



PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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PRESS RELEASE



PARLIAMENT DEBATES THE SIERRA LEONE SHIPPING AGENCY ACT 2025

The Parliament of Sierra Leone on Tuesday, 04/03/2025, intensely debated the Sierra Leone Shipping Agency Act 2024 for the development of the State.

The Bill seeks to make provision for the establishment of the Sierra Leone National Shipping Agency as the sole national carrier of the Republic of Sierra Leone with the right to perform at its discretion the maritime transportation of 40% of the total value of cargo exported out of and imported into Sierra Leone, whether unitized or in bulk, dry or liquid, including the provision of FPSOs, FSOs, freight clearing and forwarding, transshipment, Crew management, cabotage services haulage and related logistics services and to provide for other related matters.

Presenting the Bill, the Minister of Transport and Aviation, Ambassador Fanday Turay said the purpose of the document is to make provision for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Shipping Agency. He highlighted the importance of the Bill and also explained the important nature of the Bill in various Parts.

The Chairman of the Committee on Transport and Aviation, Hon. Dickson Momoh Rogers, who also doubles as the Chief Whip of Parliament, used the opportunity to commend the Minister for presenting such a developmentally oriented Bill to Parliament. He also emphasized that the Bill is

rich and endowed with a lot of goodies. He noted that the Bill would create due diligence between the Board and Administration of same. "This Bill is a good one," he noted and stressed on the proper implementation of the Bill, in light of revenue mobilization.

Hon. Ambrose Maada Lebbay from Bo District spoke on the importance of Part 3 of the Bill in tandem with support from the Government to the Agency. He mentioned the other powers of the Bill in light of venturing with others to hire vessels. He called for measures that would force other MDAs to collaborate with same.

The Opposition Deputy 2, Hon. Aaron Aruna Koroma from Tonkolili District said the Bill is not controversial and noted that it would increase revenue mobilization. He emphasized on the powers of the Agency for cooperating with others. He urged the House to consider the Bill for approval and stressed on its proper implementation.

Whip of the Opposition, Hon. Abdul Karim Kamara from Kambia District reflected on the powers of Parliament to make laws that would promote the agency to raise revenue for the state. He spoke on problems affecting revenue mobilization and used the opportunity to ask the House to do more in that direction.

Hon. Lolloh Tongi from Kailahun District said the country is synonymous with making good laws, but they are not implementing them. According to her, the lack of implementing those laws affect the national revenue mobilization. She used the opportunity to appeal to the Minister to implement the law when enacted.

The Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Ibrahim Tawa Conteh, said the repeal is prudent and would enhance transformation in that direction. He cited important provisions of same. He described the Bill as a revenue mobilization and explained some aspects of the Agency. He spoke on Section 13 in lieu of negotiation with others. The Deputy Speaker used the opportunity to call on all and sundry to promote the Agency in light of revenue mobilization. He concluded by calling on the House to expedite the enactment of the Bill, taking into consideration of its importance towards National Development.

Rounding up the debate, the Acting Leader of Opposition, Hon. Daniel Brima Koroma, described the Bill as a very laudable Bill. However, the Leader raised concerns over circumstances in which State-owned entities found themselves inept in light of powers and effective revenue mobilization, making a comparative reference to the moribund State Lottery and Sierratel. He used the opportunity to emphatically oppose the lethargy of State institutions with similar powers, but could not stand the test of time to raise revenue. He expressed worries over the government's own revenue generation institutions with the same powers but could not support the Government to pay the wage bill. He raised several concerns, including the exclusion of the National Revenue Authority from the Board as an irony. The Acting Leader of the Opposition concluded by advising those piloting Bills to always come along with extant laws.

Concluding the debate, the Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew S. Nyuma thanked colleague MPs who made contributions to the Bill and described same as progressive law. He reflected on the importance of revenue mobilization and its positive impact on the State. He made comparisons to other countries regarding the imposition of taxation for revenue generation. The Leader spoke about the reluctance of those who defer to pay tax and how revenue improve State development. He clarified and supported the Opposition Leader to consider the provision of the extant laws. Hon. Nyuma referred with concerns to some of the provisions in the Bill. He also spoke

on exemptions. He clarified and alluded to the position of the Financial Secretary on the Board, contrary to NRA. He also alluded to the payments to be made into the consolidated fund as provided in the Bill. He spoke on the importance of compliance in the Bill, in light of going into a joint venture with the private sector. He highlighted the penalties and made a vehement supporting stance for same. He referenced and declined clause 15, which asked for Fifteen Years of experience for someone to become the Director General. He commended the Bill with a specific mention of the defined roles of the Director General and Deputy. He suggested that the Director General of the Sierra Leone Harbor and Port Authority be Part of the Board. He however emphasized on the decline of donor support to poor nations, in tandem with the positivity and necessity of the Bill. The Leader of Government Business moved a motion for the Bill to be sent to the Legislative Committee for further scrutiny and was seconded by the Acting Opposition Leader.

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