



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT - (SECOND SESSION)

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

_____ (No. 050 of 2023) _____

PRIORITIZATION OF BILLS BEFORE COMMITTEES

Honourable Members,

1. As you will recall, on Tuesday, 25th July 2023, I did notify the House on the status of business, especially legislative proposals and Bills published and awaiting consideration by Committees and the House. In my notification, I indicated that at least forty (40) Bills by individual Members had been published for consideration by the House. In addition, there are two hundred and sixty-eight (268) legislative proposals that have been sponsored by Members of this House, of which sixty-five (65) are undergoing pre-publication scrutiny by various Committees.

2. **Honourable Members,** the House Business Committee took cognizant, that under Standing 40, which provides for the sequence of proceedings, in one week, individual Members Bills are only allocated a maximum of three (3) hours, which is very little time compare to the volume of Bills by individual Members.

- 3.** Consequently, **Honourable Members**, the House Business Committee resolved to allocate time on Wednesday afternoons for the consideration of individual Members' Bills. The Committee also resolved to, from time to time, request the House to either approve to hold morning sittings on Thursdays or extend its sittings to create more time for consideration of the said business.
- 4.** **Honourable Members**, as you may have noticed, from the Order Paper for the Afternoon sitting of Wednesday, 26th July 2023 and on today's Order Paper, several Individual Member Bills have been slotted for Second Reading. This practice will continue for the rest of this Session as the House Business Committee endeavours to facilitate Members to effectively discharge their constitutional mandate.
- 5.** **Honourable Members**, it is important for Committees to appreciate that, it is the desire of every Member to have a Bill published in their name, expeditiously considered and passed by the House. However, unless all Committees prioritise the consideration of Bills, the efforts of the House Business Committee to create time for consideration of individual Member's Bills in the House will be in vain.
- 6.** In this regard, **Honourable Members**, Committees are expected to prioritize the consideration of Bills and legislative proposals. To this end, I urge all Committees to prioritize the consideration of Bills and legislative proposals undergoing pre-publication scrutiny.

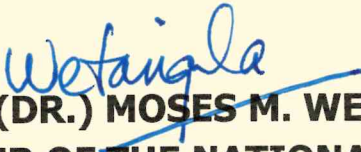
For greater certainty, may I remind Committees that Standing Order 114(7) requires a Committee to which a legislative proposal is committed to submit a report **within thirty (30) days**.

- 7. Honourable Members**, should it be brought to my attention that any Committee has inordinately delayed undertaking pre-publication scrutiny of legislative proposals before them, I will cause the House Business Committee, which I chair, to follow the precedent set in 2019 to have such proposals published as Bills without any further recourse to the relevant Committees.
- 8.** To this end, **Honourable Members**, I now direct all Committees to consider and conclude on all legislative proposals before them and to submit their reports as soon as possible, given that the timelines for considering the Bills lapsed a long time ago. Going forward, may I remind Committee Chairpersons that Committees are under obligation to adhere to the thirty (30) day timeline without fail.
- 9.** Further, all Committees that have Bills pending public participation are directed to expedite the process of consideration and table reports on the respective Bills within the timelines spelt out in Standing Order 127(4), in order to facilitate prioritization of the Bills for Second Reading.
- 10. Honourable Members**, as the House creates time for individual Member Bills, the onus is on the Members to avail themselves in the House and prosecute their respective businesses once scheduled.

11. I hasten to state that, whenever a sponsor of a Bill or other business, listed in the Order Paper is absent from the House without permission of the Speaker when the business is scheduled, such business shall stand deferred and will not be prioritised again.

The House is accordingly guided.

I thank you!


THE RT. HON. (DR.) MOSES M. WETANG'ULA, EGH, MP
SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 2nd August, 2023