about ante-natal child delivery and post natal care. I would want to know the period because post natal care could be from the day you give birth to a month or 12 months. I want clarification on that. When we go to Page 19, Paragraph 31 [4], it says: **"All expenses relating to administrative cost, including salaries of beneficiaries, shall be charged on the scheme."** The question is, how much are we talking about? This is likely to be abused if we are not sure how much the percentage is going to be like.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the scheme also talks about those exempted from other taxes. Again, there is room for abuse. This document also states that 'the sources of funds for the scheme shall consist of contributions from members of the scheme.' Again, we want to know the percentage. However, the area I want to focus my contribution is the one that talks about the conditions that would be treated under this scheme. If you go to Page 28, the conditions are there. Honestly, I do not think I need a primary health care to take care of myself with these basic conditions. They might be important, but honestly they are basic. For laboratory examinations, we do not know what that will involve. Again, the document talks about essential generic drugs. What does generic drug mean? It means you can be given the cheapest drugs that are not of quality. That is another concern I need clarification.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you look at the list of conditions on Page 30, it excluded something like breast screening, which is important to women of our age. It is very important because that is part of primary health care. It should not be excluded at all, Mr Speaker. Also, cholesterol check should be part of this process. People are dying from heart attack in this country. We usually say, S.O. 2, 'na witch' or 'den don nac am' [He/She has been bewitched]. That is not included here. Nothing is mentioned about diabetes and we know that is a killer in this society. If it is just for eczema, I do not need primary health care for it. Again, I do not need any primary health care for whooping cough. We have diseases like Cholera and Dysentery which can be

preventive. So, if you are asking for **4%** from the employers and **2%** from the employees, then that is too much money. I think we need to look at this very carefully. It is a good document, but you have to look at other areas that are not included at all. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I personally want to be covered because I can no longer bear children at this age. In other words, breast screening should be included, otherwise why am I paying? If the children after the age of 12 are not covered, why am I paying? I really want to know whether this is compulsory or we have got the option to opt out of the scheme. In fact, hypertension is also excluded, which is one of the big killer diseases in this country. Hypertension is very common among men who are above the age of 40 years. For women, hypertension is on the increase because of our lifestyle. I think we need to look at this document; and I am of the opinion that this is going to be compulsory for everybody to pay. It is also important to look at the poor people in this country. They are not going to benefit from this, but if you are disadvantaged, where do you complain and how many people know how to make complaints in this country? In fact, even the educated ones do not complain, let alone the poor people who might be mistreated or misdiagnosed or even given the wrong medication. Which power have they got to complain or where will they make their complaint?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with those few words, I am sure I would be saying more about this, but this not a novelty at all. I hope my colleague from Constituency 096 has learnt some lessons.

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to add my voice to this very important Bill that we are discussing here; i.e., the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act, 2017.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would recall that life expectancy rate for Sierra Leoneans is 45 years for women. This is simply because people cannot afford health care and a lot of people die because they cannot afford to pay medical bills. The introduction of this Bill will ultimately increase the life expectancy for Sierra Leoneans. If this Bill is passed into law, it will save the lives of many Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague from Kailahun mentioned children between 12 to 18 years were not factored. Well, we have the Free Health Care Scheme that covers children under five. What this Bill seeks to do is to also increase that age bracket from children under-five to 12 years of age. Now, once the parents are covered and are paying for insurance, they are expected to factor their children who are between the ages of 12 to 18 years. That is what this Bill is stating. The Bill also includes persons classified as indigent under the laws of Sierra Leone. What this is telling us is that extremely poor people would be treated for free because they are covered in this Bill. It is also covering people who are disabled and they will be treated free.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think this is long overdue because Sierra Leone should have had this Authority long ago. However, it is better late than never. This is a responsible Government that cares for the lives of its citizens. In other words, this Government wants to improve the lives of its citizens and is why this Bill is here today for our consideration. It is a fine Bill, but when we get to the Committee Stage, there are areas we need to look at very carefully. My colleague did mention that we have diseases that are affecting Sierra Leoneans, especially hypertension. We need to add it in this Bill when we get to the Committee Stage.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to caution that once this Bill is passed into law, the proceeds that will be paid should be utilised judiciously. We should not put them in white elephant projects at all. We want a situation the people have access to proper health care and the moneys are readily available when needed. With these few words, I want to urge my colleagues to pass this Bill into law because it is a fine Bill. I thank you very much.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today again is another very big day for the people of this country. The Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act, 2017 is a wonderful scheme for the people of this country. This is telling us that we are building our health care infrastructure and this is one of the strides to show that this Government is committed to improving the health care system in our

country. As we speak, we have the Kingharman Road Hospital that has just been built. We also have one at Rokupurr and Waterloo. Now, having a scheme of this nature tells you that we are not only building structures, but also creating a situation whereby people will be able to access drugs through this scheme.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before this Bill comes to this House, the National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT] did some advertisements on the radio concerning this Scheme and that tells you they have been preparing our minds, so that we know exactly what is on the way. My colleague from Constituency 001 was talking about how the people would be educated about this Scheme. We are here as their representatives, which means that every area in this country is represented in this Well. What we have to do now is to let our people know that this Act has been passed in Parliament. We have to go to our people and educate them about the Scheme. It is our duty to educate them because we are here as their representatives. We are here on their behalf and it is our responsibility to take this message to them. That is why we have to be meeting our constituents from time to time, to tell them the Bills we have passed and the benefits they will get from those Bills or Agreements. I want to remind colleagues that you cannot have it all at the initial stage, but it is a first step and the first step always gives you the right direction and that is where we are going.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague was talking about certain areas which are of concern to her. I want to appreciate her, but when we come to the Committee Stage we will cross the Ts' and dot the Is.' I want to assure her that those areas that are not included will be included when we come to the Committee Stage. We cannot do that now until we get to that stage. However, I want to commend the Minister of Labour and Social Security, officials of NASSIT and all stakeholders who are involved in bringing this Bill to this House. Let us pass this because it is really very necessary for this nation. We have all been talking about health care and this is a step in the right direction. I think we must give this Bill credit and we must pass this into law for the benefit of this nation. We have to remember the popular saying that 'health is wealth.'

I want to thank the people who brought this Bill here. On that note, I will urge my colleagues to pass this Bill into law. I thank you very much.

HON. MOSES JORKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, whenever we talk about health, I always feel good. This is a very good Bill, but we only need to add some of the diseases that were omitted which are equally important. We know that health is not everything, but everything without health is nothing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I was looking at this Bill, my minds went to the operations that are usually carried out in the hospitals. There is one common disease which is affecting people living in the suburbs; i.e., hernia. It has not been mentioned in this Bill, but it is disturbing our people in the villages. Uncomplicated malaria is being mentioned, but nothing was mentioned about complicated Malaria. Is it not killing people? In fact, it is killing more people in this country. My colleague has already spoken about hypertension. If we check our Blood Pressure [BP] now, you will find few people who will not have high BP. It is very necessary for that area to be included in this particular Bill. As she said, diabetes is on the increase and we need to take note of this particular disease. If we check our sugar level now, you will realise that almost **60% to 70%** are suffering from diabetes.

With those few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to ask my colleagues to do justice to this Bill and pass it into law.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to add my voice to this all important Bill in front of us. As already mentioned by my colleagues, this Bill is very good and I am in favour of it. However, there are concerns I want the Minister to clarify. The first concern has to do with the funding mechanism for this Scheme. It is stated in this Bill that the funds will come from contributions from members of the Scheme. I need more clarifications on this, Mr Minister.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to know whether there have been proper consultations between the two Ministries; i.e., Ministry of Finance and Ministry of

Labour with regards to the **2.5%** of the total revenue generated from the goods and services tax, **2.5%** of the total revenue generated from the non- tax revenue, **0.25%** of total revenue generated from annual licenses of all motor vehicles and motorbikes and **40%** of Government's curative budget for primary health care for Local Councils. This is a National Insurance Scheme geared towards own revenue mobilisation, but these categories of moneys are coming directly from the Government of Sierra Leone and knowing our budgetary constraints, that is why I asked the questions as to whether the two ministries have had consultations on these issues. This is because we have seen institutions created in this country, but they are always in disputes in terms of percentage of moneys that each should get. The Sierra Leone Road Safety Authority [SLRSA] and the Road Maintenance Fund Administration [RMFA] are clear examples of what I am trying to say. The RMFA is claiming that they are entitled to certain percentage of money that the SLRSA collects, but they are not getting that money. And knowing how difficult it is to raise revenue, we must get these things very clear. The government of Sierra Leone is also going to be contributing to this Scheme and it is the largest employer.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, under the penalty section, it says that if somebody delays payments, he or she will accrue **2%** or **2.5%**. We all know that we always get late payments of our salaries, whether it is due to procedures or policies of the Ministry of Finance, nobody knows. It is very certain that government will delay in paying its contributions for government workers to the National Insurance Scheme. Do you think government is going to pay that **2%** if the Bill is enacted into law?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the need for this Bill is very paramount and I am sure it will contribute to the reduction of infant and maternal mortality rate in Sierra Leone. I am very sure that whoever that will be in charge of this Authority will do his/her utmost best for us to realise the aims and objectives of this Bill. There are few areas to correct in this Bill, but when we come to the Committee Stage, we will handle that area.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague on the other side was saying that he has not seen what we call hernia in this Bill. I want to inform him that it is captured under the various diseases mentioned in this Bill. It is on Page 30, Paragraph 'm.' He also asked if diabetes was captured. Well, medical specialists have said that diabetes is a disease that is created by lifestyle; therefore, it is not part of the primary health disease. Those are the reasons why these two diseases were not captured. I have not heard any situation in my whole life where children are suffering from diabetes. I am not denying the fact that it does not exist, but I have not heard that before at all *[Undertone]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Bill is fine and it shows we are starting somewhere as a country. We are very serious in improving our health care system and what we are doing here today shows that this is a responsible Government. With those few words, I want to urge my colleagues to ratify this Bill. I thank you.

HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not surprised that we have this Bill here. My only problem with this Bill is the fact that I wish we had it earlier than now. This is because it would have given us enough time to actually look at it entirely. I am saying this because health insurance or provision of any amount of health insurance is very important and this Bill is a move in that direction. In other countries, they have the National Health Insurance Scheme, but in other countries, it is known as social services, which provides extensive coverage in terms of providing health care services. I am sure the Minister drew experiences from other jurisdictions, where he has lived before he became a Member of Parliament and now a Minister.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a good Bill for the people of Sierra Leone. However, although a lot of diseases are mentioned in the schedule, but there are others that are not mentioned at all. I think diagnoses should also be covered in this Bill. A high percentage of Sierra Leoneans suffer from prostate cancer and a lot of women are suffering from various forms of cancer. I want to believe that some measures or advice should be included in this Bill, so that Sierra Leoneans can have the advantage, privilege or right to enjoy those services. When you talk about national insurance

schemes in other countries, they almost have blanket coverage, especially at the primary care level. I am sure the Chairman of the Health Committee would not disagree with me that when we go to the Committee Stage, this Bill needs to be beefed up, so that we include areas that are initially elided.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform my colleagues that Sierra Leone is in tropical Africa, where we have a lot of health disadvantages because of the weather condition, our lifestyles and even our natural composition. The Bill is good, but it is rather unfortunate and disturbing that most of the Members of Parliament who could have helped to comprehensively look at this Bill and make sure that they do justice to it are not here. I want to thank the Minister and to inform him that this is a very good move. I hope that after 90 days when we have had our elections, some of these issues would be comprehensively looked into. It is a move in the right direction. I thank you.

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I strongly believe that this Bill is going to address major problems in terms of financing our health situation in this country. I am saying this because one of the major challenges confronting our people in accessing health care services is finance. There are lots of poor people who are not able to access health care because they do not have money. I am happy that this Bill is going to address poor people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are certain diseases that are excluded, which I believe will bring a major challenge in the implementation of this Act. For example, anaemia in children is one of the major killer diseases in this country. If you are treating anaemia, but you exclude blood transfusion, then how are you going to deal with all the anaemic children who are admitted due to severe malaria? I strongly believe that this is something that needs to be considered because you cannot provide a primary health care for our children and excludes blood transfusion. Who is going to be responsible for a mother or a woman who needs emergency and blood transfusion? Blood transfusion is completely excluded, but it is very important.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one major thing that needs to be looked into is the road accidents we are having in this country. If you look at the amount of

motorbike accidents, we have victims who are sustaining fractures and other conditions that need emergency care. Definitely, this is an area that needs to be covered by this Scheme because these are people who never intend to involve in a road accident, but they need care. I strongly believe that if our insurance policy covers those who might involve in road accident while travelling, it will be a good thing.

