



The Speaker of Parliament,
Hon. Moses Wetangula EGH,
National Assembly.
14 November, 2023

Dear Sir,



RE: CONCERNS OVER PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF PARTIALITY REGARDING PROPOSED BILLS

We, the undersigned organizations championing democracy, the rule of law, and constitutional safeguards, are concerned over the public displays of partiality from your office. In particular, we refer to a meeting you held on 25 October 2023 with members of the Kenya Christians Professionals Forum (KCPF) and the subsequent public promises to support the content of proposed bills that raise legal and constitutional concerns.

The Speaker, as the Presiding Officer of the Legislative Assembly, must act with both authority and impartiality. The office, as recognized in the Constitution, the Parliamentary Service Act, 2019, and the National Assembly Standing Orders describes the Speaker as the Legislative Assembly's "independent and impartial representative". Your initial speech upon appointment in 2022 reassured us that you "unequivocally submit yourself to the collective will of the House and reiterate your singular desire to serve with impartiality, fidelity to the Constitution and the laws of this land."

We are, therefore, concerned by your recent statements indicating that your office had pledged to support bills driven by a section of Kenyans who do not represent Kenya's comprehensive views on religion, morality, or ethical standards. Your promise to KCPF to secure private meetings over the same bills with President Ruto also raises concerns over the political partiality of the Speaker's Office.

The Speaker's Office must uphold the rights and privileges of ALL citizens and not selectively push for bills that promote specific interests and are not representative of marginalized, vulnerable, or discriminated sections of society. As the mouthpiece for the House, your office must lead by example in conveying messages that unite Kenyans at a time when division is rife based on religion, economic status, and political disagreement.

WE, THEREFORE, MUST INSIST that you reassure Kenyans of your commitment to the National Assembly Standing Orders and the Parliamentary Service Act 2019, to act as an "independent and impartial representative" of the National Assembly over all matters – past, present, or future -presented by anyone including by interest groups with which you as a private individual may sympathize.

Signed by: Katiba Institute
The Kenyan Section of the International
Commission of Jurists
Kenya Human Rights Commission; and
East Africa Legal Service Network

Cc: **Hon Gladys Boss Shollei**,
Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly
Kimani Ichungwah,
Majority Leader
Opiyo Wandayi,
Minority Leader