



# PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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## PRESS RELEASE



### PARLIAMENT VETS AND APPROVES 8 PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES

The House of Parliament concertedly vetted and approved Eight (8) Presidential Nominees to serve as Board Members at the National Revenue Authority (NRA) and the Consumer Protection Commission of Sierra Leone. This groundbreaking approval occurred on 31/10/2024 in the Chamber of the Sierra Leone in Freetown.

The following Presidential Nominees were vetted and approved: Chief:

1. Mathew Younge-Deputy Chairman-National Consumer Protection Commission of Sierra Leone
2. Mr. Andrew Pessima, Member-National Consumer Protection Commission Sierra Leone
3. Madam Memunatu Rogers-Member-National Revenue Authority Board
4. Dr. John Arouna Karimu- Member-National Revenue Authority Board

5. Mr. Mamoud Ruskin Kabbah- Member-National Consumer Protection Commission Sierra Leone

6. Madam Koloneh Sankoh- Member-National Consumer Protection Commission Sierra Leone

7.Mr. Francis Gbondo- Member-National Consumer Protection Commission Sierra Leone and

8.Madam Susan Williams - Member- National Consumer Protection Commission Sierra Leone.

“Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the Second Report reflects the unanimous view of the Committee. I, therefore, move that the Second Report of the Second Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved.” the Acting Leader of Government Business Hon. Bashiru Silikie moved the motion.

Seconding the motion Deputy Opposition 2. Hon. Aaron Aruna Koroma from Tonkolili District, said the nominees were very fine people who would create the needed change in their respective offices. He added that the president would have considered their qualifications for such jobs. He called the attention of the nominees to pay critical attention to the job they were appointed for. He made special reference to the Consumer Protection Commission, adding that the commission had long abandoned and not protected the consumers. He called on the Members of the Commission to address expired goods in the interests of consumers. He also called on the appointees to be more responsive in their responsibilities. He decried the terrible network of the Mobile Network, which the Consumer Protection Agency had not been effective in protecting the consumers of those offices. Hon. Koroma also noted that goods are expired in shops, but the Consumer Protection Agency is not protecting the consumers. He also decried price discrimination across Sierra Leone due to a lack of infective consumer protection. He said the NRA had done much with regards to the NRA Act of 2022 in terms of revenue generation. He said the new Finance Act imposes a double tax on citizens of the nation with little impact on the people in terms of development. He called on the NRA to make new innovations in terms of generating taxes.

Hon. Mustapha Sellu from Moyamba said the duties of the Consumer Protection Agency are not felt in the lives of citizens. He said one is only heated about the agency when they come for approval of presidential nominees. He called for three popularizations of the consumer protection agency so that the agency could be seen across the radius and circumference of the country. He called on Members of the Board to perform their functions as expected after their approval. He also called on them to read their Consumer Protection Act so that it would help them in the administration of their jobs. He said the history of NRA would not be written in completion without mentioning one of the Newly approved Board Members, Mr. John Karimu. He said the NRA does not have an office space, adding that all of the offices for NRA across the country are rented properties, for which they pay about half a million dollars annually. He, therefore, called on the NRA to invest in building their offices.

The Whip from the Opposition, Hon. Abdul Karim Kamara from Kambia, joined the queue regarding the Consumer Protection Agency to be very effective in their duties. He also called on Members of Parliament to support the agency to effectively do their jobs. He also called on the Members Of Parliament to place more emphasis on the Standard Bureau to maintain standards in terms of goods and services for citizens. He said the Standards Bureau no longer works in maintaining standards but only cares about making money. He clarified that the Standards Bureau is a death trap for the nation. He also decried the ills in the NRA, especially in the area of NRA renting offices with colossal sums of money. He expressed that Government Agencies spend huge amounts of money on renting private houses as offices for their work. He specifically called on Mr. John Karimu to go with his vim and vigor into the NRA to rewrite the history of the NRA. He also noted that about 90% of the sachet water citizens drink is not purified.

Hon. Lolu Tongi from Kailahun District commended the representation of females among the nominees who were approved. He also commended President Julius Maada Bio for upholding the 30% quota for Women's Representation in public offices. She called on the Board Members to be very effective in ensuring that the NRA generates more money for the nation. She lavished praises on Mr. John Karimu, adding that Mr. Karimu would bring the needed change in the NRA.

The Deputy Leader of Government Business 2, Hon. Emerson Lamina from Kono, thanked President Bio for earmarking smart nominees and sending in the well of parliament for approval. He called on the Nominees to always open their doors for MPs so that MPs would help them in their jobs. He lavished praises on the nominees and urged them to serve well in their respective offices. He called on Consumer Protection to improve its work and visibility nationwide. He also called on Mr. John Karimu to reenergize the NRA. He called on the Board Members of the Consumer Protection Commission to seek the interest of the consumers. He added that with effective collaborative work between the Consumer Protection Agency and the Standards Bureau, sanity would be enhanced for Consumer Protection.

In rounding up the debate , Opposition Leader Hon. Abdul Kargbo from Port, said the consumer protection agency is one of the country's most powerful institutions for protecting citizens' well-being. He said one of the jobs of the Consumer Protection Commission was to make recommendations to the ministry for action. Still, none of those recommendations or actionable steps had been made. Hon. Abdul Kargbo said most of the food poisons are from Expired foods. He decried the Consumer Protection Commission, saying they had been very inept in addressing the issue of consumer protection from fake goods and substandard services. He said amid the poor job delivery of the Consumer Protection Commission and the Standard Bureau, nobody had been arrested for seeking expired goods. He said most of the nation's disasters are preventable, adding that the state institutions' lackadaisical nature, especially the Consumer Protection Commission, leads to food poisoning issues. He decried the inability of the NRA to impose taxes and not collect those taxes. He said effective revenue collection would save the nation from Bank Lead debt. The Leader of the Opposition noted that the appointment of Madam Rogers was not a mistake, but rather meritorious. He concluded by sending strong-worded advice to all the nominees that they owe a responsibility to the nation in their various responsibilities. He called on the House to expeditiously approve the nominees.

In concluding the debate, the Acting Leader of Government Business, Hon. Bashiru Silikie from Bo, lavished praise on President Bio for appointing those foreign nominees. He, however, decried that most nominees, after approval, closed the offices from Members of Parliament. He said the Government is not giving them money to develop their respective constituencies or districts. He elucidated that before now, they had the responsibility for primary development, but that had been revoked and placed on the head of Local Councils. He made it clear that their primary responsibilities as MPs are to make laws, provide oversight, and adequate representation. He concluded by encouraging the nominees to work in the nation's interest.

After the approval of the nominees, the Acting Speaker, Hon. Ibrahim Tawa Conteh, expressed congratulations to all the nominees. He said the President had introduced his big five game changer, of which he called on the nominees, especially the NRA, which had so much to do with the delivery of the President's vision, to do better in terms of revenue generation. He said much was said by Members of Parliament for the Consumer Protection Agency and urged them to do their best to protect consumers nationwide.

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