Also, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you look at the surgical conditions mentioned, hernia and appendicitis are major diseases that are very common and can cause acute abdominal pain. We have seen lots of people suffering from gastric perforations because of ulcers. We have seen lots of children dying because of perforations from typhoid fever. However, this is not a primary disease. It is a secondary care, but these are real emergencies cases that are taking the lives of many people.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to suggest that as we discuss and continue the debate on this Bill, we need to look into some of these very important disease conditions that are affecting our people. Usually, I would have loved to see a clause covering emergency surgical conditions. We should be able to cover acute appendicitis, gastric perforations, etc. I strongly believe that if these issues are looked into, it will help a lot. If you look at all the primary conditions which this Scheme seeks to cover, it seems as if most of the people who are contributors to the Scheme; i.e., the working class, are not covered. I think that is going to be a challenge because most of the working class people are suffering from such diseases as hypertension, high cholesterol level, etc. If they are left out, how will they benefit from this Scheme? I thank you.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by saying that 'health is wealth.' A wealthy nation is a healthy nation and a healthy nation is a wealthy nation. When you look after your human resource in terms of health, you will be able to promote other sectors such as education, agricultural, labour and national contribution. So, the health of a nation is very important. We know that for quite some time now, we have a very poor health status in Sierra Leone. We can look

at it from many indicators; i.e., life expectancy at birth, child and maternal mortality and even the doctor/patient ratio are all indicators that will show us where we are in terms of our health status. Health is an expensive business and that is why in most countries, they come up with health insurance schemes. You will continuously contribute to that Scheme, so that health services are made available to you on a regular basis and in a sustained manner. That is what this Bill is all about.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have listened keenly to colleagues who have taken the floor before me. In the first place, this Bill is seeking to establish the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority. I have some concerns I want the Minister to clarify. I want to know if this Bill seeks to establish an Authority; i.e., the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Act. There should be an Act, whether you call it the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Policy or not and the policy would mandate the establishment of the Authority. However, we are establishing the Authority without a policy. This is my first concern.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about those that will be covered by the policy or scheme. The Bill talks about children under the age of 12 years. I asked myself what is wrong with those who have attained the ages of twelve to fifteen years. We should look at the existing policies and Acts. We are striving towards universal basic education and we have the 6344 system of education in this country. All things being equal, I want to state here that basic education is achieved based on our educational structure at the age of 15. Children are expected to start their primary education at the age of 6 years and by the time the children is 12 years, he/she would have taken the National primary School Examination [NPSE]. The child is expected to take the Basic Education Certificate Examination [BECE] within 3 years. That is where we need the care for our children. If we do that for those between the said ages, every citizen will attain basic education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to also agree with some of the statements made about the financial provisions. We are deriving our finances from certain areas; i.e., licenses of motor vehicles and motorbikes. Let us look at the mobility pattern in

Sierra Leone. We are now grappling with non-communicable diseases emanating from our lifestyles. Take cigarette for example, they will tell you that smoking is bad for your health because most adults who are smoking are always grappling with lung cancer. We have proliferation of fast foods industries in this country, but where we have, for example, McDonalds, KFC studies have shown that countries that have them are now having higher rate of malnutrition, especially obesity. As a result, the taxes on those industries are high because they are spending between **3%** and **16%** of their GDP on fighting malnutrition and other related diseases, such as stunting, underweight and obesity. Sierra Leone is no exception because we have a lot of obese people. Most of our children have stunted growth and are also underweight to the extent that when we are generating income for the National Insurance Scheme, we should also look at those industries whose activities add to increase morbidity. If that is the case, why are we bothering government in terms of providing medical services for those in that category. Why are we taxing vehicles? Is it for emission of carbon monoxide we are taxing them? Why are we not taxing those industries that are producing alcohol and cigarette that are adding to the morbidity of our citizens?

THE SPEAKER: What page are you referring to, Madam Minority Leader?

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Speaker, Pages 19 and 20. They are enumerating the sources of revenue. They are talking about **0.25%** of total revenue generated from licenses of motor vehicles.

THE SPEAKER: They are not taxing the vehicles. They are going to collect from what they have already taxed.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: That is what I am saying. They are passing it to what they have already taxed. I am asking whether it is because of carbon monoxide they are taxing that sector. What about the other sectors?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me go to the pharmacists and the doctors who will be providing the services under this Scheme or Authority. When we are in the Pan-African Parliament, we are covered by the Internal Health Scheme. Under that Scheme,

they have given us the list of all the institutions that are covered by the health insurance like what obtains in other countries. The essence of having a health scheme is that you contribute to the scheme and the service will be given to when you need it. That will defeat the purpose of the scheme. We are going to have pharmacists and health practitioners. If they are not going to be paid regularly, it will get to a point when they will say they will not provide the services and you should pay for it. This is what is happening.

In Ghana, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the health Scheme is working very well because of their nationalism. Patriotism is very important. My late mother was in Accra for one year and we paid because we are not nationals of Ghana. They will write on your document as non-Ghanaians and you will pay three to four times what the average Ghanaian pays. So, what is going to be the safe guide to ensure that non-nationals do not benefit for this Scheme. What is the difference? We need to know about foreign nationals, but it is not mentioned here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleagues have spoken about some diseases they are worried about. The non-communicable diseases are the ones that are killing lots of Sierra Leoneans today. Some of them are hereditary. The Honourable Member from the Western Area said he has not heard any case wherein children suffer from diabetes. We have seen children with diabetes. We have heard about those children not because of their lifestyles, but because it is hereditary. Children are having hypertension not because of their lifestyles. Most of them have these non-communicable diseases not because of their lifestyles, but because of hereditary. Some of these things will have to be taken into consideration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, malnutrition is as wide as anything. It is caused by either over nutrition and under nutrition. These are some of the issues we need to look at. It is important for us to have this Scheme because we have to look after our human resource for productivity in all spheres of life. It is very important, but it has to be sustainable, affordable and effectively delivered. The Chairman of the parliamentary Committee on Health and Sanitation asked a very important question. He wanted to

know who would be contributing to the diseases that most adults are grappling with? This is not included here in this Bill. What is going to be the incentive for them to contribute if they are not covered by the insurance? We have to look at existing conditions and make a decision.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is what I have to say about this Bill that it is a good Bill and there has to be a starting point. No Bill is perfect; and as we implement it, we will come across loopholes. However, before it goes through the Committee Stage, let us look at it properly and see what amendments we are going to make. We should not enact the Authority because it is the policy and it is the Bill we should be acting on, which should give the mandate for the establishment of the Authority. This is the way I see it and that is how it should be. We have passed the Food and Feed Safety Bill into law. That Bill came here as a Food and Feed Safety Authority, but it was not the Authority that we established, but the Act because it was that Act that created the Authority and other competent authorities that will implement the Food and Feed Safety Act. I think we can take a cue from it, but let us hear what the Minister will have to say. I thank you very much.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, majority of Members who have spoken about this Bill have said on the whole that this Bill has a good intent and we are going to take care of certain issues suggested during the Committee Stage. However, I must state here that the intention of this Bill is to establish the Authority; and once the Authority is established, I would want to anxiously see the implementation of the Health Insurance Scheme, so that it will start providing services to our people. There is no gainsay that we definitely need the implementation because compared to the present Health Scheme that we have, it is not very extensive. It is much more in the rural area than in the Western Area. And since we are going cosmopolitan, we need a very serious and widely spread insurance scheme, so that it can be able to provide services for our people and for all of us [even though the majority of the people are above 65 years and would be exempted from that], but I want to believe the intention is good and we should all rally round to make sure that

the areas being left out are included during the Committee Stage. We have to do that, so that we will have a very comprehensive Bill in this country. Until and unless we are able to do this, we will not be able to provide the necessary health facilities for our people. Doctor says that the health is an expensive system and that is the reason why government should help in terms of providing an insurance coverage for people, so that their health can be taken care of. The Minority Leader has said that health is wealth, but yet it is an expensive matter. It is good that government is taking responsibility in providing this insurance coverage for our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to thank Honourable Members who have spoken on this Bill and we want to continue to solicit their cooperation, especially at the Committee Stage. We seem to have a good crop of health officers in this Parliament and they can all put ideas together, so that we will have a better Bill that will pass through this Parliament. I thank you very much.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank all the Honourable Members for their contributions, comments and questions regarding this Bill. What we are looking at is something that we all agree that we need for the people of this country, including ourselves. This is because it serves a very good purpose and it will bring many benefits to the people of this nation. Therefore, some of the comments made and questions asked are very relevant.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Labour and Industrial Relations for his support. He is in the workforce and we have many people out there who are also part of the workforce, but are not getting enough medical support. This is a way to force employers to take care of their employees. As the Minister of Labour, I have seen compensation cases, where some workers lost parts of their bodies during operation; but regrettably, they are not well compensated. With this Scheme, I am sure we will be able to help the poor man working for somebody in a factory. We have the concern of the payment because it is a relevant concern. However, the technical Committee of the SLISHI has done extensive survey and a tutorial report, showing the willingness of people to pay was done nationwide. People

were interviewed at district and chiefdom levels, starting from the Western Area. In their own indication, the people are willing to pay up to **Le 20,000** per month, but it was considered too high and it was finally brought down to **Le 15,000** per month.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the people have the willingness and determination to pay for medical health insurance because they have the experience of visiting a medical doctor for health services, wherein a single visit would cost them **Le 500,000** and even more. Therefore, they thought this would be better than what they usually spend. It was the associated high cost that has been scaring people from going to the hospitals for medical attention. They are of the opinion that if they go there, they will not attend to them if you do not have money. Who is the benefactor? The people will be going to the traditional healers where they will pay very cheap. That is a better alternative for them, but unfortunately, those healers will not be able to solve their medical problems and that is why majority are dyeing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the cost is not the biggest factor when compared to other instances. Others spoke about the poor and the rich. What are the differences and the advantages? Mr Speaker, S.O. 5[2], this is a Scheme that talks about 'osusu welbodi.' This means that the rich will contribute more for the poor and the poor will share the health services which they were unable to access. With this kind of arrangement, I think they will benefit equally because the poor will have access to medical services they were not able to afford before.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I heard Members raised concerns about the moral issues. The Scheme and its corporate body will come up with measure that will be put in place to regulate the daily operations of the Authority. That will be done in order to capture some of the activities of people who are trying to undermine the system. But if we have a strong monitoring technology, I think that will be minimised. It will not be eliminated completely because some expenses we may have from other places are still being taken for a ride by medical doctors on double billing. As long as we are not technologically inclined, we will still have problems in terms of the providers. Sierra

Leone will not be an exception and that is why the corporate body should come up with measures to monitor and make sure that people do not take the Scheme for granted.

With those few clarifications, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act, 2017 be read the second time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

The Bill entitled, 'the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act, 2017 has been read the second time]

[COMMITTEE STAGE]

Parts 1, 2, 3 & 4, Clauses 1–21 proposed.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1, 2, 3 & 4, Clauses 1–21 stand part of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we go page by page. Page 1?

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, Page 1. I have asked a question if we are passing the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act. I do not think it should be the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act at all. To me, the Authority should come after the scheme. It should not bear the name of the Bill and if that is the issue, then we also have to change the long title, that it will no longer read 'being an Act for the establishment...' I think that will come later, Mr Chairman. Is it the policy we are going to provide for the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance? We should provide for the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance and then we establish the Authority, fund and other related matters. I want the Minister to respond to that concern. He has not responded to that concern.

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minority Leader, do you want the word 'Authority' to be removed or what?

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: I want the Minister to respond.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, please respond to the Minority Leader's concern.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Policy is seeking the Act and the Act gives the Authority. So, when there is an Act then the Scheme has authority to do what it intends to do.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: In this case, is it an Authority or an institution?

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minority Leader, I think that point is well noted and we should agree on what to do. The Minister has confirmed that he is here to pass an Act and we have to determine that. Honourable Members, stop saying yes, yes. We are not in a circus at all. If you want to say something, you have to stand up.

HON. DR FODAY I. SUMAH: Mr Chairman, Part V talks about the establishment of the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Scheme. I will suggest that we change the title to 'the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Scheme and Authority Act.'

THE CHAIRMAN: That will be too long. The point is that the Minority Leader is saying that the Authority will be created by the Act under Section 2. It is smaller than the scope of the Act and that is the point she is making.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, the Minority Leader rightly said that it will create no harm by deleting the word 'Authority.' If that word is deleted, the short title will now read, 'the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Act, 2017.' The long title will read, 'being an Act to provide for the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance, to provide for the administration of Social Health Insurance Scheme, providing healthcare insurance services throughout Sierra Leone and to provide for other related matters.'

THE CHAIRMAN: In other words, the long title should stay as it is?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: No. I have read the modified version by removing the words 'the establishment.' Let me read it again.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, this is the long title and the Act will make provision for the Authority. So, I see no harm in leaving the Authority under the long title.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: No problem, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am saying this because it is also part of the reason why the Act is being established.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: That is okay, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, let us go over it again for the benefit of Honourable Members and for us to get their permission. The short title should read: 'the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Act, 2017.' Mr Minister, I hope you are with us? Honourable Daniel B. Koroma, please go over the long title.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, the Long title reads, 'being an Act to provide for the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance, to provide for the administration of Social Health Insurance Scheme, providing healthcare insurance services throughout Sierra Leone and to provide for other related matters.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, are we in agreement? Let us listen to the Minority Leader.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, we should bring the 3rd sentence to be the 1st sentence; i.e., 'being an Act to provide for the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Scheme,' and then 'Healthcare Insurance Services, Establishment of the Social Health Insurance Authority and to provide for other related matters.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Dr Foday I. Suma, you want to say something new?

