
Liberia: Unqualified People At Legislature

By Ben P. Wesee

A Bong County Senator has seriously frown at the Liberians for electing inexperienced and unqualified individuals into the Liberian Legislature. As a result, according to Senator Jewel Howard-Taylor, such decision was seriously hampering the functions of the Legislature. Senator Taylor said the work of the Legislature will continue to be unprogressive once the Liberian voters keep electing people who lack

knowledge and competence in lawmaking to represent their interest at the highest level. The Senator - a former First Lady of Liberia, made the comments Wednesday on a local talk show - Prime Morning Drive on Prime F.M in Monrovia.

"The people of Liberia are the cause of the continued failure of the Legislature; the Legislature is not a school house for people to go and learn," noted the Senator. She also indicated that it was unfortunate that in modernity, Liberians were still voting people based on interests and not experience or qualification - something Senator Taylor said must be corrected for a smooth and better Legislature.

The Bong County Senator further frown at lawmakers for making promises during the campaign periods not part of legislative functions. "How can a man who wants to be elected go to his people and tell them he will build road when he is elected - not even in the know of the cost of road?

When I first entered the Liberian Legislature, I entered with two master degrees; and yet I'm still schooling at the law school. The Legislature is not a learning center for people to come and learn - you have to know the functions of the Legislature and also have broad ideal on lawmaking before thinking of been a lawmaker," Senator Taylor indicated.

The Bong County Senator further acknowledged the failure of the Legislature over the past years, but noted that the time to correct such mistake is coming again - a time for Liberians themselves to learn from their past.

It can be recalled that the Institute for Research and Democratic Development or IREDD, during the period under review (last January-July), graded Members of the Legislature - most of whom did not perform in consonance with Legislative responsibilities.

According to IREDD, the Liberian Legislature remains under-equipped and sadly operates in a state of paralysis, with clerical professional staffs' performance continuing to be hindered by the unavailability of basic office equipment such as printers, photocopiers, as well as ink, among others. Despite the incredible budgetary support by development

partners and government since the inauguration of the Modernization Plan, staffs continue to experience and work under deplorable conditions, thus creating poor documentation constraints and inefficiency within the Legislature.

Such paralysis, according to IREDD, is being used as a cover-up to deny citizens vital public information crucial to monitoring the Legislative representation of Legislators, thereby undermining citizens' right to information.

IREDD indicated in its report that the efficiency of the Legislature continues to be impeded by the lack of time consciousness and commitment to serve. During the period under review, the organization noted, most sessions started late - often an hour or more late. Although this violates Rule #2 of both Houses, which put the starting time at 10:00am on every session day (Tuesday and Thursday),

Legislators and the leadership continue to exercise insensitivity. As observed during the year, regular plenary sessions did not only start late, but also a number of lawmakers were recorded late (those who came in after roll call).

On the average, attendance for both Houses revealed a fair rating of a little below 80% accumulatively during the entire reporting period, IREDD reported. "Our research shows a considerable number of Legislators continue to place personal economic interest over national duty for which they have been elected. This means, some lawmakers used their working hours to engage in other activities of their personal interest at the detriment of their respective constituencies. However, the Senate topped Members of the House of Representatives during the reporting period, i.e., Senate 83.73%, House of Representatives 76.6%.

Copyright © 2016 The New Dawn. All rights reserved. Distributed by AllAfrica Global Media (allAfrica.com). To contact the copyright holder directly for corrections — or for permission to republish or make other authorized use of this material, [click here](#).

AllAfrica publishes around 1,300 reports a day from more than 140 news organizations and over 500 other institutions and individuals, representing a diversity of positions on every topic. We publish news and views ranging from vigorous opponents of governments to government publications and spokespersons. Publishers named above each report are responsible for their own content, which AllAfrica does not have the legal right to edit or correct.

Articles and commentaries that identify allAfrica.com as the publisher are produced or commissioned by AllAfrica. To address comments or complaints, please [Contact us](#).



AllAfrica is a voice of, by and about Africa - aggregating, producing and distributing 1,300 news and information items daily from over 140 African news organizations and our own reporters to an African and global public. We operate from Cape Town, Dakar, Lagos, Monrovia, Nairobi and Washington DC.

© 2016 AllAfrica

AllAfrica - All the Time