

SENATOR GEORGE M. WEAH
MONTSERRADO COUNTY

ANNUAL REPORT
2015



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A MESSAGE FROM THE SENATOR

I am thankful to God, Whose Grace has brought us this far as a people. I am especially thankful that His Grace took us through the terrible Ebola Epidemic in 2014.

This Annual Report serves as an outline of what I have accomplished and what I intend to undertake in the future.

Since being elected as Senator of Liberia's core County, Montserrado, home to Liberia's Capital City, Monrovia, and the highest populated County, I have embarked on forming alliances with my colleagues, established the Senator George M. Weah Montserrado County Scholarship Fund that caters to more than four hundred low income students, introduced various community initiatives, and represented the Liberian Senate at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In addition, I have presided over and served as a Member in Senate Committee Rooms deliberations and voted for key Bills passage. I have also been actively involved in conflict resolutions and have maintained cordial working relationships with the 17 Representatives of Montserrado County.

As head of the Montserrado County Legislative Caucus, my aspiration is to support the County Representatives in their developmental undertakings, ensure a fair distribution of development funding amongst the representatives and work with the government to make sure funds are disbursed on time.

As an active Member of the 53rd Legislature of the Liberian Senate, I serve on the following Leadership and Standing Committees:

- Chairman - Standing Committee on Youth & Sports
- Member - Committee on Land, Mines, Mineral Resources and Environment
- Member - Committee on Gender, Health and Social Welfare
- Member - Committee on National Defense, Intelligence, Security & Veteran Affairs
- Member -Transport

I hope this Annual Report will enhance public awareness on the workings of my office, to ensure accountability and transparency to my people.

Thank You.

Amb. George M. Weah
SENATOR, Montserrado County

INTRODUCTION

MONTSERRADO COUNTY

Montserrado County is the most populous of Liberia's fifteen (15) counties and is the home of about 40% of Liberia's total population, which is estimated at about 4 Million people – the majority of whom are young people (45% under 14 years of age, 61% under 24 years of age and about 85% under 40 years of age)¹. The county is the birthplace of what is now known as Liberia, and it was the first of three counties to sign the Declaration of Liberia's Independence on July 26, 1847. As host to the capital city of Liberia (Monrovia) and financial bedrock of the country's economy, the county is the melting pot for all of Liberia's 16 ethnic tribes and a population over a million.

WHY FORM ALLIANCES IN THE SENATE?

The Liberian Senate comprises 30 eminent Senators from 15 counties with diverse backgrounds and different political interests and ambitions. Therefore, it's essential to keep a mutual and close relationship with other Senators to ensure a smooth working environment. Upon entering the Senate, I aligned myself with like-minded Senators in establishing the Majority Block (MB) that was instrumental in electing Sen. Armah Zulu Jallah of Gbarpolu County as the Liberian Senate Pro-Tempore. In addition, the MB cemented all leadership positions. In order to accomplish my legislative goals that stem from a pro-poor agenda, which include improved health delivery, education, agriculture, youth empowerment, and preserving our environment for our future generations, establishing a strong relationship with my colleagues is paramount.

¹ US CIA World Facts Report: International Monetary Fund: The World Bank

LEGISLATIVE CONTRIBUTION

During the period under review, January to October 2015, I actively participated along with my colleagues (Member of the Senate) to deliberate, debate and vote on a wide array of key legislations, culminating in the following achievements:

RECORD OF BILL

- Number of Bills Introduced in the 4th Regular Session.....33
- Number of Bills inherited by the Committees.....67
- Number of Bills introduced during the Extra-Ordinary Session.....25
- Total number of Bills during the 4th session.....**125**

INSTITUTION LEGISLATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Total number of Bills Passed during the 4th Session.....22
Bill on Hold in Plenary based on motion of Reconsideration.....1

CATEGORY OF BILLS PASSED BY THE SENATE

Number of Senate Originated Bills passed.....12
Number of Bills on hold by Plenary.....1
Number of Concurrence Bills with the House of Representative.....10

BREAKDOWN OF BILLS PASSED BY THE SENATE

Ratification.....16
Enactments.....4
Amendment.....2

In view of the achievements previously mentioned, it's necessary to provide reasoning for my vote in favor of some key legislation.

THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION (MCC) COMPACT ACT, 2015

The MCC compact is a bilateral United States of America grant agreement entered into by the U.S.A Government and developing countries with lower Gross National Income (GNI) per capita for development assistance. Countries qualify under the GNI criterion are rigorously shortlisted by democratic principles and policies. Liberia was one of the countries that met the standards set and was awarded USD 257 Million. Constraints analysis completed for Liberia earmarked electricity and road infrastructure as areas of priority (Tarnoff, 2015). The Liberian Legislature had to ensure that the government was fully accountable by law for the MCC Compact Agreement. Therefore, the Act establishing the Liberia MCC Compact was passed. Not only did I vote for the passage of the Act, I also feel that if this grant is properly managed and faithfully executed, it will benefit all Liberians because electricity and roadways are proven examples of contemporary living and incentivizes private investment and development.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

As your Senator, I believe the report of the Constitution Review Committee should be acted on immediately upon recommencement of session in 2016. In considering revision of the constitution, I will work to increase awareness of proposed options that are likely to marginalize a minority group and serve as roadblock to economic growth.

Confirmation Hearing

One of the major constitutional responsibilities of the Liberian Senate is to vet individuals nominated by the President to hold public office. In conformity with this requirement, the Senate received 99 Presidential nominees for confirmation consideration. Nominees confirmed 86; Nominees pending confirmation 13.

COMMITTEE

I. CHAIRMAN: SENATE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS

Overview of Committee's Functions and Activities

This Committee is responsible for all proposed legislation, messages, petitions, memorials and other matters relating to the promotion and development of all youth and sporting activities. It has direct legislative oversight of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. I serve as the Chairman of this Committee and it is co-chaired by Senator Morris Saytumah. The Committee has six other members; namely, Senator Stephen Zargo, Senator Francis Paye, Senator J. Gbleh-bo Brown, Senator Mathew Jaye, Senator Conmany Wesseh, and Senator Daniel Naathehn.

Interaction with the Ministry of Youth and Sports

As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Youth and Sports, I have been working closely with Minister Eugene Nagbe, Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr. Musa Bility, the President of the Liberian Football Association (LFA), and other athletic presidents to foster capacity building and encourage sporting activities amongst youth in Montserrado County and Liberia at large. Before the National Budget was passed, I unsuccessfully lobbied both Houses to increase the Liberian Lone Star budgetary allotment. I also advocated for incremental changes in other youth capacity building sections within the National Budget. Being one of the Technical Advisors to the Liberian National Team, the Lone Star, I persuaded the LFA to conduct coach-training certification for ex-professional football players. The National Team Coach, Mr. James S. Debbah is one of the beneficiaries.

II. MEMBER: SENATE NATIONAL DEFENSE, INTELLIGENCE, SECURITY & VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Overview of Committee's Functions and Activities

The Defense, Intelligence, Security and Veteran Affairs Committee is one of the eight Senate Leadership Committees. This Committee is responsible for the formulation of national security policies and programs, and for veteran affairs. It has oversight for the performance of the Ministry of National Defense, National Security and related agencies with statutory responsibilities for national security. Senator Stephen Zargo of Lofa County chairs the 15-member committee.

Liberia's Security Sector Prepares To Take Over After The United Nation Mission In Liberia (UNMIL)

As UNMIL is set to end its mandate in Liberia, the Liberian Senate Committee on National Defense, Intelligence, Security & Veteran Affairs placed high on its agenda for the year 2015, the discussion of the

Liberia's security sector takeover. The Committee conducted series of consultations and public hearings with the relevant security and legal institutions to discuss the peace and stability of Liberia in the face of gradual UNMIL withdrawal. Your humble Senator believes that the security sector should be fully supported to undertake the role of the UNMIL. I urged the Committee, however, that the transition should be done after the 2017 National Presidential and General Elections.

The Immigration Bill and the National Police Bill

The Liberia Immigration Bill and the Liberia National Police Bill, two bills with serious implications for National Security, are currently before the Defense Committee and the Judiciary Committee for further review. The Committee conducted a series of public hearings with security and legal professionals and experts from the public and private sectors. These two Bills come at a crucial period because the United Nation Mission in Liberia's (UNMIL) mandate is scheduled to end in 2016 and the security sector had shown some vulnerability in protecting our people. There is skepticism and rising fear amongst Liberians that the peace and stability they enjoy will not be sustained. There are numerous examples of cases pointing out the sector's poor judgment and the use of lethal force when carrying out duties including the March 2011 brutalization of some students from the Monrovia Consolidated School System (MCSS) at the campus of the G.W. Gibson High School; the November 2011 brutal invasion of the CDC party headquarter; and the inhumane beating of Esther Glain by some EPS officers. These are few examples of the many cases pointing out the sector's poor judgment and the use of lethal force when carrying out duties.

