

LEAD DEBATE ON A BILL TO ESTABLISH THE NORTH WEST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (NWDC) BILL, 2020.

Sponsor: Sen. Barau, I. Jibrin (*Kano North*).

Mr. President, my highly respected colleagues, permit me to lead the debate on this very important Bill before us today Sponsored by myself and Co-sponsored by the entire North West Senators.

This Bill was read for the First Time in this Chamber on Tuesday, 26th November, 2019.

Essentially, the Bill seeks to provide for the establishment of North West Development Commission to act as a catalyst to develop the arrays of potentials of the North West as well as address the gap in infrastructural development of the region.

The North West as a region has contributed immensely to the overall development of Nigeria in terms of Agriculture and other areas of endeavour yet the region remains hugely underdeveloped. What the region requires now from the Federal Government is the support to develop its infrastructure and educate its seeming youths so as to drive the process of developing the zone in its entirety in order to grow at par with the more developed zones in the country.

The infrastructure of the zone has been immensely destroyed by the activities of the Boko Haram Insurgents, armed Bandits and Kidnappers across the region leading to exodus of investors, businessmen, managers of companies and employees. This destruction is having a major impact on the economy of the region as it has led to severe food shortages, unemployment in a region that has traditionally produced cash and food crops across the Sahel. Also, some parts of the region are currently facing the problem of desertification. All these have contributed to make agriculture and other economic activities to suffer thereby creating more poverty in the zone.

The Federal Government is in the right position to show concern in the face of the plethora of problems and challenges facing this geo-political zone by creating the North West Commission to appropriately address the developmental needs of the zone. Nigeria has abundant capacity to beam a sympathetic focus by beginning to address these issues in a more holistic and

systematic manner. The public works projects to be executed by this Commission will engage the youths in a more serious fashion and help to develop the needed human capital so as to curb the current cases of banditry, kidnapping and other criminal activities that has created a security situation that is not conducive for growth and development in the region. The peaceful co-existence of the Nigerian State will be enhanced with the establishment of this Commission.

The functions of the Commission shall among other things be:

- a. Formulate policies and guidelines for the development of the North West Zone where security shall prevail;
- b. Conceive, plan and implement, in accordance with the set rules and regulations, projects and programmes for the sustainable development of the North West in the field of roads, education, health facilities, employment, industrialization, agriculture, housing and urban development, water supply, electricity and commerce;
- c. To identify factors inhibiting the development of the region and assist the member States in the formulation and implementation of policies to ensure sound and efficient management of resources of the North West Zone;
- d. Tackle ecological and environmental problems that arise from the desertification problems and other related environmental challenges in the Zone.
- e. To facilitate the rapid and sustainable development in the North West into a region that is economically prosperous, educationally advanced, socially stable and politically peaceful;
- f. Provide a master plan for the reduction of unemployment while also providing schemes to promote physical development of the North West;
- g. Identify factors inhibiting the development of the North West Zone and assist the member states in the formulation and implementation of policies

to ensure sound and efficient management of the resources of the North West; and

h. To carry out such functions as the President may from time to time direct.

The massive growth and activity of the agricultural sector evidenced with endless groundnut and cotton production have given way while growth of local industries like textile and leather production has been stalled.

It should be noted that the Zone has the highest population of people amongst the six geo-political zone in the country. The youths consist of 70% of the population of the people of the zone. The sad fact is that majority of these youths are uneducated in a region that has the highest out of school children in the country. The establishment of this Commission shall help to address this problem by educating these youths so as to develop the needed human capital to drive the developmental needs of the region in particular and Nigeria in general. These youths should be assets to Nigeria rather than liabilities.

The enactment of this Bill will help to rebuild the North West Zone and shall provide opportunity for the people of the Zone to display their talents and contribute immensely to the development of the country.

In line with Order 77(3) of our standing Orders, the financial compendium for the establishment of this Commission is hereby attached.

I therefore urge my colleagues to support this Bill for the Second Reading.

Thank You.

COMPENDIUM DISPLAYING A SYNOPSIS OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF A PROPOSED BILL FOR AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE NORTH WEST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION.

In compliance with Order 77(3) of the Standing Order of the Senate 2007 (as amended) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with respect to the procedure on Bills, Compendium and Consolidation.

It is worthy of note that the compilation shown below is a summary of the contemplated Overhead Costs, Recurrent and Capital Expenditure of the Commission.

Capital Estimate:

1.	Office Space and Setting	—	N14, 000,000.00
2.	Office Furniture	—	N22, 850,000.00
3.	Office Equipment	—	N10, 437,000.00
4.	Communication Facilities	—	N3, 338,000.00
5.	Operation Vehicles	—	N23, 250,016.00
	Sub-Total	—	N73, 875,016.00

Recurrent Estimate:

6.	Training	—	N10, 000,000.00
7.	Emolument and Allowances	—	N74, 167,034.32
	Sub-Total	—	N84, 167,034.32
	GRAND Total	—	N158, 042,050.32

SURMISES

The forgoing compilation proffers a fair approximation of the financial implications for the establishment of the Commission.

To all intents and purposes, the financial outlay estimated and projected is a modest one appropriate for the effective discharge and performance of the duties contemplated in the Act.