

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020

1.0 JUSTIFICATION FOR AMENDMENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ACT, CAP.243

- 1.1 The Local Governments (Amendment) Bill, 2020 is necessary to align the Local Governments Act Cap 243 and the Local Governments (Amendment) Act, 2020 with the provisions of the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2017. These Amendments are needed urgently for application during the Fourth coming 2021 General Elections.
- 1.2 The Bill will remove the requirement of lower and upper age limits for qualification of a person to be elected Chairperson of a lower Local Government, as currently provided under the Local Governments Act Sec III (4)(c). This is in line with the Constitutional Amendment of 2017 which removed the age limits for District Chairperson and President of Uganda.
- 1.3 The Bill will also reinstate the reservation of one third of membership of councils being reserved for women, as provided under various Sections of the Local Governments Act. This is in line with Art. 180 (2)(b) of the Constitution, which provides that, **“One third of the membership of each Local Government Council shall be reserved for women.”**
- 1.4 Hon. Colleagues, you will recall that in the recent Local Government Act amendment of August this year, we amended the law such that a woman Councilor is directly elected to represent each electoral area in every Local Government. Cabinet’s position is that the Constitutional provision on affirmative action [Art. 180(2)(b)] is adequate for now because of the following:
 - i) **Timing:** The National Independent Electoral Commission electoral process are already underway, including nomination of candidates for various leadership positions in Local Governments.

ii) **Party Primaries:** The political parties have already held their primaries or other arrangements to select their flag bearers, based on the status quo, as per the Electoral Commission guidelines.

iii) **Cost Implication:** The expanded councils will have a significant strain on the budget, especially during this time of the Covid pandemic.

Government appreciates the need to build on the efforts we have made in gender equity and fairness in representation at all Government levels. Government will study this proposal in detail and advise on the appropriate reforms.

2.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 The implementation of the provision contained in this proposal has no additional financial cost.

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 Colleagues this is to request Parliament;

(a) To approve the Local Governments (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to remove the requirement for Lower and Upper Age Limits for a person to Qualify for election as Chairperson of a Municipality, Division, Town Council, or Sub-County;

(b) Reinstate relevant provisions of the Local Governments Act Cap 243 to provide for one third of Council to be reserved for Women.

Rt. Hon. Speaker,

I beg to Move



MOVED BY: Hon. Raphael Magyezi (MP)
Minister of Local Government

23rd September 2020