

**JOINT RESOLUTION LEG-002/2019 OF ATLEAST TWO-THIRDS OF THE TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE LIBERIAN SENATE AND THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 54<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA ON THREE PROPOSITIONS TO AMEND ARTICLES 28, 45, 47, 48, 49 50, & 83(a) OF THE 1986 CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**

We, Members of the Liberian Senate and House of Representatives, having met the requirements of the Constitution of Liberia, have resolved to propose and do hereby propose the amendment of the below described and mentioned Articles of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia for reasons set forth below each proposal, as follows:

**PROPOSITION #1 : To amend Article 28 of the Constitution to provide for the inalienability of the citizenship of natural born citizens of Liberia (Dual Citizenship)**

**Article 28 Reads:**

Any person, at least one of whose parents was a citizen of Liberia at the time of the person's birth, shall be a citizen of Liberia; provided that any such person shall upon reaching maturity renounce any other citizenship acquired by virtue of one parent being a citizen of another country. No citizen of the Republic shall be deprived citizenship or nationality except as provided for by law; and no person shall be denied the right to change citizenship or nationality.

**Suggested Amendment to Article 28:**

Any person, at least one of whose parents was a citizen of Liberia at the time of the person's birth, shall be a natural born citizen of Liberia; a natural born citizen's right to citizenship of Liberia is inherent and inalienable; no law shall be enacted or regulation promulgated which deprives a natural born citizen of the Republic of his/her citizenship right; and any law or regulation which alienates or deprives a natural born citizen of his/her Liberian citizenship right is null and void ab initio.

A natural born citizen of Liberia may hold another/additional citizenship but shall not qualify for elected national or public service positions and the following appointive positions:

1. Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of Liberia;
2. Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers;
3. All Heads of Autonomous Commissions, Agencies and Nonacademic/Research/Scientific Institutions;
4. Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiaries; and
5. Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia;

A Liberian with dual citizenship shall have certain rights, including the right to hold elected national or public service positions and all appointive positions if he relinquishes the other citizenship.

The Legislature shall enact laws on the process by which natural born citizens of Liberia who have obtained additional citizenship, will maintain all of the rights pertaining to their Liberian citizenship.

#### **Reason for Proposed Amendment:**

As a consequence of the civil war, hundreds of Liberians fled Liberia as refugees, assumed residency in other countries and obtained citizenship of other countries. Many obtained citizenship because that was the only way for them to get certain jobs or to enjoy certain opportunities, such as education. Most of these Liberians also had children and continue to have children, who are automatically citizens of the countries of their birth.

Whatever the circumstance of these Liberians may be, one thing that is certain is that their loyalty to their motherland remains unquestionable; they continue to provide support to relatives and friends and to remain connected to their motherland through financial remittances. They continue to cling to the belief that they will be able to enjoy all the rights and privileges of Liberian citizenship, such as inheriting real property from their parents and being able to return to their motherland and be accepted and regarded as natural born citizens, not as foreigners. This amendment of the Constitution will enthrone all natural born Liberians to invest in Liberia and will give them hope of a permanent home in their motherland. To ensure that the loyalty of these Liberians will not be questioned, they are prohibited from holding certain positions in the Government of Liberia.

#### **PROPOSITION #2 : Reduction of Tenure of the President, the Vice President & Members of the Legislature**

1. To amend Article 45 of the Constitution to provide for three to reduce the term of Senators from nine (9) years to seven (7) years: