REPUBLIC OF KENYA

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF LAIKIPIA

THE HANSARD

Wednesday, 19th June, 2024

The House met at the Assembly Chambers at 10.00 a.m.

[The Speaker (Hon. Lantano Nabaala) in the Chair]

PRAYERS

PAPER LAID

BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT ON LAIKIPIA COUNTY BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR 2024/2025

Hon. Nicholas Mwaniki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the following paper.

The report of the Budget and Appropriations Committee on the Budget Estimates for the County Government and the County Assembly tabled in the Assembly on 7th May 2024.

(Hon. Nicholas Mwaniki laid the Paper on the Table)

NOTICE OF MOTION

BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT ON LAIKIPIA COUNTY BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR 2024/2025

Hon. Nicholas Mwaniki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to give notice of the following motion;

THAT pursuant to the provisions of standing order no 207(6), this Assembly adopts the report of the Budget and Appropriations Committee on the Budget Estimates for the County Government and the County Assembly tabled in the Assembly on 7th May 2024.

BILL

First Reading

THE LAIKIPIA COUNTY ALCOHOLIC DRINKS CONTROL BILL, 2024.

Speaker: These bills stands committed to the Committee on Labour.

MOTION

ESTABLISHMENT OF A CHILDCARE FACILITY POLICY

Hon. Leila Hussein: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the following motion;

THAT, AWARE THAT Article 53(1) b & c provides that every child has the right to free and compulsory basic education; and to basic nutrition, shelter and health care;

FURTHER AWARE THAT Part 2 of the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, stipulates that Pre-primary education, village polytechnics, home craft centres and childcare facilities is a function of the County Government;

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NOTHING THAT day care centres have become increasingly popular among urban parents striving to balance their careers with parenting responsibilities;

FURTHER NOTHING THAT this surge in demand has led to a notable increase in day care facilities within urban areas, catering to the needs of parents who seek the convenience of having their children cared for while they pursue their daily work commitments;

COGNIZANT THAT According to a UNICEF report, Kenya has more than a quarter of children under the age of five, or two million children, with stunted growth;

CONCERNED THAT stunting is the most frequent form of under-nutrition among young children which, if not addressed has devastating long-term effects, including diminished mental and physical development;

ALARMED by the rise of children requiring nutrition interventions at Laikipia Health Facilities in the nutrition Department, primarily due to the effects of low-quality care, food insecurity and over nutrition which has led to a concerning scenario of extreme nutrition;

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT enhanced childcare will establish a strong foundation for optimal development, particularly benefiting children in low-income settings and ultimately contributing significantly to the development of human capital; this House urges the County Government to establish childcare facilities policy that will seek to;

i. Ensure that all childcare facilities that meet the criteria set out are registered;
ii. Ensure that the Childcare facility Owners pay registration fee for the business;
iii. Ensure that public health officials do issue certificate of compliance to the owners of child care centre after inspecting and monitoring the centres;
iv. Ensure that public health officials mainstream reporting on childcare centres within the requisite routine-monthly reporting;
v. Give incentives to day care owners to meet the required standards e.g. wavering licensing fees for newly set up centres while they are pursuing capacity strengthening and working closely with Community Health Volunteers for support supervision;
vi. Encouraging Community health volunteers (CHVs) to routinely support child health and nutrition programmes in the day care centres as well as training the centre managers to provide an environment for healthy early childhood development;

This is basically talking about the health of the day care centres because we are having many cases right now where day care centres are being run inside people personal homes. We are not sure of the child's health. We are not sure of the cleanliness of the facility and we are not sure how many people are taking care of the children according to how many children are in that specific day care

As per a conversation I had with the head of the Paediatric department at the General Hospital, they are having a lot of cases of malnutrition children and when they ask parents for details, they find out the parent leaves the child at the day care with food. The parent comes back at 5:00 p.m. to pick up the child from day care. The containers are empty but when they reach home the child is hungry.

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There are also a lot of diseases going round these day-care centres because of the lack of inspection for the cleanliness of the environment surrounding the day care centres. What I am urging is that we actually have to have a plan to purpose. Such that the same way that normal schools and restaurants have health officers coming in for inspections and having to issue a license once they are guaranteed that the school is safe. The school is clean and the food is clean and the handlers know what they are doing.

Its they same way, I hope that will happen for these day cares because these day-cares are popping up left right and centre anyone who has a home right now can start a day-care. They don't need a business permit as far as I have checked. They don't need the health Certificate as far as I have checked, so everybody is opening one in their home. You could be living in a two-bedroom house and housing 30 children in a day. I don't think that is fair in any way.