Based on these facts, I wrote a letter to Senator Stephen Zargo, Chairman, of the Committee on National Defense, Intelligence, Security & Veteran Affairs, recommending the addition of the following to the current Bill:

- Required random drug testing for all serving officers
- Community background checks that are completed before officers are enlisted
- A pledge that officers uphold the highest standard of integrity and be guided by a strict Police Law Enforcement Code of Conduct
- Personal accountability to the communities in which they serve
- Community involvement in the delivery of service

I concluded the letter by saying that these recommendations lay the fundamental path to good policing. I believe it is the duty of the lawmakers to scrutinize the bill before its passage. I further urged the Chairman that both bills are adequately deliberated upon so that the degree of power, control and authority given to the police and immigration officers do not obstruct law-abiding citizens.

The Passage Of The Firearms And Ammunition Control Act Of Liberia, 2015

I support the passage of the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act of Liberia and feel that it will provide the necessary conditions for the safe usage and possession of firearms in the country. An important provision of this law is the requirement of the registration of all firearms, and that it limits possession to single barrel guns for non-security personnel.

April Standoff between Liberia National Police and Motorcyclists in Paynesville

In April, the Liberian National Police (LNP) and Commercial Motorcyclists in Red-light, Paynesville had a major standoff that resulted in human casualties and loss of property.

According to the story, on April 15th a motorcyclist from the GSA Road Junction area was struck by a police officer after violating a traffic regulation, which resulted in his death. The incident led to mob action resulting in assaults on police officers and the subsequent burning down of a police depot in the Red-light, Paynesville area. The Concerned Motorcyclist Association (CMA) headed by Mr. John F. Kenyor visited my office and presented a communication recounting the story and asking me to advocate for their return to work.

After listening to the LNP and the motorcyclists' accounts of the story, I took special interest in the matter, and worked with the Committee on National Defense, Intelligence, Security & Veteran Affairs, to seek an amicable resolution to the situation. I lamented the death of the motorcyclist, a young Liberian in his prime: however, I expressed to the CMA officials that no citizen or group of citizens should take the laws into their own hands and attack police officers and destroy property. At the same time, I highlighted the fact that no Liberian, regardless of social class should meet his or her demise because of a traffic violation.

The Senate Defense Committee held two public hearings and invited the Minister of Justice, Cllr. Benedict Sannoh, LNP Director Clarence Massaquoi, Deputy Transport Minister Hon. Bushuben Keita, and other senior ranking LNP Officers, as well as the CMA to provide clarity on the matter. I believe the tension between commercial motorcyclists and the LNP can be adequately minimized by the measures contained in the Defense Committee's report to Senate Plenary. The measures recommended to Plenary include the following:

1. There should be structured engagement between the LNP and the commercial motorcyclists, based on periodic dialogues and collaborative activities;
2. That the various motorcyclist organizations unite themselves into a union that will seek their interests and security; and,

3. That the motorcyclists should adhere to police regulations for everyone's safety.

I pledge to continue to work with both the LNP and the CMA to ensure these objectives are met in the future.

III. MEMBER: GENDER, HEALTH, SOCIAL WELFARE, WOMEN AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Overview of Committee's Functions and Activities

This Committee has statutory authority to conduct oversight for the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Gender, all Medical Institutions or, entities operating on matters related to Health, Gender, Social Welfare, Women and Children's Affairs. Senator Dr. Peter Coleman of Grand Kru County chairs the Committee.

Hearing of Joint Legislative Committee on Health and Education on the Readiness of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health to Reopen Schools Within Liberia After Ebola

The Ministry of Education's sudden decision to reopen schools after the Ebola epidemic had subsided came as a shock to many parents, self-sponsored students and teachers. According to parents, the timing for the reopening of schools was abrupt, leaving them unprepared to undertake the financial cost needed to get their children back in school. After listening to the concerns of parents, students and teachers, I advised the Executive Branch in an official press release to reconsider its decision to reopen schools in the midst of public outcry. Citizens were expressing concerns for students' safety and the financial unpreparedness of parents and self-sponsored students. I reminded the executive of the massive economic and psychological impact of the deadly Ebola virus on Liberian Society. I also called for the Ministry of Education to adjust the academic timetable to accommodate an efficient back-to-school plan based on adequate national consultations with those affected, including parents, students, teachers and school authorities and other stakeholders.

