
THURSDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2024

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

The sign † indicates the original language and [] directly thereafter indicates a translation.

The House met at 14:15.

The Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER: Please be seated. Order! Hon members, before we proceed, I would like to remind the hon members about some of the logistical arrangements. As has been our practice to date, hon members will participate in this Sitting of the House both here in the Chamber with the Presiding Officer and Table Staff, and via Microsoft Teams. Our Standing Rules have accordingly been amended to accommodate such hybrid Sittings of the House.

Hon members, the quorum requirements for this Sitting of the House are provided for in the Constitution and the Standing Rules. Unless there is an indication of unanimous concurrence voting will be confined to members present in the House and on the hybrid system, who are entitled to cast their

votes as per the ATC issued on 11 August 2020. Members present in the Chamber and via Microsoft Teams have all the privileges and immunities imparted by law. Hon members, if you are considered out of order by the Presiding Officer your microphones will be muted and called to order.

The Serjeant-at-Arms have recorded all members' attendance.

Hon members, in instances where these directives do not cover eventualities the Standing Rules must apply and in instances where the Rules cannot be applied, the ruling by the Presiding Officer is final.

Hon members, the media have also been granted access to this MS Teams Sitting as guests of the WCPP. However, I wish to remind the members of the press that they may not use the chat room or speak or activate their cameras while the Sitting is in progress.

For this Sitting, hon members, Language Translation Services are available in the Chamber as usual and on Microsoft Teams via the respective channels.

Hon members, I wish to remind you that no interjections are permitted during these hybrid Sittings and to this end I wish to draw your attention to Rule 40 of our Standing Rules.

I recognise the hon Chief Whip.

(Motion)

The CHIEF WHIP: Thank you very much, hon Speaker, I move without notice:

That, notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 20(1), that precedence be given today for the Matter of Public Importance to be discussed. I so move.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Chief Whip. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

No objections? Agreed to.

Hon members, we will now deal with the Matter of Public Importance as printed on the Order Paper in terms of Rule 143 and I recognise the hon member Herron.

**MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH
STANDING RULE 143**

**The impact of the national fiscal emergency on post provisioning
in the Western Cape Education Department**

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, Speaker.

Hon Speaker, it is said that the choices Government makes in compiling budgets reflect their values and aspirations. It is the Western Cape Government's choice to cull thousands of teacher posts because it would rather spend money dabbling in crime prevention. That is despite the fact that dealing with crime is a National Government competency and the Province's expensive dabbling to date has bore no fruit, but the Province does not want to own its choice. It cannot admit that teachers' jobs must pay for the theatre of provincial security, so it falsely blames unanticipated public sector wage increases for its shortage of money and a quick check of the provincial budgets reveals the truth of these matters.

First, the Education and Health Services have been defunded by R2,7 billion since 2019 for a Safety Plan that has no impact on crime stats. The baseline in funding the allocation to Education from the Provincial Equitable Share was reduced to enable the Province to spend R1,7 billion on its Policing Plan from 2019 to 2023, with the 2024 Budget committing an additional R1 billion over the next three years.

Second, the MEC for Education indicated in his 2024 Budget Speech that his Department had a shortfall of R537 million at the end of last year as a result of public service wage increases. He did not say that this would result in a reduction in teaching posts. On the contrary, the Provincial Education Budget was tabled as a balanced budget which provided for an improvement of conditions of service based on CPI, which was at that time 4,9%, as well as pay progression of 1,5% in each year of the budget, plus a housing

allowance and medical aid. The March 2024 Public Service Wage Agreement was settled at 4,7% from 1 April 2024 and the Department budgeted a 6,1% increase for compensation of employees.

Third, just six months ago, when the Budget Vote was approved, the MEC disclosed no plans to cut educator posts. His budget actually planned to increase posts in the Department by 1 018 from 46 392 to 47 410 employees from 2023 to 2024.

Finally, it is important to note that 42,2% of all funds raised nationally are paid to provinces in the form of a Provincial Equitable Share. Based on population size and growth, the Western Cape Government complains that we do not get our fair share. Perhaps it should contract one of the teachers that it wants to fire to come and school it on the difference between an equitable share and a proportional share. But 48% of the Provincial Equitable Share is actually based on the size of the school age, population and the number of learners enrolled in public ordinary schools. Given that, you would think that the proportion of funding would require provinces to prioritise education. Thank you. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Herron, I recognise the hon member Van Wyk.

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): Thank you, Speaker. Today's debate is not an easy one. I have no doubt that there will be those today who choose to use this

debate as an attempt to score political points... [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!!

An HON MEMBER: You are not serious!

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): ...and who choose to grandstand in feigned outrage... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: You are not serious.