HON. DR FODAY I. SUMAH: Mr Chairman, I would have loved to see the establishment of the Scheme itself in the title and then the Authority that administers the Scheme. What is in here is to provide for administration, but in that case, 'being an Act to provide for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Scheme comes first, and then Authority to provide for the administration...'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I want us to get things right. The point that is being made here is that it would be better for the Scheme to come before the Authority because that is where the emphasis is and I am sure we are in agreement. The position

of the Minority Leader is that we get the Scheme, which is supposed to be the primary, before the word 'Authority.'

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Mr Chairman, I want to support the Minority Leader and to rephrase the long title to read: 'being an Act to provide for the administration of the Health Insurance Scheme. You do not provide for the establishment of the Scheme, but you provide for the administration of the Scheme. I will read it again: 'being an Act to provide for the administration of the Social Health Insurance Scheme, to provide for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Social Insurance Authority.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, you are confusing some of us.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, do we have somebody from the Law Officers Department?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Deputy Minister of Justice is here.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: That is not his work, Mr Chairman. We should have had the competent authority to witness what we are saying. They are bringing these Bills here and a representative should be here.

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minority Leader, I said it yesterday.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: We need a representative from the Law Officers Department.

THE CHAIRMAN: In fact, they are here without the Draughtsman and they expect us to make amendment. It makes no sense because the Draughtsman should be here to listen how we are discussing Bills.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: He should be here to advise us and he should come with his specialists.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the specialists are here.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Why are they not seated here to help the Minister?

THE CHAIRMAN: This is about drafting and it is not for them.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, explaining the content is also important.

THE CHAIRMAN: When we come to the content, they should come in front. They are seated there.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: As the Minority Leader rightly has said, I want to say that we have done a similar Bill yesterday.

THE CHAIRMAN: It was not yesterday.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It was on Friday. We did the same on Friday and the phrase was acceptable.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please tell us because that is what we are waiting for, Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: What we did in that Act was that we removed the word Authority from the short title and then the long title. So, this should now read, 'being an Act to provide for the Sierra Leone Health Insurance, to provide for the administration of the Sierra Leone Health Insurance Scheme, providing healthcare insurance services throughout Sierra Leone and to provide for other related matters.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, what about the word establishment? You have to establish the Authority.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, are you referring to the long title?

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, the Authority is key in the management of the Scheme and it has to be established. The Authority has to be a creature of law and I want to agree with the Minority Leader. Let me read what I have now. Honourable Members, this is law and it is not economics. We do not need your assistance for now. Honourable Members, let me talk some nonsense and see what sense we can make out of it. Madam Minority Leader, the long title should read: 'being an Act to provide for the administration of a Social Health Insurance Scheme, providing healthcare insurance

services throughout Sierra Leone and to provide for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority and to provide for other related matters *[Applause]*. Let us make progress. Page 2? Page 2?

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Mr Chairman, Page 2, under the meaning of Minister. We should spell 'labour' in the British way.

THE CHAIRMAN: Where, Honourable Member?

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: The fourth line under the definition of Minister. I have problem with the spelling of 'labour.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Your point is noted. Page 3?

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Mr Chairman, under 'worker' the second line of last paragraph reads: employed for remuneration in any kind of work, whether manual or otherwise, I have issue with 'in' or 'in.'

THE CHAIRMAN: So you are saying that the comma should come after the first line?

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: The first 'in' should be deleted.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, it is there for a purpose.

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Well, it is confusing.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Lamin Yansaneh, draw a line underneath and consult with the draughtsman. Page 4?

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: We have passed Page 2, but we need to change the structure because Page 4 starts with the establishment of the authority; i.e. Part 2.

THE CHAIRMAN: What structure are we talking about?

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: We should bring Part 5.

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minority Leader, Part 2 deals with definitions.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: What I am saying is that if we are going to reconfigure the sequence from the long title, the sequence of this Bill has to change.

THE CHAIRMAN: That has nothing to do with Page 2, Honourable Member.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, it has something to do with Page 2.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, Part 2 deals with definitions.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Let me tell you why? If you take Authority for instance, 'Authority' means the body established under Section 2.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is correct.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: What I am saying is that if we have changed the title of the Bill and we should also go into the Bill to re-configure the positioning

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minority Leader, do you want to look at the content first?

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: I know the content, but what we are saying is that when we do it, then we have to go back.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Honourable Member. It does not mean so at all.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: It will, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, the content will determine the structure of the Bill and not the long title. In other words, it is the table of contents that will determine the structure of the Bill.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: That is what I am saying, Mr Chairman. If you look at the table of contents, it has to change, so that Part 2 becomes Part 5. Part 5 will take the place of Part 2 and this is what was saying. And if that is the issue, then the table of contents will have to change.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note of that. The draughtsman will advise on that.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: The table of contents will have to change.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is for the draughtsman and he will advise accordingly.

HON. CLAUDE D.M. KAMANDA: Mr Chairman, you cannot establish the Office of the Clerk, for instance, without first establishing Parliament. In this case also, you cannot

establish a Scheme without first of all establishing the 'Authority.' The Authority should be established first before the Scheme. This is because we agreed to change the nomenclature of the long title and that is why the Minority Leader was saying that we should bring Part 5, which talks about the 'Establishment of the Scheme' and then take the establishment of the authority to Part V.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, let me give you an example. Initially, we had the HIV/Aids Secretariat and there was no policy. In other words, the Secretariat was established without a policy; but when the HIV/Aids Bill was brought to this House, we established the policy in that Act before the Secretariat was established and that was why they brought it because the Secretariat was in existence without a policy.

THE CHAIRMAN: In this case, Honourable Member, there is already a policy in existence.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: We have to do same in this case.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is a policy in this case.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: First of all we have to put in place the Scheme and then we establish the Authority that is going to implement the Scheme.

THE CHAIRMAN: In this case, Honourable Member, we have a policy. I want to make it very clear that there is a policy already. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note. The draughtsman will advise on that because it is dealing with legality. Page 4?

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Chairman, Page 4, Part 2, Sub-clause 2[i]. The heading says 'the Sierra Leone Health Insurance Authority. It should be Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance. We should add 'social' to the title.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you saying 'the establishment of the Sierra Leone Health Insurance Authority?'

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Chairman, the word 'Social' is missing and it should be included.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you referring to Clause 2[i]

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Yes, Mr Chairman. Again, in Sub-clause 3[a], an 's' should be added to the word 'member.'

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Honourable Member. Clause 3[a] should not change at all. It has to do with the CEO and that is why it should not change. Page 4? Page 5?

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Mr Chairman, Page 5. I have issue with 1[g]; i.e., 'Appointment by the Minister of Health.' Usually, the recommendations are made by Ministers, but the President reserves the power to appoint. I also have issue with Clauses 'j' and 'k.' Normally, the head of administration is usually the Secretary to the Board, but this is not the case here. I want to recommend that the Director-General serves as the Secretary to the Board and we remove the word 'ex-officio' because that is inconsistent with other laws we have passed in this House.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, if we remove 'k,' I will suggest that we add one more member under 'g' so that we have a male and female representation. Mr Minister, what is your take on that?

MR MINISTER: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members that suggestion is in place.

THE CHAIRMAN: They want Clause 'k' to be removed and then add one more member under clause 'g.'

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: It is okay, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you okay with that?

DR MATTHEW m. TEAMBO: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Page 5?

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Chairman, if you look at the number of Board members, we have twelve Board members, including the Chairman. I want to state here that that is an even number.

THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, we have to remove the ex-officio, who is the Secretary to the Board.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Exactly, Mr Chairman. If we remove one, we will be left with eleven [11] and eleven [11] is an odd number. We can add two [2] to make it thirteen [13].

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, if we add [2], I want to state that all of them cannot come from the Civil Society because it would be a Civil Society Board.

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Mr Chairman, the job of this authority is so big and maybe we have to get 2 more experts to make it 13, those experts would attend meetings, but you hardly get these representatives to attend Board sittings. Again, instead of 'appointment by the Minister, we can say recommend by the Minister.'

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please continue your contribution.

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Mr Chairman, the fourth issue has to do with Members of the Board. Almost all of them are representatives from institutions and it will be very difficult to get all of them to attend Board sittings. In that case, we need to get 2 experts to make it 13. The Honourable Member from Kono spoke about Clause 'g' that the phrase 'appointed by the Minister' be replaced with the phrase 'recommended by the Minister.'

HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, we have not agreed yet.

THE CHAIRMAN: Basically, there is a standard format we normally use.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: That is what I was about to say.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please say it now.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I want to agree with what the Chief Whip and Honourable Alhassan Kamara have said that based on that, we can say a member representing civil societies working on health issues.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Honourable Member. We are talking about 2 members.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, if we say 2 members, then we have to be gender sensitive. That is to say, at least one of whom shall be a woman from civil societies working on health matters. Clause 'j' is talking about 'a professional health economist.' When you come to the provision that has to do with appointment, we have look at Sub-clause 3 for the standard. It says, the Chairman and other members referred to in paragraphs 'g' and 'j' or Sub-clause 2 of Clause 3 shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Minister subject to the approval of Parliament. I think that has been the standard procedure.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, you were in this House for five years. Am I correct?

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is the procedure we are not going to give out. Proceed, Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I have another issue I want to discuss.

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to give chance to Dr Abdulai Sesay.

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: Mr Chairman, if you look at Clause 'h,' it talks about the Registrar, Sierra Leone Dental and Medical Council or the Registrar, Nurses and Midwives Council. We do not have a Council as we speak. Furthermore, I strongly believe that if you have somebody from the Medical Council or from the Pharmacy Board, then we should have somebody from the Nurses and Midwives Board because these are three critical areas providing the bulk of the workers that are providing the healthcare scheme that we are talking about.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we should change the word Council to Board and that is the first stage for the nurses. Dr Abdulai Sesay, I hope I am correct.

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: You also said that the Medical and Dental Association to be separated. We also have the nurses and midwives.

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: In that case we have the Pharmacy Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Dan Y. Sesay, do you want to differ? I think it is not Pharmacy Board, but Pharmaceuticals.

HON. DAN Y. SESAY: Mr Chairman, the Pharmacists are usually business people.

THE CHAIRMAN: I know that, but they will be servicing the authority.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Lamin Yansaneh, I hope you are taking note. Mr Minister, we will get back to you soon because we have to get your confirmation. I think we have 13 Board members. The number is 13 because the Director-General is just ex-officio member he/she will serve as Secretary. The Director-General is not a member of the Board. Therefore, we have to remove Clause 'k.'

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, I think we will have 11 Board members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, the Director General is going to serve as the Secretary to the Board.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: If the 2 members are maintained, it is going to be 12 Board members, but if Clause 'g' is maintained, we will have 11 Board members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I have 13 members.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, are you saying 13 Board members?

THE CHAIRMAN: The total I have with me here is 13 Board members. We have the Chairman, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, the Financial Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Social Welfare, the President of the Employers' Federation, the President of the Labour Congress and 2 other members, one of whom shall be a woman.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, we also have 2.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Honourable Member. We have 3; i.e., one from the Medical and Dental Association, the Registrar for Nurses and then the Pharmaceuticals.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: We have to rephrase that clause.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you saying that it has to be separated?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes Mr Chairman because we cannot say 'or.'

THE CHAIRMAN: It cannot be one at a time. If they are relevant, they have to be separated. I have 13 and 13 is an odd number.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, it is now 14.

THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, Honourable Member, you still need an odd number and that is why we have 13. The Director-General is not a voting member. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, I hope you are taking note. You have to take note of 13. I hope we are together. The numbering is going to change and I hope the Minister is with us. We have added 1 more to Clause 'g' and 2 to Clause 'h.'

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I think 1 is added to Clause 'h.'

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Honourable Member. We have added 2 to Clause 'h' because it was an 'or,' but they have now being separated.

HON. DANIEL KOROMA: In that case, we now have separate paragraphs.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Honourable Member. Any more on Page 5?

HON. MOHAMED L. MANSARAY: Mr Chairman, Page 5, Roman figure c, under the Permanent Secretary [PS] in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. The PS is an Administrator and then the DMO is the technical person in that Ministry of Health. I want to suggest that the PS is removed and replaced by the DMO because the officer dealing with health issues.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we should not also forget that we have other professionals that have been factored in this Board. The PS is in charge of administration and this has more to do with administration. So, you better think about it carefully before you say yes.

HON. MOHAMED L. MANSARAY: Mr Chairman, the reason for the removal of the PS and replaced by the DMO is that the DMO is the technical person as far as health issues are concerned. When you take a look at the representatives from the Nurses and

Midwives Board, the Pharmacy and the Medical and Dental, they all receive instructions from the DMO in terms of medical advice. Therefore, the PS in the Ministry should not overshadow the DMO.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, that is his position and I want the Minister to respond.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, with the removal of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Health... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, are you in agreement for the PS to be replaced?

