

*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

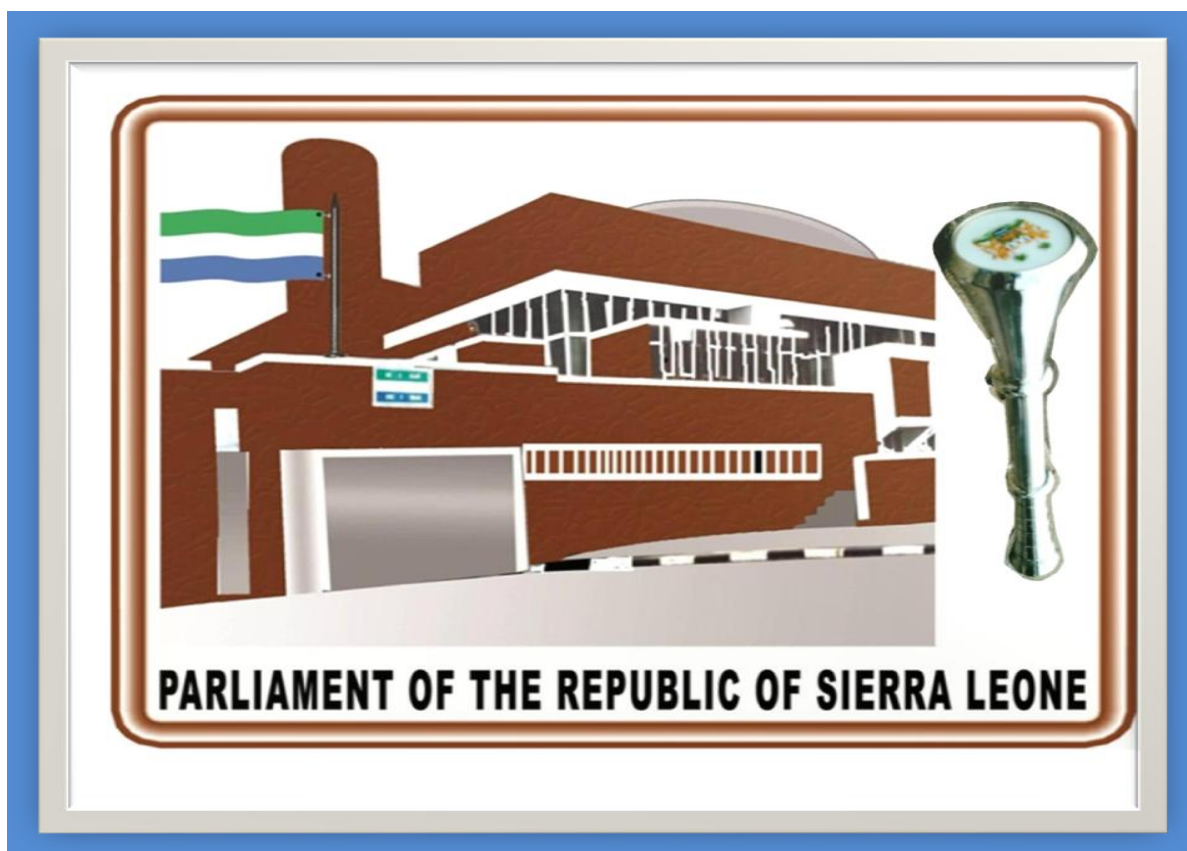
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**SECOND SESSION –FIRST MEETING**

**TUESDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2025**

*SESSION – 2024/2025*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: I**

**NUMBER: 33**

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First Meeting of the Second Session of the Sixth Parliament  
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
held on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2025

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**CHAIRMAN, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

**i. REPORT ON THE BILL ENTITLED: THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL  
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**ii. THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL AND**

**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT, 2024**

**COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING**

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**THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE**



*THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE*

## **Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House**

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### **SECOND SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

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**Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2025**

#### **I. PRAYERS**

*[The Deputy Director II, Mrs Fatmata Bintu Weston read the Prayers]*

*[The House met at 10:00 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]*

*[The Speaker, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas in the Chair]*

Suspension of S.O. 5[2]

**II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY, 30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2025**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, as usual we skip pages 1 to 4. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Can a Member please move?

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN:** I so move Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any Seconder?

**HON. IBRAHIM KABBA:** I so second Mr Speaker.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**[The Record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday 30th, January 2025 has been adopted]**

**III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, are you all happy? Why should you not be proud of your Speaker and the Leadership? Even the Leader of the Opposition is smiling. Proceed.

**IV. BILLS**

**THE TERTIARY EDUCATION COMMISSION ACT 2024**

**THE MINISTER OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

**COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING**

**[THE HOUSE RESOLVES INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE]**

**REPORT ON THE BILL ENTITLED THE TERTIARY EDUCATION COMMISSION ACT 2024**

## **HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH**

### **CHAIRMAN OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I rise to present the Fourth Report of the Legislative Committee, Second Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone on the Bill entitled: The Tertiary Education Commission Act 2024 being an Act to provide for the continuation of the Tertiary Education Commission, to provide for the regulation of tertiary education institutions throughout Sierra Leone and to provide other related matters. Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Bill having gone through Second Reading, was committed to the Legislative Committee for scrutiny pursuant to Standing Orders 51[1]. Subsequently, the Committee met on Wednesday, 29 January, 2025 in Committee Room 1, Parliament Building, with the following objectives, to scrutinize in detail the principles and provisions of the Bill, and to make amendments if necessary, to assert in the Constitutional and legal implications contained therein and to report to Plenary for consideration by the Committee of the whole House. In line with S.O. [53], Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in attendance were the Deputy Minister, Permanent Secretary and Directors of the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education. The Executive Secretary and other Officials from the Tertiary Education Commission, Officials from the Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Officials from the National Council for technical Vocational and Other Academic Awards, NCTBA, the Chairman Legislative Committee, the Chairman Technical and Higher Education Committee, Members of the Legislative Committee and other Members of Parliament.

#### **Recommendations**

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Legislative Committee, having scrutinized the Bill, line by line, Clause by Clause, recommends the following Amendments to the House for approval. Short title of the Bill been amended to read the Tertiary Education Commission Act 2025. Long title of the Bill be amended by inserting the phrase to repeal and replace the Tertiary Education Commission Act No. 8 of 2001 after the word

Act, to read being an act to repeal and replace the Tertiary Education Commission Act No. 8 of 2001 to provide for the continuation of the Tertiary Education Commission and to provide for the regulation of tertiary education institutions throughout Sierra Leone and to provide for other related matters.

Part One, Preliminary Clause One- Interpretation be amended by inserting the following new definitions, foreign institution means a tertiary education institution registered outside Sierra Leone, or a tertiary education institution registered in Sierra Leone, but representing or issuing certificates, diplomas or degrees on behalf of the institution registered outside of Sierra Leone. Online courses means an academic program delivered over the Internet.

Part Two, Tertiary Education Commission- Clause 2 continuation of Commission be amended to read, 'there shall continue to be in existence the body known as the Tertiary Education Commission'.

Clause 3, Sub Clause 1, composition of Commission be amended by inserting a new paragraph [K] to read the Financial Secretary or his representative, not below the rank of Director. Sub Clause 1, composition of Commission been amended by inserting a new paragraph [K] to read, the Chairman West African Examination Council. Previous paragraph [J] now becomes paragraph [L]. Composition of Commission be amended by replacing the word from with the word representing to now read one person representing a technical and higher education institution in each of the five administrative regions of Sierra Leone, at least two of whom shall be female. Clause 3, Sub Clause 1 be amended by inserting a new paragraph [M] to read the Executive Secretary who shall serve as Secretary to the Commission with no voting rights. Clause 3, Sub Clause 2, composition of Commission be amended by replacing the phrase who are not ex-official with the phrase under paragraph [L] of Sub Section 1 to Section 3 to now read the Chairman and other members of the Commission. Under paragraph [L] of Sub Section 1 of Section 3 shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Minister subject to the approval of Parliament. Clause 4, Sub Clause 1 tenure of members be amended by replacing the phrase who are not ex-official with the phrase



appointed under paragraph [I], paragraph [L] of Section 1 of Section 3, deleting the letter [A] before the word member. Pluralizing the word member, and replacing the figure 5 with the figure 3 at the second and third line of the sentence to now read the Chairman and members of the Commission appointed under paragraph [L] of Sub Section 1 of Section 3 shall hold office for a time of three years and shall be eligible for reappointment further term of three years only. Clause 4 Sub Clause 2 [d] tenure of members be amended by inserting the phrase sexual offense immediately after the word dishonesty, and moving the word all to the place after the word dishonesty to now read if he is convicted and sentenced for an offense involving fraud, dishonesty or sexual offense. Clause 5 Sub Clause 1- Meetings of Commission be amended by replacing the figure six with the figure three. Sub Clause 5, meetings of Commission be amended by replacing the figure 8 with the figure 6. Clause 6, disclosure of interest be approved. Clause 7, immunity of members be approved. Clause 8, remuneration of members be amended by inserting a new Sub Clause 2. Clause 8, Sub Clause 1 remuneration of members be amended to read the Chairman and other members of the Commission appointed under paragraph [L] of Sub Section 1 of Section 3 shall be paid such remuneration, sitting fees and allowances approved by the Minister, and shall be reimbursed by the Commission for expenses incurred in connection with the discharge of their functions, as the Commission may, with the approval of the Minister determined. New Clause 8, Sub Clause 2, remuneration of members be amended to read members appointed under paragraph A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K and M of Sub Section 1 of Section 3, and person co-opted by the Commission shall be paid sitting fees approved by the Minister and shall be reimbursed by the Commission for expenses incurred in connection with the discharge of their functions as the Commission made with the approval of the Minister determined. Clause 9, filling of vacancies be approved but three functions of the Commission.

Clause 10, functions of Commission, side notes of Clause 10 be amended by inserting the word the after the word of, to now read functions of the Commission. Clause 10, Sub Clause 2[1] function of Commission be amended by replacing the phrase stated in

Sub Section 1 with the phrase of the Commission to now read, do all things necessary to attain the objects of the Commission.

Clause 11, independence of Commission be approved. Clause 12, Committees of Commission be approved.

#### **PART 4 ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS**

Clause 13, Executive Secretary be amended by inserting a new Sub Clause 2, to read, a person shall not be appointed Executive Secretary unless that person has at least a PhD.

B. Is at least a Senior Lecturer in a recognized university with at least five years' experience in this rank.

C. Has at least three years of progressive experience as head of an academic department, Dean of a Faculty, or in any other senior management/ administration in a recognized tertiary education institution / organization. Previous Clause 13 Sub Clause 2, Executive Secretary now becomes Clause 13. Sub Clause 3, new Clause 13 Sub Clause 3, Executive Secretary be amended by replacing the word for with the word to after the word Commission to now read, the Executive Secretary shall be responsible to the Commission to. Clause 13 Sub Clause 3[b] the Executive Secretary be amended by replacing the word recording with the word record to now read, record the minutes of the meetings of the Commission. Sub Clause 3[b], Executive Secretary be amended by replacing the word performing with the word perform to now read, perform such other duties imposed on him by this Act, or as the Commission may direct. Clause 14 other staff be approved.

#### **PART 5 FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

Clause 15 funds of Commission- The Executive Secretary recommended to the Committee for the inclusion of own source revenue to be collected by the Commission to form part of the funds of the Commission. The Committee agreed unanimously that this recommendation be brought to the Committee of the whole House for deliberation. Clause 16, Sub Clause 2, account and audit be amended by replacing the figure 2 with

the figure 3, after the word than and before the word month. Clause 17 should be financial year of Commission be approved. Clause 18, Annual Reports be amended by inserting two new Sub Clauses, Sub Clauses 3 and 4. New Clause 18, Sub Clause 3, Annual Report be amended to read, the Minister shall lay copies of the Annual Report before Parliament within three months after you have received the Report. New Clause 18, Sub Clause 4, Annual Report be amended to read, the Commission shall make copies of the Report available to all stakeholders once it has been laid before Parliament.

## **PART 6 OFFENSES**

Clause 19, operation without Commission. Side Note of Clause 19 be amended by replacing the word Commission with the word accreditation to now read operation to be without accreditation. Clause 19 Sub Clause 2, Operation without accreditation be amended by replacing the word exceeding with the phrase less than replacing Le200,000 with Le100,000 and Le100,000 to Le500 000 to now read a person or institution that contravenes Sub Section 1 commits an offense and is liable to a fine, not less than Le100,000 and a further fine of Le500,000 for each day the offense continues. A new Clause 20 Sub Clauses 1 and 2 being inserted with Side Note to read, mounting of unaccredited academic programs by an accredited institution. New Clause 20 Sub Clause 1, mounting of unaccredited academic programs by an accredited institution reads, an accredited tertiary or higher education institution shall ensure that no new programs are mounted without the approval or accreditation of the Commission. New Clause 20 Sub Clause 2, mountain of unaccredited academic program by an accredited institution with a tertiary or higher education institution that contravenes Sub Section 1, commits an offense and is liable to a fine not less than 50,000 Euros per program and suspension of the said program. Clause 20, confirmed qualification by unaccredited institution be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 21. Clause 21 Sub Clause 2 previously Clause 20 Sub Clause 2 confer of qualification by unaccredited institution be amended by replacing the word exceeding with the phrase less than, replacing Le500,000 with Le250,000 with fine to now read a

tertiary or higher education institution that contravenes Sub Section 1 commits an offense and is liable to a fine not less than \$250,000 and the proprietor proxy of Commission members to imprisonment for a term not less than five years. Clause 21 false claims by foreign E-institution be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 22. Clause 22 previously Clause 21 false claims by foreign E-institution, Side Note of Clause 22 previously Clause 21 be amended by deleting the letter E after the word foreign to now read, false claims by foreign institution. Clause 22 Sub Clause 2, previously Clause 21 Sub Clause 1, false claims by foreign institution be amended by replacing the word exceeding with the phrase less than, replacing Le500,000 with Le300,000 with fine to now read a foreign institution that contravenes Sub Section 1 commits an offense and is liable to a fine not less than le300,000 and the proprietor proxy of Commission members to imprisonment for a time, not less than five years. Clause 22 failures to comply with Acts and Regulations be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 23. Clause 23 Sub Clause 1 previously Clause 22 Sub Clause 1, failures to comply with Act and Regulation be amended by replacing the word these with the word this to now read, the tertiary or higher education institution shall comply with this regulation may thereon that include the Regulations relating to discipline, registration and renewal requirement. Clause 23 Sub Clause 2, previously Clause 22 Sub Clause 2, failure to comply with Act and Regulation, be amended by replacing the word exceeding with the phrase less than to now read a tertiary or higher education institution that contravenes Sub Section 1 commits an offense and is liable to a fine not less than Le100,000. Clause 23 obstruction of false declaration be amended by renumbering needs to become Clause 24. Clause 24 Sub Clause 2 previously Clause 23 Sub Clause 2. Obstruction of false declaration be amended by replacing the word exceeded with the phrase less than to now read, a person or institution that contravenes Sub Section 1 commits an offense and is liable to a fine not less than Le100,000.

