**REPORT OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES AND INSTITUTIONS ON A BILL FOR AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE NIGERIAN AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS AND TO PROVIDE FOR A REGISTRAR WHO SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTATION OF THE ACT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF AGRICULTURAL RELATED ASSOCIATIONS, SO AS TO ENHANCE THEIR CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY REGULATE FARMING ACTIVITIES IN THEIR VARIOUS FIELDS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH INTENT OF PROFIT MAKING AND PROVIDE SUPPORT TO SUCH FARMERS EVEN IN THE AREA OF DISEASE CONTROL, AS WELL AS ENCOURAGE THEIR EXPANSION AND CAPACITY TO MEET LOCAL AND POSSIBLE EXPORT DEMAND AND FOR OTHER RELATED MATTERS (HB. 586)**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the House Resolution vide the votes and proceedings on Tuesday 25th October, 2016. The Bill (HB. 586) sponsored by Hon. Abubakar Amuda-Kannike G was referred to the Committee on Agricultural Colleges and Institutions for further legislative action.

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE BILL

The Bill seeks to establish Nigerian Agricultural Associations, and provide for a Registrar who shall be responsible for the administration of the Act in accordance with the objectives of agricultural related associations so as to enhance their capacity to regulate farming activities.

The Bill further seeks to among others to encourage improvement in agriculture, food production and rural living through:

1. Promoting the circulation of agricultural literature;
2. Providing leadership in sustaining the social structure of rural communities, including, but not limited to, maintaining educational opportunities and traditional activities in communities;
3. Providing programs, services and facilities based on needs in rural communities and;
4. Holding exhibitions or fairs in order to award prizes or premiums for livestock or poultry, for agricultural and horticultural implements and machinery (general excellence in any agricultural or horticultural productions or operations).
5. METHODOLOGY

The Committee resolved at its meeting of 10th May 2017 to conduct Public hearing on the Bill on 7th June, 2017 with aim to collate stakeholders’ inputs on the Bill.

1. **ACTIVITIES OF THE BILL**

The Committee in the process of considering the Bill was guided by:

1. The Gazette copy of the Bill
2. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended
3. The Rules of the House of Representatives

The Hearing was declared open by the Honourable Speaker, House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Yakubu Dogara ably represented by the House Chief Whip, Hon Alhassan Ado Doguwa.

Accordingly, the following organizations in attendance made presentation:

* 1. Director Department of Cooperatives Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
  2. National Agricultural Production Cooperative Union of Nigerian LTD (NAPCUN)
  3. Animal Science Association of Nigeria.

1. **OBSERVATION**

The following inputs were made by the stakeholders:

a. That the Bill is found to be devoid of form and direction as it did not clearly state how the Association shall be formed, registered, promoted, as well as, the avenue for the contributors to make meaningful contributions.

1. That Part 1 Section 1; The Composition of the Advisory Committee did not represent any of the Associations.
2. That Associations have laid out process with regard to exhibitions, Fairs, Competitions etc. as peculiar to them. Therefore, an advisory committee will be of no use to them as noted in Section 4(2) (b).
3. Section 4(2) (c-g); is ambiguous, hazy and not detailed in its modalities.
4. The adduced functions for establishment of the Association are been currently been performed by the Federal Department of Cooperatives in the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the States and the Federal Capital Territory Department of Cooperatives that have the mandate to deal with farmer’s cooperatives and other cooperatives.
5. The Bill did not refer to the Department of Cooperatives at the Federal or State level which register and give legal entity to the cooperatives in Nigeria;
6. The functions stated there in section 11 and 17 are performed by the Department of Animal Husbandry Services and Nigerian Institute of Animal Science (NIAS) as established by the NIAS’ Act No. 26 of 2007 as Amended;
7. The establishment of the Association by the Bill shall result in duplication of agencies and inter agency rivalry;
8. The Bill will also, result in dysfunction in the Agricultural sector because different agricultural associations do have their functions spelt out in as registered with C.A.C or with the Department of Cooperatives and;
9. Agriculture and Rural Development are on the concurrent list of the 1999 constitution has amended therefore, the legislative powers to administer is vested on the three tiers of government concurrently thus, a creation of a body as this, through this Bill will be against the spirit of Federalism.

6.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on these observations, the Committee thereby recommends that the Bill be withdrawn as its passage will conflict with the provisions of the Constitution and other enabling laws of agencies earlier mentioned.

**7.0 CONCLUSION**

The Committee in view of the above the findings, urge the House to step down the Bill as it was strongly opposed by the stakeholders.

**Hon. Linus Okorie *FCA* Olunike Adesina-Obube**

**Chairman Clerk**