

# PARLIAMENT OF KENYA

## THE SENATE

## THE HANSARD

Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2021

*The House met at the Senate Chamber,  
Parliament Buildings, at 2.30 p.m.*

*[The Deputy Speaker (Sen. (Prof.) Kamar) in the Chair]*

### PRAYER

**Sen. Olekina:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I need to respond.

**Sen. Olekina:** We follow the Speaker's rules.

**Sen. Olekina:** Sen. Murkomen should withdraw and apologise.

**Sen. Olekina:** On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The biggest problem that we have as leaders is that we allow the colonial mentality to dictate our daily moves. When the former Senate Majority Leader stands on the Floor of the Senate of the Republic of Kenya to say that a distinguished Senator who was elected by the people of Kenya sits like a woman and he is man, it is completely out of this world.

*(Loud Consultations)*

Sen. Murkomen, you need to apologise and withdraw because when I stand here, I represent my people.

**The Deputy Speaker** (Sen. (Prof.) Kamar): Sen. Olekina, kindly address the Chair.

**Sen. Olekina:** Madam Deputy Speaker, as we let this issue rest, we must protect our cultures because one of the reasons why we are here is because we are an African country and we must behave as one. We cannot allow this colonial mentality to dictate us. I beseech you to rule Sen. Murkomen completely out of order. If this was my jungle, I would have thrown Sen. Murkomen out of the house.

**Sen. Olekina:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank you. I rise to support this Bill which is an amendment to the Basic Education Bill, 2020 which was sponsored by my sister, Sen. Kwamboka.

From the onset, let me go one record to congratulate Sen. Kwamboka for thinking out clearly the issue of nutritional values for our children.

When most of us were growing up, we did not have to worry about our own nutritional value in schools, particularly, vitamin D. This is because the then President of Kenya, President Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi ensured that all school going children had a packet of milk.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when I think about the challenges that our children go through during this era, I really feel sorry for them particularly for those children who live in rural areas. Children who walk to school for five kilometers or some of them who live in the schools. They get their tea or porridge in the morning then they come and get their lunch. Thinking about reintroducing milk in the schools does not only build into the nutritional value of children but it also ensures that local businesses can thrive.

Everyone is talking about different forms of economic theories, bottom up, middle up and top down. However, the most important thing is that we all must start thinking local. When I saw this amendment Bill, I thought about our local farmers. If you think about the milk industry which I can confidently speak about. This is a sector that has been undervalued. If you think about more schools in this country that have land, those schools can even have a small dairy plant in the schools. The Ministry of Education can support those schools and set up a small dairy farm, invest in pasture and ensure that those children can get milk.

Madam Deputy Speaker, value addition is key. In Narok County we produce 300,000 liters of milk on a daily basis. One day if you just sit along the road from Narok to Mai Mahiu and you start counting the number of trucks that transport milk from Narok County all the way to Ruiru or Nairobi, you will not come down with less than 50 big trucks. These are trucks that transport over 20,000 liters of milk per truck. You will find the least will transport about 10,000 liters of milk.

This milk is normally collected from small scale farmers at a price of about Kshs26 to Kshs42. You will see this. Then it is brought in and value is added. What if we look back and say let us invest in this industry but to promote our children. You will see mothers particularly in the Maasai community who take their small two or three liters of milk to the market to and sell per cup. You will see them come together and county governments will even have an interest to bring these women together and help them sell this milk.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when you talk about different health benefits for milk, you will find that there are some children who may want to take milk. However, because of them being lactose intolerant, they may not be able to do that. In this case when we legislate in terms of ensuring that children have milk in the schools, we now begin adding value where you can buy a very small equipment and you play with the glucose and lactose and you remove the lactose are able to still give those children milk.

