STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Review Report on the Public Health (Amendment) Bill (Bill No. 4 of 2026)

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI
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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

It is an honour, as Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, to present this Report on the review of the Public Health (Amendment) Bill, No. 4 of 2026. The Bill was referred to the Committee by Parliament pursuant to Standing Order 51(2) for detailed scrutiny, stakeholder consultation and reporting its findings to Parliament.

In undertaking this important responsibility, the Committee conducted a comprehensive review of the proposed legislation through clause-by-clause analysis, briefings from the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, research and consideration of written submissions from a broad range of stakeholders, including government ministries, statutory authorities, municipal councils, civil society organisations, academic institutions, industry representatives and members of the public. The Committees review process was transparent, participatory and guided by the principles of accountability and good governance.

The Committee noted that the Bill seeks to modernise the Public Health Act 1935, a key piece of legislation that has governed public health in Fiji for more than nine decades, which has gone through 26 minor amendments. The proposed amendments aim to strengthen public health administration and environmental health management through updated definitions, enhanced governance arrangements, improved disease surveillance mechanisms, stronger enforcement powers, modern sanitation standards and revised penalties that will reflect present-day realities and public health risks.

Throughout its deliberations, the Committee carefully examined several significant issues raised by stakeholders. These included the expansion of the powers and functions of environmental health practitioners, the proposed restructuring of the Central Board of Health, increased penalties for non-compliance, public health oversight of water and sanitation systems, management of infectious diseases, environmental pollution controls and the extension of the Act's application throughout Fiji. The Committee also considered concerns regarding potential overlaps with existing legislation, constitutional safeguards, inter-agency coordination, accountability mechanisms and the practical implications for businesses, local authorities, rural communities and vulnerable groups.

The Committee further recognised the contribution of the Bill towards Fiji's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and Goal 13 (Climate Action). By strengthening public health systems, promoting disease prevention, improving environmental sanitation, protecting water sources and addressing emerging health challenges, the Bill supports the broader objective of creating healthier, safer and more resilient communities throughout Fiji.

In considering the gender and social inclusion dimensions of the Bill, the Committee noted submissions advocating for improved sanitation and hygiene facilities, greater consideration of the needs of women, girls, persons with disabilities and vulnerable communities. The Committee acknowledges that effective public health legislation must be responsive to the diverse needs of all citizens and contribute to equitable access to health and sanitation services.

Following its examination of the evidence and stakeholder submissions, the Committee is satisfied that the Bill represents a significant step towards modernising Fiji's public health legislative framework. While several issues were identified that warrant further consideration and clarification, the Committee recognises the importance of updating the law to address contemporary public health, environmental and sanitation challenges facing the nation. The Committee's observations and recommendations are contained in this report for the consideration of Parliament.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Health and Medical Services has assured the Committee and members of the public during the consultation process that a nationwide public health awareness programme will be conducted over a period of more than a year before the legislation is implemented.

Consequential amendments to the iTaukei Affairs Act, the Local Government Act and other legislations, are required as a matter of urgency to incorporate provisions addressing public health coverage.

The Committee has been assured that regulations made under the Public Health Act will provide for categorised fines applicable to natural persons and body corporate, considering the severity of nuisance or contravention of the Act.

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, I extend sincere appreciation to all ministries, organisations, stakeholders and members of the public who contributed to the review process. Their valuable submissions and engagement strengthened the Committee's deliberations and ensured a more informed assessment of the proposed legislation.

I am thankful to the Hon. Members, Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure, Hon. Alipate Tuicolo, Hon. Viam Pillay, Hon. Aliki Bia and Hon. Parveen Bala, for their invaluable contribution. Further I extend my appreciation to the alternate members Hon. Ketan Lal, Hon. Shalend Kumar, Hon. Joseph Nand and Hon. Josaia Niudamu for their contribution and support.

I would like to thank the secretariat for their dedication and assistance in compiling this report.

I, on behalf of the Committee commend the Public Health (Amendment) Bill (Bill No. 4 of 2026) to the Parliament and seek support of all the members of this august house.



…….
Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Social Affairs

Acronyms:

MOHMS	Ministry of Health and Medical Services
PHB	Public Health (Amendment) Bill
SO	Standing Order
UNSDG	United Nation Sustainable Development Goal

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

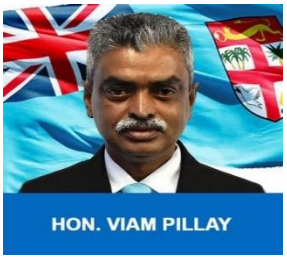
The Standing Committee on Social Affairs (**'Committee')** is established under Section 70 of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji and Standing Order 109**.** The Committee's mandate and functions are provided under SO 109 (2) and 110 (1) (a)-(d) & (f).
The Members of Committee are:



Chairperson



Deputy Chairperson



Member



Member



Member



Member

COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT

The Committee Secretariat supporting the Committee, is a team of dedicated Parliament staff who are appointed and delegated by the Secretary-General to Parliament pursuant to Standing Order 15 (3)(*i*).

The Secretariat are as follows:

Mr Rishi Dutt	–	Senior Committee Clerk
Ms. Lia Korodrau	–	Deputy Committee Clerk
Mr. Jeke Rokotuiloma	–	Assistant Committee Clerk
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Terms of Reference

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs, referred to as the ("Committee"), was assigned the Public Health (Amendment) Bill No 4 of 2026 for its review on 28th May 2026. The Bill was referred to the Committee in accordance with SO 51(2), which tasked the Committee to examine the Bill and report back to Parliament.

1.2 Committee Procedure

The Committee has conducted a thorough review of the Public Health (Amendment) Bill 2026 (Bill No. 4 of 2026). This report outlines the findings, observations and recommendations of the Committee regarding the Bill, which aims to amend the Public Health Act 1935.

The Committee reviewed the Public Health (Amendment) Bill No. 4 of 2026 in detail and deliberated on the 69 proposed amendments. It then invited the Ministry of Health and Medical Services to provide a briefing on the amendments. Following this, the Committee sought submissions from Government and Non-Government Organisations, as well as members of the public and called for submissions through all media platforms.

The Committee was mindful of the provisions on Standing Order 111(1)(a) and ensured that all its meetings were open to the public, except during the finalization of its report.

1.3 Committee Remit

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs, pursuant to Standing Order 109, is vested with a range of statutory responsibilities. In accordance with Standing Order 110, these responsibilities include the scrutiny of all Bills referred to the Committee by Parliament and the examination of any subordinate legislation tabled in Parliament that falls within its mandate.

1.4 Objective of the Bill

The Public Health (Amendment) Bill No 4 of 2026 provide the following objectives:

- To amend the Public Health Act 1935 (“Act”) and update policy procedures and improve compliance.
- To modernise Fiji’s public and environmental health framework by introducing updated definitions, strengthening institutional arrangements, enhancing enforcement powers and increasing penalties to reflect current public health risks.
- To evolve challenges such as disease outbreaks, environmental pollution, waste management and water safety.

1.5 Consequential amendments

The Committee is of the view that the following consequential act that may be affected by the Public Health (Amendment) Bill (Bill No 4 of 2026).

1. iTaukei Affairs Act 1944

2. Local Government Act 1972

3. Town Planning Act 1946

4. Maritime and Transport Act -2013

5. Dogs Act -1968

6. Biosecurity Act -2008

7. Land Transport Authority Act -1998

8. Environment Management Act - 2005

9. Litter Act - 2008

10. Maritime Safety Authority Act - 2009

11. Hotel and Guest Houses Act - 1973

1.6 The following are the 26 amendments made to the Public Health Act since 1935.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT 1935

Last Updated: 12 July 2026

Table of Amendments

Public Health Act 1935 (No 29 of 1935) commenced on 1 January 1936, as amended by:

Amending Legislation	Date of Commencement
Public Health (Amendment) Ordinance 1939 (No 14 of 1939)	20 September 1939
Public Health (Amendment) Ordinance 1942 (No 17 of 1942)	7 December 1942
Law Revision Ordinance 1945 (No 2 of 1945)	1 May 1945
Public Health (Amendment) Ordinance 1947 (No 27 of 1947)	3 December 1947
Public Health (Amendment) Ordinance 1948 (No 9 of 1948)	29 September 1948
Public Health (Amendment) Ordinance 1954 (No 4 of 1954)	15 July 1954
Law Revision Ordinance 1955 (No 9 of 1955)	15 April 1955
Public Health (Amendment) Ordinance 1957 (No 27 of 1957)	19 December 1957
Public Health (Amendment) Ordinance 1961 (No 31 of 1961)	12 August 1961
Public Health (Amendment) Ordinance 1964 (No 10 of 1964)	21 May 1964
Dairies and Slaughterhouses Ordinance 1965 (No 27 of 1965)	31 December 1965
Public Health (Amendment) Ordinance 1966 (No 12 of 1966)	26 August 1966
Law Revision (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No 2) Ordinance 1966 (No 37 of 1966)	13 January 1967
Amendment of Second Schedule (LN 126 of 1970)	31 December 1970
Public Health (Amendment) Act 1972 (No 3 of 1972)	3 March 1972
Law Revision (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 1975 (No 14 of 1975)	30 May 1975
Law Revision (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 1977 (No 13 of 1977)	1 July 1977
Health Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2002 (No 22 of 2002)	15 November 2005
Food Safety Act 2003 (No 10 of 2003)	5 June 2009
Fijian Affairs (Amendment) Decree 2010 (No 31 of 2010)	2 July 2010
Maritime Transport Decree 2013 (No 20 of 2013)	1 January 2015
Revised Edition of the Laws (Consequential Amendments) Act 2016 (No 31 of 2016)	1 December 2016
Public Health (Budget Amendment) Act 2018 (No 31 of 2018)	1 August 2018
Public Health (COVID-19 Response) (Amendment) Act 2020 (No 9 of 2020)	29 March 2020
Public Health (Amendment) (No 2) Act 2020 (No 30 of 2020)	5 October 2020
Public Health (Amendment) Act 2021 (No 6 of 2021)	12 July 2021

Source: Laws of Fiji

2.0 COMMITTEE'S DELIBERATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE BILL

2.1 Initial reading of the Bill and deliberation by the Committee

The Committee commenced its analysis of the Bill, reading through it, Clause by Clause. From this initial reading, it was noted that the Public Health (Amendment) Bill was the result of a comprehensive review and analysis of the Public Health Act 1935 and the consequential amendments that followed over the years.