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): ...but all of us must remain cognisant of the fact that our subject today is one which has far-reaching and serious consequences. We have arrived at a solemn moment, one which I believe all of us would have hoped to avoid, but we did not arrive here by chance, nor did we arrive here overnight. What we debate here today is not an isolated event but the result of a national fiscal emergency, which has far-reaching consequences across the entirety of our country.

Last year the then ANC-led National Government agreed to a public sector wage increase, which it knew it could not afford. In doing this National Government created a tidal wave, one which has rippled outward and begun to impact every province in our nation. In other words, last term's National Government has left us holding the ball... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: You are taking this to Pretoria again.

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): ...for what they themselves have bought.

[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Stay here!

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): For almost a year this Government has been focused on building defences to this tidal wave. In the most recent budget cycles, cuts have been made to non-essential services, wherever possible. The goal of these measures has been to ensure that our two largest frontline service delivery departments, Health and Education, remain insulated against the shortfall and continue their operations to help the people of our province, but we have now reached a point at which we cannot hold back the rising tide. We have cut to the point where we can cut no more.

The WCED has done everything it can to limit the damage. They know that they cannot abandon learners, nor can they allow cuts to the feeding and learner transport schemes, which provide food to half a million learners every single day and which transport almost 70 000 of them to schools which they otherwise would never have attended. No matter how bad the financial situation gets, we cannot leave our children hungry, nor can we let the underprivileged among them languish at home due to lack of transport while their wealthier peers continue to receive a quality education.

In an effort to keep our learners afloat the WCED has made a drastic R2,5 billion cut to administration, curriculum and infrastructure – anything which does not directly affect teaching. They have frozen the recruitment of most public service staff, encouraged schools to convert contract appointments and restricted the appointment of substitute teachers. In sessions of the Committee, which I chair, we have heard at length of the efforts made to hold back the flood, and still, despite everything, the WCED faces a shortfall of R3,8 billion and to be abundantly clear, the reason for this is that National Government bought something it could not afford, and then funded only 64% of it.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!!

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): What you see before you is an exercise in damage control and this Department's valiant attempts to make the best of an impossible situation. Make no mistake, Speaker, this is a solemn moment, but one which was made inevitable the moment the previous National Government agreed to that wage increase and made no effort to deal with the consequences of their own mistake.

It is a moment that extends outside of our province to places like KwaZulu Natal where more than 11 000 educated posts are at risk, and it is a moment which can only be resolved by National Treasury coming to the table and paying the cost incurred at the national level.

As we debate today, we must remain aware of perspective. In one day our National Government spends enough on debt servicing alone to employ 1 126 educators, 992 professional nurses, staff nurses and nursing assistants and 125 social workers for an entire year in the Western Cape. It is time for National Treasury to fix what it has broken. I thank you, hon Speaker.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!!

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Van Wyk. I recognise hon Nkondlo. [Interjections.]

Order, members! There is a member on the floor. Hon Nkondlo.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): †Enkosi Somlomo. [Thank you Speaker.] Hon Speaker, esteemed guests and fellow citizens, teachers and parents and the education activists in the gallery, I greet you.

Today we stand at a critical juncture, one that will shape the future of education in the Western Cape and by extension the future of countless young lives. The DA wants the entire country and citizens of the province to believe that they are in a corner with no option but to let go 2 470 teaching posts of existing educators who are on contract. This DA-led Government speaks on both sides of the mouth to know the poor and working class through their rhetorical claim of a pro-poor budget that was planted during elections here in this House and now that they have the seats and the rulers of the Western

Cape Government and they have cushy positions in the Government of National Unity (GNU) Cabinet their true nature is nakedly displayed.

The affected schools are predominantly low to no-free schools, whilst affluent schools with their reserves will be able to turn this contract post to SGB funded ones and keep these teachers. Last year with the implementation of Circular 06 0034/23 we were assured by MEC Maynier that the goal was to avoid cutting teaching posts – a lie! Yet, here we are today facing an even more drastic measure. The MEC previously cited factors such as the three billion budget deficit and insufficient national funding for public sector. This Provincial Government is known for disinformation, to manipulate public sentiment for their political expediency.

The DA-led Western Cape Government is not telling citizens that National Treasury fully funded the carry-through cost of the 2023/24 wage increases and also reverse the reductions on the Wage Bill for labour intensive departments which are mainly Education, Health in provinces as well as Police, Defence, Justice, Home Affairs and Correctional Services over the 2024 MTEF period. Therefore, there was no expectation for the 2023 Wage Agreement to contribute to any spending pressures in the 2024/25 financial year moving forward as the carry-through cost were fully funded by National Treasury. What we are witnessing is a clear example of manufactured chaos of a double-tongued DA who speaks from both mouths.

