

## Ellen Lobbies for Tyler, Findley

Written by Stephen Binda  
Wednesday, 04 January 2012 21:51 -

---



President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is said to have broken silence over her choices for the leaderships of the Upper House (Senate) and the Lower House (House of Representatives) of the National Legislature.

The Liberian leader, according to well-placed and unimpeachable legislative insiders made her choices known yesterday at a closed door meeting she held with members of the first branch of government (Legislature).

Legislative sources quoted President Sirleaf as saying that she prefers incumbent House Speaker, J. Alex Tyler, to be reelected as speaker for the Lower House and Grand Bassa County Senator, Milton Gbezohngar Findley, as President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate. Speaker Tyler is key member of the ruling Unity Party (UP) while Senator Findley was elected to the Upper House as an independent candidate in the 2005 presidential and legislative elections.

Presidential press secretary, Cyrus Wleh Badio, when contacted yesterday through a mobile phone by the Daily Observer said President Sirleaf has nothing to do with legislative politics; neither was the President lobbying for anyone to head the first branch of government.

“The president will work with whoever emerges as winner of the impending legislative elections” Mr. Badio said.

However, sources maintained that President Sirleaf made her choices for the Legislative leaderships known at yesterday’s meeting held at her Foreign Ministry Office on Capitol Hill in Monrovia.

Both Tyler and Findley are contesting the legislative elections slated for January 9, 2012, on the grounds of the Capitol Building, the seat of the National Legislature.

Incumbent Speaker, Alex Tyler is to face Nimba County newly elected lawmaker, Ricks Toweh, while Grand Bassa County Senator Gbezohngar Findley will go against Bong County Senator Jewel Howard Taylor, wife of ex-president Charles Ghankay Taylor.

Both Ricks Toweh and Speaker Tyler are also business tycoons.

Though details of the meeting the lawmakers held with President Sirleaf yesterday were not disclosed, our sources quoted the Liberian leader as saying her decision to support both Alex Tyler and Gbezohngar Findley was on the basis of continuity in government.

According to sources, the President believes that the two men have wealth of experience in legislative politics.

Initially, sources at the Capitol Building said, members of the Senate, resolved to support Bong County Senator Jewel Howard Taylor, but later withdrew their support for the continued placement of her name on United Nations Security Council travel ban list.

## Ellen Lobbies for Tyler, Findley

Written by Stephen Binda

Wednesday, 04 January 2012 21:51 -

---

Hours after the President's alleged support for some legislative leadership candidates broke out, our reporter at the Capitol building said, some of the legislators appear dissatisfied over the mood.

Fifteen minutes later, the Chairman of the opposition bloc at the National Legislature, Representative George Mulbah, a member of the former ruling National Patriotic Party (NPP), hastily called a press conference to let out his feelings.

At the press conference, the Bong County Lawmaker described the President's alleged action as "a deliberate interference into the workings of the Legislature."

He added that the action by the President was a 'recipe for confusion' amongst lawmakers.

Mulbah: "It also has the ability to create a "rubber stamp or weak Legislature." "President Sirleaf needs to stop what she is doing" he said. "If we have the President lobbying for individuals to become Speaker and President Pro-Tempore of the Legislature, then, where are we going? I see us having a rubber stamp legislature this year," he declared. Though there is no law that forbids the President and Speaker coming from the same county, but Mulbah said it was not politically conducive for Liberia.

Both Speaker Tyler and President Sirleaf hail from the same Bomi County. "You cannot have the President and Speaker coming from the same county," he argues.

"We already have the Vice President who is coming from the ruling Unity Party," he intoned.

Rep Mulbah then used the occasion to call on his colleagues to review the standing rules of the House of Representatives aimed at reducing hugely the powers of the Speaker.

"Why will you want to have a Speaker that will be more powerful as compare to the chief executive of the country? We were all elected here and we all have equal rights" he said.

The Speaker of the Lower House has the power to appoint house standing committee members and leadership.

However, Mulbah said "I think people should contest these posts."