The Committee held extensive discussions on the proposed amendments of the Bill and followed the process to first seek the views of the public, particularly key stakeholders, on the proposed legislation.

2.2 In-depth Analysis of the Clauses of the Bill

The 69 proposed amendments to the Public Health (Amendment) Bill are set out below for the Committee's detailed scrutiny, with the rationale for each amendment duly highlighted.

Clause	Current Act / Existing Legislation	Proposed Changes	Reason for Changes	Fine
1	Existing title and commencement provisions.	Provides the • short title • sets the commencement date via Ministerial notice in the Gazette.	To establish the legal name and timeline for the new legislation.	N/A
2	No specific section 1A regarding scope.	Inserts a new section 1A stating the Act applies to the whole of Fiji.	To explicitly define the geographic jurisdiction of the Act.	N/A
3	Existing definitions under Section 2.	Introduces new definitions and amends existing ones.	To modernize terminology and clarify the scope of the Act.	N/A
4	Existing Section 4 regarding Members of Board.	Updates the constitution of the Central Board of Health (CBH) with appointment of the Board and meeting procedures.	To modernize the Board's structure and improve administrative efficiency.	N/A
5	New sections 5A through 5E.	Inserts the following sections • 5A – Functions of Board	To formally outline the functions, powers, and composition of the Board.	N/A

		• 5B – Delegation and Powers of Board • 5C – Appointment and registration of Officers of Board • 5D – General Powers of supervision of Board • 5E – Board may exercise powers of local authority		
6	Existing heading for Section 6.	Amends the heading to "Rules of Procedure of the Board."	To accurately reflect the content and purpose of the section.	N/A
7	Section 7 References "Officers of Health."	Replaces "Officers of Health" with "Practitioners."	To align with current professional designations and healthcare standards.	N/A
8	Previous appointment structure for Secretary.	Appoints the Head of Environmental Health as the Secretary to the Board.	To designate a specific, relevant technical lead to the Board's administration.	N/A
9	Roles not explicitly defined for these positions in this section.	Inserts Sections 8A and 8B defining roles for the Secretary to the Board and the Chairperson of local authorities.	To provide clear statutory duties and accountability for key leadership roles.	N/A
10	Section 10 Previous definition/appointment of rural local authorities.	Amends Section 10: Environmental health managers (or Ministerial appointees) to act as local authority in rural areas.	To ensure professional oversight of health standards in rural jurisdictions.	N/A
11	Section 11 Uses the outdated term "Sanitary Inspectors."	Replaces "Sanitary Inspectors" with "Environmental Health Practitioners" and sets quorum requirements.	To modernize professional titles and ensure technical expertise is present for legal decisions.	N/A
12	Section 12 General powers to manage nuisances.	Modernizes the clause; local authorities can order removal of nuisances/unclean water.	To strengthen enforcement powers against unsanitary conditions on private premises.	Legal proceedings may be instituted for non-compliance.

13	Section 16 Limited Board oversight on infrastructure designs.	Amends Section 16 to give the Board power to scrutinise and authorise water and sewage infrastructure/designs.	To ensure all utility designs meet national health and safety standards before implementation.	N/A
14	Section 16 Lacks specific protections and detailed powers for field staff.	Inserts Sections • 16A – Powers of Head of Environmental Health • 16B – Powers of Environmental Health Practitioner • 16C – Obstruction in the performance of duty The above Outline powers and create an offense for obstruction.	To empower health practitioners and protect them from interference while performing duties.	Criminal Offence for obstruction.
15	Section 18 Uses the term "erected."	Replaces "erected" with "constructed."	To utilize more comprehensive and modern terminology applicable to various structures.	N/A
16	Section 19 General building requirements.	Requires owners to comply with the Town Planning Act before constructing a new building.	To ensure cross-departmental legal compliance and orderly urban development.	N/A
17	Section 21 References "medical officer of health."	Replaces term with "environmental health practitioner."	To reflect modern professional titles and specific roles in public health enforcement.	N/A
18	Section 23 previously carried a fine of $2.	Increases the fine amount to $50.	To adjust for inflation and ensure the fine serves as a meaningful deterrent.	$50
19	Section 30 General waste disposal requirements for facilities.	Mandates that all healthcare facilities must have formal waste management plans.	To ensure biohazardous and medical waste is handled safely and systematically.	N/A
20	Section 31 Older terminology for facilities and bins.	Inserts updated terms: "sanitary facilities" and "wastebins."	To ensure the Act uses contemporary and clearly defined language.	N/A

21	Section 32 Older terminology for facilities and bins.	Inserts updated terms: "sanitary facilities" and "wastebins."	To align Section 32 with modern sanitation standards and definitions.	N/A
22	Section 35 Older terminology for facilities and bins.	Inserts updated terms: "sanitary facilities" and "wastebins."	To maintain legislative consistency throughout the Act.	N/A
23	Section 37 References outdated sanitation terms and officers.	Inserts updated terms for "septic tanks", “wastebin” and "environmental health practitioner."	To modernize technical specifications for sewage disposal and identify the correct oversight officer.	N/A
24	Section 39 Local authorities had independent or different regulatory processes for buildings.	Mandates local authorities to consult the Minister for Local Government when making building regulations.	To ensure alignment between public health building standards and national local government policies.	N/A
25	Section 55 Lower fine levels and outdated professional titles.	Increases the fine and updates "medical officer" to "environmental health practitioner."	To maintain modern professional standards and increase the deterrent effect of penalties.	Increased “$20” to “$1000”
26	Section 56 Existing list of nuisances.	Updates the list of activities likely to constitute a nuisance.	To include modern environmental and health hazards not previously captured in the old Act.	N/A
27	Section 57 Previous fixed penalty for nuisances.	Increases the level of fixed penalty for causing a nuisance.	To provide a more effective immediate deterrent against health hazards.	Increased “$20” to “$1000”
28	Section 59 Lower penalties for failing to rectify a nuisance.	Increases fine for non-compliance and adds a daily penalty.	To compel swift action in removing health hazards and penalize ongoing negligence.	Up to $1,000 (+ $100/day if persistent)
29	Section 60 previously carried a fine of $2.	Increases the fine to $100.	To update an obsolete penalty amount to a more realistic modern value.	Increased “$2” to “$100”
30	Section 63 Fine for obstruction was $40; uses old professional titles.	Updates term to "environmental health practitioner" and increases obstruction fine.	To protect health officers from interference and reflect the seriousness of hindering public duty.	Increased “$40” to “$500”

31	Section 64 Uses the phrase "time being."	Deletes "time being" and substitutes it with "current."	To improve the linguistic clarity and modern legal phrasing of the Act.	N/A
32	Section 66 Previous definitions and lower penalties for water/drain nuisances.	Explicitly defines nuisances regarding public water and drains; increases fine.	To protect public water sources and drainage systems from contamination and blockage.	New Fine $500 or imprisonment exceeding 3 months or both
33	Section 69 Standard response protocols for infectious diseases.	Empowers the Permanent Secretary to form specialized response teams; expands practitioner powers.	To provide a rapid, flexible, and expert response to emerging infectious diseases (e.g., pandemics).	N/A
34	Section 70 References outdated professional titles.	Updates terminology to "environmental health practitioner."	To maintain consistency in professional designations throughout the Act.	N/A
35	Section 71 Medical practitioners only required to notify of disease occurrence.	Mandates practitioners to notify and establish surveillance systems.	To move from reactive reporting to proactive monitoring and data-driven disease control.	N/A
36	Section 78 Broader or less defined group allowed to apprehend for isolation.	Limits authority to apprehend persons for isolation strictly to environmental health practitioners.	To ensure that the deprivation of liberty for health reasons is handled by specific, qualified authorities.	N/A
37	Section 79 General disposal procedures for infected materials.	Mandates that environmental health practitioners safely destroy goods/clothes exposed to disease.	To ensure biohazardous materials are disposed of in a manner that prevents further transmission.	N/A
38	Section 85 Older professional titles and lower fine threshold.	Updates title to "environmental health practitioner" and increases fines.	To modernize the Act and ensure penalties are a modern deterrent.	Increased “$40” to “$1000”
39	Section 89 penalty fee was $20.	Increases the penalty fee to $2,000.	To significantly strengthen the punishment for specific violations.	Increased “$20” to “$2000”
40	Section 90 Offensive trade fees set at $10.	Increases the fee for offensive trades to $500.	To reflect current administrative costs and the impact of offensive trades.	Increased “$10” to “$500”

41	Section 92 No specific mention of short-term rentals.	Requires registration/approval for lodging businesses like “AirBnB.”	To regulate the growing short-term rental market under health and safety standards.	N/A
42	Section 95 Previous lower penalty for obstructing inspections.	Increases the penalty for obstructing local authority inspections.	To ensure health inspectors can access premises without interference.	Increased “$10” to “$5000”
43	Section 96 Previous lower penalty for using unregistered premises.	Increases the penalty fee for using unregistered premises.	To mandate compliance with the registration process for businesses.	Increased “$10” to “$1000” and Increased “$4” to “$100”
44	Section 98 Outdated terminology.	Updates terms to "sanitary facilities" and "wastebin."	To maintain consistency with modern language used in earlier sections.	N/A
45	Section 103 General or vague conditions for mosquito breeding.	Outlines specific conditions that constitute a risk of breeding mosquitoes.	To provide a clear legal standard for identifying and penalizing mosquito hazards.	N/A
46	Section 104 Limited list of mosquito-related nuisances.	Expands the definition of nuisance to include any receptacle capable of breeding mosquitoes.	To give authorities power to order the removal of even small containers (cans, tires, etc.).	N/A
47	Section 105 Uses "yards" and outdated professional titles.	Updates title to "environmental health practitioner" and switches to meters.	To align with the metric system and modern professional designations.	N/A
48	Section 106 Outdated technical and professional terminology.	Updates terms to "environmental health practitioner," "boreholes," and "water tanks."	To ensure the Act reflects modern water storage technology and professional titles.	N/A
49	Section 107 General maintenance requirements for properties.	Empowers practitioners to issue notices for the repair or reconstruction of gutters to prevent stagnant water.	Specifically targeted at vector control to eliminate breeding sites for mosquitoes.	N/A
50	Section 108 References outdated professional titles.	Updates terminology to "environmental health practitioner."	To maintain statutory consistency across the Act.	N/A
51	Section 109 References outdated professional titles.	Updates terminology to "environmental health practitioner."	To ensure legal clarity regarding who has the authority to enforce this section.	N/A

