

LEAD DEBATE ON THE NATIONAL ENERGY BILL, 2017 (SB. 431)

Sponsor: Sen. Ibrahim Gobir (*Sokoto East*).

Mr. President, Distinguished colleagues, permit me to lead the debate on the general principles of this important Bill which seeks to provide for Legal, fiscal and regulatory framework for the sustainable energy development with the overall objective of providing clean, affordable, adequate and reliable energy in Nigeria.

The Bill was read for the First Time on the floor of the Senate on Thursday, 9th March, 2017.

Energy is a common currency not only in Nigeria but all over the world because without energy there will be no growth and development in the World. Developed countries ^{are} moving progressively today because they have adequate energy to play with and those countries that are struggling with energy problems are virtually behind because they cannot cope up with their energy challenges.

Nigeria is certainly the giant of Africa in terms of all the resources you can think of, it is also the most populous black nation on earth and the most resourceful of all the countries in Africa but when it comes to the issue of energy the country is certainly one of the least because the energy is not enough to go round in this country. Hence the need to have this energy bill that will consider all the various energy sources we have in this Country and suggest its effective and efficient utilization.

REASONS FOR OUR BACKWARDNESS IN ENERGY.

Your Excellency, Distinguished Colleagues, Nigeria is today backward in Energy because it has refused to utilize its abundant energy resources and the right energy mix particularly in producing electricity for the country.

It is important to know that the level of energy utilization in an economy coupled with the efficient energy conversion of these energy resources for useful purposes is directly proportional to the level of development of that economy. It is also an indicator of its ability to overcome all the likely

challenges associated with the use of energy. Nigeria with its abundant energy resources cannot allow it's self to be left behind in the use and exploitation of this very important commodity.

Nigeria is supposed to be the main energy producer in Africa but unfortunately cannot even supply its own energy needs less talk of giving other smaller countries in Africa. This is simply because we somehow either refuse to develop or do not have the political will to develop it. However, with this energy bill I am confident that Nigeria should and must develop its energy base and get out of the present cog mare. I also believe that with this present APC Government of change under the able leadership of President Muhamadu Buhari, there will be that political will needed to pursue this energy bill strictly.

STRUCTURE OF THE BILL

This bill is structured into twelve sections with each section well explained in detail to ensure effective and efficient utilization of each source of energy. The first part of the bill deals with the objectives of the bill and the remaining sections deal with development and exploration of each energy source and how to achieve its potential in terms of short, medium and long term objective.

The energy sources and other related topics are as follows:

1. Petroleum product
2. Coal, Tar Sand and Bitumen
3. Nuclear Energy
4. Renewable Energy
5. Bio-Energy
6. Electrical Energy
7. Energy Utilization
8. Energy efficiency and Conservation
9. Environmental, Climate change and other energy issues.
10. Energy Financing

11. Planning and Implementation.

In addition, the responsibilities of Government have been spelt out in order to achieve full potentials of each energy source. This has become necessary so that private sector and international communities to what Government will do to provide necessary incentives that will attract them to invest in the sectors. Private sectors both local and international will be involved to ensure efficiency and rapid development of the particular energy source because they are the main drivers of the economy.

There is no financial implication on this bill since the Agency that is to monitor the implementation of this Energy policy is already in place which is the National Energy commission of Nigeria.

Your Excellency, Distinguished colleagues this bill is important because it is going to revolutionize our Energy sector for our economy to move faster and foster growth and development. I therefore call on all my colleagues to support it so that it can be given a speedy passage.

Thank you and God bless.