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Civil Service Agency Boss Defends AG Designate

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Dr. Charles Allen, tells Senate “Kilby is Overtly Qualified. By: Stephen Binda

In the face of controversy over the academy credentials of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf’s nominee for Auditor General of Liberia, the Director General of Civil Servant Agency (CSA), Dr. C. William Allen, has been strongly defending the nominee, saying his credentials are credible and authentic.

Allen told the Senate on Capitol Hill in Monrovia yesterday that Mr. Robert Kilby is not only “overly qualified” but also has a wealth of professional experience to occupy the Auditor General post and perform to the expectation of the Liberian people.

The CSA boss said the nominee met all of the qualifications set by the CSA for the job. Credible sources say the international organizations accredited to Liberia have signed an authorization document approving the post for the nominee.

Applicants for Auditor General of the General Auditing Commission (GAC) are required to possess a Certified Public Accountant (CAP) with 15 years of professional work experience.

Mr. Allen clarified that applicants for the job do not necessarily have to acquire a degree in accountancy, neither Masters degree in Accounting as was speculated in many quarters of the Liberian society.

Dr. Allen: “Look, Mr. Kilby is the best candidate for the post of Auditor General now. He has met all of the requirements and we felt that he is overly qualified for the job.”

According to the CSA Boss whose agency played a pivotal role in the vetting process, the academy documents presented by Mr. Kilby to the Civil Servant Agency were “thoroughly verified and that they were correct.”

He dismissed widespread notions that the nominee has falsified his credentials. “There is no fake academic credential that was submitted. We verified each and everyone of them with the institutions listed, and they are all true and correct” Dr. Allen intoned.

Commenting on claims that the nominee was a holder of a double degree in Accounting and Information Technology, the CSA boss told Senators that Mr. Kilby's credential never indicated that. "That is not true," he emphatically told the Senate.

Mr. Allen further told the lawmakers yesterday that the University of Maryland has a policy of not offering two degrees at the same semester.

However, he said, the presidential nominee had sufficient credits to have a degree in Accounting and Information System, but he (nominee) rather opted for a degree in Information system since in fact it was optional.

The CSA boss noted that those who questioned the academy and professional credentials of Mr. Robert Kilby were only being political.

The CSA Boss strongly called on the Senate to unconditionally confirm the presidential nominee for the Auditor General post as he is capable for the job.

"Mr. Kilby has 25 years of auditing experience. He is a CPA, an achievement that exceeds the normal requirements put forth by the CSA," Dr. Allen further said in a serious mood.

"You know that we are in a political season and people will always want to raise some of these issues politically. But the fact remains that the nominee is overly qualified for the post. We called for 15 years of experience, and he has 25 years and is a CPA. This tells you we have one of the best candidates for post of Auditor General of Liberia" Dr. Allen intoned.

At the same time, the Senate has lauded the CSA boss for the clarifications provided the august body.

The Senate said such clarifications would help the plenary, which is the highest decision making body to arrive at a informed intelligent position as it relates to whether or not to confirm Mr. Kilby for the influential GAC top post.

Senate Pro-Tempore, Cletus Wortoson, said the body would take a decision on the matter today. Mr. Kilby is a member of the American Institute for Certified Public Accounting.

He has partnered with other firms to audit various companies in the American States of Ohio, Massachusetts, Georgia, etc.

Robert Llewellyn Kilby is an Exam Writer for the American Institute of Certified Accountants.

He replaces former AG John S. Morlu, whose tenure as AG expired a few months ago.

CSA played a pivotal role in the selection process of Kilby and Mr. Taweh Jefferson Veikai.

President Sirleaf also nominated Veikai as Deputy AG.

He is Comptroller and Chief Finance Officer at Liberia Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI).

Both men's nominations were subject to confirmation by the Liberian Senate. CSA received 32 applicants for the post when the Liberian Government announced it vacant. "Twelve of the applicants came from within Liberia while 20 came from the Diaspora.

Of the 32, three were females, while 29 were males. Among them, 15 were Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) while the rest were non CPAs.

A five-person panel, including the CSA, the Center for Transparency & Accountability/CENTAL, Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL), Liberian Institute of Certified Public Accountants(LICPA), and Mr. Jenkins G. W. Wongbe, a former Director General of CSA, selected three names after the vetting process.

Though the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and European Union (EU) were on the panel, neither of them took part in the ranking of candidates.

They were just there to observe the process and they signed the final document, which indicated that they were satisfied with the process.

The first name on the list of three submitted to the President declined the job owing to family engagements in the United States and the President nominated Kilby and Veikai as Auditor General and Deputy Auditor general respectively.

Each panelist was given ample opportunity to dialogue about how the candidate met or did not meet the requirements of the five areas including Education, Relevant Experience, Written Communication, Management Capacity and other striking personal characteristics as defined.

Applicants in Liberia were interviewed in person while those outside were interviewed via teleconference.

His deputy-designate, Mr. Veikai, is a CPA. He is also a Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), certified Fraud Examiner and holds a Master's in Business Administration.