52	Section 110 Existing lower penalty fees for mosquito-related offenses.	Reviews the penalty fee upwards for non-compliance with mosquito regulations.	To create a stronger financial deterrent against negligence that leads to mosquito-borne diseases.	Increased “$10” to “$1000”
53	Section 111 Older professional titles.	Updates term to "environmental health practitioner."	To standardize professional designations throughout the Act.	N/A
54	Section 112 Lacked specific detailed hygiene standards for maritime vessels.	Inserts Section 112A outlining general hygiene requirements for ships.	To ensure maritime vessels maintain sanitary conditions to prevent the spread of disease.	N/A
55	Section 117 Lower fees for ship masters failing sanitary checks.	Reviews the fee payable by a master of a ship upwards.	To ensure ship captains take health regulations seriously and maintain vessel compliance.	New Fine “$1000” or imprisonment not exceeding 6 month or both.
56	Section 118 Older professional titles.	Updates term to "environmental health practitioner."	To ensure the correct authority is identified for maritime inspections.	N/A
57	Section 120 General or limited water sanitation rules.	Inserts Sections 120A–120E regarding water supply and contamination prevention.	To create a robust regulatory framework for protecting the national water supply.	N/A
58	Section 121 Older professional titles.	Updates term to "environmental health practitioner."	Consistency in legal language.	N/A
59	Section 123 Existing lower penalty for water contamination.	Reviews the fee for contaminating a water source upwards.	To reflect the severe public health risk posed by polluting drinking water.	Revised Upwards
60	Section 124 Vague placement rules for water sources; outdated terms.	Updates terms ("borehole") and mandates a minimum distance between water sources and toilets.	To prevent cross-contamination between sewage facilities and drinking water sources.	N/A
61	Section 125 Older professional titles.	Updates term to "environmental health practitioner."	To maintain statutory consistency.	N/A
62	Section 127 Limited or non-specific regulations for laundromat waste.	Empowers the Minister to make regulations specifically for	To manage the unique environmental impact and volume of waste produced by	N/A

		laundromat solid waste storage.	commercial laundry services.	
63	Section 128 General penalty levels for breaches of by-laws.	Reviews the general penalty for breaches of by-laws and regulations upwards.	To ensure that all subsidiary legislation (by-laws) carries a meaningful financial deterrent.	Increased “$200” to “$2000” and Increased “$4” to “$100”
64	Section 130 Existing cost-recovery mechanisms for the local authority.	Updates the power of local authorities to sue property owners for reimbursement of enforcement costs.	To ensure the taxpayer does not bear the cost of cleaning up or fixing health hazards created by private owners.	N/A
65	Section 132 References outdated professional titles.	Updates terminology to "environmental health practitioner."	To maintain consistency in professional designations throughout the final sections of the Act.	N/A
66	Section 135 Potential legal ambiguity when a property has multiple owners.	Allows legal proceedings to be instituted against any one person among multiple owners for a breach.	To simplify enforcement and prevent owners from avoiding responsibility due to complex co-ownership structures.	N/A
67	Section 140 was active in the current Act.	Deletes Section 140.	As in Clause 2- to be applied to the whole of Fiji including iTaukei villages	N/A
68	Section 141 Lower general penalty for miscellaneous offences.	Reviews the general penalty upwards for offences without a specific fine elsewhere in the Act.	To ensure that every violation of the Act carries a meaningful and modern financial consequence.	Increased “$10” to “$5000” And Increased “$4” to “$500”
69	Existing Schedule 2 list of nuisances.	Amends Schedule 2 by inserting new forms of business activity that may constitute a nuisance.	To capture modern industrial and commercial practices that pose new types of public health risks.	N/A

3.0 Responses to the Public Health (Amendment) Bill by various stakeholders

3.1 Stakeholder Response

All the submissions received during the stakeholder consultation were considered and deliberated on extensively. The main points and issues noted from the submissions are summarised below.

Name of Stakeholders	Issues
1. Ministry of iTaukei Affairs	• Removal of Section 140, which currently exempts villages from the Public Health Act extending the Act's reach to all parts of Fiji, including iTaukei villages for the first time. • Restructuring of the Central Board of Health to include professionals drawn from public environmental health, medicine, law, engineering, local government and consumer protection. • Modernisation of terminology, replacing 'sanitary inspector' with 'environmental health practitioner', reflecting updated professional standards. • Expanded enforcement powers, enabling health officers to inspect premises, collect samples, order remediation of insanitary conditions, and in some circumstances require vaccination, treatment, or isolation during epidemics. • Substantial increase in penalties fines previously ranging from $2–$40 are replaced with amounts reaching $500, $1,000, $5,000, or $10,000 depending on the offence. • Stricter standards for water safety, waste management, mosquito breeding prevention, common lodging houses, healthcare waste, and sanitation on ships. • Expansion of activities classified as 'nuisances' to include noise, overcrowding, pollution, poor waste disposal, and unsafe animal and bird keeping.
2. Fiji Institute of Environmental Health	• Formal recognition and appointment of Environmental Health Practitioners under the Act • Establishment of specialist Environmental Health Practitioners in vector entomology • Creation of constitutionally compliant Environmental Health Prosecutors under DPP oversight. • Modernization of evidentiary and digital enforcement provisions. • The submission also recommends stronger inter-agency coordination mechanisms, objective nuisance standards, and administrative review rights to ensure transparent and proportionate public health enforcement.
3. Ministry of Environment and Climate Change	• The Bill expands the Ministry of Health's powers into areas already regulated by the Environment Management Act (EMA) and its regulations, creating potential for conflicting authority and regulatory duplication. • Provisions allow the Central Board of Health to direct actions on pollution (water, land, air, noise), which are already covered by the EMA. The Ministry recommends limiting these powers to imminent public health emergencies and requiring consultation with the Ministry of Environment.

	• The Board's ability to appoint persons for pollution control if local authorities' default could create a parallel enforcement system, rather than referring such matters to the Ministry of Environment. • Certain sections, such as those addressing pollution of water bodies and waste management, duplicate existing environmental regulations, risking inconsistent enforcement and uncertainty for regulated entities. • The Bill introduces new approval pathways for activities already subject to environmental impact assessments under the EMA, potentially bypassing established processes. • The Central Board of Health lacks required environmental science or climate expertise, raising concerns about its ability to make informed decisions on environmental matters. • The term "environmental health practitioner" is undefined, leading to confusion about qualifications and overlap with roles already established under the EMA. • The Bill uses terms like "waste" without formal legal definitions consistent with the EMA, which could undermine enforcement and clarity.
4. Ministry of Education	• The document outlines Fiji's public health and building requirements for schools, covering classroom design, sanitation, water systems, emergency health responses, pollution prevention, enforcement and boarding facilities. • Classroom space: Schools should provide at least 1.5 m² per student—about 45 m² for 30 learners—with safe desk layouts and unobstructed exits. • Safety and accessibility: School buildings should include cyclone-resistant features, fire-safety measures, ramps and accessible doorways. • Ventilation: Windows and external openings should equal at least 10% of floor area, with at least half openable. Workshops may require four air changes per hour, while laboratories need separate exhaust systems. • Water and sewerage: New construction and expansions require prior approval from relevant authorities. Plans must include adequate water storage, properly scaled WASH facilities and separate disposal systems for oils, grease and chemicals. • Sanitary facilities: Staff and student toilets must be separated. Detached toilets should be at least 15 feet from kitchens and food areas, while multi-storey buildings require accessible toilets and step-free access. • Outbreak response: Schools must promptly report suspected disease clusters, formally notify authorities within 24 hours, provide temporary isolation areas and cooperate with inspections and infection-control measures. • Water pollution: Sewage, chemicals and runoff must not contaminate waterways or drinking supplies. Plumbing must be watertight, and laboratories, workshops and kitchens require specialised traps or containment systems. • Enforcement: Inspectors may issue abatement notices for overcrowding, poor ventilation, defective sewerage, dampness or unmanaged waste. Continued non-compliance can result in daily fines, court orders, closure and recovery of repair costs.