## **PART 7 MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

Clause 24 Regulations be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 25, Clause 25 repeal be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 26.

Conclusion, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Legislative Committee having scrutinized the Bill entitled: The Tertiary Education Commission Act 2024 hereby recommends these proposals to the House for approval. The Report reflects the consensus of Honourable Members of the Committee. I therefore move that the House pass the Bill entitled: The Tertiary Education Commission Act 2024 through Committee Stage, Third Reading and into Law. I thank you for your attention.

Sign: Honourable Abdul S. Marray Conteh

Chairman, Legislative Committee

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much Mr Chairman.

[Parts 1 to 7, Clauses 1 to 25 stand part of the Bill]

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1 to 7, Clauses 1 to 25 stand part of the Bill.

### **[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, just one more thing.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Where is that?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, page 3 it talks about the composition of the Commission. It starts from page 3 to page 4 dealing with TVET institutions or their representatives under the composition of the Commission.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Honourable Members, is that okay?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** That is what was missing because there you have the Chairman National Council for Technical and Vocational Education, and the Chairman Conference of Principals.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Is that all?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Just hold on. The Clerk is drawing my attention to some other missing information here. Let us proceed Mr Chairman.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Page 10? Page 11? Page 12?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, if you go to page 6 of the Report, the Committee recommended for something to be deliberated here. The Executive Secretary recommended to the Committee for the inclusion of own sourced revenue to be collected by the Commission to form part of the funds of the Commission. The Committee agreed unanimously that this recommendation be brought to the Committee of the whole House for deliberation. They have different consultative engagements, wherein minimal fees will be charged per student and part of that fees will not lead to any further increase because it is minimal and that fees also can be added under their own funding options. I do not know if Madam Minister is that something you can throw light on?

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Honourable Members, please pay attention.

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Thank you very much. Just to add to that, this is something that we are considering within the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education as an innovative way of generating funds for the Commission to enable them to be able to carry out their functions without any delay or hindrances. So the idea is the tuition fees that students already pay to the universities, a small amount of that very small amount will be collected by the institutions per students and given to the Commission to help them fund for their operations.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Honourable Members, are you okay with that?

**HON. TAMBA KELLIE:** Thank you Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, the relevant institutions will not attempt to increase the fees of students in order to provide for that small amount, they would have to give to the Commission to facilitate its functions. What guarantee can the Minister give?

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Are there safeguards?

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Mr Chairman, if I was to give you the amount we are talking about Le10, 000 for undergraduate students and Le20, 000 for postgraduate students. So we will put the safeguarding measures in place to ensure that there will not be that increment on the total amount of fees. It will be deducted from what the students pay, and not an additional amount.

**HON. TAMBA KELLIE:** The institution can increase the student's fees, because they have to collect that money from the student and pass on to the Commission. So once that safeguard is there, Mr Chairman, it is a brilliant idea and I thank the Minister for that.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I think that is good, Madam Minister. That is okay.

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS- LAMIN:** Mr Chairman, I hope that this particular subject here will be properly guided, because we are already struggling with students paying fees because the education that we are struggling with and I do not want somebody to take advantage of that.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Madam Minister, we are forcing about the safeguards.

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Mr Chairman, absolutely the safeguards will be put in place and it will not be an additional burden on the students.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay, thank you. Page 13?

**HON. DIXON M. ROGERS:** Mr Chairman, I am afraid we are living in society today where any Jack or Jill will get up one morning and do what he or she wants to do. If we are to accept this particular Clause, the PRO department of the Ministry should be very active to educate the students. Because today, the Minister wants her Bill to be enacted, she will say nothing will happen. In the next few years, we will see colleges or other institutions will start to increase fees on students, and Members of Parliament have to pay those bills. So I want the students to know, and also parents, to know that there will be no extra burden. It should be in black and white so that the people will know because sometimes most of those institutions do not listen to the Ministry. As far as they are concerned, they are separate entity. I thank you.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Chief whip it is noted. She has given us her word, and if anything goes wrong, then we will bring her for Question Time to provide answers.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Chairman, I think what we can ask for is for us to have the Regulation based on the provision. We are not begging her for guide. We are telling her that after the implementation of this Bill, we should be thinking about looking at Part 7 of the Bill. Let me read Part 7 because what the Honourable Chief Whip is saying it has to be enforced by the rule of law. Rely on Clause 24 the Minister may in consultation with the Commission a Statutory Instrument, make Regulations for giving effect to this Bill, I want to remind you on the text of the Bill. We have the Commission which is gearing to put in place the vicious increment of fees because you are trying to see the homogeneity in terms of fees. They are also regulating the work of the Commission to ensure that you do not have this free flopping of fees. If I am paying for National Diploma for the NCTVA, it will be the same fees and fees coming should be in line with what the Commission has agreed because you have different institutions. The beauty of this Bill, it brings the private sector on board to make sure that they are under the Commission. So what we will encourage Madam Minister to do is to make sure we have immediate effect of this commitment theory in the regulation form. The Regulation will come in the form of Statutory Instrument. So we have to pay attention to Clause 24 there comes in the oversight Committee after the enactment. They need



to remind Madam Minister or whosoever will be at the moment that we need to have the Regulations to give effect to some of the Clauses we have in the Bill. The reason why we cannot put the Bill, we do not want to be the administration of the Bill. So this one you are doing now is to make sure that there is complete compliance with what we have agreed and seen in the Regulation. I think that is how it should be.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much. Madam Minister, how long is it going to take you to bring the Regulations here?

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** We will work very hard, and we will try to bring it as quickly as possible within the next two weeks.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Madam Minister, you listened carefully to the Chief Whip not so? You are in a hurry to have your Bill being enacted so you can give us all the promises. Are you sure two weeks is enough for you to be here?

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** I am a woman of my word.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Madam Minister, I will remind you.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** I trust in the leadership of Madam Minister. Yes, I believe whenever institutions are being headed by women, they tend to be almost close to perfection.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Mr Leader, before you go any further I know Members of Parliament could recall when I made my position about women. I am 'He for She'. I do believe in women. I know women can work wonders when they are in offices. So Madam Minister, I trust you with all my heart.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** I trust you also Madam Minister, but I am advising Madam Minister to have a rethink of that timing. This Parliament is not a rubber stamp Parliament, once you tell us a time you are going to comply, so I advise that you consider maybe end of March, at least to be realistic. Otherwise, you say two weeks, just because you want to please us. At the end of two weeks, you will be summoned and I prefer you to take end of March, and it will be always good for you.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** You might be invited for a meeting out of the country and by the time you come back, it is already two weeks so give us the end of March. How about that?

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Thank you very much. Mr Chairman, We will work to deliver on the Regulations within the shortest possible time, and we take heed of the advice that has been given to us.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Not later than March okay?

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Yes.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Honourable Members, are we okay?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Chairman, I do not think it is appropriate because when we pass the Bill into Law the President also has his own part to play. Under Section [106] of the Constitution, there is a provision, but sometimes there are compromises. So I do not want us to sue the Minister, we can just say after the enactment, that means the President has signed the Bill into Law. If we are a progressive Parliament, let us leave room for some negotiations. If you say end of March, you are tying yourself. Not later than two weeks, you can come back that is my proposal.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Two weeks after the assent, thank you. Page 12? Page 13? Page 14?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I just want to know for neatness of proceedings Mr Chairman, I want to know if we have agreed that not more than or still with the same language? Mr Chairman, I want to make reference to the submission of Annual Report. Mr Chairman, with your leave, let me read this provision. Annual Report submitted by the Commission under Sub Section 1 shall include accounts, an annual financial statement prepared under Section [16]. Now we are referring to the financial statement, financial audit report, etc and the report of the audit. Mr Chairman, the reason why I have reminded Members about this provision is because people are bringing Annual Report to Parliament without financial statements. Let me remind you,

Madam Minister that those Commissions under your purview should not submit annual report without the provision expressly stated in the Act that is not a Motion is complete fraud to the Law. We have received copies, and we have returned them, because it is not within the context of the Law. So if you are doing this abrogating provision, it is deliberate. Let me remind the public that it is a fraud by bringing an annual report to this Honourable House without the audit report and also financial statements. Mr Chairman, let it go in the record that I have read this provision so that we can understand and I have raised Clause 24.

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** Mr Chairman, during the debate, we raised a point that there should be a publication of all registered tertiary institutions, so as to help people to understand which one is registered, which one is not registered. I do not see where we place that in any of the provisions, because we are talking about Annual Reports. I do not know if that could not be captured under this Annual Report. So we know on a yearly basis, these are the accredited institutions. These are paid up institutions, and these are the categories of institutions in Sierra Leone.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** So Madam Minister needs to go back and look at all of those institutions for accreditation. You can update them as time goes on and it can be in a record that those institutions were certified by your very Ministry and they are now part of the enlistment of those vocational institutions. So it is alright for you to have brought it to the House and let us encourage Madam Minister to put it in the Regulation.

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** I think what the Leader was saying makes a lot of sense, but in the functions of the TEC we should have inserted that on a yearly basis because registration is not a fix one. You can be a registered institution this year, and you have the staff capacity and everything to run an institution, but by the time you come to renew the other year, you have not met the criteria. So if it is a mandate that every year in the yearly Report, TEC is to give us an Annual Report or status Report of every institution everybody will know which one is accredited, or which one is up to standard. We should force the institutions to pay their annually subscription, which

enables them to run and we should wipe away all these mushroom institutions which are not registered and which are not up to the task. Registration is not just the physical amount being paid, but we should look at the structures, the infrastructure, the facilities, the learning environment, and every other thing. So it is incumbent that we have that in the Law to say, every year we have a published list, and we can also have a situation where we can also say, as they enlist them, they should also be enlisted by their categories, performance, the learning environment, the staffing capacity and that all should form part of the Regulation. They will be enlisted in a better grade, rather than being allowed to come down which will reduce their intakes.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Thank you Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, let me read page 10 Clause B which says 'to ensure that a tertiary education institution submits for accreditation programs offered by the tertiary education institution in order to ensure that they are relevant and adequate to meet national needs and objectives, and of same parity of esteemed product'. Earlier I mentioned parity in terms of fees. These have formed the basis for us to enlist them. So they will no doubt know that before you come for accreditation, you must sure that you are even certified, you need to have some of these things that are very important because they cannot bring the Law every week for it to be amended, but you can come with Regulations as time goes on. You can come with Regulations as much as you can or for every academic year. But do not forget that when you want to pass Law, you have to go through so many procedures. So the Regulation now is forming a basis of the administrative order to give total effect to the Law. So that is why I said the framework is already there. Thank you Mr Chairman.

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Mr Chairman, the Leader is quite right, and also the Honourable from Kambia is quite right, but what transpires between the Institutions and the TEC is not to the knowledge of the public. So the public may not have known whether these institutions have met the criteria as stipulated by TEC. So what he is saying now for those institutions which have met the criteria stated, they should not only be enlisted, the enlistment should be published so that they do not go to offer

courses in those institutions. After four years, they know that those institutions have not met the criteria of the TEC and their certificates are rejected. So what the Honourable Member is saying is that it should be inculcated in the Act that all those institutions who have met the criteria stated in the Act should be published so that whenever we have pupils from high school, and they want to enroll into tertiary institutions, they would know that this tertiary institution is accredited and has met all the criteria stated in the Act.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Madam Minister under the present circumstances how are these institutions monitored?

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Thank you very much. The Tertiary Education Commission is the regulatory authority for higher education institutions in Sierra Leone, and they have a grading system. You have Grade A institutions, Grade B and Grade C institutions, and they have a criteria for you to meet these Regulations. In some instances, you are given accreditation to offer some programs, but it is time bound, after which the TEC will come in again and do another review and assess as to whether or not you are fit to continue offering that program. But I take on board everything that has been said. In fact, after the engagement we had here last week, I sent a message to the Executive Secretary of the Tertiary Education Commission asking for a list of institutions by grades, and I agree that should be made available to the public, so that is something that has been considered. Thank you very much.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Yes, Leader of Government Business, you wanted to say something?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** First, there is this issue of people always saying the public is not informed. The public is always informed. By the Laws of Sierra Leone, before you table a Bill you must put in the Gazette. What we need to do as a nation, especially institutions that are really dealing with the enactment of various Laws, let them educate the public. There are Government bookshops and they are available there. There is no way you are not going to gazette it. In fact, if you do not gazette any

Bill, it is not acceptable to the House. We do not need to forget about that one, because it is part of the Law. I thank you.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Thank you very much Leader of Government Business, I think we can solve it in a very simple manner. To ensure that we have a provision which will mandate TEC to provide an updated register and updated list of accredited Tertiary Institutions.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Why should we not include that here?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** You included that particular function here and the list is going to be incorporated and they are going to really provide that list except otherwise and it has to be stated there that they have to do it. Thank you Sir.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Is that included in your Report?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** No, I think based on this deliberation now; it can be incorporated in the Report.

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** We do not want the names to be in the Bill because the names are dynamic. They could change on annual basis, contingent on the registration and accreditation process of the institutions. It is mandating, the only way it could be mandated is, let it be in the Bill that on annual basis, they should publish accredited institutions.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Chairman, I think they made a provision, but it is for only new universities. Maybe, we can have a proposal as 'accredited universities be published'. So I think under the same provision, we can have something here to accommodate the proposal, because you are now talking about establishment with new universities. So in that same provision I think we can go further now to say to have the list of those universities.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** And so move?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I so move Mr Chairman.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Any Secunder?

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** I so second.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**[ THE MOTION IS CARRIED]**

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Mr Chairman, most of the times we discuss about institutions laying Reports in Parliament, there is a time frame. I do not know how I might get it wrong, but now that my Leader has set the stage in terms of talking about Annual Reports, maybe it is something we really have to do. So is it that the Ministries are not or the Departments are not submitting their Reports, or somebody is not laying the Reports? Because we keep putting things into Law, we must make sure that they are implemented?

**THE CHAIRMAN:** No, it is somebody that is not doing his or her oversight properly. Because if we are doing our oversight properly and we are dealing with the books, then we know we have to urge them to bring their Reports. So maybe Committees of Parliament should begin to look at all of these issues.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Chairman, if we are talking about the Report, and we really want that one to happen, we can add it as part of our own program during the budget approval.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** In Fact that should be one of the requirements.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I do not want to say your words but that can be proposed because your ruling can not be challenged in any Court of Law. For me, I think that is what we need to adopt. It is not a matter of having a Committee to do it, but a matter of enhancing transparency and respectability of the Law.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** So make sure you follow the Law as it is.