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: I beg to differ, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to differ?

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members that is the position of the Minister.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: The explanation is that you have to understand the schedule of a DMO and his availability when you need to have an urgent meeting. I do not think whether you will be able to get him easily because they have their priorities. For the Permanent Secretaries in the Ministries of Labour and Health, they are easily accessible than the DMO. You cannot easily access the DMO when you need something because he is involved in a whole lot of things.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, you still have to convince the Honourable Members.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, the convenience of having someone is better than you want another person that you do not have total control of and that will slow down your activities. This is my position, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, do you have something new to tell us?

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please take your seat because the Minister is still talking.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, the representatives we have identified are professionals, and we will be able to utilise their services in this situation when the need arises.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, that is the position of the Minister and I think we should go to Page 6. Page 6?

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Mr Chairman, Page 6, Sub-clause 1. I think the word 'dispatch' is wrongly used.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have seen it.

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Is it dispatch or discharge?

THE CHAIRMAN: It should be dispatch.

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: So, it should be 'dispatch.'

THE CHAIRMAN: That is what they use and it is their language.

HON. [RTD CAPT. FREDERICK S. SOURIE: The Board shall meet for the dispatch of its duties.

THE CHAIRMAN: If you like, you can change it to 'conduct,' but not 'discharge.' You can use 'dispatch' or 'conduct.' Madam Minority Leader, you want to say something on the same point?

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: No, Mr Chairman. Now that we have 13, I am sure the quorum is 7.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think 3 is good.

HON DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, are you saying 3 is good?

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minority Leader, 3 is good to call for meetings. Even that number is high because you might have 2 members who have something very serious to discuss. So, 3 is good.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Okay, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 6? Page 7?

HON. HASSAN SESAY: Mr Chairman, Page 7, Clause 6[i]. It reads, Mr Chairman: "A member of the Board who has interest, whether...." The word 'direct' is being joined with the word 'or' and that has given us the word 'director.' The word 'direct' has to be separated from the word 'or.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member. It is a typographical error.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I want to talk about the quorum.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is wrong with the quorum?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I think having 7 as the quorum for Board meetings is too much and I want to suggest 5 out of 13.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think 5 is good. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note. Anymore on Page 7? Page 8?

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Mr Chairman, Page 8, Sub-clause 3, the penultimate sentence. I want to know whether it should be 'Executive Director' or 'Director-General.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you want to take us back to the definition?

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: There is no definition for Executive Director.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, the authority is going to have a Director-General and that is what is written here.

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: I believe it should be 'Director-General' instead of 'Executive Director.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note. You are not taking note at all. You have to pay attention. The words 'Executive Director' should be replaced with 'Director-General.'

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Mr Chairman, Clause 9, Sub-clause 2. I am a bit confused and I would like to read.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please read, Honourable Member.

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: It says, "Notwithstanding the generality of Sub-section 1, the Board shall also be the responsibility of the Board to provide..." I am a bit confused.

THE CHAIRMAN: It should be 'it shall also be the responsibility of the Board to provide...' The word 'Board' should be removed. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, I hope you are taking note. Do not allow Mr Anthony C. Kamara to distract you. In fact, Mr Anthony C. Kamara should be looking at another Bill, so that when Mr Lamin Yansaneh makes mistakes, you will help him. Page 9? Page 9?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 9, Clause 11[i], the penultimate line. It says: 'by reason of his illness unable to perform the functions of his office for a continuous period of three months.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I think we have agreed on six months. Six months is the standard. We agreed on six months because three months is short. Anymore on Page 9? Page 10? Page 11? Page 12?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 12? Clause 17[1] at the bottom of the page. It reads: "**The Authority shall have a Deputy Director-General to be appointed by the Board.**" I do not know if that is consistent. I think the Deputy Director-General and the Director-General occupies almost the same position. So, I wonder why the DG can be appointed or ought to be appointed by the President whilst his deputy can be appointed by the Board. I am not comfortable with this Clause.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, the Inspector General of Police is approved by Parliament, but the Deputy Inspector General is not approved by Parliament. Why did you say it is correct? It depends on the circumstance and you have to give justifications.

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Mr Chairman, we are dealing with the establishment of Authorities or Commissions. Therefore, both the head and the deputy are appointed by the President and approved by Parliament.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, we have to follow the cue. Mr Minister, NaSSIT is not like that.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, the responsibility of appointing the Director and the Deputy Director could be done by the President.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note. Clause 17[ii] on Page 13 must be properly rephrased. It should be Deputy Director-General and not General-Director. I hope we are in agreement. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note of that amendment. You also have to do same in Clauses 15[i] and 17[i].

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, Page 13 says: **"The Authority shall have, in addition to the Director-General, other staff, including 'Secretary to the Board."** We have said that the Director-General cannot be other staff. In other words, the Director-General is a Director-General. Therefore, we have said that the Director-General is the Secretary to the Board, but this Clause is saying 'other staff.' Therefore, we need to look at it or maybe we go back to the composition.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we do not need to go back to the composition. What we need to do is to remove the words 'Secretary to the Board.'

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: That is okay, Mr Chairman.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, the words 'officer claims' are not also in place. We can delete those words or we bring 'officer' after 'claim.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minority Leader, there is a discussion going on. We agreed that the DG should be Secretary to the Board, but they are saying it will be difficult because the DG will be presenting documents to the Board during the course of the meeting. Some Members of Parliament are suggesting somebody different to serve as Secretary to the Board.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: In that light, Mr Chairman, we can simply remove the Director-General from serving as Secretary to the Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: So that the DG will only go to the Board to present documents.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: In that case, we can maintain the phrase 'including Secretary to the Board.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Please take your time and do not get too excited Honourable Members.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: This is because if you go to Clause 19[ii], it says, 'the Director-General and other staff of the Authority shall be appointed by the Board. Is it possible for the Director-General to be appointed by the Board?

THE CHAIRMAN: That was what Honourable Daniel B. Koroma was saying.

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Director-General is the Secretary to the Board. The resolution met by the Board is to be implemented by the Director-General and no other person else. The Deputy Director-General can serve as Secretary to the Board, but the head of the institution has always been the Secretary to the Board and whatever that is agreed by the Board should be implemented by the head.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, based on their own practice and based on the practice they have been going through, they want a different person to serve as Secretary to the Board instead of the Director-General. So, let us agree on the composition of the Board. The Director-General and the Secretary to the Board are going to sit as ex-officio members because they are not going to vote. Therefore, we are not going to delete the phrase 'Secretary to the Board' because it makes it easier. They will have no voting right and we will still have 13 Board members because they will sit as ex-officio members, but not members of the Board.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, we have to go again to Clause 19[i] for amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we have to finish with the Board before we go to Clause 19[i]. Honourable Members, I hope we are in agreement. We have said that the DG and the Secretary to the Board should serve as ex-officio members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Daniel B. Koroma, I hope we are in agreement.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note. We now go to Clause 19[i].

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Mr Chairman, I am yet to know the functions of the Secretary to the Board and the functions of the Director-General who should be the 'Secretary to the Board.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, the Secretary to the Board will be responsible to take minutes or compile resolutions. The Director-General will be presenting the documents that will be discussed during Board meetings.

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Mr Chairman, it is duplication of efforts.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we go to Clause 19[i]. Madam Minority Leader, I think Clause 19[i] will now stay as it is.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Yes, Mr Chairman. It should stay as it is.

THE CHAIRMAN: As it is, 'the Authority shall have, in addition to the DG, other staff including...'

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, I have a concern. I agreed that Clauses 'f' and 'k' should stay, but we have altered them and created three spaces under Clause 'h.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, those are members of the Board and not ex-officio members.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Okay, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: These other two would not be counted. When it comes to voting, they have no voting right. Therefore Clause 19[i] should stay as it is. Honourable Members, any comments on Page 13?

HON. NICHOLAS KAMARA: Mr Chairman, Page 13, Clause 3 says 'the Authority may delegate to the Director-General...' Who is this Authority, Mr Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Authority that is going to be established. Anymore on Page 13?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Clause 19[i], the second line. As we have resolved to maintain the Clause 'other staff, including 'Secretary to the Board', there should be a comma and followed by Claims Officer or Processing Officer.

THE CHAIRMAN: Claims Officers.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: There is a Processing Officer in this line or it should be Claims Processing Officer,

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I thought they are separate.

THE CHAIRMAN: They are not, Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It is okay, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to ask officials from the Law Officers to tell us whether the Claims and Processing Officer are the same.

OFFICERS FROM LAW OFFICE: No sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: This means we have to remove the word processing. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please remove the first 'officer' and 'processing.' Honourable Helen Kuyembah was saying that we should leave the word 'processing.' Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note that you have to remove the first 'officer' before claims

THE CHAIRMAN: Any more on Page 14?

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Mr Chairman, before the Minister moves, I have seen the functions of the Director-General and the Deputy Director-General, but I have not seen the functions of the Secretary to the Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you will not see the functions of the Secretary to the Board in the Bill.

HON. CLAUDE D.M. KAMANDA: The Board meets at least once every quarter and if the Board is not meeting, what will be the functions of the Secretary in that Authority?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Secretary to the Board is standard. They might decide to hire the services of KPMG or other firms. They might not hire an individual and that is why it is not stated there. Mr Minister, please move.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4, Clauses 1–21 stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4, Clauses 1–21 form part of the Bill as amended]

[Parts 5, 6, 7 and 8, including the Schedule, Clauses 22–47 proposed]

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 5, 6, 7 and 8, including the Schedule, Clauses 22–47 stand part of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, Page 15?

HON. DAN Y. SESAY: Mr Chairman, I have Page 14 here.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 14?

HON. DAN Y. SESAY: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we go to Page 14.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, I have Page 15 here.

THE CHAIRMAN: We start with Page 14.

HON. DAN Y. SESAY: Page 14, Clause 23[v]. The procedures for the application and registration as members of the scheme shall be by the Minister by statutory instrument. I want to know why?

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member that is the procedure. Anymore on Page 14? Page 15?

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, Page 15, Clause 25[2], under 'Immunisation.' I would like clarification whether it is childhood immunisation and what that entails. Is it going to cover school-health immunisation or travel vaccine and adults? If we look at typhoid and Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C vaccines, I need clarification, Mr Chairman. And

if we go to 'b' you talked about family planning services. I want to know if that covers pregnancy test.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you are going too far.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman that is also part of family planning services.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Dr Bubuakei Jabbi is not interested in that.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: We also have contraception. If we are talking about family planning services, I want to know if contraception and pregnancy tests are included.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, do you know that insurance is not elastic all over the world?

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: That is why I am asking, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, insurance is not elastic.

HON. NAVO-KAIKAI: We need to know what family planning covers. If you are talking about family planning and other areas, the scheme should include sexually transmitted diseases like HIV/Aids because those are part of family care or primary care service.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, I hope you are taking note and you should be talking to Honourable Members. Honourable Suahilo M. Koroma, do you want to talk about the same thing?

HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA: Not really, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, if you look at Clause 25[i], the Scheme is talking about inpatient and outpatient care, maternity care pre-natal and post-natal, and also supply of essential drugs. I want a clarification on these, Mr Chairman. Why are these blended with the free-healthcare services that government is already providing for this purpose? Again, if you look at Clause 25[ii], I want clarification on immunisation and family planning services

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Navo Kaikai has talked about that.

HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA: I know and Marie-Stopes is already providing family planning services. The Brigade Foundation is also involved in immunisation, which is a donor project for Sierra Leone. I do not know how we are going to make it part of this Scheme.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, maybe you need to talk to Honourable Navo Kaikai. She will tell you how insurance scheme works in the UK

HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: In the UK, you have the LHS, but you still have insurance scheme. It all depends on the Board. Mr Minister, these questions are for you.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, we have to understand that government is responsible for immunisation and all other services. There are also NGOs that are providing these services. You cannot fix what is not broken. If other agencies are providing these services, then the Scheme is not going to be responsible for them.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: What are you providing, Mr Minister?

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, the Scheme has a series of services it is going to provide. If other agencies are providing similar services in the country, government is not going to duplicate cost.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: If you are talking about immunisation the government is providing, they are childhood immunisation. In other words, government is not providing immunisation for adults. You probably need to be specific as to why it is included in the first place.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, I hope Clause 23[v] will explain these things before the Bill takes effect. I hope so because these questions have to be answered in those regulations.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Thank you, Mr Chairman

THE CHAIRMAN: Anymore on 15? Page 16?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, I want to look at Sub-clause 4 of 25, the last line. I am not sure of this phrase 'based on actual review.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Dauda Kallon is an insurance specialist and he will explain to you.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Chairman, I asked some questions earlier during the debate and the Minister has not responded to those questions. I asked about the **2.5%** penalty on late payment. I said since the government of Sierra Leone would be paying **4%** and we are notorious for late payment of contributions, I wanted to know if the government would be paying **2.5%**. This is because it will be year in year out or every month.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: In response to the Honourable Member's question, the purpose of enacting a law is to ensure that the people comply. Therefore, the **2.5%** is a compliance figure and if government does not comply, then it has to pay the penalty because it is for everyone. We want to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Chairman, the initial money/funding to set up this Scheme is coming from government and there are other moneys government is generating that will be going to this Authority. I am still asking the Minister if it is prudent to apply this to the government of Sierra Leone.

