



GOVERNMENT OF NIUE

MEDIA RELEASE

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NIUE ASSEMBLY PROGRESSES CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS: THIRD READING SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

Alofi, Niue – 7 August 2024 – Today at the Niue Assembly meeting, the Constitution Review Committee (CRC) presented their final report and the Niue Assembly successfully passed the third and final reading of the Bills aimed at amending the Constitution of Niue.

The CRC Committee, chaired by Honourable Billy Talagi, conducted consultations in 13 of the 14 villages, with the village of Makefu being the exception as they had previously provided their views to the CRC. They also engaged with the Niue USP Alumni students. Over 200 people participated in these consultations.



Chair of the CRC, Hon. Billy Talagi highlighted the significance of these discussions, which is the first since 1992. The consultations revealed a broad support for the proposed changes, with some varying opinions.

For the first bill “Change of Title from Premier to Prime Minister”, most villages supported this change, suggesting that an appropriate Niuean word for "Prime Minister" be determined. However, some villagers, were in favour of retaining the current title.

For the second bill to “Increase Cabinet Ministers”, there was general agreement that if the number of ministers is increased, the role of Members Assisting Ministers should be removed from legislation. Some members expressed concern about the feasibility of this change given current public service shortages.

For the third bill which is the “Extension of Assembly Term from 3 to 4 Years”, some supported this change to align with regional and international practices, allowing more time to complete initiatives. Others recommended a more gradual approach to allow people to adjust to the idea.

For the fourth and final bill to “Amend from Audit Office to Auditor-General”, this change was widely supported as it does not alter the existing requirement for auditing government and public funds.

The third reading of the bill received its two thirds majority in order for the bills to be passed. The next step in the Constitutional Amendments process will be for these amendments to be presented to the public for a final vote in the form of a referendum on the 31st August 2024.

Honourable Billy Talagi expressed his gratitude to the villages, the Niue USP Alumni group, Vice-Chair Ms. Kahealani Sinahemana Hekau, CRC members, and the Committee's secretaries from the Niue Legislative Assembly Department for their dedication and hard work.

Premier of Niue, Hon. Dalton Tagelagi commended the CRC Committee and encouraged the community to participate in the upcoming referendum. "I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Constitution Review Committee for their tireless efforts and thorough consultations with our community. Your dedication has been instrumental in bringing these important amendments to this stage. I urge all members of our community to engage in the upcoming referendum. Your vote is crucial in shaping the future governance of Niue. Let us come together and make our voices heard for the betterment of our nation."

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For further information, please contact:

Anzee Mougavalu, GON Communications Officer, Email: NiueGovernment.Media@gov.nu