	• Boarding facilities: Dormitories and hostels must be registered and inspected before use. They must meet standards for space, ventilation, bed spacing, sanitation and safety; registration may be cancelled if conditions become unsafe.
5. Ministry of Local Government	• The Ministry supports modernizing the Public Health Act to improve environmental health, sanitation, And public health outcomes. • Recommends explicit definitions for modern accommodation (e.g., homestays, Airbnb, guest houses) to ensure proper regulation of health, safety and land use. • Clarifies that public health approvals should not override town planning or zoning requirements. • Suggests expanding Section 19 to cover a wider range of development activities (e.g., landfilling, excavation, drainage changes) due to their public health impacts. • Use of term "Head of local authorities" (CEO for towns/cities, chairperson for rural/provincial) instead of "Chairperson" in the Bill. • Requests explicit exemption for councils of towns and cities from certain quorum requirements, preferring delegation of responsibilities as currently allowed. • All fines be tiered by offence frequency and differentiated for individuals and companies. • Supports mandatory consultation with both the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Town Planning on regulations affecting land use and buildings. • Calls for clarity to avoid overlapping approval responsibilities between the Board, municipal councils, and infrastructure agencies.
6. Ministry of Agriculture, Waterways and Sugar	• Supports modernising Fiji's public health laws to strengthen water safety, sanitation, pollution control, waste management, and disease surveillance. • The Bill will directly affect agriculture, particularly farming and livestock near water sources, pesticide use, agricultural waste, processing facilities, and zoonotic disease management. • The main risk is disproportionate compliance pressure on smallholder farmers and rural communities through broad enforcement powers, higher penalties, and unclear farming standards. • Recommends agriculture-specific guidelines, phased implementation, farmer education, technical and financial support, and corrective action before penalties for minor or first-time breaches. • Effective implementation requires formal coordination among health, agriculture, environment, water, biosecurity, municipal, and disaster-management agencies to avoid duplication and protect public health without unnecessarily restricting sustainable agriculture.
7. Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources	• The Bill expands public health enforcement powers, potentially overlapping with existing land administration laws and authorities.

	• The Ministry recommends the Bill should explicitly preserve the statutory functions and powers of the Director of Lands and other land authorities to avoid duplication, conflicting directives, and legal uncertainty. • Mandatory consultation with the Director of Lands is recommended before enforcement actions (e.g., demolition, closure, enforcement within reserves or informal settlements) affecting State land or interests. • An emergency exception is supported for urgent public health threats, provided the Director is notified promptly after action. • The Bill introduces statutory liens for cost recovery on properties where public health works are performed. • The Ministry raises concerns about clarity on lien creation, registration, notification, priority, and discharge, especially across different land tenure types (freehold, State leases, iTaukei, customary land). • Recommendations include: o Lien effectiveness only upon registration. o Mandatory notice to the Registrar of Titles. o Clear priority ranking of liens relative to mortgages and other encumbrances. o Formal discharge process after payment. • Suggests expanding the list of activities that may contaminate water sources to include mining, quarrying, and development projects. • Recommends including boreholes as recognized water sources and clarifying liability for intentional contamination. • Proposes higher penalties for polluting water supplies and inclusion of groundwater recharge zones. • Recommends allowing mapping of cases using various geospatial technologies, not just QGIS, for flexibility in spatial analysis. • Concern that increased fines may disproportionately affect rural/agricultural lessees with limited infrastructure. • Recommends a tiered enforcement process: warning/improvement notices, reasonable remediation periods, and technical assistance before penalties. • Suggests compliance periods based on breach severity (e.g., 14–30 days for minor defects, immediate action for serious hazards). • Enforcement in informal settlements should be coordinated with land regularization and resettlement initiatives to avoid negative social and economic impacts. • The Ministry's support for public health objectives while emphasizing the need for legal clarity, inter-agency coordination, and fairness in enforcement, especially regarding land administration and vulnerable communities.

8.Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji	• MSAF recommends introducing a clear definition of "vermin" in the Bill, specifically including pests like cockroaches and bed bugs, not just vectors of medical importance. • Suggests expanding the definition of premises to include ships where relevant, supporting amendments related to vermin removal from ships. • Recommends adding a clause to ensure sanitation and hygiene of crew and passenger living spaces, including medical facilities onboard ships. • Proposes a requirement for health inspection after fumigation to confirm all pests and habitats are eliminated before issuing a fumigation certificate. • Suggests enforcing a specific timeframe for when passengers and crew can safely re-board ships after fumigation. • Proposes expanding the penalty regime for non-compliance with abatement notices on ships to include not only prosecution but also infringement or spot fines for immediate deterrence. • Recommends mandatory water testing for ships both at the source and at the point of consumption.
9. Pacific Community	• The Pacific Community (SPC) provides the technical submission by evaluating Fiji's Public Health Amendment Bill No. 4 of 2026. The submission recognizes the Bill's intent to update public health legislation but finds it insufficiently modern and largely reactive. • The Bill updates some definitions and enforcement powers but omits critical areas such as non-communicable diseases (NCDs), climate-related health risks, digital health, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and International Health Regulations (IHR) implementation. • The Central Board of Health's composition and functions are unclear and do not reflect modern public health needs. • Allowing a single individual to perform Board functions undermines governance. • Registration of environmental health practitioners by the Board is inconsistent with best practice and should be handled separately. • Expanded enforcement powers are included, but some (e.g., compulsory vaccination) may not be appropriate for environmental health officers. • Some penalties, such as daily fines of $1,000, are considered excessive and potentially inequitable. • Drafting inconsistencies and unclear delegation mechanisms may undermine legal certainty. • Other issues raised were as follows o Expand the Bill to include o Clarify and modernize the Board's composition and functions. o Remove or revise provisions allowing single-person Board decisions. o Address practitioner registration through separate legislation. o Review penalties for fairness and proportionality. o Align the Act with Fiji's health and digital strategies and strengthen multisectoral governance
10.University of Fiji	The review identifies several significant legal risks in the proposed Public Health (Amendment) Bill 2026 reforms: • The Bill grants wide-ranging powers to the Board, Head of Environmental Health, and environmental health practitioners (e.g., compulsory medical examinations, forced entry, demolition, and quarantine orders) without clear statutory safeguards.

	• Risks include lack of written reasons, objective criteria, timeframes, or independent review/appeal mechanisms, which could lead to arbitrary or disproportionate use of authority and potential human rights violations. Key terms (e.g., "public health," "environmental health," "practitioner") are undefined or inconsistently used, creating uncertainty in interpretation and enforcement. • The appointment, qualifications, and oversight of critical roles (e.g., Head of Environmental Health) are not clearly established, risking legal challenges and lack of accountability. • The Bill allows delegation of major coercive powers (e.g., compulsory treatment, demolition) to junior officers without adequate limitation or oversight, increasing the risk of misuse. • There is potential for regulatory conflict or duplication with existing legislation (e.g., Town Planning Act, Environment Management Act, Water Authority of Fiji), which could cause confusion, inconsistent enforcement, and legal disputes. • Powers affecting personal liberty, privacy, and property (e.g., forced medical treatment, closure of premises) are not always balanced with requirements for necessity, proportionality, or due process. • Emergency intervention powers are not clearly defined or limited, and there is a lack of clear review or appeal processes for affected parties (e.g., local authorities, individuals subject to orders). • Terms like "significant health risk" are undefined, and the Bill does not specify applicable standards or clarify coordination with environmental agencies, risking inconsistent application and enforcement. • References to specific software (e.g., QGIS) in legislation may limit future flexibility and create legal uncertainty if technology changes. • The Bill does not explicitly recognize climate change, domestic violence, or child protection as public health priorities, missing opportunities for statutory frameworks to address these risks.
11. Land Transport Authority	• LTA supports the Bill's intent to strengthen Fiji's public health framework, especially regarding pollution control and environmental health. • Bill does not specifically address several transport-related environmental health concerns: o Vehicle emissions: No standards or regulations for tailpipe emissions. o Noise pollution: Limited guidance on regulating transport-related noise. o Vehicle nuisances: No clear rules on issues like prolonged idling or oil leaks. o Derelict vehicles: No measures for managing or removing abandoned vehicles. o Hybrid/electric vehicle batteries: No provisions for safe handling and disposal. o End-of-life alternative fuel vehicles: No guidance on disposal or management. • The Bill's focus on pollution control, regulatory enforcement, and data sharing aligns with LTA's functions and offers opportunities for improved agency coordination. • The Bill supports sustainable development and environmental resilience. Addressing transport-related impacts would further enhance this alignment.

12. Ministry of Housing	• The Ministry suggested the importance of inter-ministerial coordination to protect public health while preserving affordable housing access and social protections. • Endorse the Bill with targeted amendments and coordinated implementation. • Clarify lodging definitions and prevent overcrowding. • Set a 14–21-day approval timeframe for water and sewerage designs. • Require consultation and relocation planning before demolition orders. • Integrate public-health requirements with town planning. • Phase in the 4.8 m² overcrowding standard. • Recognise legitimate leasehold lodging operators. • Apply the 50-metre rural sanitation safeguard.
13. National Fire Authority	• NFA supports the Bill's aim to modernize public health governance, environmental health, nuisance control, water safety, disease prevention, and enforcement. • Recommends adding the NFA CEO (or nominee) to the Board of Health to ensure fire and life-safety expertise is included in public health decisions. • Suggests healthcare waste management plans must address fire prevention, emergency evacuation, hazardous material storage, fire response protocols, and coordination with NFA. • Proposes mandatory NFA consultation for developments involving hospitals, public buildings, industrial facilities, and high-risk premises to ensure fire safety standards are met. • Recommends fire risk assessments, emergency response plans, fire protection systems, and NFA consultation before licensing new high-risk industries (e.g., asphalt plants, workshops, quarries). • Advocates for firefighting water supply requirements (hydrants, emergency storage, access points) to be considered in public water infrastructure approvals. • Calls for explicit coordination with NFA and other emergency services in outbreak response teams and emergency powers provisions. • Recommends NFA consultation before demolition orders for unsafe or fire-damaged structures due to their expertise in fire damage and hazardous materials. • Suggests requiring proof of compliance with NFA fire safety standards (extinguishers, alarms, lighting, escape routes, evacuation plans) for registration. • Proposes that Environmental Health Practitioners notify NFA when inspections reveal significant fire hazards or unsafe conditions.
14. Fiji Woman's Right Movement	• The Bill fails to explicitly recognize the needs of women, girls, and other vulnerable groups in its language and definitions, particularly regarding sanitary facilities and the WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) framework. • Recommendation: Separate and clearly define "sanitary facilities," adopt the WASH framework, and use language that explicitly protects women, girls, pregnant women, elderly, and persons with disabilities. • The Bill does not require health data to be broken down by sex, gender, age, or disability, making it difficult to address inequalities in health outcomes. • Recommendation: Mandate the collection and public accessibility of sex-disaggregated data to support evidence-based, inclusive health policies.

