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Lead Debate

ON

AN ACT TO AMEND THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES OF AGRICULTURE ACT, CAPF22 LAWS OF THE FEDERATION OF NIGERIA 2010, TO ESTABLISH FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE NGOR OKPALA IMO STATE AND FOR RELATED MATTERS

Sponsored by: Hon. Matthew Nwogu

Mr. Speaker, Honorable Colleagues.

I rise to lead the debate and seek your support to allow this Bill be read a second time, this Bill was first read at the floor of the House on Tuesday 4th March 2025. **an act to Amend the Federal Universities of Agriculture Act, Capf22 laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2010, to establish Federal University of Agriculture Ngor Okpala Imo State and for related matters**

This Bill seeks to establish a specialized Federal University at Ngor Okpala, Imo State, for teaching, research, innovation and practical training in Agriculture and allied fields. It is a Bill about food security, youth employment, rural transformation, research, and the future of Nigeria's Agricultural economy.

Mr. Speaker, Honorable Colleagues, Agriculture remains central to Nigeria's economy and to the livelihood of millions of Nigerians. Over the years Nigeria has faced persistent challenges in food production, post-harvest losses, low mechanization, limited access to modern farming techniques, climate change, rural poverty, and inadequate agricultural research. These challenges require not only policies and budgets, but also strong institutions that can train the next generation of agriculturists, researchers, extension officers, agribusiness entrepreneurs and food-system innovators.

Ngor Okpala is strategically suitable for such an institution. With land area of about 561Km2, the area has Agricultural products like cassava, yam, maize and palm Oil which can boost food supply and earn foreign exchange for the Nation via export of this products. This Institution can also serve as a hub for Agricultural education, research, extension services and agribusiness development in the South-East and beyond. A Federal University of Agriculture in this location will bring opportunities closer to young people, attract researchers and investment, stimulate local businesses, and create a knowledge ecosystem around Agriculture

The proposed Federal University of Agriculture, Ngor Okpala is intended to respond directly to that National need. Clause 2 of the Bill sets out its objectives: to provide training and instruction in every aspect of Agriculture; to produce socially mature Agriculturists capable of understanding Nigeria's Agricultural needs; to improve and exploit existing agro-infrastructure; and to collaborate with National and international institutions on Agricultural training, research and development.

Mr. Speaker, Honorable Colleagues this Bill is not merely about siting a University in one part of Imo State. It is about establishing an institution with a clear national mandate.

Nigeria needs universities that do more than award certificates. We need institutions that will produce graduates who can cultivate, process, preserve, market, finance, regulate and innovate across the Agricultural value chain. We need graduates who can operate modern farms, develop agro-processing enterprises, apply digital technologies to farming, manage livestock and fisheries, conduct soil and crop research, and create jobs in their communities.

The Bill provides for a University that will offer courses of instruction, training and research in Agriculture and allied areas. It also empowers the University to establish faculties, schools, institutes, research units, laboratories, workshops, farms and other facilities necessary for teaching and research.

Mr. Speaker, Honorable Colleagues, this amendment if allowed will strengthen Agricultural education, research, innovation and food production in Nigeria.

I therefore urge all Honorable Members to support the Second Reading of this Bill. Let us give it the necessary legislative consideration, improve its provisions where necessary.

Mr. Speaker, Honorable Colleagues I humbly seek your support to this Bill.

Hon. Matthew Nwogu