On Tuesday, January 27, 2015, the Joint Committee on Health and Education of the Liberian Senate conducted a hearing on the level of preparedness of the two sectorial ministries to reopen schools on February 4, 2015. The Minister of Education, Dr. Etmonia Tarpeh, and the Acting Minister of Health, Hon. Mathew Flomo, both insisted on the Ministries' readiness to resume the academic school Year. During the deliberation, my colleagues and I advised against the hurried timeline for the resumption of classes based on students' health safety and financial unpreparedness of parents.

The hearing revealed that preparations for the reopening were incomplete; consequently, the date announced by the Executive was adjusted. I supported and signed the Committee's recommendation to

the Senate Plenary for the post Ebola school openings to be delayed to provide parents ample time to gather resources.

Ebola Vaccine Trials in Liberia

In fulfillment of the mandate of the Plenary of the Liberian Senate, the Senate Committee on Health conducted a public hearing on the Ebola vaccine trials in Liberia on February 4, 2015. A delegation of experts from the Ministry of Health (MoH) and their international partner testified at the hearing.

Mr. Mathew Flomo, Acting Minister of Health, led the MoH team, and United States Government partners were represented by the Clinical Director of the National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Disease, Dr. Clifford Lane, and Dr. Frank Mahony, National Institute of Health and the Center for Disease Control (CDC), USA. During the deliberation, I raised the issue of liability. I wanted to know, who would bear the financial liability if a volunteer died during the process? The foreign experts said they were having conversations with other partners about the trials' financial liability, but did not reach a definite compromise. The Committee recommended periodic updates from the Ministry of Health during the trial process.

The Law for the Creation of an Autonomous Nursing and Midwifery Board

A Bill seeking to amend the Public Health Law of Liberia to an autonomous status, “the Liberian Board for Nursing and Midwifery”, is before the Committee on Gender, Health and Social Welfare for review. As a member of this committee I support this Bill and believe that when enacted, the bill will elevate the status of the Midwifery and Nursing Board so that it becomes more independent. With the passage of this bill, the Board will receive a direct allocation from the National Budget, thereby enhancing the level and quality of service of those in the health care profession.

Investigation into the High Charges at the JFK Medical Center

An inquiry into the reason for high financial charges to patients at the John F. Kennedy Medical Center is currently on the agenda of the Health Committee. The Committee will continue its review upon the resumption of regular activities in January 2016. I see this issue as a sensitive matter and will advocate that future budgetary allotment for the J.F.K Medical Center, Liberia's largest referral hospital be increased to prevent transferred financial burden to patients.

IV. MEMBER: SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAND, MINES, ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Overview of the Committee's Function

This committee comprised of six senators and Chair by Senator Albert Chie conduct oversight on institutions having the statutory and fiduciary responsibilities for matters relating to titled deeds and

ownership of public and private property, surveys, mapping geo-physical studies, protection of the environment, fauna and flora, preservation and protection of natural beauty, the extraction industry, etc. As may be necessary, this Committee liaises with other sectorial committees on matters relating to public corporations.

Land Rights Act

The Land Rights Act is currently before the Joint Committee comprising of the Judiciary Committee and the Committee on Lands, Mines, Energy and Natural Resources. A groundbreaking study done by Yale University on conflict in Liberia found that land conflicts are omnipresent in the country and their prevalence has not diminished over time². In August, the Joint Committee conducted its first hearing with stakeholders, including Ministries and Agencies of Government, Community Rights Advocates, Private Land Developers, Lawyers and the Civil Society. The hearing sought to gather expert testimony and public opinion on the bill. My support for this bill is rooted in the belief that, if passed it will serve as a guideline in preventing future land disputes and curb existing land conflict in both urban and rural areas.

The Passage of the Liberia Electricity Act and the Liberalization of Liberia's Electricity Sector

The Liberia Electricity Act was sponsor by Sen. Jewel Howard-Taylor and co-sponsor Nyonblee Kangar-Lawrence, Sen. Jewel Howard-Taylor, Sen. Francis Paye and myself. The Act seeks to create a safe, competitive, and productive business environment for affordable electricity in Liberia. In July 2015, the Senate was presented another Bill on electricity from the President, Her Excellency Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. The Senate hired an expert on the subject to examine both documents and merge them. The Act was later passed, but during the deliberation, I allayed the fears expressed by some of my colleagues, that privatization of the energy sector is not in the interest of the Liberian people. I pointed out that market competition benefits the people better than monopoly, citing the deregulation of the telecommunications sector as an example.