HON. DR BERNADETTEE LAHAI: Can I come in, Mr Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, Madam Minority Leader.

HON. DR BERNADETTEE LAHAI: I want to know from the Minister what usually happens with the NASSIT payment. Let us know what obtains with the NASSIT payment. I know that some institutions usually deduct the moneys. However, some of them use those moneys while others keep or fail to transfer the moneys to NASSIT. I want to know if there are penalties in that regard. I want to remind Honourable Alhassan Kamara that it is not only government that is going to contribute to the Scheme.

THE CHAIRMAN: There are private employers.

HON. DR BERNADETTEE LAHAI: There are also private employers who would contribute to the Scheme.

THE CHAIRMAN: But the Honourable Member is interested in the government.

HON. DR BERNADETTEE LAHAI: I know, Mr Chairman. I am just saying that you cannot have two different prescriptions or treatments. What is good for the geese should be good for the gander. I want to know what obtains with the NASSIT. If the government fails to pay that money on time, is there any fine? Let us know, so that we do not make different laws.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, the Authority has been given to NASSIT to apply penalties for late payment or non-payment at all. So, it has the option to apply that and we know they are applying it.

HON. DR BERNADETTEE LAHAI: Minister, what is the percentage?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, what would you consider as a delay?

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Well, that would be prescribed by the corporate body wherein they set up measures to govern their regulations.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you telling us that it would come as a regulation?

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have to know what constitute a delay. The Minister of Finance is here and he will not be too happy with us.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Normally, the delay in other cases, anything more than 5 days or 15 days could be considered as late.

THE CHAIRMAN: What the Minority Leader is saying is that when you are coming with the regulations, they must be consistent with what obtains now.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please take note of that. I am sure the Minister of Finance is giving it a second thought. They might charge interest in their capital outlook. Page 16, Page 17?

HON. DR BERNADETTEE LAHAI: Page 17, Mr Chairman. I did not hear the Minister's response to my question. I wanted to know why only children under the age of 12 and not those under the age of 15? I need an answer to that question.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think teenagers start from 13. Mr Minister, please answer that question.

HON. DR BERNADETTEE LAHAI: Let us know the minimum age for those to be covered by the Scheme.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let us hear from the Minister.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Minority Leader's question why under the age of 12 and not 15. Well, what we need to consider is that this is the beginning of a Scheme and we do not want to make the cost too high that will cause the Scheme to collapse. It has happened in other countries and we do not want that to repeat here. The Free Healthcare Programme talks about children under 5, but this Scheme is talking about children under 12. That question may be considered in the regulations. The corporate body is going to put all the regulations and this particular issue will be discussed and agreed upon.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Mr Minister. The regulation cannot push it to 15. You are saying that this is a pilot Scheme and we want to see how it moves.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: The Scheme is a pilot Scheme; therefore, we have to see how it goes before we make any more changes.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is okay, Mr Minister. Honourable Navo Kaikai, do you have something new to say?

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, Page 17, Clause 27[f] is talking about Sierra Leoneans who have attained the age of 65 to be exempted. The problem is how do you

can you actually ascertain that? I am asking this because some people may want to increase their ages to 65 because they want free medical attention. They will go the extra mile to even have other birth certificates.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, by the time this Bill will take effect, the National Civil Registration would have been completed.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Also, the Minister was saying that if the ages of children were to be increased, then there will be lapses in the system. Exempting 65 years old people might create similar problem because the older you become, the more complications you will get.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any more on Page 17? Page 18? Page 19?

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: Mr Chairman, it seems as if this Scheme is trying to create another NRA. If you look at the funds of the Scheme, the source of funds for the Scheme shall consist of **2.5%** of total revenue generated from Goods and Services Tax and **2.5%** of total revenue generated from None Tax Revenue. Mr Chairman, this is going to be colossal. Already, we are struggling with the taxes in the government institutions and we are also struggling to meet government's expenditure based on revenue received from the NRA. Taking **2.5%** of total revenue received is too much and it will create a lot of pressure on the government.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, if you go to the next page, it says that **40%** of the government's budget will go to Local Councils for primary healthcare. This Scheme will kill the government because **2.5%** is too much. I would want to suggest **0.25%** of total revenue.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Chairman, I think the Honourable Member has problem with figures. What we have in this Bill is **0.25%** and not **2.5%**

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, it is **2.5%** on Page 19. I think the Minister of Finance was in the Cabinet meeting where this issue was discussed and he must have had a position on this issue. You might have been bullied, but tell us now, so that we can agree on something. Is it something you can carry or not? Honourable Members we

are back and we are making progress. Honourable Members, this is Parliament and we have to be disciplined. Madam Minority Leader, there is a suggestion that since we are going to get the statutory instrument on a later period, we remove the percentages against this contribution for now, but will allow the sources to stay. However, the percentages will be determined when the regulations are discussed between yourself and those in charge of the finances in Sierra Leone.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Chairman, they are considering ... - *[interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, they will discuss that when they meet, but the sources of revenue should stay. For now, let us expunge the percentages. You will have to assist Honourable Daniel B. Koroma on that issue and I would like to see the final inputs. Page 20? Page 21?

HON. IBRAHIM SORIE: Mr Chairman, I want to look at Clause 36[1]. Instead of saying 'source and application fund,' the financial language is 'cash flow statement.' Financial statement comprises the balance sheet, income statement and the cash flow statement.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Hassan B, Sheriff, you are not from a procurement background. You are an Accountant and we want you to tell us. The Honourable Member is close to the truth. So what is the suggestion?

HON. HASSAN B. SHERRIFF: Mr Chairman, it is 'cash flow statement.'

THE CHAIRMAN: So, it should be 'cash flow statement' instead of 'source and application of funds?'

HON. HASSAN B. SHERRIFF: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, Clause 'c' should be changed to read 'cash flow statement.' Are we in agreement? Page 21? Page 22? Page 23? Page 24?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 24 Cause 'f' talks about 'fines and imprisonment provisions.' It says: "**Misrepresent or fails to disclose any material fact as a result of which he obtains a benefit to which he is not entitled**

commits an offence and shall be liable upon conviction to a fine of not less than Two Million, Five Hundred Thousand Leones or for imprisonment of three Months or to both such fines and imprisonment.” That is not the normal phrase. In the first place, these three months should not be certain because there should be a clause not exceeding and that could be based on the gravity of the offence. Every offence committed cannot have the same sentence; therefore, I want it to be stated to create room for... - *[interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, if you ‘misrepresent or fail to disclose any material fact, it is an offence.’

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: That is not an offence, Mr Chairman. The offence begins from Clause 40.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I am talking about clause ‘f.’

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: The offences in Clause 40[1] are unhealthy according to the way they are phrased. What I am saying is that if you say ‘a term of imprisonment of three months,’ it means that irrespective of the gravity of the offence, whether lesser offences or greater ones, both are suffering the same punishment. The point is that we should make use of the phrase ‘not exceeding.’ If you say for instance, not exceeding twelve months, the lawyer or judge presiding over the matter would have to determine the punishment based on the gravity of the offence. Some could be imprisoned for two months, some six months, some eight months or twelve months as the case may be.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, what about ‘not less than **Le2, 500,000**?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: That is also another issue. If you say not less than ... - *[interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I want you to suggest something.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, it should be ‘not exceeding **Le 2,500,000** That is the standard and it has been the normal way we make laws.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, if you say not exceeding, it is different from not less than.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Exactly, Mr Chairman. We can adjust the figures to create room for lesser and more serious offences. It should read, 'shall be liable upon conviction to a fine not exceeding **Le 2,500,000** or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding twelve months or six months, or both such fines and imprisonment. If the offence require more than three months... - *[interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, what is the point? We have to make progress. Honourable Members, do you think we should continue with the **Le 2,500,000** fine and the three months imprisonment? I want the Chairman of the Legislative Committee to ensure that the final copy of this document is taken down, otherwise it will just go for Clause 'f.' It has to be separated for it to cover the rest of the others. Any more on Page 24?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, let us look at Clause 41[2], which deals with the penalties to be imposed. The word 'on' should be inserted between impose and an.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Daniel B. Koroma, have you seen that properly? Any more on page 24? Page 25? Page 26?

HON. FREDERICK S. SOURE: Mr Chairman, I am seeing a repetition here. Clause 46 talks about exemption from liability and there is also a Clause 21 which talks about protection of officers' respect.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I think it is done in good faith. The intent must be there and you must have something. Any more on Page 25? Page 26? Page 27? Page 28?

HON. MOHAMED KAMARA: Mr Chairman, Page 28. We do not have small or minor surgeries. We have major and minor surgery. So, the word 'small' must be expunged.

THE CHAIRMAN: We should delete the word 'small.' Where are the experts? So do you want the word 'major' in this Bill? So, just delete the word 'small' and the word 'minor' remains. Any more on Page 28?

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, the three days per incident might be too small depending on what a patient goes with. I do not know how a patient will be cured within three days. It depends on the condition of the patient. So, we need to look at that area as well.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, would you like to say something?

DR MATTHEW TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, the three days, as it was pointed out, is the procedure in many countries we have visited. We found this in Ghana, Rwanda and Tanzania. So if you give more days, people will abuse the system.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, this is primary health care.

HON. DR ABDULIA SESAY: Frankly speaking, Mr Chairman, three days maximum seems to be very short. From experience as a practitioner, I know that there are lots of cases that are needed to be hospitalised.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, your point is noted.

HON. DAUDA KALLON: Mr Chairman, I want to differ from what my colleague has just said. The issue is that the Scheme is going to cater for retainers. It is the retainers that will determine who goes inpatient and who goes outpatient. It is not the staff of the Authority. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the retainer and that is why they have to retain and pay them. So, they have to decide how many days the person should spend in the hospital. That is the standard procedure.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, would you like to extend it to five days?

DR MATTHEW TEAMBO: No, Mr Chairman. We stay with the three days.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we have listened to the Chairman of the Committee on Health and Sanitation, and Honourable Navo Kaikai, but we have to take

a position. What is your position now Honourable Members? Mr Minister, if you are not okay with the five days, I am going to ask for a motion.

DR MATTHEW TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, we have to consider the cost as well. What you are proposing is not common in many Schemes in other countries, but because we need to help more people, that is why we included the impatient for three days.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, if that is the case, can we have an option not to be included in this Scheme? This is because if I am paying for something, then I need to determine the service I get. If he is saying that it has to be three days, then it is necessary for some of us to be excluded.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, I was just saying that we give and take. If we are asking for five days, but they are saying three days, let us go for four days. It is a give and take situation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, the Minority Leader has made a very good point and I think we have to take 'four days.'

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Chairman, in insurance business, there is a risk of certain people enjoying and paying for some other people... - *[interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: In fact, I have never benefited from my car insurance. So let us go for the four days and start from there. Honourable Members, one thing I have noticed is that this Bill will be reviewed not too long from now; and when it comes here again, we will look at it.

HON. EDWARD S. JENGO: Mr Chairman, we do not pass Bills for them to be revisited... - *[interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: In the same token, we are not making laws that are sacrosanct. They are not written on rocks; they are in black and white. Honourable Members, please let us take four days. Mr Minister, whether you like it or not, we are taking four days. Page 29?

HON. MOHAMED KAMARA: Mr Chairman, Page 29[f] under laboratories examinations. It should not only be limited to laboratories examinations. We must also include radiobiologies because there are certain disease conditions that may need examination.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we are talking about primary healthcare.

HON. MOHAMED KAMARA: Mr Chairman, if you go to Clause 'e,' you will find out that we will need the five days. Now, if the prognosis of the patient is poor, can that patient be discharged in three or four days? I think we need to look at this issue again. The same goes and applies to Page 29.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, there is no insurance in the World that does not have a limit.

HON. MOHAMED KAMARA: If the prognosis is poor, Mr Chairman that patient will not be treated?

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I am saying that insurance should have a limit. Minor operations these days will not even warrant you to sleep in the hospital. Honourable member, have you read this Bill properly? It is a primary healthcare Bill. Please, do not confuse this issues. Any more on Page 29?

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Chairman, I want to make clarifications. We already have the Free Healthcare programme that takes care of pregnant women, lactating mothers and children under five.

THE CHAIRMAN: What you wanted to ask has been asked and answered long ago.

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: Mr Chairman, malaria is malaria... - *[interruption]*.

HON. DR ABDULIA SESAY: Mr Chairman, I want to say something about maternity care service. I think it is a normal practice that women coming from a maternity receive at least an ultra sound scan. As we speak, most of our government hospitals do have scanning facilities. I do not want that to be left out because this is something that

needs to be done for our pregnant women. Most of our government hospitals do not have scanning machines. This is a basic procedure you need.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, they say we can include it.

