



PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

Parliament Building - O.A.U Drive, Tower Hill, Freetown | admin@parliament.gov.sl | www.parliament.gov.sl

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PRESS RELEASE



PARLIAMENT APPROVES TWO PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES

The Seventeenth Report of the Committee on Appointments and Public Service, chaired by the Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma has on Wednesday, 25/06/2024 been debated and unanimously approved by Parliament.

The following Presidential Nominees were approved by Parliament:

1. Deputy Minister of Energy II - Ministry of Energy, Ing. Edmond Benjamin Nonie and
2. Member - Board of Directors, Audit Service Sierra Leone, Madam Matilda Mattu Kormoh

Presenting the Report, the Leader of Government told the Plenary that the Nominees were interviewed live on media and on strict procedure including educational backgrounds, track records in pertinent work situations, asset declaration, tax obligations, and vision for productive tenures amongst others.

Seconding the motion, the Deputy Opposition Leader, Hon. Brima Daniel Koroma from Koinadugu District said the Report contained the unanimous views of all Members of the Committee and went on to acknowledge the curriculum vitae and qualification of the newly appointed Deputy Minister of Energy. He used the opportunity to encourage the Ministry of Fisheries to start inter-ministerial collaboration, in light of utilizing the expertise of the Deputy Minister on drones to monitor the nautical areas. He raised concern over the Chiefdom solar light in light of variance in the cost of tariffs and advised the Deputy Minister to address the same. He also commended the Government for the transformation of electricity cables and asked the appointee to look into the matter of an abandoned transformer and electricity theft.

On the Female Nominee, he commended the Government for gender equality and women's performances. While speaking also on the same Nominee, he used the opportunity to assure the House that, the Sixth Parliament would debate the Auditor General's Report.

Hon. Beatrice Maaya Kangbai from Bo District thanked President Bio for appointing highly qualified Nominees to serve the State. She described Ing. Nonie as a very hard-working young man and encouraged him to address the electricity problem. "Electricity could be a very big attraction to investors", she maintained and advised him to work with Members of Parliament. She reiterated that they as Female MPs rely on Madam Matilda Mattu Kormoh and asked her to discourage Male chauvinism.

The Chairman of the Energy Committee in Parliament, Hon. Keikura Vandy from Bo District strongly informed the House of his teamwork with the Ministry. He said energy is capital intensive and stated that since Sierra Leone gained Independence, President Bio has done more than any other leader on electricity transformation. "Amidst all challenges, we are making headway" he maintained and warned the Deputy Minister not to make promises and not to go with a mindset in the designated office. He used the opportunity to disclose the current situation of Bumbuna Hydro and dilated on the efforts of the Government in that direction. The solar Mini-grid electrification he said is envisaging problems as earlier brought by the previous speaker. He reaffirmed that the government has challenged economy and went on to educate the Plenary on the sector. He encouraged the Deputy Minister to abreast Parliament with concerns or matters. "Let us speedily approve these two Nominees" he concluded.

Hon. Tamba Simeon Johnny from Kono District said everything about life relies on energy and went on to encourage the House to approve the nominated Deputy Minister on his qualifications. He decried rapacious electricity theft and advised the Nominee to be robust in that direction. The MP sounded loud in commending President Bio for providing constant electricity in the Kono District.

Hon. Rebecca Yei Kamara from Kono District singled out the Board Member of Audit Service for service delivery and mentorship. She applauded the Government for appointing credible people. She assured the Plenary of the Nominee's performance in the designated office. She also acknowledged the Deputy Minister for his talent and expressed hope for the future. She used the opportunity to appreciate renewable energy, in light of the effort of the Nominee. The two Nominees, she said are fit for the jobs.

The Whip of Opposition, Hon. Abdul Karim Kamara from Kambia recalled and clarified past government efforts in electrification. He damned excuses on electricity theft as a yardstick for perpetual challenges, especially for blackouts in Freetown. He used the opportunity to denounce the Government for ignoring Bumbuna Phase II which has better potential than the Karpowership. "It would have taken us two years to complete the Bumbuna Phase II" he stated. He was concerned about a payment system and zoomed on the deputy and Minister related the challenges to him for attention and asked him to provide proactive solutions to those problems.

Hon. Tamba Kellie from Kono District expunged certain concerns that were raised earlier and informed the House that Mini-grid electrification is very expensive, except with mini hydro. He also raised concern over the debate of the Auditor General's Report. The MP shared his experience of the Ministry and advised the Deputy Minister to pay attention to the internal workings of the same, in light of the attitude of staff members, and the tariff amongst others. He also explained the issues around Bumbuna Phase II.

He used the opportunity to advise the Government on the necessity of public/ private partnership of electricity.

Hon. Mohamed Conteh from Falaba said there is nothing to write home about electricity in Falaba and also explained to the House the challenges of Mini-grid electrification in that area. He said, unlike other Western Rural Communities, Devil-Hole is envisaging an electricity problem. He appealed to the Government to consider Falaba District.

Hon. Hindolo Moiwo Ngevaio from Kailahun District said the Energy Ministry is the lifeblood of several ministries. He commended the Government for electricity transformation and expansion in the rural communities. He related the CLSG to the Late President Kabba and commended President Bio for implementation. "Mr. Minister you will be approved very soon" he concluded and appealed for more provisions.

Rounding up the debate, Leader of Opposition, Hon. Abdul Kargbo cautioned colleague MPs not to politicize the debate on Presidential Nominees as the latter are going to serve the State. He used the opportunity to inform the Plenary that the Opposition would be having a discussion on alternative electricity. He also brought the attention of the House to the challenges of rural solar electrification and proffered solutions. He expressed serious concerns over the consequences of foreign electricity sources, Karpowership and CLSG. He spoke about the hike in electricity tariffs and used the opportunity to advise the Government to work on affordability and to have indigenous major source of electricity. He also expressed that there is an inability to provide electricity, irrespective of the high tariffs and advised the Government to consider the payment of a loan with proceeds of the same. He spoke about the fear of the Government to invest in light of comparative study and advised the Government to find a permanent solution to the problems of electricity. He advised the nominated Deputy Minister to work diligently and judiciously for the nation. The MP advised the Nominees to do due diligence to Sierra Leone and wished them well.

In concluding the debate, the Leader of Government Business wished the Nominees well. He vehemently decried wicked compatriots that are destroying electricity infrastructure. In the Falaba District, he recalled that the district was created without infrastructure, but the current Government is tremendously providing development in that direction, highlighting communities that are benefiting from rural solar Mini-grid.

He commended the Deputy Minister, especially in the manner he answered their questions at the interview which was geared towards solutions to electricity challenges. He blamed the opposition for the bad administration and its consequences on electricity. The Leader dilated on the professionalism and motherly character of Madam Matilda Kormoh. He advised the Nominees to go and deliver.

In his felicitation, the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Solomon Segepoh Thomas thanked the Nominees and advised them to work in the interest of the State.

In another development, the Parliament of Sierra Leone on Wednesday, 25/06/2024 ratified the following agreement:

Addendum to the Concession Agreement entered into by and Between the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, the Sierra Leone Road Safety and Autospect (SL) Limited, Dated 21/01/2019

Leaders of Opposition and Ruling Parties made meaningful contributions to the debate.

The agreement was presented by the Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation, Rex Bonapha.

Parliamentary and Public Relations Department

Parliament of Sierra Leone

+23278495023/+23276625960/+23278426851/+23278697776