Probe into the Financial Crisis at the National Oil Company of Liberia (NOCAL)

Predicated upon a mandate from the Plenary of the Liberian Senate, the Committee on Land, Mines, Mineral Resources and Environment along with the Committee on Public Corporation and the Committee on Ways, Means, Finance and Budget there was an inquiry into the financial crisis at the National Oil Company of Liberia. In fulfillment of this, a number of public hearings were held to ascertain facts concerning the situation and to provide an informed report to the Plenary.

² Patterns of Conflict and Cooperation in Liberia (Part 1): Results from Longitudinal Study

Those that testified before the Committee at different times were: Cllr. Seward Cooper (Chairman of the Board of Directors), Dr. Randolph McClain (President and CEO), Mrs. Aletha Sherman (Chief Operating Officer and General Consul), Mr. Karmo Ville (Vice President for Finance), and Mr. Rufus Tarnue (Vice President for Technical Services). Cllr. Benedict Sannoh (Minister of Justice) and Dr. James Kollie (Deputy Minister for Fiscal Affairs, representing the Minister of Finance) also appeared before the Committee at different times. During the deliberation, I acknowledged NOCAL's mismanagement and appealed to my colleagues to salvage the company as the energy and oil sector is important to Liberia's future economic growth.

Hearing on the Threat of Sea Erosion to Coastal Area

Erosion and flooding during the rainy season have caused the destruction of lives and properties and led to the displacement of many of our citizens. The Plenary assigned the Committee the responsibility to conduct a probe into the erosion along coastal areas in the country. This was prompted by a communication to Plenary by Senator Albert Chie of Grand Kru County.

In pursuing this matter, we invited the Minister of Lands, Mines and Energy led by Hon. Patrick Sendolo, and head of the Environmental Protection Agency, Hon. Anyaa Vohiri to testify on the situation. Minister Sendolo testified that Liberia could pursue measures to address the threat of the Atlantic Ocean to the coast of Liberia and noted that his Ministry was involved with other technical agencies of government to provide a roadmap advising how to address the situation. During the deliberation, the Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency Hon. Anyaa Vohiri, provided an in-depth explanation on findings of study on the situation. She mentioned Liberia's high vulnerability to climate change in coastal areas. She pointed out that areas along the coast where erosion is most severe are in the West Point and New Kru Town areas in Montserrado County. Other parts of the country are Cestos City in River Cess County, and Buchanan, in Grand Bassa County. During the deliberation, I first established the fact that erosion and flooding are natural but are accelerated by human actions. I also urged my colleagues that it is imperative upon the Liberian Legislature to increase funding to institutions responsible for addressing the problem.

V. MEMBER: SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT

Overview of the Committee's Function

This Committee has oversight for the performance for the Ministry of Transport, the Liberia Civil Aviation Authority, and all other agencies and organizations having statutory and fiduciary responsibility for matters relating to land, sea and air transportation.

Probe concerning \$10 Million United State Dollars appropriated in the F/Y 2012/2013 National Budget for the Robert International Airport

The Senate Committee on Transport and the Committee on Public Accounts and Audit conducted a public hearing with officials from the Ministry of Transport about the \$10 Million United States Dolllar allotted for the renovation of the Robert International Airport. During the deliberation, I recommended that there should be an independent audit done by the General Auditing Commission to investigate how the fund was used.

Increase in the Cost of Passport

Senator Marshall Dennis of Grand Gedeh County in a communication to plenary raised concern on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recent pronouncement to double the price of Liberian passports from \$23 to \$50. During that session, I concurred with Sen. Marshall Dennis and joined him in appealing for a lower passport cost. I stated during the deliberation, "Passport is a necessity for all Liberians" therefore it should be affordable.

THE NATIONAL BUDGET

The National Budget is an instrument through which Government policies are translated into actions. Following the submission of the Draft National Budget to the National Legislature, the Honorable Body formed a Joint Legislative Budget Committee of both Houses. This committee was charged with the responsibility to extensively scrutinize the budget with various government bodies and entities. Following the holding of the hearings and submission of the Joint Committee's report, the FY 2015/2016 Budget was hurriedly passed in an executive session.

