

REPUBLIC OF NAURU

ELECTORAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 2018

SECOND READING SPEECH

Honourable Baron Divavesi Waqa MP

6 March 2018

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I introduce to the House today a Bill for an Act to amend the Electoral Act 2016.

Mr Speaker and honourable Members, I am pleased to say that democracy is the hallmark of the Republic. In the last 50 years we may have had political differences, but the political will of the people has kept our Constitution and democracy alive.

Mr Speaker, the proposed amendment to the Electoral Act is a simple one. The purpose of the amendment is set out in the explanatory memorandum. Let me explain. The first part of the Bill is merely to clarify the law and the entitlement of every eligible voter to vote in an election. However, when it comes to by-elections, the law as it stands can result in a person voting more than once in one Parliamentary term in more than one district. This in turn will affect universal suffrage of a person's right to lawfully vote.

The amendment to section 47 was already done in 2016 to restrict the transfer of registered voters from one district to another within the term of the Parliament. In the process, it now becomes important to clarify the status of voters who may have lawfully transferred 6 months after the general election as permitted under the Act. This is what this amendment is

for. In short, any person who has voted in a district cannot transfer to another district for the purposes of a by-election. By the same token, it does not deny a person who has transferred districts to vote in a by-election in the district he voted for in the general election if a vacancy in the Parliament were to occur.

Mr Speaker, the explanatory memorandum details the provisions of the Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.