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN:** Mr Chairman, my Colleague Honourable Member from Falaba said that, there is going to be no more issue of accreditation. That will be well informed when these things have been published and gazetted. You will be well guided when you select the type of university you may want to attend or tertiary institutions you may want to go and spend your money. It was really discussed with Madam Minister, but it was promised that it will come under the Regulations, but now that it has come to the frame part of the Act, I think we have done a very good job. Thank you very much Mr Chairman.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, the new rendition to develop and publish an updated list of accredited tertiary and higher education institution is to be qualified annually.

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Mr Chairman, I do not want Parliament to wait till Budget hearing. Maybe a lot would have gone wrong before Budget hearing. The Constitution in Section 93 [5p] gives Parliament the powers of the High Court, especially in requesting for document, so the Committee can summon whosoever that is to present document and compel the institution to present document before we wait for the Budget hearing. Maybe so many things may have gone wrong before that Mr Chairman.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** This is my advice to Chairmen of Committees. The moment you are made a Chairman of a Committee, try to get all the Laws relating to your MDA, and get yourself acquainted with those Laws so that you know the requirements of your particular MDA, and what is expected to do every year. But if you do not know, there is no way you are going to do follow up because you do not know. If your Chairman is forgetful, please remind him or her.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Page 12? Page 13? Page 14? Page 15?

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1 and 7, Clauses 1 to 25 stand part of the Bill as amended.



**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

[Parts 1 to 7, Clauses 1 to 25 form part of the Bill as amended]

**THE HOUSE RESUMED**

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled: The Tertiary Education Commission Act 2024 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 Tertiary Education Commission Act 2024 being an Act to repeal and replace the Tertiary Education Commission Act 2001 Act NO. 8 of 2001 to provide for the continuation of the Tertiary Education Commission, to provide for the regulation of tertiary education institutions throughout Sierra Leone and to provide for other related matters, has been read the Third Time and passed into Law]

**THE HOUSE STOOD DOWN AT 11: 40 A.M.**

**THE HOUSE RESUMED AT 11: 55 A.M.**

**V. BILL**

**THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
ACT 2024**

**THE MINISTER OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

**COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING**

**REPORT ON THE BILL ENTITLED:**

## **THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT 2024**

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH**

**CHAIRMAN, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I rise to present the Fifth Report of the Legislative Committee, Second Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone on the Bill entitled: The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act 2024. Being an Act to continue in existence the National Council for Technical Vocational and Other Academic Awards, which is now to be known as the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education to provide accreditation, validation, examination and certification services for awards in certain specialized and professional programs in formal, non-formal and informal sectors, and to provide for other related matters.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Bill, having gone through Second Reading, was committed to the Legislative Committee for scrutiny pursuant to Standing Orders 51 [1]. Subsequently, the Committee met on Wednesday, 29 January, 2025 in Committee Room One, Parliament Building with the following objectives, to scrutinize the detail principles and provisions of the Bill and to make amendments if necessary, to assert the Constitutional and legal implications continually, to report to Plenary for consideration by the Committee in line with S.O. 53.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in attendance were Deputy Minister, Permanent Secretary and Directors of the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, the Executive Secretary and other Officials from the Tertiary Education Commission, Officials from the Technical and Vocational Education and Training [TVET], Officials from the National Council for Technical, Vocational and Other Academic Awards, NCTVA, the Chairman Legislative Committee, the Chairman Technical and Higher Education, Members of Legislative Committee and other Members of Parliament.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Legislative Committee, having scrutinized the Bill, line by line, Clause by Clause, recommends the following Amendments to the House for approval. The short title of the Bill be amended to read the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act 2025. Long title of the Bill be amended by inserting the phrase to repeal and replace the National Council for Technical, Vocational and Other Academic Awards Act 2001, Act NO. 10 of 2001 after the word Act to read, being an Act to repeal and replace National Council for Technical, Vocational and Other Academic Awards Act 2001 Act NO. 10 of 2001 to continue in existence the National Council for Technical, Vocational and Other Academic Awards, which is now to be known as the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education, to provide accreditation, validation, examination and certification services for awards in certain specialized and professional programs, informal, non-formal and informal sectors, and to provide for other related matters.

Part 1, preliminary Clause 1, interpretation- The definition of the word Registrar be deleted. Part 2, National Council for Technical and Vocational Education. Clause 2, Sub Clause 1, National Council for Technical and Vocational Education be amended to read there shall continue in existence the National Council for Technical Vocational and Other Academic Awards to be now known as the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education. Clause 3 Sub Clause 1 membership of Council be amended by replacing the phrase 'of each of the' with the phrase 'from the' and inserting the phrase on a rotational basis at the end of the sentence to now read a representative from the technical universities in Sierra Leone on or rotational basis. Clause 3 Sub Clause 1, membership of Council be amended by replacing the phrase of each with the word from and inserting the phrase on a rotational basis at the end of the sentence to now read a representative from the polytechnics in Sierra Leone on a rotational basis. Clause 3 Sub Clause 1, membership of Council be amended by inserting a new paragraph [Q] to read the Commissioner National Youth Commission or his representative. Clause 3, Sub Clause 1, membership of Council be amended by inserting a new paragraph [R] to read

a representative of the principles of community technical colleges. Clause 3, Sub Clause 1, membership of Council previous paragraph [Q] now becomes paragraph [S], Clause 3, Sub Clause 1 is membership of Council be amended by inserting the phrase, who shall serve as Secretary to the Council with no voting rights immediately after the word education to now read the Director National Council for Technical and Vocational Education, who shall serve as Secretary to the Council with no voting rights. Clause 3 Sub Clause 2, membership of Council be amended by inserting the phrase and other members of the Council under paragraphs [O] and [P] after the word Chairman to now read, the Chairman and other members of the Council under paragraphs [O] and [P] shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Minister, subject to the approval of Parliament. Clause 4 Sub Clause 1, tenure of members, be amended by inserting the phrase and other members of the Council appointed under paragraphs [O] and [P] after the word Chairman to now read the Chairman and other members of the Council appointed under paragraphs [O] and [P] shall hold office for a period of three years and shall be eligible for reappointment for a further term of three years only. Clause 4 Sub Clause 2, tenure of members be amended by inserting the phrase sexual offense immediately after the word dishonesty, and moving the word all to be placed after the word dishonesty to now read if he is convicted and sentenced for an offense involving fraud, dishonesty or sexual offense. Clause 5 Sub Clause 1, it should read, Mr Chairman, meetings of the Council be amended by replacing the figure 3 with figure 8. Clause 5 Sub Clause 5 meetings of Council be amended by replacing the figure 8 with the figure 6 to now read, the quorum at a meeting of the Board shall be 6. Clause 5 Sub Clause 9 meetings of Council be amended by deleting the phrase of the Council shall after the word meetings inserting the phrase Council shall cause after the word the inserting the word it is after the word all, and inserting the word to before the word be at the first line of the sentence to now read, the Council shall cause minutes of all its meetings to be taken and signed by the Chairman, kept in proper form and made available to members. Clause 6, again, it should be Committees of Council instead of Board be approved. Clause 7, disclosure of interest be approved. Clause 8, immunity of members be approved. Clause 9, remuneration of members be amended by inserting a

new Sub Clause 2. Clause 9 Sub Clause 1, remuneration of members be amended to be the Chairman and other members of the Council appointed under paragraphs [O] and [P] of Sub Section 1 of Section 3 shall be paid such remuneration city fees and allowances approved by the Minister, and shall be reimbursed by the Council for expenses incurred in connection with the discharge of their functions as the Council may, with the approval of the Minister determined. New Clause 9, Sub Clause 2, remuneration of members be amended to read members appointed under paragraph A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, M, N, Q, R and S of Sub Section 1 of Section 3 shall be paid sitting fees approved by the Minister, and shall be reimbursed by the Council for expenses incurred in connection with the discharge of their functions, as the Council may with the approval of the Minister, determined. Clause 10 filling of vacancies be amended by replacing the word three months, the word months after the figure three, with the word meetings and at the third and fourth line of the sentence.

Part 3, functions of the Council, Clause 11, Sub Clause 2a, [i] functions of Council be amended by deleting the word national to now read basic vocational certificate. Functions of Council be amended by deleting the word national to now read vocational certificate 1. Sub Clause 2a, Functions of Council be amended by deleting the word national to now read vocational certificate 2. Clause 11 Sub Clause 2a, functions of Council be amended by deleting the word national to now read Technical Certificate. Clause 11 Sub Clause 2a [vi], functions of Council be amended by deleting [i] after the word diploma to now read diploma. Clause 11 Sub Clause 2a [vii], functions of Council be amended by replacing the phrase diploma two with the phrase higher diploma to now read higher diploma. Clause 11, Sub Clause 2 functions of Council be amended by inserting the phrase technical and vocational education and training before the word Tutor, replacing the phrase management and with the word recruitment, and inserting the phrase management and after the word training to now read, establish and maintain a formal, non-formal and informal technical and vocational education and training due to recruitment, training and management program to ensure quality delivery.

Part 4, Administrative Provisions- Clause 12, Sub Clause 1, Director be amended to read, the Council shall have a Director who shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Minister, subject to the approval of Parliament. Clause 13 Sub Clause 2, functions of Director be amended by deleting the word general after the word Director to now read without prejudice. Two, the generality of Sub Section 1, the Director shall be responsible to. Clause 14 Sub Clause 2, Deputy Director be amended by deleting the word general after the word Director, deleting the phrase and training, inserting the word masters before the word degree and replacing the figure 5 with the figure 8 to now read, a person shall not be qualified for appointment as Deputy Director on the Sub Section 1 unless he is holder of a Master's degree in education with at least eight years of experience in administration and management. Clause 15, functions of Deputy Director be approved. Clause 16, Tenure of Office be deleted and new Clause 16 be inserted. Side note to read, independence of Council, the new Clause 16, independence of Council reads in the performance of its functions under this Act, the Council shall not be subject to the control of any person or authority. Clause 17, Registrar be deleted. Clause 18, functions of Registrar be deleted. Clause 19, other staff be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 17. Clause 17 Sub Clause 1 previously Clause 19 Sub Clause 1 other staff be amended by deleting the phrase and Registrar, inserting the word and in between the words Director and Deputy Director, and replacing the word Directors with the word Managers at the third line of the sentence to now read, the Council shall have, in addition to the Director and Deputy Director, such other staff, including a Finance Officer, Administrative Officer and Technical Managers as may be required for the efficient performance of the functions of the Council. Clause 20 secondment settlements be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 18. Clause 21 Protection Officers be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 19. Clause 22 department be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 20. Clause 20 Sub Clause 2 previously Clause 22 Sub Clause 2 department be amended by replacing the phrase Head of Department with the word Manager to now read a department approved by the Council under Sub Section one, shall be supervised by a Manager. Clause 20, Sub Clause 2 previously Clause 22 Sub Clause 2, department be amended by

inserting a new paragraph [J] to read department of technical and vocational education and training, tutor, recruitment, training and management. Clause 20 Sub Clause 3, previously Clause 22 Sub Clause 3, department be deleted. Clause 23 Regional and District offices be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 21 Sub Clause 1, previously Clause 23 Sub Clause 1, Regional and District offices be amended by replacing the word may with the word shall to now read, the Council shall establish offices in the administrative Region of Sierra Leone and in such District as the Council may determine.

Part 5- Financial Provisions, Clause 24 funds of Council be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 22. Clause 25 accounts and audit be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 23. Clause 26 financial year be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 24. Clause 27 annual reports be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 25. Clause 25 Sub Clause 2 previously Clause 27 Sub Clause 2 annual report be amended by replacing the number 25 with the number 23.

Part 6- Offenses, Clause 28 operating without accreditation be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 26. Clause 26 Sub Clause 2, previously Clause 28 Sub Clause 2, operating without accreditation be amended by replacing new Le15,000 with Le25,000 and deleting the phrase and not more than 20,000 Leones to now read, an institution that contravenes Sub Section 1 shall be liable to a fine of not less than Le25,000 and a further fine of Le5,000 for each day the offense continues. Clause 29 disregarding integrated certification software be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 27. Clause 27 Sub Clause 2 previously Clause 29 Sub Clause 2, disregarding integrated certification software be amended by replacing Le15,000 with Le25,000 and deleting the phrase and not more than Le20,000 to now read an institution that contravenes Sub Section 1 shall be liable to a fine of not less than Le25,000 and full feature of accreditation. Clause 30 certificate obtained from unaccredited institution be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 28. Clause 28 Sub Clause 2 to previously Clause 30 Sub Clause 2 certificate obtained from unaccredited institution be amended by deleting the word is before the word shall, replacing the word exceeding with the

phrase less than replacing Le15,000 with Le25,000 and deleted the phrase and not more than Le20,000 and interchanging the positioning of the phrase shall be liable with the phrase on conviction to now read a person who contravenes Sub Section 1 commits an offense, and shall be liable on conviction to a time of imprisonment, not less than 12 months, or to a fine not less than Le25,000 or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Clause 31 counterfeited certificates be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 29. Clause 29 Sub Clause 2 previously Clause 31 Sub Clause 2 counterfeited certificate be amended by inserting the phrase on conviction to after the word libel, replacing Le15,000 with Le50,000 replacing the phrase, and not more than Le20,000 with the phrase, or to a time of imprisonment not less than two years, replacing the word exceeding with the phrase less than in certain the phrase commits an offense and after the figure 1 and inserting the word day after the word each to now read a person who contravenes, Sub Section 1 commits an offense, and shall be liable on conviction to a fine of not less than Le50,000 or to a time of imprisonment not less than two years, and in the case of a continuing offense, to a further final not less than Le5,000 for each day during which the offense continues after conviction. Clause 32 general penalties be amended by renumbering to become Clause 30. Clause 30 Sub Clause 1[i] previously Clause 32 Sub Clause 1[i]. General penalty be amended by replacing the word exceeding with the phrase less than at the first and second line of the sentence, and replacing Le5,000 with Le15,000 to now read to a fine not less than Le15,000 or to a time of imprisonment not less than 12 months, or to both such fine and imprisonment. Clause 30 Sub Clause 1[ii] previously Clause 32 Sub Clause 1[ii] a general penalty be amended by replacing the word exceeding with the word with the phrase less than to now read for a continuing offense to a fine not less than Le2,000 for each day the offense continues. Clause 30 Sub Clause 1b[i] previously Clause 32 Sub Clause 1b[i] general penalty be amended by replacing the word exceeding with the phrase less than and replacing Le25,000 with Le50,000 to now read to a fine of not less than Le50,000 and Clause 30 Sub Clause 1b[ii] previously Clause 32 Sub Clause 1b[ii] general penalty be amended by replacing the word exceeding with the phrase less than to now read for



a continuing offense to a fine of not less than Le5,000 for each day the offense continues.

