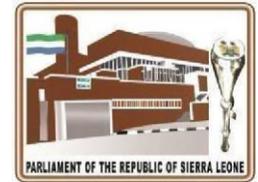




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PRESS RELEASE

PRE-LEGISLATIVE HEARING ON THE PUBLIC HEALTH BILL 2022

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Monday 17/10/2022 through its Pre-Legislative Committee hearing discussed, the Bill entitled "The Public Health Bill 2022", in Committee Room Parliament Building, Tower Hill in Freetown.

The bill seeks to repeal and replace the Public Health Act, 1960, to provide for the promotion, protection and improvement of public health and wellbeing in Sierra Leone, to provide for the protection of individuals and communities from public health risks, to provide for the prevention and control of the spread of infectious diseases, to provide for local government and community participation in protecting public health, to provide for early detection of and prompt response to diseases and public health threats and to provide for other related matters.

In his welcome address, the Chairman Legislative Committee, Hon. Abdulia Suliaman Marray-Conteh said it is a legislative process to scrutinize bills before the House and underscored the importance of the document and its relevant features. He encouraged everyone to participate in the process and noted that the bill is geared toward repealing the Public Health Act of 1962.

In his submission, the Parliamentary Chairman of the Health Committee Hon. Moses B. Jokie said the bill is not a new one, adding that it had been discussed earlier. The Parliamentary Chairman emphasized that repealing the 1962 Public Health Act is a laudable venture.

In his statement Opposition Leader, Hon. Chernor R.M. Bah said there have been consultations on the bill whilst encouraging the Ministry of Health and a non-governmental organization, CARE to understand what has been presented before the House of Parliament might not be remain in the same form. He said Parliamentarians are responsible to bring out their views in their representation role in the light of the amendment and repealing of the Public Health Act 2022.

The Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma in his statement appreciated the team from the Ministry of Health for coming up with the long-awaited document and also thanked Members of Parliament for participating in the hearing

He emphasized that, the draft law should cover issues relating to pandemics and rules for combating such, shortly.

He pleaded for decentralization on the bill from the Ministry of Health to Local Councils.

Dr. Sylvester Epiagolo, Health Director of CARE Sierra Leone in his submission, shared the joy of being part of the process of repealing the Public Health Act.

He commended the timeliness of the bill before Parliament and described it as a global health trend. "Good health and well-being are the long-term plans of the Government", He asserted. He said as an organization, they plan to support the Government of Sierra Leone in achieving this goal

Mrs. Princess Dugba Turay, the Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation in her statement expressed appreciation for bringing the bill to Parliament and noted that, it is long overdue. She explained that as a Ministry, they wish to have a Health Agency to structure the health sector.

The Deputy Minister encourages Members of Parliament to speedily repeal and ratify the Public Health Act 2022 to address issues relating to the pandemic and other related health activities.

The bill was presented by Dr. Mohamed Alex Vandi, Director of Health Security and Emergency from the Ministry of Health and Sanitation whilst questions and clarifications climax the deliberations.

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