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to know the differences between malaria and an uncomplicated malaria. This is because the Bill says uncomplicated malaria. What do you mean by uncomplicated malaria? To me, all malarias need the same treatment. I want a clarification on that issue.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Dr Abdulai Sesay, do we have uncomplicated malaria?

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: Yes, Mr Chairman. The difference is that you have simple malaria. If you are tested and discovered that you have malaria parasite, you can be treated and discharged. That is the uncomplicated malaria they are referring to. Complicated malaria is when cerebral malaria leads to kidney failure or anaemia that brings blood transfusion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, your question has been answered. Thank you very much.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, if we are talking about primary healthcare services, I think this Bill should introduce what we called regular test, especially for those over 40 years. This is because that is where you will be able to diagnose the issue.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you saying over 40 years or over 65 years?

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, I am just saying that if you are bringing primary healthcare, then we need to have regular health check, maybe once every three years that will be beneficial to most of us. You cannot have a health care scheme without health checks.

THE CHAIRMAN: I agree with you, Honourable Member. Mr Minister, please take note of that observation. It should be mandatory or you do it somewhere in the regulations for the contributors.

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: Mr Chairman, I am kindly requesting that the word 'uncomplicated' be deleted. This is because if somebody comes with malaria and he/she is vomiting, then that individual needs admission because it is a complicated case. So, the word 'uncomplicated' should be deleted. Whether malaria is complicated or not, it needs to be treated.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, there is a suggestion that we delete the word 'uncomplicated.' The professionals will advise what next to do.

DR MATTHEW TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, the end part will explain the difference clearly. So, it helps people to clear the doubt.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let us make progress. Page 30?

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, Page 30. Most of these conditions are minor. We do not have primary healthcare, but again primary healthcare should also include breast screening, saliva screening, especially for women, and conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, etc. Those should be routine checks and they are part of the primary healthcare. We cannot mix diabetes, high blood pressure checks or cholesterol, breast screening and saliva screening.

HON. MOHAMED MANSARAY: Mr Chairman, I am concerned with Clause 'j,' which talks about anaemia. This is another area because if somebody is anaemic, then the therapy for that patient is blood transfusion. If the transfusion is excluded, then it is not anaemia and that disease condition should be excluded. Therefore, [for anaemia], if blood transfusion will not be included in this scheme, I recommend it to be deleted.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, there are two issues on the floor. The first one was suggested by the Honourable Navo Kaikai to either keep or delete Clause 'j.' She is saying that anaemia patient needs the blood. I have my view and I do not know your view.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, the list we have here is a list of conditions we want to bring to the attention of the House. These are the lists we can use for now

because this is just the initial stage of this Scheme. As we move along the implementation process, other areas will be included as and when necessary.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have to start somewhere.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, if that is the case, some of us do not mind to be exempted because ... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, stop threatening the Minister. You are constantly threatening the Minister.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, I am just saying that if you exempt certain conditions I may likely suffer from, I am not sure whether I will be part of this Scheme. My mum is diabetic and she also has high blood pressure. So, if these diseases are excluded, but I am paying for the service, there is no need for me to pay. The Minister said that the diseases that are not included in this Scheme will be incorporated later. If that is the case, then we should have waited until these diseases are included in the Scheme. We should not be forced to participate in a Scheme we are not going to benefit from.

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: Mr Chairman, I would like to add something.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we have to finish with this issue before you add something else.

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: Mr Chairman, I want to say that breast cancer is on the increase in Sierra Leone. Again, mammogram and saliva cancer are also on the increase.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you know how much money we have spent to procure those machines? The machines are yet to come.

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: In that case, Mr Chairman, I would like to add Mammograms and Pap smear

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: Mr Chairman, Mammograms and Pap smear are quite advanced and we have very few pathologists to read about them. I strongly believe that

there is a new method using simple vinegar to perform cervical cancer screening. And if we put more emphasis on that, I think it is cheaper. It is easy to do cervical cancer screening in this country because we can use simple vinegar to examine it then you will be able to tell if there are changes in the cells. In fact, WHO is funding a programme in that area and we are doing something to make sure that we help to control the situation.

HON. EDWARD S. JENGO: Mr Chairman, we also need testicular test to avoid prostate cancer *[Laughter]* because it is affecting men and the testicular test ...*[laughter]* It is primary Health Care check for prostate enlargement. It is a primary Health care test.

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: I want to agree with my colleague because the standard is at the age of fifty years and men are advised to do a PSA screening test. Unfortunately, PSA screening in this country cost a lot of money. Today, ECOMED is doing PSA test for **Le280, 000**. Men are advised to do that test every five years.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman that is just part of the primary healthcare.

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: Mr Chairman, it is possible, but when you look at the disease conditions listed here, you will realise that most of the men between the ages of 35 and 55 or 60 are not suffering from most of these diseases. So, they can benefit from the PSA test in every five years. And women will get their Pap smear and cervical cancer screening done. In fact, it will even encourage men and women to participate in the screening process. However, it is not very expensive to do this screening process.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: In that case, why are we contributing to this Scheme when you know that majority of us would not be suffering from those diseases?

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Navo Kaikai, who granted you permission to speak?

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, I wanted to buttress what Honourable Dr Abdulai Sesay has rightly said. He said that most of us would not be suffering from these diseases. If we are to subscribe to this Scheme, it is necessary for us to get the basic healthcare checks on a yearly basis, or once in every five year. But if you are excluding

those above the age of 35 years, I wonder what we will be paying for. I might as well keep my money pay and wait to pay **Le280, 000** for me to be screened. But I will not contribute something that I will not be benefiting from.

HON DR. BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, the mammogram screening takes place in every two years.

THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, we can do it in every two years?

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: For mammogram screening, the current prescription is every two years. You cannot do it every year. So, let the mammogram screening be every two years.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Chairman, this is about money making and since it is about money making and we are investing so much in it, I think we have to benefit from the services that are going to be provided.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, you heard the discussions from Honourable Members.

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, I heard the discussions, but I want to bring to the attention of this Honourable House that this is just the beginning and I am sure we would like to have a lot of benefits as stated in this Bill. It is not a simple thing because when you talk about more benefits, you should also talk about more cost. We have to understand that this is a social Scheme and it is not a money making Scheme as somebody mentioned. If we wanted to make money, we should have commercialised it, but this is a social Scheme. Therefore, if you compare what we are asking for as compared to other commercial outfits, you will realise that there is huge difference. So, if we increase our needs at this point, the Scheme will collapse before it starts. It has happened in other countries and we do not want that to happen here. Let us start somewhere and see how we will control the Scheme.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, you have heard the Minister.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Chairman, I want to differ from the Minister's submission. Whether it is social or commercial, it has some element of making money.

In the case of social, for instance, we are talking about contributions from the workforce and that would bring a lot of money to the Scheme. What this Scheme will bring could not even be compared to the commercial Scheme in simple economic terms. You will have more people in the social Scheme than the commercial Scheme. Therefore, even if you are charging minimal, you have more input as compared to the commercial. I want to believe that if we are fighting over this, we should also have the option, like what Honourable Navo Kaikai said, not to contribute to this Scheme.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, if I am 35 and I want to be tested at least every two years, then I would have to pay **Le 280,000** in every two years, which is very expensive. In the same token, I should also have the option not to be part of the Scheme. They have to consider the quantum that is required.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Foday Rado Yokie, if you are making that statement, you should also consider the millions of Sierra Leoneans who will not be paying, but they will be benefiting from this Scheme. So, you should not be talking about us alone, but the two or three million people who will not be contributing to the Scheme. You should be thinking about them. Mr Minister, what do you want to say?

HON. DR FODAY I. SUMA: Mr Chairman, I do not think the private sector is excluded. In some countries, it is obligatory that you belong to the social Scheme. According to this Scheme, that is excluded and possibly, they have to be paying a little more than the flat rate to get access to those facilities. That is how it operates in the Netherlands. You have to belong to a social Scheme where everybody pays flat rate and you can even ask for additional packages. We are not yet there, but this is a very good beginning.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, what is the suggestion? You talked about testing your testicular and the cervical. I think we have to put this into a vote. The Minister is still asking the House to allow it stays as it is because of reasons he has proffered, but some Members of Parliament are saying the opposite. This is the situation, Honourable Members. We have to decide on this issue once and for all.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, let us see how we can start.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Minister has made his points very clear. Madam Minority Leader, I think we have to put this into a vote. We have to bring this issue to a close. The Minister wants us to start with this Scheme.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Mr Chairman, you have to choose between now and the time you are going to use for testing this Scheme, whether many men or women are going to die or not. I am saying this because by the time you think you are satisfied that you have piloted the Scheme, how many women are going to die of cancer? How many men are going to die of prostate cancer?

THE CHAIRMAN: So, Mr Minister, do you want to move?

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 5,6,7 and 8, including the Schedules, Clauses 22 to 47 stand part of the Bill as amended.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Point of order, Mr Chairman. The Minister wants to outsmart us. There is a contention here ... - *[interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable member, the Minister has my permission.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agree to]

Parts 5, 6, 7 and 8, including the Schedules, Clauses 22 to 47 form part of the Bill as amended

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

DR MATTHEW M. TEAMBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled, 'The Sierra Leone Health Insurance Social Health Insurance Act, 2017 having gone through the Committee of the whole House with some amendments, I now move that the Bill be read the third time and passed into law.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, 'The Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Authority Act, 2017 has been read the third time and passed into law]

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, Members of Parliament have reminded you that our labour rights have been abused, including myself.

Honourable Members, I will have to adjourn the House for 15 minutes. We still have two more items to deal with, but based on what the leadership said earlier, it is left with us to decide whether we should deal with the Appropriation Act, 2018 and we look at the Bill tomorrow. I hope we are in Agreement. Mr Clerk, I need the list of Members who are in the Chamber. If they are outside, please ask them to come in. Mr Minister of Finance, we have to start these proceedings.

BILL

THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 2018

BEING AN ACT TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND FOR THE SERVICES OF SIERRA LEONE FOR THE YEAR 2018 AND FOR OTHER RELATED MATTERS

[FIRST ALLOTTED DAY].

[COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE HOUSE RESOLVES INTO COMMITTEE

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please allow me to decide who should start first. Honourable Members, I am in charge of this proceeding. I will start from Sub-Appropriation Committee 1. The reports have been circulated to Members of Parliament over a week now. Therefore, I am going to take them as being read. I want you to know that.

HON. CLAUDE D.M. KAMANDA: Mr Chairman, Point of Order. I supposed the Committee Clerks of the different Committees should be in the Chamber.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who are the Clerks of the different Committees? If they are all here, I want them to be taking notes. Thank you very much, Honourable Member, for that observation.

MR MOMODU KARGBO [*Minister of Finance and Economic Development*]: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that the following Vote Heads, which are listed in this Report and the total amount on the extreme right stand part of the Schedule.

THE CHAIRMAN: We go to Sub-Appropriation Committee 2. I will put the question once and Honourable Members who would want to debate on all the reports should do so once given the Floor. In other words, a Member of Parliament is allowed to speak twice or thrice. You are at liberty to say something about all the reports if given the Floor.

MR MOMODU KARGBO: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that the following Vote Heads and the amounts, as listed in Sub-Appropriation Committees 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 stand part of the Schedule. Thank you very much.

[Question Proposed]

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Chairman, I rise to contribute to this debate. I am going to limit myself to Sub-Appropriation Committee 6. I am a member of that Committee and I took part during its hearings. During the Committee's engagement with officials of the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs] under this Committee, there was one peculiarity we noticed. The Committee observed that most of the officials were telling us that they had only received the first quarter allocation; but even as that, the allocations were not received on time. In this regard, that impacted negatively on their performances. Therefore, I am calling on the Minister of Finance to take cognisance of that, so that in future, funds are released on time in order to enhance the MDAs' perform.

Again, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I personally observed that almost all the MDAs under the purview of Sub-Appropriation Committee 6 were underfunded. I want to also believe that many other Members of Parliament in this Committee will agree

with me. In that regard, I want the Minister to consider for a supplementary budget to enhance the performance of these MDAs.

Mr Chairman, I do not think whether we had anything controversial apart from those two issues. Therefore, I want to ask my colleagues to ratify this Bill.