In conclusion, I ask the Chair of the Health Committee, Hon. Lempaira, to second.

Hon. Nicholas Lempaira: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in support of the motion. Thank you.

(Question proposed)

Speaker: I open the floor for Members to contribute to this motion.

Hon. Paul Leshuel: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to support this even though it has taken me a few minutes to understand what daycare is. Finally, however, I have come to understand that it concerns those women who do not want to commit to their children due to many other things that they want to do. It is very important because this is a generation that we need to take care of from the beginning. If you neglect a child at an early stage, you allow a chance for them to have complications, diseases and other things.

Mr. Speaker, we need a policy because someone can just wake up tomorrow and start a facility that handles many people without considering many factors, especially health. So, it is very important for the entire government to have policies that guide every institution, and this belongs to the Department of Education. We need to have a policy that guides this, otherwise we will just leave our children there without knowing who is handling them or what type of food they are taking.

Also, who is supervising them? If things go wrong, where will you go? Who knows that your child is there? What is the guiding law? That is why in churches, because there is no law to regulate them, anybody can do or say anything, and can take people wherever they want. So, it is very important for us to have a guideline on this so that we can be sure of the children that are there.

Mr. Speaker, nowadays we have places that we take our boys for circumcision, but nobody knows what they do there or who is taking care of them. There are a lot of things happening in this country. I want to agree with the mover of the motion that we need to have guidelines, policies and laws that enable us to take care of our children. I also want to urge them once again that they need to be committed to their kids.

You know our work is simple. It only happens at night and after that it is about taking care of the children. So, they should commit themselves to take care of the kids. If they do not want to be responsible in that small role and only want to dump a child there; that child might be a president tomorrow. So, they should be committed. I stand to support. Thank you.

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Hon. Nicholas Mwaniki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this is a timely motion because of the times we are living. We were told to check in this country that our ladies are the most vulnerable people in the society. When it comes to childcare, balancing between jobs and taking care of the child is still hectic because we need finances and still, we need to take care of our kids. That is why we have come of age as society.

There is establishment of day-care facilities in our towns so that our people are able to juggle between family care and jobs. That is why we need accountability when it comes to establishment of day care facilities in our county. Taking care of a child is one thing. Doing it the right way still is another thing. It is a matter of security. From whatever has been happening in this country; theft of kids is rampant. Child trafficking is rampant. We need to know if at all we have a day-care, is registered or does the government know? Is it licensed? Do the CHVs – Community Health Volunteers visit the facility to check if they meet the standards required by the health department so as to take care of the health of our kids in the right way?

Mr. Speaker, it is time that each and every person wishing to establish a day-care in this County has to follow the right procedures of licensing so that we are able to verify if at all he/ she is a person who can be able to take care of a child. They should also be certified if at all the person is of the right mind for him to establish a day-care facility in this county.

Mr. Speaker, we are nurturing our kids and still we need to earn. The right procedure should be followed to the letter so that we can have day-care facilities that are up to the standards so that we can be able to serve our young kids. Thank you, I support.

Hon. Catherine Umija: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I rise to support this motion brought by Hon. Leila. It is timely as the other Members have said. Childcare responsibility, long time ago it was left to the community. Our community comprised off our grandparents, neighbours and everyone within the community. Times have changed and this generation has become individualistic meaning that people are considering their problems not shared within the society. Even the problems of the children are left with the parents.

Mr. Speaker, with this set up, more women have gone back to work to take the responsibility. Hon. Shuel was saying men are not taking their responsibility and it because they are not providing for their women so that we don't go to work. We can take care of the children but now we are forced to work and support our spouses. We have not neglected our work of childcare and I hope men also can take more responsibility of ensuring that our children are taken care of. It is also the work of the men.

In regards to childcare facilities, this is very important. Several of us as women, we have taken our children to childcare facilities within this county. Unfortunately, most of these facilities are not registered. We are not sure. As Hon. Leila had said earlier that these facilities just crop up from the homes. If I want to do business today, I will wake up and say the easiest to do is to put up a childcare facility.

Let me say that is a noble idea but I think it needs regulation. Some of these people opening up in these facilities, we do not know their criminal background. We only get word from other women that a certain women can take care of our children well and we just put our children there not knowing what the child goes through.