I believe the process was not transparent and it prevented senators that were not on the Budget Committee from comprehensively debating the final draft before it was passed. To express my discontentment of the budget passage process, I wrote a detailed letter to Senator Armah Z. Jallah, Senate President Pro-Tempore, outlining the process according to the legislative proceeding. Henceforth, all future budgetary processes will be revised to allow for input and thorough debate of the National Budget.

MONTSERRADO COUNTY LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

During the 4th Session of the 53rd Legislature, I was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Montserrat County Caucus. My predecessor, Representative Edward Forh, Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) of District #16 turned over his gavel, but the County Caucus Secretary, Hon. Muna P. Youngblood (CDC) of District #9 retained her position. During the period under review, I presided over several meetings and coordinated all matters pertaining to the body. With these responsibilities, I presided over the first Montserrat County Sitting on June 22 2016. During the Sitting, delegates from each of the seventeen Districts of the County were represented. The delegates elected a three-member Project Management Committee (PMC) for a term of three years. The three officers elected were chairman, assisted by a treasurer and a controller. The PMC provides technical and financial management of the County Development Fund (CDF), and are responsible to ensure that the resolution for the County Council Sitting is carried out. At the district level, a Project Management Team (PMT) is formed to coordinate the implementation of the project in the districts. The PMT consists of a chairperson, who manages the team; a treasurer who ensures that financial matters are properly carried out; and a secretary, who is responsible for the safekeeping of all records. Montserrat County total allotment for the FY2014/2015 is USD 1.5 Million and 77.5% of this amount was allotted projects. The amount for Project was divided amongst the 19 Legislators for projects implementation in the County. By Law the PMC and PMTs are responsible for implementation and monitoring of all projects. The Legislators monitors the process to ensure full implementation, transparency and accountability.

SENATE REPRESENTATIVE TO ECOWAS PARLIAMENT

On February 19, 2015, the Liberian Senate elected me as one of its representatives to the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) Parliament. In conformity with the August body preferment, I was present in Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria from May 11 to 28 to attend the 2015 First Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Parliament. The Liberian delegation which included Hon. Jefferson S. Kanmoh, Sinoe County, District 1 Representative, deliberated on Liberia's state of affairs, mainly focusing on the following:

- The Political Atmosphere In Liberia
- National Security
- The Effects Of Ebola
- Infrastructure And Transportation
- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Implementation Process

In concluding the 2015 First Ordinary Session, the ECOWAS Agenda was developed to include:

- Global And Regional Economic Development
- ECOWAS Supplementary Act
- Enhancement Of Power
- Implementation Of Community Work Programs
 - Economic And Monetary Integration
 - Building Of The Common Market
 - Agriculture, Environment And Water Resources
 - Infrastructure And Private Sector Development
 - Human Development And Gender
 - Political Affairs, Peace And Security
 - Inter-Institutional Relations And International Cooperation
 - Institutional Reforms And Capacity Building
 - Activities Of Other ECOWAS Institutions

Upon my return to Liberia, I submitted a summary report to the Liberian Senate outlining my activities in Abuja.

INITIATIVES

THE SEN. GEORGE M. WEAH MONTSERRADO COUNTY SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL AID FUND

First Term Scholarship payment

Student	Institution	Amount Paid (LD)	Amount Paid (USD)	Total Amount Paid
357	110	\$2,060,751.00	\$41,233.16	\$65,477.00

Second Term Scholarship payment

Student	Institution	Amount Paid (LD)	Amount Paid (USD)	Total Amount Paid
425	120	\$3,500,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$69,772.00

Exchange rate: (USD) 1.00= (LD)\$85.00

For the period under review the total amount of one hundred thirty five thousand two hundred forty-nine United States Dollars (\$135,249.00) was spent on scholarship. On April 30, 2015, I launched the Sen. George M. Weah Scholarship Fund (SGMWSF) at the Monrovia City Hall to help ease the post Ebola back-to-school financial burden placed upon lower income parents. Today, the SGMWSF caters to more than four hundred students, and covers different levels (Elementary & Junior High, High School, Technical & Vocational, Undergraduate and Graduate) of education.

Although the scholarship has the nomenclature “Montserrado County”, students benefiting from the scholarship are found in Liberia’s 15 counties. Without a stronger educational and training system, Liberia will not be able to leverage and take full advantage of inflows of foreign direct investments (FDI).³ Hence, I encourage all Liberians, the business community and foreign partners to financially support this scholarship fund to create sustainability and the ability of this initiative to continue to support the education of Liberians.

