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LEAD DEABTE ON A BILL FOR AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE, BILLIRI, GOMBE STATE (HB. 677)

Right Honourable Speaker, Honourable Colleagues, I feel highly honoured and privileged to lead the debate on the General Principles of the Bill for an Act to Establish the Federal Medical Centre, Billiri, Gombe State Bill, 2020 (HB. 677). The Bill was read the first time on Wednesday, 12 February, 2020.

Mr Speaker, Hon. Members, it is worthy to note that health is a crucial matter in any nation. It plays a critical role in a relatively long period within and without of every season. It is largely known as an indispensable tool which will not only remedy or cure the nation's social, political, moral, cultural and economic aspirations but will also educate the citizenry knowledge, skills, and desirable values in health that will foster national development and self-skill development.

Mr Speaker, Hon. Members, it goes a long way to say that without a good health and sound education in health sector, a nation cannot achieve the much needed manpower in the country.

However, Billiri Local Government Area of Gombe State despite its strategic location in Gombe South Senatorial district, dense and growing population and apparently having more health challenges has no tertiary health facility to provide qualitative health services.

Mr Speaker, My Hon colleagues, you will agree with me that the distance of health facilities to residents is one of the major factors that affect utilization of health services and ultimately health outcomes; increased distance leads to decreased utilization. Thus, the physical access to this infrastructure will play a significant role in improving the health status of the masses.

Research has shown that tertiary health facilities make up only 0.25% of health facilities in the country. The low number of tertiary health facilities per unit population can lead to lengthy wait time for specialized care and thus more needs to be done to provide more tertiary facilities in the country.

The Establishment of Federal Medical Centre Billiri will go a long way to reduce the burden on the over-stretched Federal Teaching Hospital Gombe and other health facilities in the North-eastern part of the country, and people of southern Adamawa and part of Taraba State can easily access services in the facility.

Mr Speaker, Hon. Members, my constituents are in dire need of a medical centre to fill huge gap and address the concern of those whose future will be guaranteed by establishing a Federal Medical Centre.

The objectives of the Medical Centre are to:

- (a) Equip, maintain and operate the medical centre so as to provide facilities for diagnosis, curative and rehabilitative services in medical treatment;
- (b) Construct, equip, maintain and operate such centre and similar institutions with proper staff, technicians and nurses;
- (c) Operate such clinics, out-patient departments, laboratories, research or experimental stations like other institutions for the efficient functioning of the medical centre;
- (d) Ensure that medical standards provided at all establishment under its control and the standard of treatment and cure provided for patients at those establishments do not fall below those usually provided by similar establishment of international repute;

- (e) Provide the general policies and guidelines relating to major expansion programmes of the medical centre;
- (f) Provide facilities for the training of medical students of associate institutions;
- (g) Manage and superintend the affairs of the Medical Centre;
- (h) Subject to the provisions of this Bill, make, alter and revoke rules and regulations for carrying on the functions of the Medical Centre; and
- (i) Do such other things which in the opinion of the Management are necessary to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of the Medical Centre.

The Rt Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members, once the Medical Centre is established, it will not only bridge the gap in the non-existence of health institutions in the Federal Constituency but will also provide Gombe State and the neighbouring States health security.

I humbly urge my Colleagues to support that the Bill be read a second time.

Thank you.



Hon. Victor Danzaria Mela