Most of the children as you see will contact diseases from the childcare facilities which still spread within our homes. It is important that we have clear regulations. We have these people opening the facilities to ensure that they go through the necessary training in terms of doing childcare training so that they know how to take care of these children. Sometimes

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accidents occur. I have heard of certain cases where children died in childcare facilities because of chocking from food. It is a serious case. When it happens, it depends with how fast you will administer first aid for the child. Sometimes, these childcare personnel do not know how to handle emergency cases within their facilities.

It is important that the county creates clear guidelines and policy on how these childcare facilities will be run. We don't want them to be expensive so that they cannot be opened but we still need the support of these facilities but run in the right way with the help of the ministry of Health, we will be able to know what is required to run these day-cares for our children. Thank you.

Hon. Daniel Mugweru: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise in support of this motion. We must agree that we are in a generation of busy people working, irresponsible, careless and all those things that are causing issues. We must agree that it is the generation that is here and living at this time. It is not the fault of the kid. Kids are very innocent. We must come up with a strategy to ensure the innocent kids get the best from this nation even if they don't get the best from their parents.

Hon. Speaker, the challenge that we are having is that the generation we are having today is whereby men and women are running away from their responsibility and also working hard. Instead of working hard for their kids to grow well, they are working hard to maintain their beauty. Therefore, we are in a generation of irresponsible people. Today you will find a man and a woman who got married two years ago but immediately they got a kid, the wife decides to run away and leaves behind a two-year old kid with the man.

The same way you will find a man, after the wife gets a kid, he runs away from the woman and therefore it is an irresponsible generation. The kids are very innocent and therefore it is the high time we come up with a policy and good laws which will protect those innocent kids.

Hon. Speaker, those day-care facilities, that is a business for them and they are doing good for our kids. The only thing we need to do is to register all those daycares so that our kids may get the best from them. Today, everyone is busy and needs to work but as much as you need to work, when you got the kid, you knew very well that you must take responsibility of that kid. Because you want to be busy on that end, not busy on the kid, then it is our responsibility as a government because we are representatives of people including those kids.

When we get an irresponsible generation, we must take care of kids who are innocent and the only way to take charge is by ensuring that all day-care facilities in this county are registered. After registration, there should be follow up on what they are doing because the nation that we are having, when it comes to service to those kids, most of us are running away. When you hear that that kid has grown up to be a better person, that is when you see a man or a woman walking saying that this is my child. I am proud of my son or my daughter but when the kids needed them the most, they were nowhere to be seen.

So, Hon. Speaker, it is for us as an Assembly to come up with a good policy so that those young ones may get the best. We are the representatives of the old and the young. The best we can give them is ensuring that all the proposals which have been here including the CHVs where most of the times are not very busy, we engage them into the day-care facilities. I really support this motion and believe that the Hon. Members will see the importance of this motion. Thank you.

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Hon. Anthony Theuri: Thank you, Hon. Speaker. I rise in support of this motion. Mr. Speaker, you need to protect me from Hon. Majority because he is joking when we are discussing about the future generation. It is very unfortunate although it was a private business during our tea break yesterday. We happened to discuss about the family and children and you know he is going north while we are going south or vice versa. Instead of adding children, he is adding wives and that is not the society of the things which we are discussing here.

Hon. Speaker, speaking of the day-cares and the childcares, it is a very sensitive issue. I support although I am having my concerns. Yesterday, we had a very busy day in Kenya and we saw something because we are taking a new trajectory as a nation. The generation is changing and they are calling them the Gen Z. If we are serious, as an Assembly of Laikipia we need to make serious decisions.

Mr. Speaker, we have got private and public schools. We have got private and public hospitals. If we decide as a County Government of Laikipia that we are doing one ECDE, we make it mandatory that we have a public day-care that is going to be emulated by the private day-care. I happen to come from a village where the population is very high and I can tell you that the child mortality is very high. You cannot go two days without having a burial of a child and if you happen to investigate, it will be carelessness, the environment but we cannot blame the father nor the mother because the situation in Kenya is bad.

If we are serious on this issue, then we need to lead from the front. We make it a law that in every ECDE, we have a day-care and somebody employed by the government and the ministry of health to follow up. On the same, as we happen to enjoy a creche in this facility, then we have to make it mandatory that in every institution, be it a police headquarters, the horticulture facilities, private or public facilities, we must protect our generation and make it a priority. Just as we have fire extinguishers and the CCTVs, we must make our children our priority by providing the necessities.