CONSTRUCTION OF LATRINE AND HAND PUMP IN COMMUNITIES

As your Senator, I have been working with the 17 Representatives of Montserrado County to coordinate community development initiatives. Financial support from my office for community projects is based on specific requests from constituents. On such example is a current project in Todee, District 1 where my office is constructing a four unit public latrine for male and female and hand pumps. My office will study the impact of this particular initiative and create a plan to extend this to other Districts in the future.

³ Liberia Constraints Analysis

ASSISTANCE FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT

Sen. George M. Weah Medical Assistance Payment

Patients	Amount Paid (LD)	Amount Paid (USD)
21	\$161,907.00	\$1,861.00

Exchange rate: (USD) 1.00= (LD)\$87.00

For the period under review the total amount of one thousand eight hundred sixty one United States Dollars (\$1,861.00) was spent on Medical Assistance.

Due to the high flow of people to my office for medical financial assistance, I established an account at the SOS Hospital in Congo town to underwrite the bills for people that are critically ill. We also have found partnership with Dr. Calvin Strathy and his wife, Mrs. Natu Strathy also a nurse. They have agreed to volunteer their services before every Christmas to perform surgeries for patients within his area of specialty. Dr. Strathy's first volunteer surgery under this partnership brought a smile to Lukiyatu Lamine, a girl who was acid burned by her boyfriend, on December 24, 2015.

As I look for a long-term resolution to this problem, I will be engaging my colleagues, policy experts, medical professionals and the Executive branch of government to find a lasting solution.

GENERAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

As a humanitarian, I wholeheartedly believe in this quote:

"Overcoming poverty is not a task of charity; it is an act of justice. Like Slavery and Apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great. You can be that great generation. Let your greatness blossom". - Nelson Mandela

Liberia faces many challenges; and one of the most notables is the high rate of abject poverty. Most Liberians are forced to depend on personal assistance from others who can barely afford it, for their livelihood. An average of six people seek personal assistance from my office every day. I feel a personal connection to these people because I once sought this same type of support in my formative years as a young man in Liberia.

Coming from humble beginnings I know what it is like to be hungry; to have nothing when your friends have the basics of life. I know how it feels to be put out of class for tuition during test periods; how a mother feels when she cannot take her child to the hospital because of the lack of money. IT IS NOT A GOOD FEELING!

My daily pursuit is to help, fellow Liberians; a simple example can be shared in the case of my neighbor whose lost their home as a result of an electrical malfunction. From one event, all he had worked for in life was destroyed. By the grace of God, I assembled the needed resources and today that neighbor and his family have a roof over their heads. I extend heartfelt gratitude to Hon. Edwin M. Snowe, of District 6, and other residents who were also instrumental in this project. As your senator, it is my pledge to continue to work with my senate colleagues to craft legislations that will increase training, employments and business support and help improve wages and earning potential for Liberians.

CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

Listed below are some of the issues of challenge and constraint that the Senator hopes to see improved at the Liberian Senate in 2016:

- Decreasing Budgetary Appropriation
- Inadequate consensus building among Senators for a more incisive scrutiny of the National Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016;
- Late preparation of Capitol Building Office due to slow procurement process which resulted to an incomplete office furnishing of furniture and equipment for the first four months on assuming office;
- Inadequate orientation for incoming Senators or staffers on the administrative and political processes and procedures at the Liberian Senate;
- Low pay for legislative staffers;
- Insufficient resources to address the incessant request of citizens in need of financial assistance for various purposes; and
- Lack of adequate resource center at the Senate to support research and drafting of bills or policy documents;

PREPARING FOR 2016 AND LOOKING BEYOND

For the coming year, my legislative plan is based on the following four action pillars: Health; Education; Agriculture and Youth Empowerment. In order to accomplish the goals associated with these policy areas, your senator aims to:

- a) Engage in the National Budget Process to ensure adequate funding for creation and support of programs tied to this above agenda;
- b) Identify and lobby among colleagues for the passage of laws that are significant to the above agenda;
- c) Maintain a direct and open office for increased interaction with the people.

CONCLUSION

We faced many challenges throughout the first session of our work in the senate. Despite the many challenges however within my first nine months in office, I launched a scholarship fund to support education, introduced various community initiatives, addressed different aspects of the healthcare system, and built relationships with fellow lawmakers to ensure the best future for all Liberians. I introduced many initiatives and launched various projects to benefit the people of Montserrado County. I have tackled many of the obstacles standing in the way, contributed to and helped pass legislations that will positively affect all citizens. I also introduced many initiatives and launched various projects to benefit countless communities.