	• Decision-making bodies under the Bill lack requirements for gender balance or civil society representation, perpetuating the underrepresentation of women in leadership. • Recommendation: Ensure gender balance and include representatives from women, youth, persons with disabilities, and civil society organizations in all relevant committees. • Section 16 grants broad powers to mandate medical examinations and treatments without sufficient oversight, risking violations of bodily autonomy and constitutional rights. • Recommendation: Remove unconstitutional provisions, especially forced medical interventions, and ensure extraordinary health powers are held by accountable officials. • The Bill lacks enforceable standards and timelines for maintaining health infrastructure and ensuring continuous water supply, disproportionately affecting rural and underserved communities. • Recommendation: Set clear accountability measures for infrastructure maintenance, establish a public complaints mechanism, and guarantee uninterrupted water supply for health facilities.
15. Hilton Hotel Fiji	• The submission from Hilton Fiji argues that Fiji's proposed Public Health Bill requires clear, tourism-specific regulations, developed in consultation with hotel and tourism operators. • Key terms and standards—such as accommodation, pollution, nuisance, noise, communicable disease, practitioner qualifications, penalties, and "reasonable time"—are too vague and risk inconsistent enforcement. • Guest privacy and rights must be protected: inspectors should not enter occupied hotel rooms or compel medical examinations without consent and appropriate safeguards. • Hotels should not be held liable for violations caused by guests, and penalties and cost-recovery processes must clearly identify responsibility. • Infrastructure changes, remediation, inspections, and closures should involve consultation with property owners and give operators a reasonable opportunity to address issues. • Overly broad enforcement powers could expose government and operators to legal liability and reputational damage, potentially harming Fiji's image as a safe tourism destination.
16. Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji	• CAAF recommends limiting the Board's ability to delegate its powers, ensuring that critical functions (such as reporting to the Minister, recommending legislative changes, and making quasi-policy decisions) remain with the Board collectively. • Concerns are raised about governance if multiple office holders can exercise Board functions in its absence; CAAF suggests designating only one temporary office holder for clarity and accountability. • The Bill grants environmental health officers broad powers to enter and inspect premises, including airports and aircraft. CAAF warns this could conflict with existing aviation security laws and disrupt operations. • CAAF recommends that such powers be explicitly subject to the Civil Aviation (Security) Act and aligned with international obligations under the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization), especially regarding facilitation and health standards.

	• CAAF notes a potential conflict between the Bill and existing Air Navigation Regulations regarding aircraft noise. It recommends clarifying that aircraft compliant with ICAO noise standards should not be considered a nuisance under the Bill. • CAAF highlights international approaches to regulating laser pointers as both a public health and aviation safety issue. • Recommends Fiji use the Public Health Act to restrict import, sale, possession, and use of high-powered laser pointers (over 1 mW), requiring permits for legitimate professional use and prohibiting aiming lasers at aircraft. • Proposes penalties for violations, including fines and imprisonment, and allows for seizure of illegal devices. • Inserting new sections to ensure aviation facilities are protected, requiring consultation with CAAF before exercising public health powers in aviation contexts, and ensuring such actions do not impede aviation safety or operations.
17. Department of Water and Sewerage	• DWS supports the Bill's aim to strengthen public health and safeguard drinking water quality. • The Bill extends Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MOHMS) powers into areas traditionally managed by DWS, such as water quality monitoring, technical approvals, and infrastructure oversight. This overlap risks duplication, regulatory uncertainty, and inefficient use of resources. • DWS emphasizes that water and sewerage regulation requires specialized technical expertise beyond public health surveillance. Approvals and technical decisions should remain with DWS, while MOHMS should focus on health surveillance, risk assessment, and outbreak response. • The Bill should explicitly recognize DWS as the lead water sector regulator and MOHMS as the lead for public health protection. Legislation should establish mechanisms for collaboration, information sharing, and coordinated monitoring. A coordinated regulatory model is recommended to avoid duplication and conflicting instructions. • DWS provides detailed feedback on specific Bill sections, including o Board membership: DWS should have permanent representation. o Technical approvals: DWS should retain authority for water and sewerage system designs. o Water quality monitoring: Support for a national coordinated framework led by DWS. o Sanitary surveys and corrective measures: Joint implementation with technical endorsement from DWS. o Closure of water sources: DWS and Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) should be consulted except in emergencies. o Setback distances for sanitation: Recommends a risk-based, site-specific approach rather than a fixed distance. o Borehole and groundwater regulation: DWS and Mineral Resources Department should be recognized as technical authorities. o National reporting and policy: DWS should coordinate sector reporting and retain policy leadership. o DWS highlights the importance of technical, operational, and regulatory expertise in managing water and sewerage systems for sustainability, climate resilience, and public health.

	○ Recommends that regulations consider Fiji's unique land, community, and infrastructure realities to avoid unintended negative impacts.
18. Fiji Commerce & Employers Federations	• FCEF supports updating Fiji's public health laws to address modern challenges like infectious diseases, unsafe water, and pollution. • Emphasizes the need for a framework that protects public health while ensuring fair, clear, and practical compliance for businesses. • Highlights the importance of public health for economic resilience, referencing recent dengue outbreaks and the significant role of MSMEs in Fiji's economy. • Notes that many small businesses have limited resources, so implementation must consider their capacity. • Recommends including a private-sector representative on the Central Board of Health to ensure business realities are considered. • Calls for clear legal standards, written reasons for enforcement actions, reasonable rectification periods, and urgent review mechanisms for severe actions like demolition or vacation orders. • Seeks confidentiality protections for sensitive business and employee information. • Advocates for retaining and modernizing existing safeguards for necessary business activities. • Recommends a graduated enforcement approach: warnings and opportunities to rectify for first non-urgent breaches, with immediate penalties reserved for serious or repeated violations. • Requests clear review and appeal rights for penalties and orders. • Suggests a national workplace protocol for outbreak management, including clear communication, privacy protections, and fair cost allocation. • Recommends that workplace-wide orders be time-limited, risk-based, and subject to review. • Requests clarification on renewal criteria, cost recovery, and the application of new rules to existing premises. • Recommends that cost recovery only follow verified testing and fair dispute processes. • Seeks clear definitions of liability based on actual control and responsibility, with reasonable defenses for those unable to prevent breaches. • Recommends support and guidance for MSMEs and rural/village enterprises during implementation. • Publish regulations and compliance checklists before enforcement begins. • Coordinate enforcement with other regulatory bodies to avoid duplication and conflicting standards. • Allow at least 12 months for general implementation, with longer periods for capital works and existing premises.
19. Engineers Fiji	• The Head of Environmental Health is given significant authority to implement the Act, with questions raised about required qualifications. • Environmental Health Practitioners may receive delegated powers, but their qualifications also need clarification. • There is debate over whether water should be regulated under health legislation or the Water Authority of Fiji, referencing New Zealand's approach.

	• The current process lacks clear technical standards for design approval; referencing established guidelines (e.g., Australian, WHO, or Fiji-specific) is recommended for consistency. • The Board currently approves each design at its discretion, which can lead to inconsistency. • Suggestion for registered engineers to self-certify standard designs, reserving Board approval for higher-risk or novel systems, to reduce administrative bottlenecks. • The Act lacks an appeal or review mechanism for Board decisions; adding a review process (e.g., Minister or Tribunal) is recommended. • The division of responsibilities between local government and the Central Board is unclear; a clearer demarcation is suggested to avoid duplication. • Proposal for a public register of approved designs, contaminated sources, and non-compliant premises to improve transparency and allow independent compliance checks. • Questions about how the Bill aligns with the National Building Code of Fiji and whether it should fall under a different ministry. • All submitted designs must be guaranteed by a Chartered Engineer recognized by relevant professional bodies. • Recommendation to include representatives from Engineers Fiji, Master Builders, and the Fiji Association of Architects on the Central Board.
20.Laisa Bale (Ms) *Farmer/Cultivator* Vunibua Gan Batyah Organic Farm (Bua)/Bethsaida Organic Farm (Macuata) District of Bua/District of Labasa Province of Bua/ Province of Macuata Vanua Levu.	• Farmers face challenges with the requirement for domestic kitchens to meet industrial standards, which is unreasonable given their limited processing needs. • The process to obtain licenses is tedious, requiring multiple registrations for different localities, limiting market flexibility. • Overhaul the Public Health Act to modernize and tailor regulations for smallholder farmers. • Establish a specific regulation for farmers, recognizing their limited trading frequency and different operational needs. • Exempt farmers from industrial food standards, allowing for seasonal and low-volume production. • Create a separate set of health standards for farmers, reflecting their minimal interaction with the public. • Promote farm-to-table concepts and direct consumer access, reducing reliance on middlemen and increasing income. • Reforming the Public Health Act offers an opportunity to support smallholder farmers, enhance market access, and improve national health outcomes by aligning regulations with their realities.
21. Rakiraki Town Council	The RTC's main concerns and objections regarding the Public Health Bill 4 of 2026: • Opposition to Health Inspector Registration: RTC disagrees with requiring Council Health Inspectors to be registered with the Public Health Board (PHB), arguing they are Council employees and should not need PHB approval. • Supervision and Inspection Powers: RTC objects to the PHB having general supervisory and inspection powers over all Councils, emphasizing local autonomy and citing effective local disaster management practices. • Appointment and Cost Recovery: RTC opposes PHB's authority to appoint Health Inspectors and recover related costs from local councils.