This is an amendment Bill that I hope we can support. It does not just become one of those Bills where we come here, spent a lot of time, it goes to the National Assembly but because of interests it does not proceed into becoming an Act of Parliament. This Bill will not only benefit school going children but it will build our local economies. When I

speaking here, I am a farmer. I invest in dairy farming. My sector is to think about adding value. Instead of counties buying trucks and saying that they are transporting cows or instead of them buying cows.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I always say Government should stay out of business. Government must stay out of business completely. I am a firm believer of a small government. Government should create an environment that will encourage small scale farmers to come together and invest in those sectors. However, when government starts doing this, buying equipment to package milk then you wonder what are small scale farmers going to do.

What is important and I would like to encourage my dear sister in the Third Reading or Committee of the Whole, she can bring in some small amendment into this Bill that we add value. You find a way to invest more in cooperatives, bring in a cooperative aspect in it and encourage county governments to play a key role in the early childhood education. When you look in terms of the services that have been devolved when it comes to education, it is on basic education.

Madam Deputy Speaker, if the county government can rally up and bring all the small scale farmers together and support them. Even come up with schemes. The World Bank always comes up with very interesting programmes. There is the Kenya Devolution Support Program (KDSP) which is funded by the World Bank. These are some of the areas that we should be looking at.

I am aware that the former governor Hon Munya in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries is planning to invest billions of shillings in the dairy sector. Why not look at ways to bring these small scale farmers together and say you are going together to set up a plant and this plant will be specifically to deliver milk to school children. You can package the milk at 250 ml and the packaging is not very expensive. Instead of investing in government running it, you empower these small scale farmers.

Madam Deputy Speaker, one of my biggest pet peeve is that sometimes in this House we sit, pass legislation but we do not follow to implement them. One of the Bills that we passed here and it is now an Act of Parliament is the Warehousing Receipt System Bill. When you travel to Narok during the harvesting season now in August, you will see on the side of the roads, farmers will be putting big canvasses and using it to dry their own wheat.

We would have been really serious and followed up in terms of implementation. If the executive is very serious to implement legislation that comes out of this House, they should have begun by putting together these cooperative groups and investing in those warehouses and receipt.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to beseech all my colleagues that even if this will be the only Bill that the President will sign before he retires, this is something which we really need to push. We are pushing it not because of our own personal interest. Some of us can be clever. We can add more value and sell the milk as butter. However, for the benefit of those young mothers and those Maasai, Kalenjin, Kikuyu women who have got one or two dairy cows or have free range cows. By the way, milk from the free range cows is very nutritious.

When you take the milk of a free range cow, it has got the yellow substance. I think it is Vitamin D that gives what is called beta carotene. Whenever you see butter it has that yellow substance. It is very nutritious because the cows are eating the green grass

or dry grass when they are just free range. Most of our farmers have those cows. Some of us might have a mixture of the zero grazing and the free range cows. However, most of our farmers will see value for their cows. Our mothers will see value for the two or three liters that they milk on a daily basis. This will also help end poverty in this country.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the biggest problem we have in this country is that we tend to create a dependency syndrome where everyone depends on you. We want a small government. Let the private sector thrive. Let us support the local farmers. Let us ensure that those farmers when they go into the market they will not divide their one liter into Kshs20 per cup. They can actually sell this milk. This milk will not come to Nairobi.

Value is added into the one litre of milk that they buy at Kshs26 or Kshs42. When you remove the butter content, most of the milk especially from free range, will have about 3.6 to 4.2 per cent butter content and a protein level of about 3.2 to 4.2 per cent. When you remove that butter content and make butter – we call it *emorno* in Maasai – out of it, the milk which is sold is skimmed milk and it is expensive.

Madam Deputy Speaker, for this Bill to be more effective and have value, I think the sponsor of this Bill, Sen. Kwamboka, should incorporate an area where the Bill encourages cooperatives and women in an area where there is a local school, for them to buy that local milk. We do not want to create a situation where we pass a Bill and then big corporations now find room to start packaging milk for children and disenfranchise the local communities. We need to focus, think and build local.

Without belabouring so much on this matter, I support the Bill and I hope the Senate will support it too.