Part 9 Miscellaneous- Clause 33 Regulations be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 31. Clause 31 Sub Clause 1b previously Clause 33 Sub Clause 1b Regulations be amended to read the application form and other forms to be issued under this Act. Clause 34 repeal be amended by renumbering it to become Clause 32. Schedule be amended by inserting a new four and five to read for every nation, Polytechnic, all private Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

Conclusion, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Legislative Committee, having scrutinized the Bill entitled: The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act 2024 hereby recommends these proposals to the House for approval. The Report reflects the consensus of Honourable Members of the Committee. I therefore move that the House passes the Bill entitled: The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act 2024 through Committee Stage, Third Reading and into Law. Thank you for your attention.

Signed: Hon. Abdul S. Marray Conteh

Chairman Legislative Committee

[Parts 1 to 7, Clauses 1 to 34 and the Schedule stand part of the Bill]

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1 to 7, Clauses 1 to 34 and the Schedule stand part of the Bill.

### **[QUESTION PROPOSED]**

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? And page 4?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Page 4 Mr Chairman, it is just a replacement.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Replacement of what?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, in the Report we have paragraph [L]. We have the Chairman Technical and Vocational Education Coalition or his representative. That is what we have there but we want this to be replaced by the Chairman of Heads of TVET institutions, or his or her representative instead of vocational education coalition.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Madam Minister where do you get that phrase from? Is this an existing entity, or is it an imaginary one?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** You mean the Education Coalition?

**THE CHAIRMAN:** We must understand the necessity of the Education Coalition is it an existing institution or it is part of the technical and higher educational infrastructure?

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** I do not have a copy of the Bill at hand, unfortunately, but based on what you have submitted, I believe that will be solved.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, in this case, we think having a coalition here is very loose, and that is why I am proposing the Chairman of heads of TVET institutions or their representatives.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Or was it the intent of the Drafter of the Bill to have included Civil Society working on technical, higher and vocational education? I think that is the intent.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Again, I can understand because we are talking about almost 24 years ago. Maybe that was the thinking.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** It is an extract from the external Law. Do we have the external Law because we have to ascertain whether it is a migration or is the thought of the Drafter to start to include Civil Society organization working as coalition on technical and higher vocational education, we may need to understand before we replace it.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, it is the intent of the Drafters to incorporate the voice of the Civil Society. We must be guided with some amount of certainty and to avoid loose organizations.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I agree with you. That is why we need to establish whether it is a migration from the external Law or it is the thought of the Drafters, so that we can coin it in a way that will reflect in the Bill.

**HON. NENNEH LEBBIE:** Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, it is past 12. I therefore move that S.O. 5[2] be suspended for the business of the House to continue.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Any Secunder?

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN:** I so second.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Chairman, I think there is provision for repeal.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The repeal is not effective.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Well, that is why we are on the process now.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** It is still part of the conversation as to what is the guiding document for us to repeal this particular one, I agreed with you 100%. I want us to be guided so that we do not put provisions that in future, somebody will utilize that provision to his or her own advantage.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, I might be doing it in haste, but I have not been able to locate that aspect in the external Law. However, I think having it as Education Coalition; it creates space for bringing a group of institutions. How do you determine who becomes part of that coalition? So that is why we are much more specific by saying Chairman of heads of TVET institutions is very easy to identify the TVET institutions, so the Chairman of the heads of those institutions will be there or his representative again, that will be determined by the heads of all those institutions.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay, let me listen to the Leader.

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Mr Chairman, it is two things. If we are having coalition in the Bill, we must be able to define what coalition is. I suggest we do not use it. It is either we define it or we do not use it.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** And I strongly believe it will take us almost the whole day to define coalition here.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I think we cannot define every word in the Bill, maybe clarity on what coalition actually means will help us and would guide the process as to what would stay and what we can delete.

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN:** Mr Chairman, looking at the external Law and the Bill in front of us, I have carefully looked at it, and there is nothing like coalition. So I recommend to the House that we do not need that particular word.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Let me take the Opposition Whip, and then I will take Madam Minister.

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** Mr Chairman, it is for quality representation and for better input. I have worked in a tertiary institution as an Administrative Officer before. If you have representative of Principals into the Board, it means they are talking the voice of the institutions. And do not forget the Regulations and some of the policies being implemented by the Board, but if you bring in coalition, what role will they be playing in the Board that will add value? So you need somebody who is technical enough to contribute immensely to the growth of the institution, rather than just having somebody for representation sake. So my appeal to the Minister is, we have quality representation that will add value, because we are talking about education here, and you need somebody who is at least knowledgeable in the areas or else you bring in somebody who is a coalition member. This is the reason we are still struggling with EDSA.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** EDSA is not the subject before the House, you have to be guided.

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** No, I am guided, that was not part of the record. So, it is just an appeal. I know everybody has his or her own grounds, but for the purpose of quality representation and input into the Board, it is good we have our own voices as people to run the institution and the Principals of the various institutions to have a representation, rather than just any coalition.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** So in my thought, I think the Drafter was actually referring to coalition or the Chairman for Civil Society Coalition.

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** If you look at all the Acts on educational institutions, there are not that kind of provisions, except you want to prove me wrong. In this situation, the people who the Law is going to affect are the owners of the institutions, and when they make Laws, the Laws affect them, because they are the owners of the institutions. And you have the Principals, who are the administrative heads. So for neatness of proceedings, I may suggest we have the owners, if they have an association, they could come to the Board as owners. You have Government and non-governmental institutions that are [Tech Voc] so you can have them to come to the Board, because they will be talking on issues that affect them. They are making policies that have helped the smooth running of their institutions.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Chairman, I wonder why we are struggling to put a proper text for the composition of the membership with appropriate language which will have no conflict. In fact, I do not want us to degenerate it to Civil Society. We are not discouraging them. But if you want to give the professional interpretation to the composition of the Board, it behooves us to replace this particular Clause with the proposal the Chairman is putting to you which makes it more appropriate.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Leader, I am not saying the coalition is Civil Society. I am just thinking alike but let me listen to the Minister.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Chairman, if you say coalition, you can be coalition and you are not a Civil Society organization. I do not want them to borrow the words from us to start saying it to the public. So what I am saying, we have not mentioned Civil Society and we have MOU with them. Mr Chairman, I believe the proposed one befits the context in which we are discussing right now. That one makes more sense to everybody, because I have seen the others, Tertiary Education Commission or its representative, Chairman of heads of TVET or his or her representative. Thank you Mr Chairman.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay, let me listen to the Minister.

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Mr Chairman, the word coalition is just alliance. We just qualify the word coalition. For example, in the interpretation section coalition means coalition of Principals, or coalition of heads of institutions, they do not misuse it. But coalition just means alliance.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Let me listen to Madam Minister.

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Thank you very much Mr Chairman. There is a TVET coalition that exists and what is being proposed is to ensure that it is heads of TVET institutions, both from the public and the private TVET institutions, so they can add value to the Council meetings and bring their embedded insights from being heads of both public and private TVET institutions.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** So what do you proposed?

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** I go with what the Chairman of the Legislative Committee proposed.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** So Chairman, is it in your Report? Can you give us the rendition of your Amendment?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, I am still of the conviction that this actual provision, as it is drafted now it is neither here nor there. It is not clear. It is ambiguous. And when once you are legislating, and you leave room for ambiguity, it is a potential for future confusion. So I am saying, if we want to at least get a representative from the Civil Society, let us stay as best as possible to at least make it known.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Civil Societies are off the books.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** So if that is the case, it is of no value to this.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I need to listen to the rendition to know whether they are still going to include the word coalition.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Is there any existing coalition?

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Let me listen to the rendition first then I will know whether the word coalition or the ambiguity of the Clause itself needs to be reviewed or to be expunged.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Chairman, if you listen carefully we did not look for other rendition. I read the one above, in the same context, talking about coalition, and talking about TVET institutions. The Minister explained clearly that having TVET, you are bringing the private sector. Do not forget policies in terms of supporting us in the educational sector and other sectors. You need private sectors even the Catholic Mission, if you go back to history, you would realize that they contributed immensely to the educational structure in this country. So if she is talking about removing that one and bringing the rendition that I have read talking about TVET institutions or his representatives, I think it makes a lot of sense so allow him to read the rendition.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I think we are saying the same thing.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Thank you very much Mr Chairman. It is the realization of the fact that the use of coalition can be chaotic, broad, and ambiguous. That is why the suggestion of the new rendition is saying Chairman of heads of TVET institutions, or his representative. I will just draw your attention to page 3[b], 'the Chairman Conference of Vice Chancellors and Principals or his representative, a representative of the Councils of heads of technical and vocational institutions'.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay, I think we are fine with that. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** I see you proposed an Amendment, and you disaggregated Clause 9, so you have 9[1] and 9[2]. It has to do with remuneration. You have statutory representation. They are only eligible to receive sitting fees and of course, other expenses incurred for some other activities. Then you have the Chairman and other members appointed on certain paragraphs. Of course, they are not statutory representatives, but then they are entitled to sitting fees and other allowances. I thank you Mr Chairman.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Page 9? Page 10? Page 11? Page 12?

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** Mr Chairman, this is for the Chairman of Legislative Committee to take note on the area of the finances.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** That is part 5?

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** Yes part 5.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Wait until you get to page 15.

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** Okay, we are almost there now.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Are we done with page 13? Page 14? Page 15?

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** I know there are no issues on page 13 and 14. Mr Chairman, if you ever visit NCTVA, either their structure or when they run their exams, you will see more reasons why they need financial support from their institutions. I do not know what the current trend is, but way back in 2014 when I used to invigilate their exams, they will pay Le28 for a paper, and even that one for you to be paid it has to take maybe after six months. And if the situation remains the same, it is an institution that it is in dying need of financial support. And most times, even when they take fees from students for Tertiary institution, it is very difficult for them to gather all their resources. So I am saying, as we did for the TEC it could also be applicable; and I see the Minister is nodding in acceptance of my ideas. Mr Chairman, I am suggesting that we have the same Clause that is put in the Tertiary Education Commission.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The rationale behind deleting paragraph B of Section 14 of the extant Law because I was saying they should also collect fees for examinations they conduct. The rationale I think in the extant Law, your proposal was captured as part of the body of Laws for the National Technical Vocational and Other Academic Awards Act.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Bring me to speed Mr Chairman; I am trying to look on the extant Law.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Whip from the Opposition has made a brilliant submission. I have gone through the extant Law, I realized what he is suggesting was



part of the extant Law on paragraph B of Section 13 provides fees charged for the services of the Council, including examination fees.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Well, this is a question again that I will bring to the Ministry and the institution itself, because they went through their consultative meetings, and they decided to bring this one to us in Parliament. I think Mr Chairman, I want you to redirect the question to them, why did they even leave it out in the first place and they want us now to even include something that will also address that particular issue?

**THE CHAIRMAN:** To you Madam Minister.

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Thank you very much Mr Chairman. There is a difference between TEC and NCTVA, but they are both regulatory authorities. TEC does not conduct examinations for university students, examinations are handled by the universities or the technical universities, with NCTVA, they conduct examinations and they collect fees, so that goes straight to NCTVA, and that would help them to execute their mandate in conducting examinations as a sector. As a Ministry, we have taken to Cabinet, and it has been approved to develop a technical and higher education fund to introduce innovative and sustainable ways of financing the sector, and we are currently thinking through different ways in which we can diversify the income stream going into that fund to finance predefined sectors within that space. But as it is, we believe that NCTVA, with the funds that they are collecting from examinations will be able to finance them with regards to strengthening the examination systems and so on and so forth. But adding another layer of tariff on the students, as we did for TEC will not be applicable in this context.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Madam Minister, the point is not addition. The point is the very fees you are referring to has been deleted in this new Bill. It has been deleted the very fee that the Council collects. Yes, it has been deleted in this Bill. This Bill has deleted it because they are holding these streams of funds. Have you seen it? Money appropriated by Parliament, and money is given to the Council by way of gift,

endowment, Grant, or other contributions by persons and organizations for the purpose of the Council.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, it is unfortunate that crucial paragraph got missing in action, and it is not the making of Parliament, but this is how it came here. And at some point we thought, this is the outcome of their consultation, so I do not think it will be too much of a problem, or any problem at all, if they decide to correct their mistake here because it was in the extant Law.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** No, it is not there now. We should correct it because 105 and 73 like I usually say, they are integrated Clauses.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** They are passing through us now.

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** Mr Chairman, because the Clause was omitted, in my mind I thought they wanted NCTVA to deal with that as an institution that determines their fees for examination. What I was asking for is what the Minister has addressed does not fit for us to have the same Clause as we have in the TEC but in a situation where there is an omission of the fees to be collected, and under the current state of the institution, I think putting the Le10,000 as it is in the TEC will make no burden on students. Mr Chairman, I have worked in this sector, and that is why I am a bit worried. Mr Chairman, my experience teaches me that Le10,000 will not be a burden. Considering what we used to take from students for the exams and what we used to pay to NCTVA, Le10,000 will not be much except otherwise, but Le10,000 is just within the bracket for students to pay.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Honourable Members, I would suggest to the Committee is for us to reinstate the provision in the extant Law on paragraph [B] and whatever it is that would require addition of funding for the NCTVA now is no longer [A]. I think the new Act that the Minister is proposing to the House that is going through the phase of consultation through Cabinet before it comes to Parliament, I am sure it will address part of the other aspect of financing. But however, let us do not take away the existing financing meant for the NCTVA Chairman. Do you agree?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** I agreed. I also want to draw the attention of the House when it comes to the issue of even that Le10,000, there is a provision which is going to clearly refer to that, but it is dangerous to go and put Le10,000 there, because whenever it changes, the issue of the Regulation comes in. The provision gives them the mandate to collect that particular amount, but again, Le10,000 there, you do not know what might change. So I just want people to understand that. It will appear there, making provision for that but not going to be stated there. Again, it is going to be there, and they are going to determine the fees through their Regulations they are going to put together.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I agreed with you, and that will be managed by the Regulation for the purposes of this Act. Let us just take the provision that was in the extant Law. Page 16? Page 17? Page 18? Page 19? Page 20? And page 21?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, on page 21 I think when you look at the Report under the Schedule, we added new Clauses 4 and 5. 4 which dealt with Polytechnic and 5 all private TVET institutions. Now we added in 6, Community Technical Colleges. That is page 21 you can see Milton Margai Technical University, Eastern Technical University, and Freetown Polytechnic. So from the Report, we added 4 and 5, and now adding to that again is Community Technical Colleges.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** You are adding them where?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** In a schedule.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I know the extant Schedule, but that Schedule most of the institutions in that Schedule are either in transition or transformed to something else. So in this new Schedule, are you adding any other?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Yes, we have already added 4 and 5 as stated in the Report, and added now 6, Community Technical Colleges.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** So you have now 5 and 6? Yes Madam Minister.

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1 and 7, Clauses 1 to 34, and the Schedule stand as part of the Bill as amended.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

[Parts 1 to 7, Clauses 1 to 34, and the Schedule form part of the Bill as amended.]