	• Broad Appointment/Termination Powers: RTC finds the provision allowing PHB to appoint and terminate personnel too broad and open to misuse. • Property Owner Absence: RTC raises concerns about holding property owners responsible for nuisances or pollution when they may be absent, migrated, or ill. • Expense Recovery: RTC does not agree with recovering incurred expenses from local councils. • Unrestricted Property Entry: RTC objects to allowing the Head of Environmental Health to enter properties at any time without a court order, citing potential for abuse. • Impact on Homelessness: RTC warns that certain sections could increase homelessness and street dwellers. • Terminology: RTC notes that the Board of any local authority should be referred to as the Council. • Revenue Collection: RTC requests that revenue from fixed penalty notices issued by Council Environment Health Practitioners be collected at the local Council level. • Overall, RTC is concerned about excessive powers granted to the PHB, potential for abuse, and lack of compensation or control for Councils regarding revenue and responsibilities.
22. Suva City Council and Nasinu Town Council	• Expressed concern that the Central Board of Health's expanded supervisory powers could overlap with, or encroach on, municipal authority. It recommended mandatory consultation, written notice, and an opportunity for councils to rectify issues before the Board intervenes or performs council functions. • The Council sought clearer coordination between the Central Board of Health, municipal councils, the Water Authority of Fiji, and planning authorities to avoid duplicated processes and delays. • Nasinu has 54 informal settlements while Suva City Council has 13 informal settlements, placing significant pressure on waste collection and other municipal services. The Council advised that residents of these settlements generally do not pay municipal rates, although councils still provide some services. • The Council supported the proposed increases from $10 existing fines to penalties of up to several thousand dollars—potentially excessive for low- and middle-income households and small businesses. It recommended warnings and reasonable compliance periods before major penalties are imposed. • The Council asked for the Bill to address the safety and compensation of officers who may be assaulted or injured—such as through dog attacks—while performing enforcement duties. • The Council supported regulating lodging houses, rental properties, and Airbnb-type accommodation, but requested authority to impose additional local licensing requirements through municipal bylaws.
22. Labasa Town Council	• New mandates for water testing and sanitation inspections require resources that councils currently lack.

	○ *Recommendation*: Introduce a phased transition period and provide national grants for training and equipment. • Institutional Overlap ○ Overlapping authority between the Central Board of Health and local councils could cause delays and conflicts. ○ *Recommendation*: Develop clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to define when override powers apply. • Financial & Cost Recovery Mechanisms ○ The Council supports new financial enforcement tools but seeks efficient implementation. ○ *Recommendation*: Add a fast-track administrative process with the Registrar of Titles for enforcing liens and interest. • Uneven Economic Penalties ○ Large flat-rate fines could harm small businesses and residents. ○ *Recommendation*: Implement a scaled penalty system that distinguishes between corporate and small-scale offenders. • Omission of Domestic Canines ○ Dogs are not included in the definition of 'animal,' despite being a source of nuisance. ○ *Recommendation*: Explicitly include dogs in the Act's definitions or as a statutory nuisance. • Omission of Town Drainage Protection ○ The bill omits language protecting urban drainage from pollution. ○ *Recommendation*: Restore the phrase protecting town drainage networks to strengthen enforcement. • Classification of Green Recycling ○ Labelling bottle collection as an 'offensive trade' discourages recycling and eco-investment. ○ *Recommendation*: Set objective criteria so recycling is only penalized if it causes real hazards.
23. Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation	• The Ministry supports aims and objectives of Public Health (Amendment) Bill 2026 • Tourism officials requested clearer rules for Airbnb, homestays, hotels and residential rentals. • Proposed fines should be proportionate to the size and type of operator. • Inspection powers should balance advance notice with the need for unannounced health checks. • Closing contaminated water sources could significantly affect outer-island resorts. • Building, water and sewage approvals may cause delays and additional administrative costs. • Noise and nuisance provisions require clear standards and penalties.
24. Avendra Prakash, PhD Candidate University of Wellington, NZ	• Include Public Health Representation on the Board • Formal recognition of health promotion • Insertion of Public Health workforce integration • Establishment of community public health units (CPHUs) • Shift from reactive “nuisance” to preventive risk management • Strengthening surveillance with a data-driven approach

3.2 Submission received during public consultation

All submissions received during the public consultation process were thoroughly considered and extensively deliberated upon by the Committee. The principal issues and observations arising from these submissions are summarised below which reflects a wide range of views.

Location of Public Consultations	Issues Raised
Rotuma Island Rotuma Council of Chiefs	Community Feedback on the Bill • Chiefs unanimously supported the amendments and fines. • Safety concerns about fuel transported with passengers on ships. • Water supply hours reduced due to staffing/overtime constraints. • Request for CID-style confidential investigation for HIV cases (MoH clarified privacy laws prevent this). • realistic rural sanitation rules • government-supported waste removal • protection of water sources • better communication from health officials • local authority empowerment • fair enforcement that respects Rotuman customs
Rotuma Island (1) Noatau / Oinafa, Noatau District Hall (2) Pepjei / Juju, Juju District Hall (3) Itutiu, Motusa Hall	• Fines too high for rural communities. • Vacant houses owned by overseas residents becoming health hazards. • Mosquito swamps used for via planting. • Beach erosion and climate change impacts. • Need for recycling programs. • Lack of toilets at Oinafa wharf. • Water supply interruptions. • Drug prevention at ports of entry. • Need for youth education on sexual health and birth control • Lower fines for rural areas • More education before enforcement • Better waste management infrastructure • Stronger port security • Support for mosquito control in natural swamps
Rotuma Island Malha'a Village, Malha'a District Hall	• Rotuma will be fully bound by the Public Health Act. • Provisions in the Rotuma Act will be aligned accordingly. • Need for better waste management infrastructure. • Desire for stronger collaboration between people and village chiefs. • Concern about abandoned houses becoming health hazards. • General support for empowering health workers.

	• Public health is “common sense”: clean compounds, fix leaks, remove receptacles. • Negligence is the root cause of outbreaks.
Kadavu Province Vunisea, Namuana, Muanisolo, Tavuki, **Nadi** Narewa **Rewa Province** Suvavou **Yasawa Islands** Kese, Yaqeta, Nacula, Solevu, **Tailevu Province** Sawakasa **Lomaiviti Province** Levuka	• Communities support for the modernization of the Public Health Act 1935. • Village sanitation and cleanliness. • Waste management such as Illegal dumping, Lack of rubbish collection services, Inadequate disposal sites pollution of the environment and waterways and Septic tank and wastewater control. • Communicable disease prevention. HIV/AIDS, Drug use and needle sharing, sexually transmitted infections, Community education and prevention. • Protection of public health inspectors. • Improved regulation of public health risks through Industrial Waste and Pollution, Industrial activities and waste affecting village waters and surrounding marine environments and Potential impacts on fishing grounds and community health. • Women's Representation on the Central Board of Health • Environmental Impact of New Developments, New housing and commercial developments lead to Environmental degradation and Pressure on natural resources. • Potential negative impacts on surrounding villages.
Yasawa Group Kese, Yaqeta and Nacula **Malolo Group** Solevu **Tailevu Province** Sawakasa **Lomaiviti Province** Levuka	• Limited access to reliable clean drinking water. • Challenges caused by geographical isolation. • The need for improved water infrastructure. • Greater government support for water storage, treatment and purification systems. • Disposal of household rubbish. • Limited waste management services. • Pollution caused by improper disposal methods. • Stray Dogs, dogs roaming freely through villages, need for stronger management and control measures.
Naitasiri Province Vunidawa, Serea, Navuso and Kalabu **Rewa Province**	• Penalties too high for Villagers and suggested penalties should be categorized according to income level or type of offender

Burebasaga and Nasigatoka Villages	• Education and warnings should come first while repeated non-compliance should attract larger penalties. • Villagers should be given time to correct problems before fines are imposed • Different penalty scales for villages and urban/business operators. • Strengthen the role of Village Nurses and local health structures. • Require regular village inspections and ongoing awareness programs. • Lack of suitable rubbish disposal sites, as land erosion affecting existing rubbish pits. • Growing volumes of non-biodegradable waste such as diapers, plastics and household appliances. • The success of the Bill will depend on adequate inspection, monitoring and implementation hence enforcement agencies must have the resources to carry out their responsibilities effectively • Penalties should be distinguished between villagers and commercial operators.
Namosi & Serua Provincial Council, Nadroga / Navosa Provincial Office Keiyasi Government Station **Ba Province** Namoli, Nailaga and Tavualevu Ra Provincial Office - Nanukuloa	• Communities acknowledged the need to modernize the Public Health Act and improve public health, sanitation and environmental protection standards. • Participants highlighted that some households may face difficulties complying with new standards because of financial constraints and limited infrastructure. • Waste management remains a significant challenge in many villages and rural settlements as rural settlement lacks proper rubbish disposal facilities, waste collection services, recycling facilities and designated dumping sites • The Community highlighted the stronger protection of drinking water sources from contamination. • Strong support for re-establishment of the Rural Local Authority • Participants requested stronger controls and enforcement measures to address noise pollution in urban and peri-urban communities.
Macuata Province Nabukadogo, Wasavulu, and Dogoru **Cakaudrove Province**	• Participants raised concerns about pigs, poultry and other animals being kept within villages because of unpleasant odors, environmental contamination and increase diseases risk

Yaroi, Somosomo, Bagasau and Naweni	• A major concern was the proposal to apply the same fines across Fiji as villagers, subsistence farmers and low-income household will have the same penalties as businesses and urban residents. • Participants supported regular visits from Health Inspectors for education and advisory purposes before penalties are imposed • Increase awareness and education program before enforcement begins. • Strengthen monitoring and regulation of livestock and animal enclosures within villages. • Improve village water supply systems and strengthen protection of water catchments and reservoirs. • Expand training and support for village water committees. • Improve rural health services, including Village Nurse support, medicines, ambulances and staffing at health facilities. • Provide greater public health outreach and regular inspections to help communities comply with the Act.
Rural Community in Wailevu, Labasa	• Restore and strengthen the role of Rural Local Authorities. • Provide a greater monitoring and reporting role for Turaga ni Koro and Community Health Workers. • Introduce separate or scaled penalties for rural communities, urban residents and commercial operators. • Strengthen village waste management systems and clarify responsibilities under the law. • Improve access to safe drinking water, water storage facilities and water catchment protection. • Include Health Inspector assessments in the registration and approval of new villages. • Ensure new village developments incorporate fire safety measures, secondary water sources and proper planning standards. • Strengthening oversight of rental accommodation, labor quarters and Airbnb-style developments.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The Committee undertook extensive deliberations on each Clause of the Public Health (Amendment) Bill and identified several provisions warranting further consideration. Through these discussions, the Committee highlighted several priority issues raised by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, stakeholders and members of the public, which were subsequently examined in detail with the legislative drafters.