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, added to what my colleague has said, the Sub-Appropriation Committee looked into the issue of **3%** for the National Revenue Authority [NRA]. That is to say, the Ministry of Finance was supposed to pay **3%** to the NRA to enhance their revenue collection as stated in the NRA Act. However, the NRA has not received this **3%**. Therefore, the Committee recommends that NRA get their **3%** to enhance revenue generation. This issue has been brought to the attention of the Ministry on several occasions, but to no avail. I want to state here that the NRA is doing well in terms of generating revenue. So, it is very important to honour that provision in the Act because they work relentlessly to ensure that they meet their targets.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to look at Vote Head 410 00, National Protected Area Authority and the Conservation Trust Fund. Mr Chairman, National Protected Area Authority and Conservation Trust Fund have not received their first quarter allocation and we are already in the fourth quarter. These institutions will not be able to generate the much needed revenue if they are incapacitated. If the funds have not been received, they will not be able to generate the much needed revenue at all, Mr Chairman. We want to appeal to the Minister to ensure that the National Protected Area Authority and the Conservation Trust Fund receive their funds as soon as possible.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to move swiftly to the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA]. The Committee observed that the EPA is in compliance with the Treasury Single Account [TSA], which was passed into law by this Parliament. The Committee further noted that the EPA remitted **\$200,000** into the TSA and we want to commend them for their compliance. However, we want to ask that [now that the EPA is being subvented], the Ministry provides their support in terms of disbursing their

subvention on time, so that environmental issues are addressed in a timely manner. I thank you very much, Mr Chairman.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: Mr Chairman, we in Committee 2 want to make a recommendation. The Local Councils are seriously under-funded, especially those that we dealt with; i.e., Kenema City Council, Kenema District Council and Bonthe Municipality Council. These are Councils that are seriously under-funded. In fact, the allocations we usually approve in this House are not given to them. In many cases, they only receive the first and second quarters, without the third and fourth quarters' allocations. These Councils are the only channels through which we can take development to our different constituencies. Therefore, I want to ask the Minister to ensure that when allocations are made to Local Councils, some considerations are given to them in the fastest possible way. If you pay the first and second quarters and forget about the third and fourth quarters, automatically there is going to be a problem. They cannot do anything developmental. Therefore, I want to recommend for capacity building, civil education and legislative reviews to enhance the efficient and effective operations of these Local Councils. Therefore, let there be some level of education and funding for these Councils. If moneys are being allocated, you have to make sure that those moneys are paid. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Honourable Member.

HON. KOMBOR KAMARA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I chaired Sub-Appropriation Committee 3 and I signed this report. This means that the details in this document will be my responsibility, but because of time I want to limit myself to the SLRA and the Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructure.

I will start with the Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructure. The main function of this Ministry is not only to look into the affairs of the road network, but the entire infrastructure and Housing. During the Committee's hearings, it was observed that **80%** of the works done by this Ministry has to do with roads. The areas of Housing and other areas dealing with infrastructure were neglected totally by this Ministry. The

Committee took cognisance of that and it was recommended that the Ministry performs its functions wholesomely, instead of concentrating only on road construction.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to look at the issue between the Road Maintenance Fund Administration [RMFA] and the Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA]. The main function of the SLRA is not only to construct roads, but to supervise all the road networks in this country; be it feeder or trunk roads. The Committee also observed that there is a conflict between the RMFA and the SLRA. It seems as if the RMFA is doing the work of the SLRA. The SLRA is charged with the responsibility of identifying contractors and supervise every work being undertaken by RMFA. They award contracts, but it seems as if the RMFA is doing that role. We took that as over-lapping of functions. The Committee recommends that the SLRA and the RMFA look at the Acts that established them for clarity of their respective functions. Every institution must confine itself within its area of operation. Both institutions must be seen doing their work.

With those few comments, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I will call on other Members of the Committee to talk about the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs. I thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Chairman of Sub-committee 3, there are Vote Heads you have recommended in these reports to be withheld, please tell us, so that when the Minister moves, we will know exactly the Vote Heads that should not be released at this point. The Chairman said there is none.

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: Mr Chairman, I have got two points to make. I was the Deputy Chairperson of Sub-Appropriation Committee 5. Mr Chairman, I want to reiterate the point made by other Members of Parliament about the issues they raised concerning the late disbursement of funds. I want to proffer a little bit of solution because that might help in resolving this perennial problem. Initially, funds were allocated on quarterly basis. As we speak, MDAs are given their funds on half-yearly basis. The problem with this mode of allocating funds is that the shift from quarterly allocation of funds to half-yearly process has created a shift in the work plan of most of

these MDAs. What that does is the fact that it is now forcing them to run into debts with suppliers and that runs throughout the year. So, the Minister might want to take a look at this issue to see if they could synchronise their disbursement schedules. I think the shift from quarterly to half-yearly disbursement of funds is due to the sluggish way revenue is being generated; and when revenue are remitted into the Consolidated Fund, you may want to synchronise with the Work Plan of MDAs, so that they avoid running into debt with their vendors and suppliers.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the other issue I want to bring up is that with the exception of Government Spokesman, all other MDAs allocated to our Committee showed up. I want to report to this Honourable House that the Vote Controller was called, but he never showed up. He told us that he was going to prepare his documents and would come back, but he never showed up.

THE CHAIRMAN: What Vote Head is that Honourable Member? Did you recommend for that Vote Head to be withheld?

HON HELEN KUYEMBEH: Yes, Mr Chairman. The Vote Head is 133 - Government Spokesman.

THE CHAIRMAN: And what Committee, Honourable Member?

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: Mr Chairman, it is Sub-Appropriation Committee 5. On the basis of that the Committee withheld its allocation. The Committee added that the Vote Controller would be charged for contempt of Parliament. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, officials of Government's Spokesman never appeared?

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Chairman, I am going straight to the point. Mr Chairman, I was very much surprised when the Honourable Member from Bo was appealing on behalf of Local Councils that they were under-funded. From our experience in Committee 3, most of these Local Councils are a source of government's leakage. They do not use Government moneys judiciously and they do not even have proper account records. For instance, during the Committee's engagement with officials of Tonkolili District Council, the sum of **Le 700mln** was not accounted for. The

Committee also observed that there were vehicles sold by officials of that Council, but they failed to account for the proceeds realised therein. As a result, the Committee recommended that the parliamentary Committees on Finance and Local Government look into that matter or the Anti-Corruption Commission [ACC] to investigate the matter.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to look at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs. The Committee unearthed many issues in that Ministry. After they appeared before the Committee three times, the Permanent Secretary could not submit documents relating to the Ministry's expenditure matrix. In fact, there was a budget of **Le 700mln** which he failed to submit documentary evidence on how the money was expended.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to ask officials of the various Local Councils to improve on their own source revenue mobilisation. They cannot continue to feed on Government coffers when they could not even use funds allocated to them effectively and judiciously. I think this was why they were dissolved by Siaka P. Stevens. As a Committee, we also asked the Committee on Internal Affairs to look into the issue relating to the Procurement of rice by the National Fire Force Authority. I thank you so much.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I was the Deputy Chairman of Sub-Appropriation Committee 2. The Committee observed that allocations were usually disbursed late and this has hampered MDAs' Service Delivery. The Committee recommended that the Ministry of Finance should work towards resolving this issue.

Also, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, Local Councils were created to bring inspired growth to their various localities. I am sure they have been here for a decade or more, but it is high time for Government and other institutions like Parliament to look at them critically so as to ascertain whether they are performing the role for which they were created or not. As a Committee, we enquired into a couple of Local Councils and they said that their primary function is to bring required growth and development to their

various localities, but they however said that they have not been receiving development grants, stating that what they normally receive is for devolved Sectors and administration. We want to know from the Minister if that claim is true or not. We know that they are sharing responsibility in terms of bringing development and growth to their localities, but they have continued to shift those responsibilities to Members of Parliament on the grounds that we receive 'development funds.' We know that they are in-charge of all of those areas of development and that is why we want to know if they are receiving development grants from government.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, Local Content Agency, which is Vote Head 419 refused to appear before the Committee. We made several efforts to get them here, but they refused. So, we recommended that their budget be withheld.

THE CHAIRMAN: Which Committee is this, Honourable Member?

HON. FRANCIS KAISAMBA: Mr Chairman, this is Sub-Appropriation Committee 2.

HON. ABU B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, I want to confine myself to the Provincial Secretary's Office, North/West. This is a new region, but nobody appeared before the Committee because this region was not in existence last year. However, they submitted documents relating to **Le1.9bln** as their allocation for 2018 financial year. The Committee viewed that allocation as inadequate for this new region and therefore urged the Minister of Finance to consider for a supplementary budget.

THE CHAIRMAN: Your recommendation is noted.

HON. ABU B. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman.

HON. [RTD CAPT.] FREDERICK S. SOURIE: Mr Chairman, I want to talk about the Ministry of Defence. I was not part of the Committee that scrutinised this Ministry and I am sure those who have looked at that Report would have noticed that the Ministry of Defence owes suppliers huge amount of money. One of the reasons is the fact that the soldiers are not given the leeway to control their own budget. It used to be the system in Sierra Leone and it was only changed in 1998 after the AFRC for obvious reasons.

This is why the military continues to incur debts over the years. For example, they approved the purchase of items like shovel, etc.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the military officers are still fighting the civilian staff in that Ministry on the cost of those items. A shovel cost more than **\$30.00**. This is ridiculous, Mr Chairman. The late disbursement of funds has been responsible for the Ministry to incur more debts. The Minister of Finance will agree with me that one of the MADs that has incurred more domestic debts is the Ministry of Defence. As we speak, the Chief of Defence Staff and his Staff could not control the expenses of the Agricultural Unit. The Agricultural Unit alone is catered for over **Le300mln**. As this has been happening today, we are still not self-sufficient in rice production, even though the Ministry of Agriculture has provided lands, we cannot fully utilise those lands. I want to appeal to the Minister to tell us how much is available for the Military. As long as we are able to get a clear picture of the situation, then we will know where we are. I thank you very much.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Chairman, I want to highlight a very important issue, which is travelling. We realised a huge disparity between what one MDA spent on one ticket to the other. For example, the National Mineral Agency [NMA] spent about just a quarter of what other MDAs spent for the same destination. This is one source of leakage and we must look it.

Again, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, my colleagues have been talking about the delay in disbursing funds to the respective MDAs. There is also the problem or conflict between the Chiefdom Administration and the Local Councils. That is also a source of leakage whereby Local Councils do not want the Chiefdom Authorities to know how they expend the moneys allocated to them. That is definitely a source of conflict because probably they have something to hide. That is why I want to confirm what my colleague from Calaba Town was saying. These Local Councils are not spending the people's moneys judiciously. In fact, they cannot even account for the moneys they are receiving from Government for local development. I think we need to look at these

areas and find lasting solutions. The Committees on Finance and Local Government must also look into this issue.

HON. BENNEH BANGURA: Thank you very much, Mr speaker. Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I would be remiss if I leave here without saying anything about the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation [SLBC]. Mr Chairman, SLBC has no subvention and SLBC is a Government owned entity. We have witnessed situations where employees of SLBC have been struggling to get their salaries. That is ongoing and that is why I would crave the indulgence of the Minister to please look into SLBC's issue and address it accordingly. The staff should not be struggling for their salaries at all.

Having said that, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to state here that I have read all the reports presented to us and every report has recommendations. I would like this House to put more seriousness in addressing some of the recommendations made by these Sub-Committees. If we fail to that, we will be having the same problems every year. With those few words, I want to thank you very much for this opportunity.

HON. HASSAN B. SHERIFF: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to make some corrections. The Honourable Benneh Bangura said that the SLBC never received allocation. About a couple of weeks ago, the Deputy Director-General, Mr Samuel Valcasel met me in my office and we talked about their allocations. In fact, none of the employees of the SLBC know the procedure to access their allocation. When Allocations are made to the MDAs, they have to apply for their money through the Ministry of Finance. They never applied for their allocations since 2014, 2015 and 2016. So, they have not been receiving anything. Again, the SLBC's budget is captured under the Ministry of Information and Communication, but they still have to apply for their allocations through the Ministry of Finance before their moneys are released. They have never done that, Mr Chairman. When Mr Samuel Valcacel came to my office, I called the Director of Budget on phone and Mr Samuel Valcacel was privileged to understand how to access their allocations. Mr Samuel Valcacel promised to visit the Ministry of Finance to make sure that they access the fourth allocation of 2017. In that regard, for

Honourable Benneh Bangura to say that the SLBC has not been receiving anything is not true. If you do not apply for your allocation, you will not get it and you will have yourself to blame.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, salaries are being paid by the Government of Sierra Leone. I personally went to the Ministry of Finance and made that arrangement for their salaries to be paid on a monthly basis. It is not good for an Honourable Member to stand in this House and say certain things that he does not know. We have to be careful with what we say here. Another point I want to bring to the attention of this House is that there is an MDA that was never scheduled to appear before any of the Sub-Appropriation Committees, which is SLARI. Mr Minister, until SLARI clears the issues with the Committee on Finance, they should not receive any allocation from the Ministry of Finance.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Chairman of the Committee on Finance, I wanted to know if SLARI is being catered for in this Budget. The answer is yes. Okay.

HON. HASSAN B. SHERIFF: Mr Chairman, being the Chairman of the Committee on Finance, I want to thank all my colleagues who have participated in this process, particularly the Chairmen and their deputies for a very good work done. Once again, I thank you very much.

