



Nigerian Political Debate Commission Bill

The bill seeks to create a commission that would be charged with the responsibility of organizing & conducting public debates for candidates of registered political parties in Nigeria.

The bill has passed second reading in the Senate and it is being reviewed by the committee on Establishment & Public Service and the committee on INEC.

Key Functions of the Commission



Conduct public debates for all candidates to the office of Deputy Governor, Governor, Vice President and President.



Help boost and strengthen the electoral process.



Create awareness leading to the making of an informed choice from the available pool of candidates.



Create a platform for candidates to articulate their policies before Election Day.



Recommend sanction(s) to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for any candidate that obstructs the commission from carrying out its functions effectively.

Comparison of Proposed NPDC* with CPD*



- NPDC is a government institution.
- CPD is a private, non-partisan organization.

- NPDC will be funded by the Federal Government of Nigeria.
- CPD is funded by communities that host debates and to a lesser extent from corporate, foundation & private donors.



- Civil servants and representatives of political parties are members of the governing council of NPDC.
- CPD's Board of Directors does not consist of civil servants and representatives of political parties.

- The Chairman of NPDC's governing council will be appointed by the President.
- CPD's Board of Directors is jointly chaired by two people - a Democrat and a Republican - based on historical precedence.



- NPDC invites candidate of all political parties for the debates.
- No party gets an automatic invitation to debates organized by CPD.

A commission run & funded by the government can **NOT** host a non-partisan debate. Senate should legislate the need for debates, **NOT** the hosting process.

*NPDC - Nigerian Political Debate Commission, CPD - Commission on Presidential Debates (USA)

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