**[THE HOUSE RESUMED ITSELF]**

**THIRD READING**

**DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled: The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act 2025, 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 National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act 2025 being an Act to repeal and replace the National Council for Technical, Vocational and Other Academic Awards Act 2001 Act NO. 10 of 2001 to continue in existence the National Council for Technical Vocational and Other Academic Awards, which is now to be known as the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education, to provide accreditation, validation, examination and certification services for awards in certain specialized and professional programs in formal, non-formal and informal sectors and to provide for other related matters, has been read the Third Time and passed into Law]

**THE SPEAKER:** Madam Minister, you are relieved.

**BILL**

**THE SIERRA LEONE DEVELOPMENT REGULATORY AUTHORITY ACT**

**2024**

**INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING**

**THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND AVIATION**

**MR FANDAY TURAY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority Act 2024 be read the First Time.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**[ BILL READ THE FIRST TIME]**

## **SECOND READING**

**MR FANDAY TURAY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority Act 2024 be read the Second Time. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the purpose of this Bill is to make provision for the establishment of the Sierra Leone National Shipping Railway Development and Regulatory Authority with the responsibility to develop and regulate railways and Cable Car transportation in Sierra Leone, to monitor and coordinate activities in the railway and Cable Car sector, to administer enactment on railway and Cable Car transportation, and to provide for other related matters. The Bill is divided into 6 parts. Part 1 makes provision for the interpretation and definition of what is used throughout the Bill. Part 2 provides for the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority, including the Sierra Leone Railway Development Regulatory Authority Board. Part 3 specifies the functions and powers of the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority. And Part 4 contains administrative provisions, including the appointment of a Director General and the Deputy Director General, Company Secretary, other staff and divisions of the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority. Part 5 contains financial provisions, including funds, accounts and audit of the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority. Part 6 miscellaneous provisions, contains the power to make provisions, to make Regulations. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority Act 2024 be read the Second Time.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED]**

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, we are dealing with two very important forms of transportation. When you go to other countries in Europe, you see Cable Cars and you see how they operate. It is very much important that we have such a facility in our country. So with this kind of transportation, it makes it easy for students and also people living on the hill side of Freetown. I see no reason why we should delay with such Bill, but because it is going to the Legislative Committee we will go there and see the necessary provisions and how they will fit to meet the growing need of our country. Of course, we have areas in Sierra Leone where production is taking place and even though production is taking place in those areas, it is difficult for products to come to the capital city or even for exportation to other areas, because by the time we use these trucks to ferry our goods to Freetown and to other parts of the country, perishable goods will have lost their values. Therefore, if we are having a resurfacing of the rails again for commercial purposes, I think it is important. As I said, we are going to look at the Bill closely when we recommit the Bill, that is where we are going to look at all the provisions, and we are to ensure it is good for purpose. Mr Speaker, I think the Chairman of Transport is now here with a shiny head, so I think I will stop here for now.

**HON. AMBROSE MAADA LEBBY:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority Act 2024 before this House is something this House needs to celebrate. I want to thank the Minister of Transport and the Ministry for bringing this Bill to this House. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, long before some Members of Parliament were born, like the Honourable Member from Kambia who spoke before me, people used to remind us that those days in the 70s, when we are having railways in this country, everything was simple, transportation was something to celebrate.

Mr Speaker, we are about to get railway services in this country. Mr Speaker, one of the goodies this Bill will bring is to encourage private investors to come and invest, irrespective of having Kingho or the Marampa mines, if we encourage private players to come and invest, I want to assure this House that the agricultural business will boom.

Let us take a look at the 'feed Salon' project if we get the railway transportation system, Mr Speaker, I can assure you that the 'Feed Salon' project will boom. I want to encourage Members of this House to look at this Bill Clause by Clause and then pass it into Law. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member for his wonderful contribution. I see the excitement when you mentioned 'Feed Salon' because everybody is determined for 'Feed Salon' to succeed. The introduction of the railway and the fact that we can attract more private sector players into the railway business would enhance the movement and transportation of goods and services across various regions. The Honourable Whip I will not take your contribution. I am ruling you out of order from the beginning. The Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin, unfortunately, the Mama of West Africa is attracting my attention, and she is going to be the last on this side.

**HON. VERONICA KADIE SESAY:** Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, I just want to tell you the benefits and what we enjoyed during the railway. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think that was the easiest means of transportation in this country, sometime in the 60s, 70s and 80s, we had railways. I vividly remember when I was a kid; I was in Magburka when normally we used to go for holidays. I enjoyed it. That is why I am happy for the return of the railway. Sometimes the people produce food, but do not have transport to bring them to the market. So with the coming of this, I think all of us should jubilate if we want to achieve in the 'Feed Salone' project I think it will help us to do the needful.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I vividly remember again when we were there coming from Dove Cot, Fisher Lane and Cline Town all those areas were train areas, we enjoyed the scene and it was cheaper than these buses that we have today. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us do not rely on these mineral companies. I am happy because during that time I enjoyed it and I want to enjoy it again. So therefore, I want to ask my Colleagues to see that we pass this Bill into Law. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member for sharing her experience, and it is good to recall what Sierra Leone was then, and what Sierra Leone will be in the not too distant future.

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, from the debate I have heard from Honourable Members is insinuating that currently we do not have railway which is not the case as I speak Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have railway services. We have a railway from Tonkolili to Pepel, and you have the port in Pepel, just as we do to regulate vehicles. This is the Act that will regulate the operations of train and again, every vehicle ply the route of Sierra Leone should have a designated license plate. As I speak, we have traffic Wardens all over the streets of Freetown, but we do not have an organized structure to monitor the operations of this team, whether they comply with the provisions of our own local transportation or not. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as a country we have several trains plying Pepel to Tonkolili but we do not have an Authority that regulates the operations of these trains. We do not have Authority that stipulates rules and regulations these trains should abide by. This is a laudable venture from the Ministry to ensure that train services are regulated and the yields are regulated, so that they would not just ply the streets of Sierra Leone as they wish.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, once this Bill is transited into an Act, it will ensure that all the rails are regulated and monitored and their activities of license and of operations of the yield will be accounted for, withhold, administer and improve rail assets. Maybe, monies accrued from these rail services will ensure that, as a nation, we begin to put structure in place so that we will have passenger train instead of the cargo train we have. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, just as we regulate vehicles, we have a union that regulates Kekes. We have Authority that regulates motorbikes. So also we should have an Authority that regulates the railway. For Cable Car, I am sure that we have made frantic efforts to ensure that it begins operation in Sierra Leone. I have seen several investors who have come into the country and they have done feasibility studies. I remember when myself and the Opposition Whip I think it was in



the last Parliament when we were in Italy, we enjoyed the services of Cable Car. And we cannot wait until we have it before we have a regulatory service for it. So to me, this Law is forward looking and positively position as a Parliament we will support it and ensure that once this Law is passed, every bit and pieces of it is applied like the Speaker was saying this morning, Parliament has enormous role to play in our oversight functions, in ensuring that we monitor what we passed here and ensure that it is strictly followed. So to me, Mr Speaker, without wasting time, I want to assure this House that, if this becomes Law will begin to monitor those rail services. It will interest you Mr Speaker, when Green Rod which is the first company that began to operate the train services from Tonkolili to Pepel began their operations in three months' time; they trained Sierra Leoneans who were plying the train. So we have to institute modalities to ensure capacity building. And if we are to achieve that, this regulatory body has enormous role to play.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this body will grant license, concession and lease, which are necessary for the operations of the railway services and the Cable Car as well. Sierra Leone as a country does not even have a license model for train. With the passing of this Bill, we will have an established Authority that will have an office station to monitor operations of the rail. We have had crucial incidences when somebody was killed by the rail. Do we have an Authority that will question those plying the rail in an event of such nature? The answer is no. So this is a laudable venture, and it is not only the passing of the Law. We should ensure that every letter here is adopted and we work closely to make our country a better place. So I want to appeal to Members of Parliament, especially those on my side, to expeditiously pass this Law when we go to Committee Stage to enhance the regulation of our rail services. I thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Leader of the Opposition for his wonderful contribution. And I want to ask Mr Minister whether stabilization Clauses in the already existing Agreement that have been ratified by this House will affect or will not affect this Law.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I want to thank the Minister because he has done the right thing by bringing the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority Act 2024 to Parliament. As it has been said by my Colleagues on the other side, it is not only development of the rail, but if you go to the memorandum of objects and reasons it is clearly stated in this Bill. The reasons are clear, and the object of which we are about to enact the Bill. Mr Speaker, the purpose of this Bill is to provide for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Rail Development Regulatory Authority with responsibility to develop and regulate railways and Cable Car transportation in Sierra Leone. To monitor, coordinate activities in the railway and Cable Car sector. To administer an enactment on railway and Cable cars transportation are provided for and for other related matters.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is so expressly stated in the memorandum of objects and reasons as we are enacting it to make sure that we make provision in this Bill. Firstly, we want to deal with the railway and the cargo train we have as said by my Colleagues. Do we have institution monitoring them? Do we have appropriate Authority to make Regulations based on the rail that we have? We used to enjoy the train during the 60s nobody is going to contest that one. This is the right step in the right direction. When you harvest you have to take it to the market. If I produce in Kambia, in Kamalo, I will want to transport them to the market and access to market also enhance more opportunities, or zeal to plough for the other year or to go into agricultural activities. But if I plow and harvest and I see I have too much problems with my harvest, or there are damages caused to my crops or goods, I will be discouraged. So automatically, I will be discouraged not to go into more ploughing the other year coming.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, countries with high population, they depend on series of mode of transportation within their cities, some underground; some use trams so that they can move from one place to another. Some areas in the Asia world, they use Cable Cars to avoid congestion. If I use a train, I can move from Koidu to Freetown and transact business and go back the same day because the train is a fast movement of transportation more so the electric trains. We are using the fast moving train, electric

trains. They are very fast and use modern technology. So I want to appreciate all of you for looking at it first in the form of a cargo and we even need to have Cable Cars that show that we are very ambitious and we are in the positive direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the setting up of administration in the regulatory Board we want to say thank you for taking into consideration the female aspect in the area of training people. You have mentioned that on page 4 Clause C, that two people with proven knowledge and experience in Public Transportation Administration or Management. We also encourage you in your proposal that we take into consideration representation of our female folks. It has now been a normal rule for us to have our female counterpart in all of the Boards to ensure that we have gender parity. You have also taken into cognizant some professional structures in terms of the formation of setting a Board. People who are knowledgeable in the operation of the rail, or Cable Cars, you can bring them on board so that they can be part of it at the management level. Mr Speaker, those who are interested should come on board and invest in the rail and Cable Cars. In fact, we are sending this Bill to the Legislative Committee to really look at the financial dealings so that we can earn our appropriate areas where we can deal with it in terms of finances. We have to get partners to develop the rail. We want to make sure that some of these levies are now really structured and monitored and properly regulated. We do not want bad arrangement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the charges levy and the representation of the Board in the Authority can make sure that we generate revenue to operate the rail and Cable Cars. Mr Speaker, I want to plead to the Minister that female should be included in the Board. We need to look at bringing Sierra Leoneans on board, train them so they can have an idea on how to operate the railway. It is very necessary for us; if we are producing somewhere the source of our goods coming to the business centers is very key because if you pay more, you would spend more money on transportation by the time the goods are reaching the market centers for consumption. We are living in a competitive world. If I bring my product from abroad, and I pay less charges, and you are producing it locally, but certain factors that are making it very difficult for me,

definitely, the prices of those commodities cannot be competitive with the imported ones, because your prices can be always lower than my own prices, even though you are producing them locally, because of the difficulties and challenges you are facing in taking them to the market centers for consumption. This is very important that we need to talk about pollution in as much as we are all fighting for climate change. You know, even in advanced countries accident along the railways, we should take into consideration the environmental issues that we are going to face. So I brought all of these for you to understand and take it into consideration that we need to have these things because we need to guide ourselves. In as much as, we are looking for development, we should be fully guided by certain things that we think we are fighting for and also this Bill made provision for certain things. We have a Company Secretary, and we have the Director General. Normally, when you have the Director General he serves as Secretary to the Board. But this time is different you are only a member of the Board because you are a Director General. So the Secretary to the Board is here to comply. The functions are very clear for the Secretary, for the Director General, so for the Deputy Director General, and for everybody. I want to say you have done a very good job so that we are not going to struggle with the roles of the different personnel. We are happy for us to have these things given to us from your Ministry and expressly stated in the Bill, so that we can handle it appropriately.

Thank you all my Colleagues for contributing to this Bill, and I hope we can succeed in enacting it. I will like to draw the attention of the Minister in the enforcement and the pattern of implementation. All of these Laws are meaningful if we put in place the necessary Authority where they can implement strong penalties and also make sure they are forceful in terms of regulatory powers. If you form the Authority without giving any necessary powers to enforce their Laws or regulate them, it will be very difficult for us, so penalties must be given where necessary to the Authority so that people can abide. So if you are found wanting of the Law, you must be fine and appropriate steps should be taken so enforcement of the Law is critical. The Regulations they are coming with, we are praying that we succeed in having them done in an appropriate way so

that people can believe that the Laws are working. We have beautiful Laws in this country. Our problem is enforcement, and making sure that this enforcement has to do with the regulatory powers. We must make sure that they are there to make sure people comply and they cannot compromise. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Leader for his wonderful contribution to the Bill before the House, and I give the Floor to the Minister.

**MR FANDAY TURAY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Honourable Members for their contributions especially from both sides. I also want to thank them for the advice and also the kind words which they have given towards this Bill. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have come a long way with this Bill and we have done so many consultations. I also had to go to the Mayor of Freetown, and then had some consultations with her regarding the Cable Cars and so many other Agencies were also consulted. After Cabinet had already approved for me to proceed with the drafting of the Bill, we also set up a small department. It is just few members that were responsible for the regulation of the railway, but the focus at that time was mainly towards the Leone Rock Railway Company, so that is where our focus was. Therefore, as a Ministry, we decided that we should go beyond the railway which we currently have, and focuses only on the carriage of bauxite from one point to the other. But with this Act like the Honourable Member said; it gives the power for the establishment of this Agency. Already, we have a framework, but then we need this power. We need this Bill to be able to give more authority to this Agency. The importance of this Bill it has already been stated by those who already had the experience so I do not need to delve on those issues. I have been taking note copiously.

Mr Speaker, I took note of the points made by the Leader of the Opposition, and I also took note of the points made by the Leader of Government Business about the inclusion of females into the Board that has been noted. Also qualification of course, we have to come up with some of the requirements to take up some of those roles. Those were just the basic and of course, when the recruitment starts, we would go beyond those required measures that we are supposed to take. I am happy to state that we have also

done the Regulation which will be presented. We are trying to do feasibility studies for the railway especially the passenger rail. We have been able to contact one of the companies, and we also try to contact another company to be able to do feasibility studies, because without the feasibility studies, we will not be able to have the railway. So we are currently doing that. The Regulations, I have talked about that to ensure that with the enforcement as a Ministry, we will do just that. It is going to be a long road, but there is no harm in starting it now as Winston Churchill once said: 'Success is not final, failure is not an option'. So we will continue to do just that.

