

FEDERAL COLLEGES OF EDUCATION ACT (AMENDMENT) BILL

LEAD DEBATE

Sponsor: Sen. Muhammad Ubali Shitu

Protocol

Mr. president, Distinguished Colleagues, permit me to lead a debate on a Bill for an Act to amend the Federal Colleges of Education Act Cap F8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004, to establish a Federal Collage of Education in Malam Madori, Jigawa State to address the current imbalance in the establishment and distribution of federal institutions in the state.

Mr. President, my Distinguished Colleagues, let me crave your indulgence to highlight the background of this bill which I believe will not only provide a jurisdiction for this laudable legislative initiative but will also motivate the National Assembly to accelerate the legislative process in passing this bill into law.

Background

Education is recognized anywhere in the world as a major pillar for national development. It is in recognition of this reality that the Federal Government of Nigeria formulated a National Education Policy that facilitates the establishment of 20 Federal Colleges of Education across the country. These institutions are categorized into special in Oyo, 8 technical in Gombe (Gombe), Akoka Yaba (Lagos), Asaba, (Delta), Bichi, (Kano), Potiskum, (Yobe), Omoku, (Rivers) and Umunze, (Anambra) States. The remaining 11 are vested with general powers to train Nigerians aspiring to become teachers in all aspects of education.

However, while the Federal Government must be commended for establishing Secondary and tertiary educational institution nationwide, a need has arisen to lament the concerns of people of Jigawa North-East Senatorial District in relation to educational under development.

Jigawa State like any other state in the federation comprised of three Senatorial districts namely; Jigawa North-East, Jigawa North-West and Jigawa Central. It is of interest to note that all the federal educational institutions are concentrated in two senatorial districts leaving the remaining one with none.

Mr. President, Distinguished Colleagues, it is imperative to further state that out of these Senatorial districts, Jigawa Central has a Federal University, Dutse, Federal University Teaching Hospital, Dutse, Federal Medical Center Birnin-Kudu and Federal Government College Kiyawa. Jigawa North West has Federal Polytechnic and a Federal Government Girls College both in Kazaure. However, Jigawa North-East Senatorial District has no single federal educational institution or any other one for that matter despite its dense population and apparently having more educational potentials than the remaining senatorial districts.

This development has no doubt created imbalance in the establishment and distribution of federal educational institutions in Jigawa State. It has also under developed the Senatorial District whose people are in dire need of tertiary institution to fill huge illiteracy gap and address the concern of those whose future is bleak without establishing a tertiary educational institution that guarantees continuity of youths education in the senatorial district and the neighbouring states of Yobe, Bauchi and Kano states.

Against this background, the bill is proposed to address this challenge by establishing a Federal College of Education in Mallam Madori, North-East Senatorial District of Jigawa State.

The proposal is also necessary to up-date the enabling legal regime that established the 20 existing Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria. The creation of new states and boundary adjustments requires the Act to be amended to align the institutions with present states where they are located.

Objectives of the Bill

The bill seeks to:

- Amend the Federal Colleges of Education (Establishment) Act Cap F8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to align the existing Federal Colleges affected by states creation and boundary adjustment with states in which they are located.
- Establish Federal College of Education Mallam Madori in Jigawa State to fill the gap of non-existing federal institution in the Jigawa North-East Senatorial District.
- Creates a favourable atmosphere for educational development in the Senatorial District and some neighboring states.
- Address the concerns of the teeming population in Jigawa North-East Senatorial District which is badly affected by non-existing federal tertiary institution.
- Ensure the practicalization of inclusiveness under the national educational policy which seeks to ensure the provision of education for all members of the society regardless of age or physical ability.
- Facilitate the realization of girl-child education which is currently low due to absence of tertiary educational institutions in Jigawa North East Senatorial District and its neighbouring communities.

Structure of the Bill

The bill has three clauses.

Clause 1 amends the Federal Colleges of Education Act which established all the 20 existing Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria

Clause 2 amends the first schedule to the Act to align existing Colleges with states of their location and establish Federal College of Education Mallam Madori in Jigawa State to address imbalance in the establishment and distribution of federal tertiary institutions in Jigawa State.

Lastly, clause 3 provides the citation.

Cost Implication

The legislative proposal seeks to establish a Federal College of Education in Mallam Madori, Jigawa State. The communities within the senatorial district in which the proposed institute is to be cited conclude arrangement to provide the necessary infrastructure to host the institute as its temporary site pending when budgetary allocations are made for the permanent site. It is worthy here to note that the donation of a befitting building structure to kick start the operations of the college by host community is both a laudable initiative worthy of emulation by other communities and a demonstration of good will, patriotism and desperate need to have this institution by the entire people of Jigawa North-East Senatorial District.

Conclusion

Mr. President, Distinguished Colleagues, the bill is important given its rich content in updating the existing law and the establishment of a Federal College of Education in Jigawa North-East Senatorial District. This development will not only address the imbalance in the establishment and distribution of tertiary institutions in Jigawa State but will go along way in facilitating educational development in the district, the state and neighboring states in the Country.

I appreciate your cooperation and hope the bill will be passed into law.