HON. NAVO KAIKAI: Mr Chairman, I wanted to say that the Office of the National Security and the Central Intelligence Security Unit wrote a letter to the President and I hope he looks at that letter because they have got many constraints; and considering the work they do, our Committee recommended for supplementary budget for logistics, equipment and remuneration of staff. The letter has been sent to the President and I hope he looks at that letter and act accordingly.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate all those who participated in the Committee Supply. I know that a lot of time and energy have been put in the committee sittings. Again, report writing is another area that is very time consuming, and the responsibility of the

Chairmen and their deputies is to ensure that they proof-read their respective reports. Also, I want to thank all the Clerks on our behalf. I have read the reports and the recommendations contained therein. What I have seen throughout these reports is that most of the MDAs do not come with their 'opening' and closing' balances. If you are going to report on what you have received or what you did not receive, it is also your responsibility to come with your 'opening and closing balances.' Even if you are yet to receive anything, but at that material moment, you should be able to report to the Committees as to what you received and how you expended it. If some expenditures are ongoing and payments are yet to be paid, then all that needs to be done.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, a lot of Members of Parliament who have spoken alluded to the Single Treasury Account [STA] and some MDAs are complying with the STA, while others are not complying at all. The reports even urged MDAs to comply with TSA. I want the Minister to say something about the TSA in terms of its implementation. I want to know whether a timeframe within which all MDAs should comply with the TSA was given to them.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, this Minister made a promise some time ago before he was transferred to the Bank of Sierra Leone that because the recommendations in these reports are so important for service delivery, accountability and transparency, he would work very hard to ensure that some of these problems that are reported every year are resolved. I think he made that promise here, Mr Chairman. However, the same issues are being reported again in these reports. Just like the Auditor-General continuously reports on the same issues over and over. Something needs to be done very fast.

Again, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, despite the fact that we have been talking about the presence of the various MDAs whenever we are discussing their budgets, none of the MDAs is here. I do not know how these reports will get to the requisite MDAs, so that they see what have been their problems and the recommendations of the various Committees. Some do not need money because some of them only need

administrative re-arrangement or administrative competences, so that they will not repeat those anomalies.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, what I am about to say occurs every year and it seems as if nobody is listening to us. In other words, they are not taking us seriously and things should not stay as usual. There are no punitive measures against MDAs that are not taking corrective measures. There should be some punitive measures against MDAs that are not taking their work seriously. We usually spend a lot of our time in this House to debate the Budget. In fact, sometimes they are not even here to listen to our comments or observations. I want to state here that it is the business of all MDAs to come and listen to us. As long as you are getting these allocations and you go through these Committees, you must also be here. I think the responsibility rests with the Minister of Finance.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to remind the Minister of Finance that it is his responsibility to collate these recommendations, even if they are not here, and make sure that he sends those that are pertaining to every MDA and monitors the extent to which they are implementing those recommendations. That was why I said the last time that I may not be here in the next Parliament, but we need a special Committee to follow on those issues. They may not be going out into the field, but they may be here to follow stringently, in order to ensure that the Vote Controllers of the MDAs comply. It is very important, otherwise we are wasting our time. Members of Parliament are doing a lot of work, but nobody is taking any remedial action and the same problems keep coming up.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to appeal to the Minister to make a promise in this House that this time round, after this Budget hearing, the Minister should ask for the collation of all these reports. In other words, all these reports should be given to the Minister and extract every MDA's recommendations and give to the respective Vote Controllers. You should also be able to monitor the extent to which the respective parliamentary Committees monitor the implementation of those recommendations. In that regard, I want to ask members of the respective parliamentary Committees to

make sure that they engage their MADs on the recommendations of the various Committees of Supply.

Finally, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, if I come again to this, it could be in a different capacity. I do not care under which party I will come to Parliament, but I will be a state woman, a nationalistic woman because I will continue to work for my country. So, I do not care under which party.

Having said that Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want the Minister to take note of the issues we have outlined. I thank you very much.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, we have had a very long day and I want to believe that we are all tired. Perhaps I am tired more than others because of my numerous functions.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Majority Leader, let me handle that issue.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Chairman, there are lot of distractions, but I want to state here that we are coming to the end of this Parliament; and although we are required to work for a longer period, I think we have enjoyed staying in this Parliament. The old and new Members of Parliament have been working very closely, and I believe having heard from the Minority Leader, Parliament should be a friend to the Minister of Finance. You should adopt certain measures and conditions to enable you maintain a permanent friendship. I have heard you say, permanent friends or permanent interest. I think Parliament should be taken in both strides. We are permanent friends and we should be maintaining permanent interest.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the three Arms of Government should be seen to be working together and that is what democratic institutions are required to do. The three Arms of Government should not be working in different directions. I am not going to recount the experiences for the past few days, but I hope that will be a good lesson for all of us and for the in-coming Administration. I pray that you keep your portfolio after the elections because you have learnt your lessons in terms of how to deal with Parliament.

Without saying much, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, we have had a lot of regard for His Excellency the President because of the way he has worked with Parliament for the past ten years. Parliament would have still been languishing in doldrums of poverty and that is why we should be grateful to him. We want to thank him very much and assure him that when this Parliament comes back in March or April, 2018, he will always be in the annals of the history of Parliament in terms of the role he played and the things he did for Parliament. We have acquired a lot of experiences in budget discussion and we are very grateful. Honourable Members, I am not giving a good bye speech, but we have received the largest supports from this President and we need to appreciate him. We want to thank you very much for the cooperation we received. Today, our telephones were ringing, so we want to say thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Majority Leader, I want to thank you very much. Honourable Hassan B. Sheriff, I am still looking for SLARI.

MR MOMODU KARGBO: The Vote Head for SLARI 418 00. Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to thank you for your various contributions. I want to take this opportunity to respond to the comments you have raised. Most of the comments were linked to the fact that MDAs have not been getting their allocations on time. Other Members of Parliament talked about inadequate funding for these MDAs. Some spoke about the confusion brought by the change from quarterly to half yearly allocation. There have been complaints about water supply. Whenever I stand in this podium, I have always talked about the leakages that take place in government. This is why we are complaining about the cost of tickets.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to remind this House that the NRA is not receiving the moneys from the Ministry of Finance. The Honourable Member spoke glowingly about the performance of the NRA, but the Ministry of Finance is still reluctant to release the **3%** to the NRA. I completely beg to differ and I am not going to stand here and begin to down anybody but let me say this. ECOWAS has told us that if African countries want to develop like China and Singapore, they have to collect **30%** of their GDPs as domestic revenue. I want all of us to look at these figures. In a

recent study that was conducted two years ago by the IMF in which Sierra Leone was included, the IMF concluded that we have to generate **20%** of our GDP as domestic revenue. Now, our GDP is **Le30tln**, and **30%** of **Le30tln** is **Le9tln**. Again, **20%** is **Le6tln**. What we get from NRA is **Le3tln** and we need to understand that. I can tell you that I know the figures and the only money I owe them as at December, 31st is **Le2.5bln** for this year's allocation. I have given the NRA the money they deserve from the Ministry of Finance except, the **Le2.5bln**. If I miss that figure, it would be by a small margin. I am saying the truth, Honourable Members.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, if you look at the revenue in terms of what they should be collecting, you will notice a downward trend and this very sad for this country. I want to remind this House that government gets funding from three sources; i.e., domestic revenue, donor supports and borrowing. These are the three sources that government gets money from and there is a limit to the other source, which is borrowing. I cannot continuously borrow money because there is a limit to that. If you look again at the figures, donor support to this country has been declining drastically. Therefore, we are faced with a situation where donor support is decreasing and we are not generating enough domestic revenue to finance our programmes. The Ministry of Finance can only allocate what is available. That is the fact of the matter and these are the problems we are facing at the moment.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, an Honourable Member was complaining that Local Councils are not receiving enough funds. I want to tell you what we have started with those Local Councils in terms of collecting their revenue. I want to bet you that almost everybody in this House has a concrete house, but the question is how many of us are paying property tax? All of us seated here do not pay much for our property. You can complain or criticise the Ministry of Finance, but these are the realities we face in the Ministry of Finance. This is why we are not growing as a nation and this is also the reason we are encountering these challenges.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I supported the school feeding programme because I ate bulgur at the Albert Academy and you know the impact it had on you. So,

you had reason to stay in school, to play and read your books because of the lunch we usually had. What I am trying to say is that our social programmes are expanding and free health care programme needs substantial sums of money. I have a document on my table to pay the sum of **\$20,000,000** for medical drugs for the free health care programme. We all know that the Department for International Development [DfID] used to fund the free health care programme. For the past three years, we were not buying drugs because that programme was being funded by DfID. Regrettably, DfID has pulled out and so it has created a new economic burden for this Government. Therefore, we have to pay the sum of **\$20,000,000**. This is one of the biggest problems we are facing presently.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Honourable Dr Bernadette Lahai spoke about 'economic measures' we have instituted. The Honourable Foday Rado Yokie is an economist like me and he knows that those were not 'austerity measures.' What we did was to minimise wastages that you have been complaining about. In other words, what we did was to minimise the leaks, wastages and the unaccounted expenditures. For example, we tried as much as possible to reduce the use of fuel, overseas travels and capital expenditure. It was as a direct result of the interaction we had with this Honourable House we were able to come up with those economic measures. Whenever I come to this House, I get so much experience and I would like to share the notes I take here one day with Members of Parliament.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I am happy to state here that any time I leave this Parliament and go home, I usually get up 4:00 a.m. to go through the notes I have taken from what I have learnt. I value that relationship and these are some of the things I take in my work. Again, I want to promise here that those recommendations made by this Honourable House would be sent to all relevant MDAs, including Honourable Members of Parliament. We have to make up our minds and pay attention to the youth and other areas. Sierra Leoneans owe obligation to this country and this is very important.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I will take the comment made by the Honourable Dr Bernadette Lahai very seriously that the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation [SLBC] was set up as a corporate organisation. The Corporation was given money and it was supposed to operate by itself. Why is AYV operating on its own? Who is funding AYV and Star TV? They are operating on their own. What is wrong with SLBC to the extent that it cannot operate on its own and generate its own funds? SLBC is expected to finance itself. I think we have to revisit the notion of the 'public.'

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the Single Treasury Account [TSA].

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, you know that both of us have had this discussion over five years now and you promised to do something.

MR MOMODU KARGBO: Mr Chairman, I know that it is your fight and the Ministry is trying to do something. The Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructure, Road Maintenance Fund Administration and the Sierra Leone Road Authority [SLRA] have their individual responsibilities in this country. I was working at the National Authorising Office when the EU first funded a project to establish the Road Maintenance Fund. It was not supposed to be an implementation Agency, but a fund manager. They should manage the funds because it is a special fund. The Act that establishes the Road Fund is very clear on the mandate of that Agency. However, the Agency has over the years extended its mandate. The Agency is always fighting with the SLRA and both the Road Fund and SLRA are always fighting the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure

Recently, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, we have challenges with the budget because some of you know that most of the contracts they awarded have been returned to government. This means it is now in control in terms of paying for those contracts. This is the truth, Honourable Members. These problems are on my table and deal with them on a daily basis. But I take courage, having interacted with this Honourable House, except for the eighteen months I disappeared and went to the Bank of Sierra Leone as Bank Governor. I believe I have grown with this House and I have been very happy for the privilege this House had given me to grow with it. I think in the

process this House has made a lot of good decisions. This House has passed a lot of good Bills and we are seeing the result out there. I do not belong to that group which says this House is always ratifying bad Bills *[Applause]*. I know the work and I know what I bring here for parliamentary approval. I brought the National Mineral Agency [NMA] Bill to this House for approval. We know that the NMA did not exist, but this House passed that Bill into law and it is functioning very well. That is why the World Bank said that I gave you **\$ 8,000,000** and I will give you **\$20,000,000** because I can see the good job. Therefore, I have been very happy and comfortable with this House. We have had our challenges and I used to be your friend, but I am not sure now.

With those few words, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I once again move that the Vote Heads, which have been read across the six reports of the various Committees that constituted the Committee of Supply, with the exception of the following:

Vote Head 418 00 [SLARI];

Vote Head 418 00 Government Spokesman Office; and

Vote Head 419 00 Local Content Policy.

Honourable Members, I am sure all of us are in possession of the Appropriation Act. The Appropriation Act and the Report are with me. I now put the question.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

The various Vote Heads as announced by the Chairman, with the exception of those withheld form part of the Schedule]

[HOUSE RESUMES]

MR MOMODU KARGO: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled, 'The Appropriation Act, 2018 having gone through the Committee of the Whole House with some amendments, be read the third time and passed into law.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[The Bill entitled, 'The Appropriation Act, 2018 being an Act to authorise expenditure from the Consolidated Fund for the services of Sierra Leone for the year 2018 and for

*other related matters having gone through the Committee of the Whole House has
been read the third time and passed into law]*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr Minister.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Honourable Members, this is what the Order Paper would look like tomorrow. Apart from the usual prayers, there would be a laying of Paper entitled, 'Report of the 63 Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference.'

ADJOURNMENT

*[The House rose at 9.25 p.m. and was adjourned to Wednesday, 6th December, 2017 at
10.00 a.m.]*