With those few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority Act 2024 be read the Second Time.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, the Bill is direct, but as I said, we just want to little bit look at one or two Clauses so that the Legislative Committee can look into them appropriately. We have to do it with some amount of real consultations within the Membership of the Legislative Committee. Maybe, the others who may have just heard what you have said here today, they will come with other proposals. So we are encouraging them to join the Legislative Committee in making this wonderful Law which can be accepted by us and based on that, I stand on S.O. 51 [1] to commit this Bill to the Legislative Committee. I so move Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any Seconder?

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN:** I so second Mr Speaker.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**[BILL COMMITTED TO LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE]**

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister you can go.

**BILL**

**THE PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKERS, REGULATORY COUNCIL ACT  
2025**

**INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING**

## **THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE**

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, I want to amend the Order Paper. Mr Speaker, are you aware of the audience up the Galleries?

**THE SPEAKER:** No, I am shocked. With Introduction of the Minister of Social Welfare, I heard loud applause I do not know the connection between the people in the Galleries and the Minister of Social Welfare.

**MRS MELROSE KARMINTY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a Bill that is needed and the people you are seeing in the Galleries are Social Workers, or will be Social Workers who actually need a regulatory framework in Sierra Leone.

**HON. MATHEW NYUMA:** They are influencing us trying to use our people against us so we need pre Legislative Committee meeting on this Bill. Mr Speaker, I just want to say thank you because it is good to have people when you are making Law. I see even my Colleagues on the other side. Mr Speaker, we are here to make sure that we do the right thing but we just want to commend the people because we want them to be part of the process. It is not only them coming to listen to us when we debate, but will be good for all of us to emulate what you have started to make the workforce very easy. People have to always be part of the process because it is a progressive Parliament. Thank you very much.

**MRS MELROSE KARMINTY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Professional Social Workers Regulatory Council Act 2025 be read the First Time.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**[BILL READ THE FIRST TIME]**

### **SECOND READING**

**MRS MELROSE KARMINTY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Professional Social Workers, Regulatory Council Act 2025 be read the Second Time. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the merits and benefits of such a Bill cannot be over emphasized. This Bill will standardize the practice of social work in Sierra Leone. The Bill will set for clear standards and guidelines for social work practice

in Sierra Leone. This will ensure that all practitioners adhere to a uniform code of ethics, competence and professional conduct, enhancing the overall quality of social services provided to communities, especially the vulnerable.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, by instituting a regulatory Bill, clients of Social Workers will have recourse in cases of malpractice or unethical behavior, the creation of a complaint mechanism promotes accountability and provides a means for clients to seek justice, thereby enhancing their rights and protection. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Bill is to make provision for the establishment of Professional Social Workers Regulatory Council with the responsibility of regulating, including license, registration and discipline the practice and conduct of professional Social Workers, social work facilities, organizations and institutions in Sierra Leone and to provide for other related matters. And when I say social work facilities like orphanages for example, and many others that you know are facilities for social work. This Act is divided into 11 parts. Part 1 contains with interpretation of defining words used throughout the Bill.

Part 2 deals with the establishment of the Professional Social Workers Regulatory Council, a body corporate having a Council as its governing body.

Part 3 stipulates the functions of the Council that is responsible for the Regulation of Professional Social Workers and the practice of Professional social work in Sierra Leone.

Part 4 arranges the administrative provisions which relate to the appointment of the Registrar and his Deputy with a Secretariat comprising such other staff as may be required for the efficient performance of the functions of the Council.

Part 5 addresses the funds, account and audit of the Council.

Part 6 provides for the registration of social work professionals, the maintenance and register and their qualifications for enrollment into the class of professional Social Workers.

Part 7 caters for the registration of social work facilities, organizations or institutions working in the landscape of social work with maintenance of a register and their qualification for enrollment into the class of social work operators.

Part 8 registers the removal, appeal, reinstatement of a professional Social Worker, social work facility, organization or institution.



Part 9 deals with the issuance of license and practicing certificate to professional Social Workers and the issuance of license to allied social work facilities.

Part 10 contains offenses for failing to comply with the provisions of this Bill.

Part 11 contains Miscellaneous Provisions which provides that the Minister may make Regulations as it considered necessary or expedite for giving effect to the provisions of this Act.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the Professional Social Workers Regulatory Council Act 2025 be read the Second Time.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED]**

**HON. RUGIATU ROSY KANU:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I want to say thank you to the Ministry of Social Welfare to empower and transform the lives of vulnerable young people and families. I can even say this Bill is little bit delayed because we are all beneficiaries of this Bill. Mr Speaker, we can only do all these through coordinated development and implementation of Laws and policies which we are here for. We are here this morning to talk on behalf of our people to contribute to their livelihood, the betterment of the lives of not only the ones clapping up at the Galleries, but those I have just mentioned because they are the most beneficiaries of this Bill.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like the Minister said the Bill is divided into 11 parts and most importantly having a Council as its governing body. This is the first time the Ministry is having such a Council so Madam Minister, thank you once more. It also has the administrative Provisions, the funds and accounts and audits of the Council. It also provides the registration of social work professionals, caters for registration of social work facilities. Of course, I have been to some of these facilities out of what I saw, this Bill is actually a laudable one Madam Minister, and there is need for this Bill to be enacted into Law. We also have the issuance of license and practicing certificates, which I think will be displayed in those centers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to assure the Ministry and the Minister to be specific that we as MPs, we welcome the idea, and we are ready to work with you. There should be a monitoring Committee, because most times when these Bills are

brought here, they are passed into Laws. Some are not being implemented, but you have to get a monitoring team, which I think the Committee on Social Welfare will be part of our oversight work. I am appealing to all Members in this Parliament that when this Bill goes to Committee Stage, let us approve it. I thank you all.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member. I am taking two each from either side, so I will take the Opposition Whip, and then I will come to my right.

**HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in a country where we have seen firsthand devastating effect of drugs on our young people and in a country where human rights violation and advocacy is much needed. Mr Speaker, in a country where mental health is more of a reality rather than a fiction and in a country where environmental disasters and the way we have treated our environment is a challenge. Mr Speaker, above all, in a country where our juvenile centers, our holding centers for kids who come in contact with the Law is a challenge in this country. There is no apt time for us to deal with issues of Social Workers than now.

Mr Speaker, every day if you drive along the streets of Freetown you would see victims of drug abuse, and even when we take them to rehabilitation centers, the mental damage cost, you still have to deal with that for a long time. When Social Work was first introduced in Sierra Leone, it was just a course for qualification. But today, when you look at the current trend in Sierra Leone, you know social work is here to stay, and they are important and relevance in our society. If you go to Mile 13, you would start to understand the damage we have caused to our environment to the point that it is affecting us. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we live in a city where we want to build houses everywhere to a point even where we get water from to sustain the lives of our people in this city is being threatened. Mr Speaker, if you do not understand what social work means, it means it is that very act that links the people to society and enabling the people to enjoy their freedoms and their liberty in society. It showcase the value they have in society and because they deal with even the aged. When you want to educate people on their rights and responsibilities as citizens, you need Social Workers. I am sure if social work was that much effective in our country before now, most

Members of Parliament will have spent more years in Parliament because they would educate the populace in the country but our people hardly understand the roles of institutions in this country. There is a huge gap that has affected even the running of our State. Therefore, you start to understand how viable these people are. When people lose their livelihood, they degenerate to a state of poverty and they generate to a state of mental crisis. You need Social Workers to rehabilitate them. I am sure there was a time in this Parliament we needed Social Workers so badly because by the 15<sup>th</sup> December every Member of Parliament is worried. We start to have mental crisis. There is also a need to regulate them, if not regulated; our society stands to lose so much. Imagine they deal with mental health cases, if they are not regulated well; people tend to take advantage of the people they take care of. We have heard of cases in Sierra Leone and other parts of the world where caregivers end up impregnating girls in those centers. Therefore it is important for integrity to be sustained within Social Workers. Interestingly, when I was in college, I was dealing with one senior human rights officer in Sierra Leone. I later understood he studied agriculture, but he was one of the most renowned human rights persons in this country, but with this Regulation, we will be able to have practitioners, not just in social work, but we are able to give dignity to people who have sacrificed their time, their resources, to go into the School of Social Work, to give back to society. We live in a country that needs Social Workers to guide our kids, our young people who have gone into drugs, and to guide those who have not gone into drugs to tell them the impact of drugs in our society.

Mr Speaker, when they started talking about Kush, I did not see the effect of Kush until one day I was at Texaco when one of the young men died of Kush. This is where we need a kind of social counseling. And it will interest you to note that even people you think are better off in society, young people who think they are in universities who have built careers for themselves are also part of the trade. So social work is important, but how do we regulate them? How do we build them to understand they have a career that is enviable in the world? So to those fine students that are here, I will say to you, you have chosen the right path to save humanity. You have chosen the path to advocate for the less privileged. Gone are those days when the Bible will say, blessed

are the peacemakers. But if people who are peacemakers do not have the enabling environment for peace, then we will say, again, blessed are the Social Workers who ensure they have peace in their communities. Social work is not a place to make money and to make wealth. It is a place where you have given up yourself for the comfort of others. Social work is a specific career for specific people. Give them chance to exist.

Mr Speaker, human rights violations are almost everywhere and we have human rights violations that are not being recorded. You go to the business sector, the mining industry, and so much human right violations. How can you for example, you go to Sama Bendugu, you mine all their minerals and you leave the people in dust, nothing to write home about. That is social inequality. Imagine one of the major rivers in Sierra Leone that is meant to give us water the Pampa River, it is almost extinct. You go to Rokel River it does not exist. These are social issues affecting our lives. And interestingly, majority of the people who are destroying these rivers are not Sierra Leoneans. So in the long run, they stand to lose nothing. These are the circumstance we face when we talk about human rights, we will just limit human rights to just what happens politically. We need to create positive change in the minds of our young people. Our communities are badly in need of Social Workers.

Mr Speaker, you will not understand what homelessness means in Sierra Leone until you drive at night in the streets of Freetown where you would see abled people that are homeless. They sleep in the streets of Freetown. You need Social Workers to integrate them again to society and let them understand what role they can play to society. Few days ago, we passed a social safety net in this Well; you need Social Workers that will implement that package so we need professionals. The ethical principle of social work are things you do not hide, and above all, the pillars and foundation, if you want to be a Social Worker, you must build solid foundation of integrity where people will trust you and they should believe in what you say and they should always see you as a role model and an agent of change. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** I give the Floor in the following order, first to the Honourable from Moyamba, then the Honourable from Bo, then the Honourable from Kailahun District and then the Honourable Tamba Kellie from Kono District.

**HON. VERONICA KADIE SESAY:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I want to thank the Minister and her team for putting this document together and to see the number of supporters in the Galleries indeed it is good you are here. Thank you very much Madam Minister and your team because this Bill is for the youth and the vulnerable people. Social Workers should maintain integrity I toe the line with the Opposition Whip who mentioned integrity. Attitudinal change, you must discipline yourself before going to other areas. A Social Worker when you enter any house or institution let them know you are a Social Worker you have to maintain standards and status to show the people that you are responsible. Now you are here today to listen to the lovely words from the Minister and I am happy to see you all here. I think the 500 jobs creation that His Excellency is talking about, this is where we want to cater from. You are very much important; it is not only about Freetown but all over the provinces. So if we are talking about job creation, this is where we want to focus our attention for our youths and even vulnerable people with disability. Let us go out of this country and see the work or the role of the Social Workers. It is your duty now, after the enactment of this particular Bill, it is your role now to engage your peer groups.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Social Welfare will do oversight to see all what you have mentioned in this Bill so that you would abide to them all. I want to applaud the Speaker who said all Committee Members should follow all what they mentioned and this is what they are going to do exactly. Honourable Members also will act as Social Workers because if you are a Committee Member you are going for oversight so at the end of the day in presenting our Report, we will lay that on the Table to be debated. We have seen what we have done today, and the applause that these people have given you. Keep to their expectations. Work for their interest and sometimes they are vulnerable. Go to the provinces, Do not only focus your attention to students in Freetown, but there are also other areas, and there are also problems all over the country, send these Social Workers there so that they can be counseling people. They can be talking to people. They have so many things to do, and you have to provide their TOR. It is not only about Nurses, because Nurses, they have their

licenses. That license will give you the strength to do your work. If you have given the license, please do the needful so that the Minister will be proud of you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, finally, attitudinal change, if you are not given license, do not pose to be one, because I know she is going to be very vigilant to give licenses to those who are supposed to be the workers, because if you are not licensed, do not try it. If you are not licensed, please make sure you get that license so that the people will give you more respect. Go to the Provinces, go to the Constituencies, and do the needful. I will continue to say this is a fine Bill that is going to help the vulnerable who have spent endless hours here waiting patiently for the Minister and you have heard from the Honourable Members. Do not say S.O. 2 'Na boku tok normor'. We are here to advocate, and this is the last stage if we do not talk, it will not be approved and this is why you voted for us to represent you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I once again join my Colleagues to thank you and keep it up. There are things that you know, if they are beneficial to others, please inform them so that they can come and share whatever they want to support in a moderate manner. So thank you very much. I want to say thank you for coming and please do the needful.

**HON. NENNEH LEBBIE:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to add my voice as we appreciate Madam Minister and her team for bringing this very good document to this House. For me, it is something new. All the practice has started long ago. Some of us have enjoyed a very decent society. We grew up in a very decent society because of Social Workers, but by then, perhaps they were not specialists in their areas, but perhaps they were given some kind of training which enhanced them to build up a very good society, and that was what we enjoyed when we grew up. We saw a lot of them around us in every sphere. They helped us in our communities to be decent young people and future elders like we are now today. Let me start by applauding the Minister, you have done a great job. The Opposition Whip has talked about the issues of social works; he has done justice to that by giving us an insight into a lot of things that is supposed to happen in the field of the Social Workers. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we had Social Workers who helped our communities

to advertise even baby instant food. I can remember when Benny Mix was introduced into this country, people used to say Benny Mix is a very low quality food for children, but it was Social Workers who went around to educate our people even in the villages to tell them that they have access to free or very accessible food for their children at low cost.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should be role models that has been said severally. You must exercise some caution when going through your work. We used to have Social Workers even in hospitals. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the under-five clinic we used to have Social Workers there talking to pregnant women, educating them about what to do to have healthy babies. We used to have radio programs on those issues. We used to have Social Workers talking to our youths. We used to have Social Workers talking to even married people. By then, they were not qualified from university, but they went through minor courses, and that benefitted this country so much. So I would want to admonish my brothers and sisters who are now going through these courses to come out to be professional Social Workers to see how they can execute their work diligently.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want us to just have a look at the offenses in Clauses 37 to 41 and I have decided to specifically refer to these Clauses for a lot of reasons. We know times are hard. We know people want job, but do not create job that will embarrass you. We have people who move around telling their communities that they are Social Workers. They mislead by telling people that they are Social Workers and extorting money from them. I will give you simple example, because I have experienced it myself. Just a few months ago, somebody went to my house in Bo and said he is a Sanitary Inspector. Of course, my drainage was not really too clean, but that is not the case I want to present here. He went and apprehended my children, telling them that he is Sanitary Inspector and he even gave them a fine that they should pay. I asked my children if that person showed any identification to ascertain whether he came from the Ministry of Health. Few days back, I decided to go to the office. Believe you me Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they did not even know him and that is misleading. That is why the Opposition Whip was talking about integrity of

Social Workers as role models. You must be a role model in your community. Now that we are having a Council be rest assured that your positions are going to be secured and your interest is going to be taken into account. So with those few words, Mr Speaker, I want to applaud the Ministry once more for putting this document together, and I can assure you that you have done something good. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, Honourable Member. It is my desire to have accommodated as many MPs as possible, but as you know, time is far spent. So I will take the Honourable Hindolo Gevao, I will give out as my last speaker, and we will round up the debates as you can see even the House is almost empty.

**HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO:** Thank you Mr Speaker. We live in the days where we are experiencing a revolution of legislations that impact the lives and livelihood of the Sierra Leonean populace. Mr Speaker, I rose to debate this particular Bill because I have huge personal experience with social work. Mr Speaker, when we talk about social work, it will be good for us to actually or to clearly define the scope of social work. Social Work, I believe, is closely interrelated with the job that the Ministry of Labour does, the job that the Ministry of Health does, and several other institutions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill will be providing opportunities for job and by regulating the institutions that will be embarking on social work activities, it will give the Ministry the opportunity to be able to see, know, track, what each and every institution will be doing. Let us take house help agencies, those agencies that trained Nannies or house help. These are social work agencies, and once they are being regulated, this Act will tell them what is expected of every house help. When you are a Social Worker, you have the opportunity to access social homes, care homes and personal homes. In countries like the United Kingdom, every Social Worker will have to go through Police clearance, if you do not do Police clearance to show that you are free of any criminal record, you cannot be employed by any caregiving home or any agency. When we talk about social work, those workers or those institutions will be interfacing with people that do not have the ability or the strength to help themselves; you will be interfacing with somebody that has got Parkinson disease. You will be interfacing with somebody that has Alzheimer disease. You will be interfacing with somebody who has suffered



from accident and cannot go out and needs a Social Worker to take care of him or her. He or she cannot help himself or herself, everything he or she does; he or she relies on you to do it for him or her. So integrity is the linchpin of every Social Worker. Mr Speaker, I was already a Lawyer, a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of Sierra Leone when I was a Social Worker and I was working with an old man who was a multi-millionaire. He will take me to the ATM machine, he will put in his code, and money will come out, and he will leave his ATM card lying down. If you take that card, go to that ATM machine and withdraw his money, you would die in jail. Also, you will be given the opportunity to access a 19 year old young lady who has suffered from accident, who cannot move, you will be asked to wheel her into the bathroom, take her out of the wheelchair, into the bathtub, wash her, wipe her body and dress her but if you touch her inappropriately, you will die in jail.

Mr Speaker, social work is a very well ambit of qualifications that will be impacting in everybody in society. I am a candidate of a service, user of Social Workers, because if I get old to like 90 years and I do not have any child around me. I might need a Social Worker to help me, dress me and do all what I could have done by myself when I was a young man.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will debate a little bit on the importance of social work and mental health. Let me be on record to say 30% of Sierra Leoneans are mental health challenged. Everybody that you see taking in alcohol in excess, anybody that you see taking in marijuana and Kush, it is not because most of them want to take it. It is because some of them are going through extreme depression. And in Sierra Leone, when we are going through extreme depression, what is it that we do? We provoke one another. I once had the opportunity to take somebody to Ghana into a rehab. That rehabilitation facility we met 20 years old girl managing that rehabilitation facility. But that rehabilitation facility in Ghana attracted people from England, America, Sierra Leone, all over the globe. You had Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, Ministers, checking into that rehabilitation facility. There you had people who were Pastors, people who were Counselors and you had people who are professional Social Workers within and then you have Medical Practitioners. So if you check in as a result of drug related effect, they

will do what they call detox. They will detox your system so that, that drugs that were concentrated in your system will be taken out.

**THE SPEAKER:** I will ask one of my local Physicians, he has a concoction that he normally called detox.

**HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO:** Thank you Mr Speaker. By the time you leave there; if you were on alcohol, you will be advised, do not take alcohol again. If you revert, your life span will be very short. But the important thing is, within three months, and it is very expensive, they will be asking for like, \$2,800 a month, and you are there permanent. You are not allowed to go out; you are not allowed to take food from outside. Within three months, they would have rehabilitated you so much that when you come out, what you were before you went into that depressed state that led them going into that rehabilitation home. Madam Minister, this is where we want the Ministry to actually come in with this Regulation in assisting those who have attempted in having homes similar to that of City of Rest was run by my uncle of blessed memory, Reverend Ngobeh. City of Rest used to have young men who were on drugs. They will take them from the street, change them, rehabilitate them, and sometimes get them well before they leave them back. But City of Rest up till now, they are struggling. They do not even have basic by way of funding. They do not have the basics by way of funding in ensuring that particular institution works. Even as my Colleague was talking about drugs, we see young people taking drugs but if you do not have a rehabilitation home where you can take them to rehabilitate them, is of no use.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Act will be creating lot of jobs because so many people will be registering. It is the institutions that will be providing the social work facilities that will be registered and regulated, and they will have the opportunity to take on qualified Social Workers that work under their agencies that will be providing these social facilities or amenities to the Sierra Leonean populace. So like I said, I will be very pleased if I see you working side by side with the Ministry of Health, because social work is closely linked with medicine, a Social Worker will be asked for prompt medication. A Social Worker will take care of that person as though he or she was a

Nurse. You have caregiving homes; you have those that you interface with in their houses directly. We have children that are born with autism in Sierra Leone today. Children that are challenged, children with special needs must have specialized and qualified Social Workers that deal with them on a day to day basis. So we are also looking forward to that aspect of this Bill wherein we will have trained and qualified Sierra Leoneans to deal with special needs children. This is really very serious, because nowadays the population of special needs children is increasing. One of these days, my friend was showing me an example of a special need child. He looks okay, but he cannot concentrate. You will see children that have difficulty in talking. So you need to train people that will actually take care of those kids.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know the day is far spent. I look forward to you working in tandem with the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health, and we look forward to us having rehabilitation centers. And we also look forward to you working, particularly with those who will be in charge of this Social Safety Net Bill that we have passed, because when you are challenged and you cannot help yourself, a Social Worker should be able to identify you and maybe bring that data to those who are working within the social safety net organization to say this person needs this type of help. So it is a whole branch of discipline that this Act is going to embark on, and I will assure you, with the implementation of this Act, the population rushing to read Law will soon dwindle, and lots of Sierra Leoneans will concentrate on social work, because social work is one of the most creative works.

**THE SPEAKER:** It will never dwindle so be prepared for it. It is a mad rush. If you are encouraging them not to come to your profession, please do not say that, because they are rushing towards you and they are going to ensure that they swap all of you.

**HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO:** I can see and feel very well. Social work is one of the most lucrative in the United Kingdom. If you say you are a Social Worker in London, you carry more respect and pride than a Lawyer. I have been there, so I entreat you and your colleagues. I know, because of the nature of this Bill, it might be committed, but we assure you this House will do its best, and will put out a Bill which will

eventually be legislated into an Act that will stand the test of time. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member. I am sure the people in the Galleries are pleased today, I am encouraging Members to speak to the Galleries. I will now give the Floor to the Leader of the Opposition.

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with my full acquaintance with S.O. 42 I would want you to be magnanimous to allow the right Honourable Member just three minutes.

**THE SPEAKER:** I would have loved to yield to the request of the Leader of the Opposition but I am sorry, I am going to give the Honourable Member sufficient time in the next Bill.

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, I beg for just three minutes Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** I will not deny the Leader of the Opposition.

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Thank you Sir.

**HON. TAMBA KELLIE:** Mr Speaker, I followed with keen interest the explanation of the field of social work by previous speakers. It is incredibly important to understand the import of this legislation, it is not yet Law. It creates a framework for regulating the conduct, the behavior of those working in the field of social work. You make Rules, Regulations to control behavior. That is what Regulation is about. This is not about extolling the best Social Worker. For example, if a complaint is made against a Social Worker, what mechanism is there to follow that complaint? Is it disciplinary, suspension, or revocation of license? This is what this Bill is about, if it becomes Law. So this is the technical contribution I wanted to make that we must focus on the import of this Bill. It is about controlling the behavior of those working in social work. It is not about soliciting funds in helping people in the streets. But essentially, this Bill is about controlling the behavior of those working in the field. We must get this very clear, Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I needed to make this clarification. It is a technical point, but I need to make it.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Honourable Kellie, your point is well noted.

**HON. UMU PYNE:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I am so happy for this Bill today, because this is what we called formal arrangement. My brothers and sisters are attending universities and colleges, but they have not been licensed. Why are we licensed teachers and nurses? They too should be licensed. So that is one thing that I am very happy for and having this Council is so great.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in those days, our mothers were feeding their kids by putting their hands under their mouth without using spoons, or even without using feeding bottle. We were Social Workers but we were informal Social Workers. You are the formal Social Workers because you are going to colleges. I want to share my experience with you because I started working as an informal Social Worker for CARE International, and I was the first female worker that started riding XL bike in Sierra Leone that made so many other ladies to start riding bike. Social Workers, you are very important. Social Workers can work in every walk of life. You can work in the Police. You can work in the hospital. You can work in schools. It is only in Sierra Leone that we do not find Social Workers in those places. But as Honourable Gevaio was saying, if you go to Europe or America, you find Social Workers in every place. As an informal Social Worker, when I went to Europe, I was so impressed about my social work that I decided to study social work as my second degree. And when you study social work in Europe, you can be employed in the Police. You cannot wear the uniform, but you can be there as a Social Worker. You can also be employed in the hospital. And that motivated me as a Social Worker, I used to go and visit sick people in their houses, but I do not have the authority to give them medicine. I decided to study medicine as well, so a Teacher, a Social Worker and a Nurse. So as Social Workers, you can be found in every place in Sierra Leone, you are 24 hours worker. There is a video passing around these days where a woman is flogging a little baby inside a bathroom. That is the work of you Social Workers; your eyes should be open. Your ears should be open in our communities in Sierra Leone. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member. You can see the acclamation from the Galleries. I have told you that you should not participate in the beginning. You see, if you are born in Africa, you are strong for you to have gone through that suicidal feeding and be a man or a woman, it means you are strong and you are ready for anything. So it is the means and medium to which we have grown, and now you are discarding most of those feeding methodology. Yes, they were crude, but they helped us, because now you are talking about Benny Mix, and you are leaving 'fufu pap' and 'rice pap.'

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, let me hastily express my thanks and appreciation for giving the two Members of Parliament the opportunity to add their voices to this debate. I am sure both of them did justice to the debate. When I saw the Bill on the Order Paper, I asked myself the question, why Social Worker? Why do we have Social Workers? Then I came to realize that their existence is precipitated on what people are suffering from. We have social deprivation. People are deprived from income. People are deprived from their social well-being. People are suffering from mental health. People are suffering from abuses. People are suffering from crisis situation, and you need a set of people to take care of those people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Volume 3b Chapter 1 of the TRC record was very clear that our mineral resources was a reason for the 11 years rebel war we suffered as a nation. People thought there were inequalities. There were some who were very rich and there were some who were extremely poor, and they found out ways to vent out their grievances. The more we despise those people that are being deprived, the less stability will have as a nation. So Social Workers are the machines, the apparatus instituted by our academic structure to take care of the vulnerable citizens that will let our nation be prone to disaster. So I do not treat them lightly. They are very important in our nation. You will agree with me, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, that we have reached a stage where every Jack and Jill will practice the functions of Social Workers. When Corona struck, we had holding centers, when Kush broke out; we had holding centers, go and check in those holding centers if we have Social Workers there. So

anybody can come from his or her cocoa garden and practice social work without the prerequisite training, and by every estimation, if they are not handled by professionals, it is highly likely that will cause more harm to them than good. As a Social Worker, all of them know that they have their codes of ethics. A Social Worker knows that they have what they called professional autonomy. They should not practice anything that is outside their scope. They should ensure that what they practice is within their scope. A Social Worker knows there is high level of confidentiality when dealing with your client. If you are not a Social Worker, you will not know that, and it will cause more harm to the client than good. And there is a proliferation of those who are not Social Worker all over dealing with addicts, dealing with those who are suffering from inequalities and all of it. So it is high time that this Parliament put in place modalities to ensure that because those people their vulnerability is so important that will not just leave them in the hands of anybody. I could remember few years back in this House, when we had issues of houses being burnt down because of bad connections, we had structures falling because of bad construction, and we decided to pass the professional Engineering Regulatory Act to ensure that no Jack and Jill practices engineering without going through the right process. Interestingly, you will agree with me that the numbers of people who are practicing social work in Sierra Leone are inversely proportional to the number of graduates we have from social work. In fact, in Sierra Leone, most people who graduate from social work go to other professions because we do not create room for them to practice their profession. We should think about it as a nation. They have ethical practices, just like journalists will have their codes of ethics, they also have theirs, what they do, what they do not do, what they say, what they should not say.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are times we should let the right people perform the right functions at the right time. So this Bill is saying, before ever you take care of somebody who is vulnerable, somebody who is deprived, somebody who is suffering from abuses, somebody who has been discriminated against in society, you must have the prerequisite experience and ideas before ever you do that. This Bill is

also saying you should ensure that the Social Work facilities are updated and are cogent. You cannot take any deprived person to any place, so this regulatory body will ensure that wherever they declare as a place for a social facility is well taken care of. We have organizations, and we even have institutions in Sierra Leone that are responsible or taking care of deprived people. This very Bill will ensure that those organizations, those institutions, are regulated. You cannot take people who are suffering from abuses you camp them in a place that is without bed. You are adding to their abuses. You cannot take people who are suffering from extreme poverty you camp them in a place and cannot provide food for them, you are adding to their problem. So the essence of this Bill is for Government to be able to regulate these organizations. Some of them make extreme money from donor support, and that money does not reflect on our deprived citizens. That is why this Bill is coming up. That is why we are having this Bill so that they are regulated, they are registered, and they are given license to operate, because Sierra Leone has suffered a lot from people. Let me tell you, when they did a survey for what we went through in the 11 years rebel war, they came to realize that the child combatant about 90% of them was suffering from drug abuse. 90% of them, some took up arms because they thought the elites are always benefiting from State resources and they are left deprived. They do not benefit a single cent from State resources, so the only way they could kick back is to take arms. So your responsibility is huge to ensure that you take care of those people. Make sure that you give them therapy to ensure that they become useful citizens. Except you are a Magician or a trained Social Worker, an ordinary person cannot do that. They say, do not mind me I am an MP but if you tell me to do my Parliamentary duties, I will do it with alacrity. But if you tell me to be a Social Worker, I would not, because I am not a trained Social Worker. They say, if you want to know whether a Medical Doctor is stupid, just tell him to paint because he cannot. So let us not train them and leave them to be working at the banks, working at other areas that are not course related. Let us ensure that they take care of our next generation, the next set of Sierra Leoneans that could be very much vulnerable to the stability of our nation.



Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister also made mention of the complaint mechanism for Social Workers, like I have always said, for every privilege you have a responsibility. As a Social Worker, it is highly likely that you may tend to go against the code of ethics. So this Complaint Board will be established to ensure that any Social Worker that goes against your professional ethics is taken care of. We have seen that on several occasions when SLAJ will take stringent actions against Journalists, or IMC will take stringent actions against Journalists that do not go according to the code of ethics. So it is the same thing. This very Bill knows that there are some Social Workers who might want to deliberately abuse their professional ethics. So in an event that happens, there is a mechanism to reprimand the Social Worker. Few days ago, I called young men in my Constituency, I sat them down, and all of them were Kush addicts. I spoke to them. I conscientize them, I educated them on how to be useful citizen.

**HON. NENNEH LEBBIE:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the time is 3pm. I move that S.O. 5[2] be suspended for the business of your House to continue.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any Secunder?

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** I so second.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**[THE HOUSE CONTINUED AFTER 3 PM]**

**HON. ABDUL KARGBO:** After I spoke to them, two of them decided to be admitted to a technical institution whilst the three others continued in their Kush addiction. So imagine if we have Social Workers in each community that will engage our next generation because some are doing it out of frustration and disappointment. They have seen disparity in condition of living. Some have given up to life. So they are doing it. They need people to put sense into them, and you cannot have a better person other than a trained and qualified Social Worker. For the sake of this Bill, I will not only say a trained and qualified Social Worker, I will say a licensed, registered and disciplined Social Worker because you cannot be a Social Worker when you are not licensed and

registered. You cannot be a Social Worker when you are not disciplined. So the next generation of our nation is in your hand. The next Sierra Leone is in your hand. If you do not multiply, and we allow those who are addicts to multiply; it will have an adverse effect on our nation. One of your responsibilities is to ensure that you uphold your professional mandate. There are times we have what we called the preventive mechanism. You do not wait until you have vulnerable people. You should be proactive so your mandate also extends to advocacy. You advocate for social injustice when things are not correct, when you know that this action will give back to what is gone to people, or give back to people who are dissatisfied in society, you advocate, and do not wait until they become vulnerable. You should respect the dignity and the right of your clients. People you handle should respect their dignity and their rights. You should address public social problems. A Social Worker is an advocate against public social problems, if you know that there is a deprived set that will degenerate before you wait for them to degenerate and you try to counsel them, you advocate for them not to degenerate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are here again to pass a Bill into an Act that has to do with the well-being of our people. It is not only the responsibility of Social Workers. We also who are in the political class have our own responsibility. One of the problems that causes poverty, mental health issues, abuses or crisis situation is lack of income. We should formulate policies to reduce inequality and poverty, the busiest Social Workers are found in the poorest countries out of disgruntlement, lack of income, lack of education is also another reason. Most important, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, is lack of employment. People who are not employed are disgruntled and very displeased; they are just looking for somebody to give them instruction. And the next time you see them, they will go and burn buildings and move on to the streets. In as much as we have Social Workers whose responsibility is to counsel those people, we in the political class should not push pressure on them, and one way we will not do that is to ensure that resources belonging to the country or to the nation are evenly

distributed without preference to no region, no tribe, no color, no member of a Political Party .This is a moral obligation that we have as a House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to plead with my Colleagues on this side, to ensure that we pay attention after the Committee Stage, the Legislative Committee stage, we pay attention to every Clause in this Bill and ensure that we pass a Law that will stand the test of time. We pass a Law that will reduce the vulnerable people. We pass a Law that will reduce disgruntlement in our country; we pass a Law that will create employment for our youth who have gone to the university to study Social Work. We pass a Law that will regulate practices that will not be detrimental to people who are vulnerable. I think this will be a fine Law, and I want to urge my Colleagues on this side of the Aisle to expeditiously pass this Law for the betterment of our nation. I thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Leader for his wonderful contribution to the debate, and I want to state that today, he has actually demonstrated leadership. I now give the Floor to the Acting Leader of Government Business, whom I also know is another man of God. So it is a contest for social working displayed by men from the temple. I so believe we have so much of them here.

**HON. SAA EMERSON LAMINA:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I should personally thank Members across the Aisles that have contributed to one of the progressive Laws in this country. Mr Speaker, it was in this Parliament the Land Commission Act came for the smoothness of the running of the Ministry of Lands. It also in this Law that the NMA Act came to regulate the mining sector. Just this morning, we have enacted the TEC for the smooth running of technical and higher institution, the Minister makes policies and those underneath should have the locus standi. It is against this backdrop today we have seen another progressive Bill which is entitled the Professional Social Workers Regulatory Council 2025.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should owe this Bill to one of the Icons by the name of Jane Adams, a Chicago citizen she actually postulated Social Workers for ethical and professionalism. Her dream was poor, vulnerable, homeless, men and

women flooding America everywhere. Jane Adams, we owe it to you, today Professional Social Working has become course in the university, and technical institutions. Today we are following the footsteps of Ghana; in 2020 we have Ghana Association of Social Workers. In 2020 Nigeria followed suit, Botswana followed suit in 2022. The UK passed a Regulation of professionalised Social Workers. This would not have gone by without South Africa Charlotte Meccari in the 20th Century also followed suit to put value and dignity on professional Social Workers. When I was in the high school I joined Boy Scout and Red Cross that gives you the interest of caring for humanity and your country. Boy Scouts as well as Red Cross still gives us these values of becoming Social Workers. I am an MP yet still I serve as Social Worker for the past 15 years or so, I conduct free classes, especially in the month of April and May, catching up with the WASSCE. I will still be in the classroom and teach Literature. I will still be in the classroom and teach English Language. The 44<sup>TH</sup> US President was a Social Worker; I am talking about former President Barack Obama. Barack Obama, no wonder when he came up to become a Senator in Chicago, everyone was supporting him. Initially, he was a Social Worker. Be a Social Worker, you can be a fine Politician. By the time we pass this Act the course called Social Work will become valid because everyone will be running for license. Mr Speaker, in the US, no US citizen can lie dying on the street, but the US will care for their citizens, carry them to homes who dare you to disadvantage them or bully them, you will be fired. They value their citizens. The act of Social Worker is very interesting, and it pushes us to make fine Laws that will make this profession to be very attractive for our kids. Somebody has continuously stated attitude and behavioral change that was a very fine doctrine. It was betrayed by the very people that were expected to change their behavioral tendencies of Sierra Leone because behavioral and attitudinal change that was a very fine philosophy. If Sierra Leonean attitudes are changed, our love for humanity will actually increase.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said earlier on, I will pay tribute today to Jane Adams, the proponent of social work so also today we hold professional social working class to Jane Adams. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members will speak more by the time we

come to the Committee Stage. We look at these 11 parts Law, and 42 Clauses. I should admire the Minister because she wants to put more value upon her Ministry, and I want to challenge her also to challenge the Minister of Environment. You see people demonstrating unprofessionalism to our vulnerable men and women, whether they are physically challenged or commercial sex workers, disadvantaging them, and you are bringing a Regulation for you to license people to do the correct thing. I challenge you also to challenge the Minister of Environment; we also see an emerging issue of plastic waste. What can the Minister of Environment do for us to see the proper management of fine policies to reduce waste plastics, recycle waste, and reproduce waste? The waste can even give us energy, this energy that we are using human faeces. If we have stronger Regulations, even the joblessness among the youth; they can reuse, recycle and reproduce these waste plastics.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I noticed that the Minister for this Bill is so fair. In part 1, she created an Appeal Committee that is, if a Social Worker is disadvantaged, it should not be like a kangaroo Court. She is saying, I will give you room for an appeal by Law. It is here in part 1 in the very preliminary definitions.

Mr Speaker, in Clause 3[f] I see a room for the President. Does it actually exist? If it does, then let them popularize it. I also see in Clause 5 that a quorum for meetings of this committee should be four. I also notice that it is ambiguous if it is four including the Chairman, should there be a controversy who should have the casting vote? The Chairman should he be part of the four that should form the quorum? That also has to be made clearer at Committee Stage. Clause 11 also talks of the Regulations of this very professional Act.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Regulation normally makes Laws to be simple, Laws to be easily understood, Laws to be running, etc. And in Clause 12 Sub Section 3, in terms of qualification, I will also appeal that somebody should have a Master's degree to become a Registrar. That is Master's degree in social work. Can you also have a related field for an MSc degree for somebody to become a Registrar? But that should be done at Committee Stage, not now. But that is a humble appeal. You can see

somebody is very versatile in social work issues, yet is not a literate in social work. We appeal for a related field, not necessarily social work. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 16; it talks about gift to be given. Also, most of the Ministers receive gifts, whether in money or in kind, and they will not bring it to Parliament, you have to hand over it to Parliament. Is that understood? If it is not, you will charge. That is why the Constitution is saying whether gift or money. I know very well you have a lot of Philanthropists. I still have a case with a particular MDA; I will not call the name. They receive gifts, and it is yet to be handed over to Parliament to know that is what the Constitution is saying in Section 118, Sub Section 7. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 37 to Clause 40 talks of defaulters and their various fines. I also entreat you to increase some of these fines. If you give somebody a year old jail it is just six months. I also noticed that six months jail time is about 90 days.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should not overlook professional Social Workers job, whether in the provinces or in the capital otherwise, we are about to welcome poverty. Do you know how somebody defines poverty? A person says, pass over opportunity repeatedly. I do not want our citizens to be poor. Many of our young men and women that we expect to be voting for us in the forthcoming elections, they are dying in the hands of Kush. Let us go to the Cemetery. Clean up the Cemetery. That is social work. Madam Minister, I should commend you today very highly because you have given life to your Ministry.

Mr Speaker, we thank the Minister for bringing such a timely sensitive Act to the House. It is against this backdrop, I will urge all Members of Parliament for us to critically look at this Bill by the time we come to Committee Stage and we would give it speed to pass into Law. I thank you very much Mr Speaker for this opportunity.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Acting Leader of Government Business, and I want to encourage either side, please try to manage the time. Sometimes, like the previous speaker will say, 'bravery is the soul of wit'. Just give us the main points. Some of us when you give us too much information, we are confused. You keep confusing us after the first two lines. So give us snappy information so that we can understand them.

Madam Minister, I am not saying you should be snappy, but try to be as short as possible. I know you have worked for UN Women, and at UN Women, you summarize things. So if you can summarize this one, it will help the House.

**MRS MELROSE KARMINTY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to sincerely start by thanking you and for your very passionate support for this Bill. I would want to say you have made my day. You have made the day of our Social Workers. Mr Speaker, every one of us in this room has listened from speaker to speaker, and we have sensed the passion in which people have spoken and to me, it has even made me to understand more that this Bill is something that is touching the fabric of society. If Honourable Members can take us back to even the war days and now where we are with the drug and substance abuse or the mental health issues, then I now understand why this Bill is more than important to me and all of us in the Ministry of Social Welfare. We see it everywhere around us, and I also believe that Members of this House also see vulnerability all over, whether it is from mental health issues, as Members of Parliament have articulated very well, the challenges related to that or about our disabled people or even those who are trafficked. Our migrants, like now, we are all watching and listening to what is happening in the US, and beginning to probably see that maybe some people will be coming back, and like Members have said, that is also a social issue, and we need to pay attention to that, because if we are having migrants coming back, or if we are having people been trafficked and they are brought back, these are all social issues, and therefore needs our urgent attention. To me, I just want to say, everybody that spoke today have made their points, and for us at the Ministry, we will just say, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members that we rely on this House to continue to support us pass this Bill.

Mr Speaker, I have no doubt in in my oversight Committee because the point that the Chair made that they will support the Ministry for our oversight function, I am very delighted about that. Because when you move around in orphanages or care centers, you would see the challenges. And the reason why we have been struggling is because the legislative framework was not in place but having this legislative framework in place

now, I honestly believe that we will see the change. That is why, when the Honourable Member said, we are going to witness emerging issues, and we are going to see a different Sierra Leone, I see the importance of Social Workers on a daily basis, especially when we had this outbreak of the drug and substance abuse at the rehab center, you saw the need that we needed Social Workers. We need Social Workers all over this country and in every sector because the issues are not just limited to one place. They are all over the place. So to me, as I said, you have made my day, and I do not need to go over all the issues, but just to mention what Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara said, you have chosen the right path to serve humanity. And if you are a Social Worker, you need to have the passion. I am venturing into this because this is what I want to do. I want to touch lives. I want to change lives. I want to make sure that our society is free of some of these endemic challenges that we have been going through as a country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will have to confess that this was organized by the Lecturers and the Sierra Leone Association of Social Workers. They are very active. They are the ones that put this together. By the time I came here, I saw the crowd. I was wondering, what are they here for? Little did I realize that they were here in support of this Bill because this Bill is going to add dignity to them. This Bill is going to connect them, not only nationally, but internationally as well. So to me, I am already a Social Worker from birth. I did not need to go and do social work to be a Social Worker, like most of the Honourable Members here, when you listen to the way they have passionately supported this Bill and also laid out the issues, I believe we are moving on for the best. I want to really on behalf of my very supportive team that are seated here, the Deputy Minister, the professional head, and other members of my team we want to say thanks to this Honourable House for your support. Thank you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to move that the Bill entitled, the Professional Social Workers Regulatory Council Act 2025 be read the Second Time.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**[THE BILL IS READ THE SECOND TIME]**



**HON. SAA EMERSON LAMINA:** Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O. 51 [1]. I want the Bill Professional Social Workers, Regulatory Council Act 2025 be committed to the Legislative Committee for proper scrutiny.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any Secunder?

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** I so second Mr Speaker.

**[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]**

**THE SPEAKER:** Madam Minister, I think the interaction and familiarity of most of the Members of Parliament to social work is the fact that for those that have been or migrated to Europe, the first work you are employed is a Social Worker, so most of them have done social work in the past. In the absence of any announcement, I want to thank you for visiting the House and for partly taking part in our debate, and for saying that you have given us valuable time, and the Legislative Committee would do justice to this Bill and will make sure that your aspiration and your intent will be actualised in the Bill. Thank you very much for coming.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MR SPEAKER ADJOURNED THE HOUSE TO THURSDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2025  
AT 10:00 A.M.**

**THE HOUSE ROSE AT 3:55 P.M.**