4.2 The outcomes of this review are reflected in the revisions to the Public Health (Amendment) Bill, as proposed by the Standing Committee on Social Affairs for submission to the Legislative Drafters within the Office of the Solicitor-General of Fiji. These proposed revisions are outlined as follows:

Clauses (Bill)	**Committees Recommendations**	**Instructions to Drafters**
1	**Maintain**	**No amendment**
2	**Maintain**	**No amendment**
3	Amend 3(a) the definition of animals to include "Dogs" Amend 3(d) Delete 3(d) in the Bill Amend 3(h) Delete 3(h) in the Bill New Definition to be inserted	Amend 3(a) the definition of animals to include "Dogs" **3(d**) Amend definition **"Common Lodging House"** to read - means that class of lodging house not being a hotel, Inn or Public House in which provided affordable accommodations for short period and though strangers to one another, are allowed to inhabit one common room and includes affordable dormitories, school dormitories, Housing Assistance Relief Trust (HART) Home **3 (h)** Amend definition of **"House let as Lodging"** to read – means a Hotel, boarding house, lodging house, guest house or any building, vessel, caravans or house on wheels, or part of a house including the veranda thereof, which is used or occupied for the business of receiving guests including Air Bed and Breakfast (BnB), House for Rent, Homestay and Resthouse 3(To amend definitions of **"Infectious Disease" to read** -means any disease caused by a specific infectious agent or its toxic products that arises through the transmission of that agent or its products from an infected person, animal or

		inanimate reservoir to a susceptible host or any disease enumerated in Schedule 1 and any other disease which the Minister declare temporarily or permanently to be an infectious disease within the meaning of this Act.
	New Definition to be inserted	**S2** To amend by inserting the definition of **Notifiable Disease** to read – means any medical condition, infectious or otherwise, that is required by law to be reported to the central public health surveillance authority to enable rapid epidemiological tracking, data coordination and preventative intervention.
	New Definition to be inserted	**S2 To amend by inserting the definition of Environment Health Practitioner** – means a profession concerned with protecting Health by controlling environment risks such as Environmental and Public Health Inspections, Water Quality Sanitation and Hygiene(WASH), Food Safety and Food Premises, Vector Control and Disease Surveillance, Waste Management and Pollution Control, Building/Development and Public Health requirements, Port Health and International Quarantine, Health License and Permits, Enforcement of Public -Health Legislations and Community Health Education and Promotion
4	Amend Clause 4, section 4 (5) (a)	Delete the word "dies", .
5	Delete the word "National Advisor "in clause 5, section 5B (2)	Delete the word "National Advisor "in clause 5, section 5B (2)
6	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
7	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
8	**Amend Section 8** in the Bill- After 8(A) Insert New Clause	Insert the following new clause **a. Membership of the Rural Local Authority** "Members of the Rural Local Authority to be appointed by the Minister on the recommendation of the Board" The Rural Local Authority consists of a **Chairman** appointed by the Board, Environmental Health Manager / Subdivisional Health Inspector as

		Secretary to the Rural Local Authority and ten (10) other members as follows: 1) Chairman – appointed by Board 2) One member shall be a person with a legal qualification background. 3) One member shall be a person with qualification and background in building and civil engineering. 4) Provincial Administrator 5) Roko Tui (Provincial Office) 6) Chairman of the District Advisory Council 7) Subdivisional Medical Officer 8) Officer In charge National Fire Authority 9) Divisional Health Inspector 10) Rep from Central Board of Health 11) 1 non-Public Office Holders 12) Subdivisional Health Inspector – Secretary
	Insert new Clause	**b. Appointment of Members of the Rural Local Authority** i. On the expiration of a term of office, a member of the Rural Local Authority is eligible for reappointment. ii. The Board may remove a member of the Rural Local Authority from office if the member— a. becomes mentally or physically incapable of carrying out official duties satisfactorily; or b. is guilty of neglect of duty or dishonorable conduct. iii. The office of a member of the Rural Local Authority becomes vacant if the member— a. completes a term of office and is not reappointed; b. resigns by providing written notice to the Minister; or

	Insert New Clause	c. is removed from office by the Minister through the recommendation of the Board pursuant to subsection (4). iv. A quorum of the Rural Local Authority shall include 7 members. v. At a meeting of the Rural Local Authority, the chairperson, or in his or her absence, a member elected by the other members present, presides. vi. At a meeting of the Rural Local Authority, the decision of the majority of members present prevails and in the case of an equality of votes on any decision, the person presiding has a casting vote." **c. The functions of the Rural Local Authority** i. Report on its own initiative or at the request of the Minister through the Board, on any matter relating to public and environmental health; ii. Initiate, carry out or oversee programmes and activities designed to improve or promote public and environmental health; iii. Keep the operation, administration and enforcement of this Act under review and to recommend to the Minister through the Board any legislative or administrative change it considers appropriate. iv. Consider and report to the Minister through the Board on regulations proposed to be made under this Act; and v. Carry out any other functions or duty assigned to it by the Minister through Board or under this Act. vi. In the event of a delay in the appointment of the members of the Rural Local Authority, the Chairman and Secretary of the Rural Local Authority may temporarily perform the functions of the Rural Local Authority, until the time that

	Insert new Clause	the appointment of members are affected by the Minister through the Board. **d. Appointment and Registration of officers of the Rural Local Authority** i. For the purposes of this Act, the Board may appoint the Environment Health Practitioners to perform any functions and duties prescribed by this Act. ii. The Subdivisional Health Inspector/Environmental Health Managers shall be the Secretary to the Rural Local Authority iii. The Rural Local Authority may appoint environmental health practitioners, as Officers of the Local Authority.
9	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
10	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
11	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
12	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
13	Maintain as it is	No Amendments
14	Amend 16A(d)	Amend 16A (d) by deleting "to be examined, vaccinated, inoculated, or immunized, or to take any prophylactic or curative medical treatment or measure" and inserting "to be isolated or quarantined upon the advice of the Medical Practitioners". And to amend by inserting "state of public health emergency after epidermic of communicable disease…" **And to read** "in the case of an epidermic or a threat to an epidermic of a communicable disease or state of Public Health Emergency, order any person he or she has reasons to believe has or is likely to contract the communicable disease to be isolated or quarantined upon the advice of the Medical Practitioners.
15	Maintain as it is	No Amendment

16	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
17	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
18	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
19	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
20	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
21	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
22	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
23	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
24	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
25	Amend $1000.00 to $500.00	Amend Clause 25(a) (i) remove "$1000" replace "$500"
26	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
27	Amend clause 27	Refer to the attached document provided by the Ministry of Health
28	Amend clause 28	Amend clause 28 (a) remove "$1000" replace "$500"
29	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
30	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
31	Amend clause 31	Amend clause 31 by removing the word "current" and replacing "occupier or owner"
32	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
33	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
34	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
35	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
36	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
37	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
38	Amend clause 38(c)	Amend 38(c) from "$1000" to "$500"
39	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
40	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
41	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
42	Amend clause 42	Amend "$5000" to "$1000"
43	Maintain	No Amendment
44	Maintain	No Amendment
45	Maintain	No amendment
46	Maintain	No Amendment
47	Maintain	No Amendment
48	Maintain	No Amendment
49	Maintain	No Amendment
50	Maintain	No Amendment
51	Maintain	No amendment
52	Amend clause 52	Amend "$1000" to "$500"
53	Maintain	No Amendment
54	Maintain	No Amendment

55	Amend clause 55	Clause 55 delete the word “Master or” wherever it appears in section 117(1) and 117(2)
56	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
57	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
58	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
59	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
60	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
61	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
62	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
63	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
64	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
65	Amend Clause 65	Amend spelling of word “pratiioner” to “practitioner”
66	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
67	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
68	Maintain as it is	No Amendment
69	Maintain as it is	No Amendment

4.4 Table below is list of categorized fines from Nuisance activities

Severity Level	Target Premises / Categories	Applicable Nuisance Type (Section 56 Statutory Reference)- ranks as per severity level	Penalty Unit (reference to penalty unit in Sentencing & Penalty Act)- 1 PU is equivalent to $100	Fixed Penalty	Non-Compliance Fine(Failure to Comply with Abatement Notice)
Minor	**Natural Person**	**(q)** Any churchyard, cemetery or place of sepulchre so situated or crowded or otherwise conducted to be offensive or injurious to public and environmental health.	**1**	**$100**	**Additional $1,000**
		(b) Any waste, stagnant water, sullage, water from a drain or any accumulation or deposit of filth or other offensive matter.	**2**	**$200**	
		(l) Any building, or premises emitting noise in a way as to be a nuisance.	**2**	**$200**	
		(m) A chimney emitting smoke in a way as to be a nuisance.	**2**	**$200**	
		(f) Stable, cowshed or other building in which any animals or birds are kept in a manner or in numbers as to be injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health;	**2**	**$200**	
		(g) Keeping or rearing animal or bird of any description so kept as to be injurious to public and environmental health.	**2**	**$200**	
		(e) Any premises or part of a construction or in a state as to be injurious to public and environmental health.	**2**	**$200**	
		(i) Any house or part of a house or premises whose residents are provided with less than 4.8 square metres of unobstructed floor space, and that in the opinion of the environmental health officer the premises has become overcrowded and dangerous or injurious or prejudicial to the health of the residents whether or not of the same family.	**2**	**$200**	
		(c) The contents of a sanitary facility or drain belonging to a dwelling house or building that is permitted to escape.	**2**	**$200**	

