

**LEAD DEBATE ON THE NIGERIAN SAFETY INVESTIGATION BUREAU
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026 (SB. 1078).**

Sponsor: Senator Bamidele Michael Opeyemi (Ekiti Central – Senate Leader)

Mr. President, Distinguished Senators, I rise to lead the debate on the Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which seeks to amend the Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (Establishment) Act, No. 35, 2022, to reposition the Bureau as an independent multimodal safety investigation authority, strengthen its institutional, operational and administrative mandates, and provide for related matters.

The Bill was read for the *First Time* on the Floor of the Senate on Thursday, 15th October, 2026.

The establishment of the Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau under the 2022 Act, was a significant step towards strengthening safety investigation in Nigeria. The Bureau plays an important role in investigating accidents and incidents, identifying their underlying causes, and making recommendations aimed at preventing their recurrence across the transportation sector.

Safety investigation is fundamentally a preventive exercise. Its primary purpose is not to apportion blame, but to establish the circumstances and causes of accidents, identify systemic weaknesses, and recommend measures that will improve safety standards and protect human lives.

However, for a safety investigation authority to discharge this responsibility effectively, it must enjoy the requisite institutional independence, operational autonomy, technical capacity and administrative flexibility. Investigations must be conducted objectively, impartially and without undue interference, particularly where the findings may have implications for public institutions, operators or regulatory authorities.

Mr. President, Distinguished Senators, the Bill proposes targeted amendments to the Principal Act to strengthen the Bureau's independence and improve its institutional framework.

Firstly, the Bill seeks to remove certain ministerial approval and recommendation requirements in the appointment and administrative processes of the Bureau. These

amendments are intended to reduce unnecessary administrative bottlenecks and enable the Bureau to discharge its statutory responsibilities more efficiently.

Secondly, it proposes amendments to the appointment of Directors with relevant technical and specialised knowledge. This will enable the Bureau to draw on the expertise required for effective investigations across the different modes of transportation within its statutory mandate.

Thirdly, the Bill strengthens accountability by providing for the submission to the National Assembly of the report and audited accounts of the relevant Fund, together with the auditor's report. This provision reinforces legislative oversight, transparency and prudent financial administration.

Furthermore, the Bill proposes adjustments to the provisions relating to the approval of certain administrative matters by substituting references to the Minister with the President where specified. It also introduces consequential amendments to the terminology and definitions contained in the Principal Act to ensure consistency with the proposed institutional framework.

Distinguished Senators, the broader objective of this Bill is to strengthen Nigeria's capacity to investigate transportation accidents and incidents across the relevant modes of transport, improve the quality and credibility of safety investigations, and ensure that lessons arising from such investigations translate into practical preventive measures.

It is equally important to emphasize that institutional independence must go hand in hand with accountability. As such, the proposed amendments are measures to enhance the Bureau's ability to perform its statutory duties effectively, while also preserving the oversight responsibilities of the National Assembly and the applicable legal and constitutional safeguards.

Mr. President, Distinguished Senators, the passage of this Bill will represent a further step towards strengthening Nigeria's transportation safety architecture and ensuring that the investigation of accidents and incidents is undertaken with the requisite independence, professionalism and technical competence.

It is against this background that I urge Distinguished Senators to support the principles and objectives of the Bill and give it a Second Reading for further legislative consideration.

I so move.