

PARLIAMENT OF KENYA

THE SENATE

THE HANSARD

Tuesday, 3rd March, 2020

Sen. Olekina: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. Let me thank Sen. Halake for bringing up this matter since it should make us think about how we can avoid these things from happening.

The moment we treat public information as public information, is the day that we can ensure that we develop as a nation that is open. We talk about a cloud solution. Any person with a business will treat paper as secondary information.

I think it is an opportunity for us to look at the PFM Act and maybe amend the section that requires every county government to back up their financial records to make sure that we are very specific in terms of how records that are held by all the 47 counties should be kept.

I dare say that the best way, and the only way that we can ensure that we do not get into *pinky-ponky* games with governors, saying that there were fires in records offices, is by making sure that there is a public portal that all these governors post all the records for all the programmes that they fund. For example, if it is Narok County financial records, anyone in Kenya should be able to access them and say: “These tender documents were issued, these are the companies that applied and there is a clear status report on how each of the projects are progressing.”

This is to ensure that in the event that there is a fire, we do not really care about the secondary documents which are kept under lock and key. When I hear people saying that they have lost all financial records and cannot trace them, it makes me wonder. This information is found at the Kenya Revenue Authority, the Central Bank, Office of the Controller of Budget and the Office of the Auditor-General, where you can recreate all those documents.

Instead of spending public money to recreate those documents, I think it is about time that we should find a solution. Even if we lament and raise these issues on the Floor of this House, unless we have a concrete solution or way forward, we cannot achieve anything.

I am happy that Sen. Kinyua has said that we will call all the governors involved, talk to them and find out what happened. However, instead of calling all those governors, the Committee should come up with a solution.

My suggestion to them is to look at the existing legislations. How do we make sure that it is watertight, so that when you are tasked with a fiduciary responsibility, you

cannot come back and say that we cannot account to the Auditor-General because our documents were burnt down during the recent fire?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Committee that will be looking into this matter should not only come up with an explanation as to why these fires are occurring, but also come up with a solution as to how we will prevent these things or public money from being lost in such dubious activities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.