		(n) The infestation of any place or premises by— (i) rats, mice or vermin; or (ii) any form of insect life declared by regulation to be injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health.	**3**	**$300**	
		(**d)** A swamp, pool, ditch, gutter, eaves gutter, pipe, septic tank, drain, ash pit, refuse pit, sanitary facility, garbage bin, washing place, well, watercourse, water, tank, barrel, sink, sanitary convenience, collection of sullage water, receptacle containing stagnant water, or other accumulation of water, in a state as to be— (i) injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health; or (ii) a breeding ground for mosquitoes or disease-bearing insects.	**2**	**$200**	
		(a) Any premises, in the opinion of the environmental health practitioner, is in a state as to be injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health;	**3**	**$300**	
Moderate (Body Corporate)	**Moderate Commercials• Restaurants, Bakeries, Supermarkets• Retail shops, Small auto garages• Car washes, Carpentry shops**	**(l)** Any building, or premises emitting noise in a way as to be a nuisance.	**4**	**$400**	**Additional $5,000**
		(m) A chimney emitting smoke in a way as to be a nuisance.	**4**	**$400**	
		(e) Any premises or part of a construction or in a state as to be injurious to public and environmental health.	**4**	**$400**	
		(j) Any work, trade or business that in the opinion of the environmental health practitioner is offensive to the public.	**4**	**$400**	
		(f) Stable, cowshed or other building in which any animals or birds are kept in a manner or in numbers as to be injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health;	**4**	**$400**	
		(g) Keeping or rearing animal or bird of any description so kept as to be injurious to public and environmental health.	**4**	**$400**	
		(h) An accumulation or deposit that is injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health.	**5**	**$500**	

		(i) Any house or part of a house or premises whose residents are provided with less than 4.8 square metres of unobstructed floor space, and that in the opinion of the environmental health officer the premises has become overcrowded and dangerous or injurious or prejudicial to the health of the residents whether or not of the same family.	**5**	**$500**	
		(c) The contents of a sanitary facility or drain belonging to a dwelling house or building that is permitted to escape.	**5**	**$500**	
		(n) The infestation of any place or premises by— (i) rats, mice or vermin; or (ii) any form of insect life declared by regulation to be injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health.	**5**	**$500**	
		(d) A swamp, pool, ditch, gutter, eaves gutter, pipe, septic tank, drain, ash pit, refuse pit, sanitary facility, garbage bin, washing place, well, watercourse, water, tank, barrel, sink, sanitary convenience, collection of sullage water, receptacle containing stagnant water, or other accumulation of water, in a state as to be— (i) injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health; or (ii) a breeding ground for mosquitoes or disease-bearing insects.	**5**	**$500**	
		(o) Any offensive trade or business carried on that is injurious to health or unnecessarily offensive to the public.	**5**	**$500**	

Severe (Body Corporate)	**Large-Scale Commercial & Industries• Resorts, Factories, Processing Plants• Abattoirs, Quarries, Sugar mills• Fish canning, Commercial piggeries**	**(m)** A chimney emitting smoke in a way as to be a nuisance.	**6**	**$1000**	**Additional $10,000**
		(l) Any building, or premises emitting noise in a way as to be a nuisance.	**6**	**$1000**	
		(a) Any premises, in the opinion of the environmental health practitioner, is in a state as to be injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health;	**6**	**$1000**	
		(e) Any premises or part of a construction or in a state as to be injurious to public and environmental health.	**6**	**$1000**	
		(k) Any schoolhouse, school dormitories, workplace, shop, office, factory, warehouse or other place of business— (i) unclean... (ii) not ventilated in a way that renders harmless...	**7**	**$1000**	

		gases, vapours, dust or other impurities... (iii) not provided with sufficient approved sanitary facilities.			
		(j) Any work, trade or business that in the opinion of the environmental health practitioner is offensive to the public.	**7**	**$1000**	
		(o) Any offensive trade or business carried on that is injurious to health or unnecessarily offensive to the public.	**7**	**$1000**	
		(p) Any noxious matter or water flowing or discharged from any premises into any public street or into any gutter or side channel of any street, or harbour, river, pond or ditch or upon any foreshore that is offensive to the public or injurious to health.	**8**	**$1000**	
		(r) Any well or water source or water supply system constructed or maintained in a manner injurious to health.	**9**	**$1000**	
		(c) The contents of a sanitary facility or drain belonging to a dwelling house or building that is permitted to escape.	**9**	**$1000**	
		(n) The infestation of any place or premises by— (i) rats, mice or vermin; or (ii) any form of insect life declared by regulation to be injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health.	**9**	**$1000**	
		(d) A swamp, pool, ditch, gutter, eaves gutter, pipe, septic tank, drain, ash pit, refuse pit, sanitary facility, garbage bin, washing place, well, watercourse, water, tank, barrel, sink, sanitary convenience, collection of sullage water, receptacle containing stagnant water, or other accumulation of water, in a state as to be— (i) injurious or prejudicial to public and environmental health; or (ii) a breeding ground for mosquitoes or disease-bearing insects.	**9**	**$1000**	
		(s) Any other matter or thing, activities, discharges, or premises, that in the opinion of the Board should be prescribed as being a nuisance.	**10**	**$1,000**	

4.4 Further instructions were issued to the Legislative Drafters on Tuesday, 27 October 2026, as set out below.

Clauses (Bill)	Committees Recommendations	Instructions to Drafters
3 (i)	Amend 3(i)	Amend 3(i) by deleting the "common lodging house" from the definition of "house let as lodging".
4(1)b	Amend 4(1)	Amend 4(1) by Insetting the word "or" after "public" and before "environmental".
5(c) (2)	Amend 5(c) (2)	Amend 5 (c) (2) by inserting the words "by the Fiji Institute of Environmental Health, licensed by Allied Health Practitioners Act and appointed" after "registered" and before "by".
11 (b) (3)	Amend 11 (b) (3)	Amend 11 (b) (3) by deleting "5" and inserting "7" after the word "least" and before "members".
14 (c)	Delete 16 (c)	Amend 14 (c) by deleting 16A (c).
14(d)	Amend 16(A) (d)	Amend 16(A) (d) by deleting the whole section (d) and inserting "in the case of an epidermic, threatened epidemic of an infectious disease, or public health emergency, order any person whom he or she has reason to believe has or might contract the infectious disease to be isolated or quarantined upon the advice of medical practitioners".
32	Amend	Amend 32 by deleting "$500" and insert "$10,000".
65	Amend	Amend section 132 by deleting "pratiioner" and inserting "practitioner".

4.5 Final instructions were issued to the Legislative Drafters on Sunday 1st November 2026, as set out below:

Clause (Bill)	Committees Recommendations	Instructions to Drafters
25	Amend Section 55 of Principal Act	1) Amend to reflect the fines in the regulations
26	Amend Section 56 of Principal Act	1) Amend to reflect the summary abatement amounts in the Regulations. 2) Create Regulation making power reflecting suggested matrix by Committee.
27	Amend Section 57 of Principal Act	1) Amend to reflect the abatement amount in the Regulations.
28	Amend Section 59 of Principal Act	1) Amend to reflect the fines in the Regulations
29	Amend Section 60 of Principal Act	1) Amend to reflect the fines in the Regulations
30	Amend Section 63 of Principal Act	1) Amend to reflect the fines in the Regulations
32	Amend 66 and 66A of Principal Act	1) Amend to reflect the fines in the Regulations 2) Expand 66A for regulations to include mandatory requirement for the Ministry of Health and Medical Services to make regulations for this part reflecting the matrix that was supplied by Committee.

5.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL

The Committee recognised its commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and Goal 13 (Climate Action). By strengthening public health systems, promoting disease prevention, improving environmental sanitation, protecting water sources and addressing emerging health challenges, the Bill supports the broader objective of creating healthier, safer and more resilient communities throughout Fiji.

Goal 3 – Good Health and Well- Being	• By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, waterborne diseases and other communicable diseases. • By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.
Goal 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation	• Safe Drinking Water: Achieving universal and equitable access to safe, affordable drinking water. • Sanitation & Hygiene: Providing adequate sanitation for all, ending open defecation, and focusing specifically on the needs of women, girls, and vulnerable populations. • Water Quality & Reuse: Halving the amount of untreated wastewater, reducing pollution, and eliminating the dumping of toxic waste. • Efficient Water Use: Increasing water-use efficiency across all sectors to prevent scarcity and reduce the number of people facing water shortages. • Cooperation & Community Support: Expanding international support for developing nations and strengthening local community participation in water management.
Goal 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities	• Ensure universal access to adequate, safe, and affordable housing while upgrading slums. • Reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities,

	specifically focusing on air quality and municipal waste management. • Provide universal access to safe, inclusive, and accessible green and public spaces, particularly for women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities.
Goal 13 – Climate Action	• Building communities that can withstand and recover from climate-related hazards and natural disasters. • Writing climate change strategies directly into national policies, budgets, and development plans.

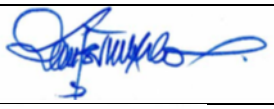
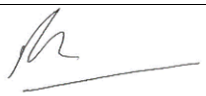
6.0 CONCLUSION

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has undertaken a comprehensive review of the Public Health (Amendment) Bill No 4 of 2026, including an examination of all proposed amendments, submissions received during public consultation, and clarifications provided by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services. Through detailed deliberations and engagement with the Legislative Drafters of the Office of the Solicitor-General, the Committee has identified key areas requiring refinement to ensure that the Bill is clear, enforceable and aligned with contemporary public health needs.

The Committee is satisfied that the revised proposed amendments will strengthen the legislative framework governing public health in Fiji and better support the effective implementation of its provisions.

7.0 COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE

We, the Members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, hereby agree with the contents of this report:

Committee Member	Signature
Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu Chairperson	
Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure Deputy Chairperson	
Hon. Alipate Tuicolo Member	
Hon. Viam Pillay Member	
Hon. Parveen Bala Member	
Hon Aliki Bia Member	
Date: 3rd November, 2026	

8.0 APPENDICES