My team has a positive outlook for the future of Liberia and will work hard to achieve the goals laid out in my legislative plan. There is hope and a brighter, better future ahead and I ask all residents of Montserrado County and all Liberians to remain focused, understanding and united in the goal to move our country forward.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: SEN. GEORGE M. WEAH MONTSERRADO COUNTY SCHOLARSHIP

**Senator George Weah Scholarship Recipients During the
Official Launched on April 30, 2015**

17 Districts of Montserrado County	85
15 Counties	28
Light International School	3
Starz College	10
University of Liberia	20
Lofa Community	5
Cuttington	16
Pursuit of Positive Action Youth Organization	10
South Eastern Development Association	20
Thumbs up Community	10
Gibraltar Community	50

Scholarship Recipients Institutions

Undergraduate and Graduate Studies

1	A.M.E University
2	A.M.E. Zion University
3	United Methodist University
4	Lincoln College
5	Cuttington Master Program
6	University of Liberia
7	Smythe Int. of Management
8	Trinity Bible College
9	Adventist of West Africa
10	Starz College

<i>Primary and Secondary Schools</i>			
1	SDA High School	40	St. Phill's Jr & Sr High School
2	Salvation Army/Len Miller	41	Mac Foundation School System
3	George Weah Foundation School	42	Royal Life School Sustem
4	Jerusalem International Elem. & Jr High School	43	Bishop Alfred Jackson Inst.
5	Clara Town Central Jr High Sch	44	Local Revenue SOS High Scool
6	Paynesville Central Academy	45	Varama National Academy
7	Calvary Chapel Mission	46	jahzjet Children Outreach Mission
8	Akelia Resource Center	47	Masue Commuinty Academy Sch. Syst.
9	Shirley Kolmer Mem. Catholic Sch	48	Morning Star Elem & Jr High School
10	J .W. Harris Memorial Sch. System	49	Faimo Christian Academy Elem & Jr High Sch
11	All Saints Catholic School	50	F. Christian Acdey Elem & Jr High Sch
12	Unification YMCA High School	51	S.D. Mayson Mem. School
13	St. Paul Ecumenical High School	52	Independent Bethlehem Bapt. high Sch.
14	Institute of Commercial Aviation	53	Maryann Cheeseman High School
15	St. Pius X Catholic School	54	Sylvanus O. Johnson memorial Academy
16	St. Kizito Catholic School	55	William Both Jr & Sr High School
17	Taffi Dollar Academy	56	Kids College
18	C.W.A High School	57	Williams C. Jones Academy
19	Cathedral High School	58	Don Bosco
20	Monrovia College	59	E. Wilmont Blyden Prebyterian School
21	St. Peter Luthern High School	60	Mary Sharp Memorial Mission School
22	Calvary Baptist School	61	Mac Foundation High School
23	Brilliance Acdey	62	Rev. Peter Amos George Mem. Academy
24	Richard M. Nixon Institution	63	Early Breed School
25	Paynesville SDA High School	64	Charles Kennedy School
26	Charles J.S. Young Sr. AGM		
27	Kollah Foundation Inc.		
28	Outreach Mission School		
29	J. Chenue Goodridge Jr & Sr High		
30	Nathan E. Gibson Memorial		
31	Harrietta E.Bailey Mem		
32	Charity Com. School System		
33	Bishop Raymond P. Koffa Mem. Inst.		
34	Bweh Kae Academy		
35	Darpoh Mem. International Inst.		
36	St. Matthew University Methodist Sch.		
37	Holy Family Catholic School		
38	Rock Int. Christian Academy		
39	Agnes Baak School		

ANNEX II: MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Names of Patients Treated at the SOS Medical Center

1	Esther Gonpon
2	Victoria Kennedy
3	Hawa Qualpa
4	Oretha S. Tumbey
5	Somah Davis
5	Kofi Doe
7	Hellen Nyumah
8	J. Alex Barclay
9	Odelia Acolatsa
10	Lisa Y. Boyd
11	Hilton D. Dormah
12	Emmanuel M. Johnson
13	Rebecca Samuel
14	James Kollie
15	Anthony S. Bedell
16	Musa Jangabeh
17	Molton Kennedy Sr.
18	Sarah M. Johnsomn