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PRESS RELEASE

PARLIAMENT DEBATES THE POLITICAL PARTIES ACT, 2022

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Tuesday 9/08/2022, debated the bill entitled, "The Political Parties Act, 2022" for the good governance of Sierra Leone.

The Bill seeks to provide for the continuation of the Political Parties Registration Commission as the Political Parties Regulation Commission, to provide for the regulation, including the registration of political parties by sections 34 and 35 of the constitution, and to provide for related matters.

Presenting the bill, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Mohamed Lamin Tarawally said the bill is timely and necessary. He underscored the need for the continuation of a corporate body by the bill. He said the Board of the commission would regulate, and supervise all registered political parties, in line with the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. He said also, the bill seeks to regulate accountability and transparency of political parties, and also promotes mediation amongst political parties.

Chairman Legislative Committee, Hon. Sulaiman Marray Conteh said this bill is geared towards structural change, political inclusion, and mediation on the activities of Political parties.

Hon. Daniel Koroma highlighted several typographic mistakes in the bill and went on to explain the memorandum, object, and reason of the bill. He endorsed the enactment of the bill. The MP highlighted several clauses in the Bill that contradict political parties' inner activities.

Hon. Aaron A. Koroma commended the PPRC and requested for the enactment of the bill into law. He said the bill should expand the landscape of political parties and not narrow them and went on to question the form of registration of political parties and the cancellation of the registration of Political Parties. He questioned several clauses in the Bill that contradicted the activities of political parties.

Hon. Lahai Marrah welcomed the initiative of the bill, relative to mediation and regulations of political parties "Let us allow political parties to participate freely", he stated.

He also welcomed the proposed subvention for registered political parties but questioned the mechanism and the independence of the process.

Leader of NGC, Hon. Kande Kolleh Yumkella said the Bill before the House is important for the development of the state. He said the proposed bill outlined "several sincerities in it", relative to the registration of political parties. He welcomed the mediation aspect of the election violence. The MP supported the clause which states, that a political party should have eight hundred registered members, before registration. He said stronger laws be made for the deregistration of political parties. He commended the PPRC for bringing the Bill before the House.

Hon. Saa Emerson, Lamina Leader of C4C said the bill is not controversial and endorsed the enactment of the bill, and welcomed the recommendation made by the European Union election observer team on the Bill. He said the bill preaches tolerance and non-violence. According to him, the bill recognizes an independent candidate. "The Bill is a progressive one ", he said and went on to call on his colleague MPs to enact the bill into law.

Rounding up the debate, Hon. Chernor RM Bah, Leader of Opposition thanked PPRC and said they are many good things in the bill and it is a progressive one. He said the PPRC should be given the powers to do the needful relative to mediation, tribalism, and regionalism "It is a very good bill, we should support it for its enactment into law", he concluded.

In concluding the debate, the Acting Leader of Government Business Hon. Bashiru Silikie said the bill would strengthen the work of PPRC. He said 2% of the vote should not be a yardstick to deregister a political party, the court should be the answer. He said the bill addresses security checks in the country.

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