Even if we discuss here with our good English or Swahili, whatever we are doing here without taking action, it is null and void. If we mean business, right now we are speaking about Rumuruti, in Likii, we are discussing about Likii plots. Everywhere if we are having a public institution, then we must leave an area for children's playground or the day-cares. I have been discussing here and had said this time immemorial. It is very unfortunate that it is not even captured in the budget today. We must make the children feeding programme a necessity. There is still drought and if we could afford a cup of porridge or a meal per day, then we are serious about the children of this society and our generation and whatever we are discussing here.

As I support, I would also like to challenge the mover of this motion also to go back and draft another motion for the things that I just highlighted here to be made a law. That is the only way we are going to protect our society and eliminate the street children and also encourage the likes of Hon. Majority here instead of adding wives, to add children because they will be living in a better society.

That is the only way we are going to eliminate the street children. That is the only way we are going to encourage the likes of the Majority Leader to instead of adding wives, they add children because they are living in a better society. Mr. Speaker, that is my priority and in fact, that is the discussion I am having between my mind and my family.

Before I reach fifty years and if God wishes, I would like to have twelve children. The population is going down and not going upward. That is the only way and we shall start with this Assembly, families and then our streets. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support and

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congratulate the mover because this is a good motive. She means well for this society, for Laikipia, this country and for everyone.

Hon. Benson Kuria: Mheshimiwa Spika, ninashukuru kwa kunipatia hii nafasi. Nasimama kuunga mkono mswada ambao umeletwa na Mheshimiwa Leila, mtuele wa Chama cha UDA. Mheshimiwa Spika, nimepata mambo matatu ambayo nimenukuu yameweza kunifurahisha. Nimepata ya kwamba kuna lishe bora, makazi bora na afya bora. Kwa sababu niko na mama na yule ambaye ameleta huu mswada ni mama, ninajua ya kwamba hili ni jambo la kujivunia.

Lishe bora, makazi bora na afya bora inaanzia kwa mama wakati ameshika mimba. Anaweza kupangia mtoto kiumbe kikiwa ndani yake kwa miezi tisa. Hapo mimi ninatembea tu kwa sekunde chache. Mheshimiwa Spika, hii ni kumaanisha ya kwamba mama ni mtu yuko na nguvu. Hili ni jambo la kunukuu na kutafakari ili kujua ya kwamba yule ambaye ameleta huo mswada ni mtu ambaye anafaa kuwa na mamlaka makuu.

Bwana Spika, nasema hivi kwa sababu baada ya miezi tisa na kile kiumbe kuja katika ulimwengu na kipate kuona jua, yule mama bado anasukumana na kiumbe kwa lishe bora, makazi bora na afya bora. Mheshimiwa Spika, baada ya hapo anakaa na yule mtoto kwa miaka mitatu ama minne na kuweza kumpeleka shule ya chekeshea. Shule ya chekeshea ni msingi wa elimu. Ninajua sababu ya kuunga mkono huu mswada.

Sasa nikitafakari na kuangalia kwetu mahali nimetoka, elimu, kulishwa bora na afya bora ni lazima. Mahali pale ni shida kupata shule ya chekeshea. Majukumu ambayo mzazi amefanya tangu mtoto akiwa tumboni amefanya kazi yake ili kuweza kufikisha mtoto shule. Akifika hili jambo linafaa kuwa kwenye rekodi na ninukuliwe vizuri kwa sababu si vyema wakati mama amefanya kazi yake ya kuzaa mtoto na kumpeleka shule lakini baada ya kufika shule, yule ambaye anafaa kuwa na majukumu hatekelezi.

Mheshimiwa Spika, ninasihi katika jimbo hili kuwe ni lazima kila eneo watoto wawe na lishe bora na afya bora ili tuone ya kwamba jimbo letu liko sawa. Ninashukuru na ninaunga mkono huu mswada.

Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Benson. I would like to give the floor to the mover of the motion to reply.

Hon. Leila Hussein: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very glad because of the contribution of the Members today. They have really opened my eyes more to other issues I need to note. I want to assure everybody that the next step is to create a policy and put it into law to ensure that all that has been said here today is put into place in order to secure the future of our next generation. Thank you.

(Question put and agreed to)

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

POWERS AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE'S MEETING

Speaker: Thank you, very much. Before we move to the next order, I just want to remind the Powers and Privileges Committee that we are meeting at the main boardroom.

ADJOURNMENT

Speaker: The sittings of this House now stand adjourned until later today Wednesday, 19th June, 2024 at 2.30 p.m.

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The House rose at 10.40 a.m.

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