

LEAD DEBATE ON THE SOLID MINERALS PRODUCING AREAS DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EST. ETC.) BILL, 2021 (SB. 713).

Sponsor: Sen. Yakubu, Oseni (Kogi Central)

Mr. President, permit me to lead the debate on the Solid Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (Establishment) Bill, 2021 (SB. 713).

This Bill was read for the First time in this Hallowed Chamber on Wednesday, 5th May, 2021.

The Bill seeks to provide for the accelerated development of the Nigerian Solid Mineral Sector so as to diversify the Nigerian Economy and reduce the over dependence on the dwindling oil revenues.

I make bold to say that Nigeria is richly endowed with a variety of solid minerals of various categories ranging from precious metals to various precious stones and industrial minerals. The Nigerian Extractive Industries and Transparency Initiative (NEITI) reported that there are approximately 40 different kinds of solid minerals and precious metals buried in Nigerian soil waiting to be exploited.

The sector offers a viable alternative to petroleum for foreign exchange earnings. Globally, the mining industry has been a close rival to the petroleum industry, while Nigeria only earns a paltry \$89 million per annum from it. The commercial value of Nigeria's solid minerals has been estimated to run into hundreds of Billions of dollars.

The Objective of this Bill includes but not limited to:

- Formulation of policies and guidelines for the development of the Mineral Producing Areas;
- Conception, planning and implementation, in accordance with set rules and regulations, of projects and programmes for sustainable development of the Minerals Producing areas in the field of transportation including roads, health, employment, industrialization, agriculture and fisheries, housing and urban development, water supply, electricity and telecommunications;

- Surveying the Minerals Producing areas, in order to ascertain measures necessary to promote its physical and socio-economic development;
- Preparing master plans and schemes designed to promote the physical development of the Minerals producing areas and the estimation of the member states of the Commission; and
- Implementation of all the measures approved for the development of the Minerals Producing areas by the Federal Government and the member states of the Commission.

The mining sector is responsible for some of the largest releases of heavy metals into the environment of any industry. It also releases other air pollutants including sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide in addition to leaving behind tons of waste tailings, slag, and acid drainage. Occupational and environmental exposure to heavy metals, silica, and asbestos can occur during mining and milling operations. The smelting process (extracting the metal from the ore) is associated with the highest exposures and environmental releases.

The hazards to human health caused by exposure to heavy metals -including lead, cadmium and mercury - have been thoroughly documented by experts. These metals are associated with a range of neurological deficits in both children and adults in addition to a range of other systemic effects. Exposure to airborne silica and asbestos can cause lung cancer, pneumoconiosis and numerous other health effects.

More commonly, small-scale gold mining utilizes significant quantities of mercury to extract gold from the ore. Exposure to mercury in these operations not only endangers miners and their families, but is also detrimental to the environment when deposited into the water supply which cannot be avoided. Artisanal gold mining employs and estimated 10-15 million miners in more than 55 countries. Estimates are that these small operations produce about 20 per cent of the world's gold supply.

According to the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), small-scale gold processing operations in developing countries employ one million children. Children, who are more susceptible to the impacts of heavy metals, tend to have higher exposures and generally account for the majority of deaths and disease associated with mass poisoning incidents from these operations. Studies have

documented that children involved in mining have higher exposures to mercury, lead, and other metals and suffer severe lead and mercury intoxication.

Mining is an inherently invasive process that can cause damage to a landscape in an area much larger than the mining site itself. The effects of this damage can continue years after a mine has shut down, including the addition to greenhouse gasses, death of flora and fauna, and erosion of land and habitat.

Most modern mining techniques have high water demands for extraction, processing and waste disposal. Wastewater from these processes can pollute water sources nearby and deplete freshwater supplies in the region surrounding areas near the mines thus the need for a special agency to cushion in the effect of the environmental degradation which affects farming and other activities in most mining areas as can be visibly seen in many mining sites across Nigeria.

In line with our order 77(3), the compendium of financial implication is hereby attached.

I thank you for your attention and therefore solicit your support for the Second Reading of the Bill.

COMPENDIUM DISPLAYING A SYNOPSIS OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF A PROPOSED BILL FOR AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE SOLID MINERALS PRODUCING AREAS DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (ESTABLISHMENT) BILL, 2021 (SB. 713).

Sponsor: Sen. Yakubu, Oseni (*Kogi Central*)

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.