The DA-led Western Cape Education Department must tell the public that between 2019 and 2022, as they brag here, the WCED was notorious for its high under expenditure with over R792 million not spent and surrendered to the Treasury. A significant portion of this R176 million was intended for the compensation of employees.

In the 2022/23 financial year, the School Infrastructure Budget under the Rapid School Building Programme increased by 48% to R2,5 billion, despite returning R196 million to National Treasury allocated for School Infrastructure.

The SPEAKER: Hon Nkondlo, your time has expired. Please conclude.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): In 2023/24 the School Infrastructure Budget increased by 8% to R2,7 billion. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Nkondlo.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): The decision to cut 2 470 teaching posts is not just a policy error, but it is a moral failure.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Nkondlo. Thank you, please take your seat. [Applause.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): A moral failure.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much hon Nkondlo. I recognise hon Petrus.

†n AGBARE LID: Die waarheid maak seer.

[An HON MEMBER: The truth hurts.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Petrus, are you online?

Mr B PETRUS (PA): Yes, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: There we go. I was just going to move on. Hon member Petrus, you may continue.

Mr B PETRUS (PA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and fellow citizens, I speak on behalf of the Patriotic Alliance to address the growing crisis that threatens the future of education in the Western Cape.

A national fiscal emergency has resulted in severe budget cuts and the real impact on education will be seen in the years to come.

Hon Speaker, the Patriotic Alliance believes that we must act swiftly to address this crisis. Therefore, we propose the following measures: that a multiparty committee, appointed by the Premier, engages with National Government to secure the necessary funding to restore teacher posts and

prevent further job cuts; that resources be allocated in a way that prioritises schools in previously disadvantaged communities. These schools are the most vulnerable to the effects of budget cuts. We must implement strategies to keep learners engaged and prevent dropouts. This includes providing additional support for struggling learners. To mitigate the effects of teacher shortages, we should leverage technology to enhance learner learning in understaffed schools.

Hon Speaker, the impact of the national fiscal emergency on post provisioning in the Western Cape Education Department is a crisis that demands our immediate attention. The Patriotic Alliance is committed to fighting for the rights of our learners, supporting our teachers and ensuring that our education system remains strong. We must act now to prevent a further decline in education quality, rising dropouts and the deepening of inequalities in our province. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Petrus. I recognise the hon Lithakong.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Thank you very much. *Somlomo.*

Hon Speaker, I would like to begin by condemning the DA Provincial Minister of Education and his dysfunctional Department in putting the horse before the cart by prematurely announcing the cutting of teachers' posts of more than 2 400 as of January 2025.

Speaker, the announcement was premature and the modus operandi is to instil fear within society at large, while they are also trying to control the wage negotiations between the National Government and unions from outside. I mean even National Treasury, Speaker, made it clear that the 2025/26 wage negotiations will only start in late September 2024, so it makes no sense to ask for someone to go around instilling fear and creating chaos where the outcomes of the negotiations will only be announced at a later stage.

Be it as it may, Speaker, if the DA ends up having its way and cutting the teachers posts, it is mostly public schools from poor communities and townships and rural areas that will suffer the brunt of such decisions. The no-fee and partial fee-paying schools will suffer as they would not have the financial muscle of creating the so-called SGB teachers' posts while their Quintile 4 and 5 counterparts will fare relatively well in comparison, so in the end this will create an unjustified inequality in the Provincial Education system with those who have money thriving and the less fortunate perishing.

The Economic Freedom Fighters, Speaker, will not allow for any cutting of teachers' posts in the province as that will disadvantage the Black, Coloured, and Indian child in the Western Cape Province. I thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Lithakong. I recognise the hon Premier, Premier Winde.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, Speaker, and I want to thank the hon member for bringing this debate to the House. It is really a critical and important debate for us to have, but before we get into the focus of the debate on the budget for teachers and why we got here and how we got here, I first just have to address his initial point on that, of course, trying to fight crime in this province is none of our business; we should leave it to SAPS. Well, quite frankly, we cannot do that and he knows very well that citizens in this province are suffering tremendously because of our lack of ability to deal with the murder rate and crime. Our children are being shot every single day. Our citizens are being murdered every single day and of course, we must take responsibility for that. I have to say to him again that if he keeps on saying there has been no difference, again if you have a look, we were the worst five years ago, deaths per 100 000, the crime capital. We are no longer that. We have shifted that narrative and in actual fact he should go and have a word with the Delft residents, in the last two months the difference month-on-month minus 13% in murders; Harare, minus 46% in murders; Khayelitsha, minus 12% in murders; Mfuleni, minus 32,7%; Nyanga, minus 9,1%. In actual fact, a 6,2% down, and of course the only province where we have these LEAP hotspots where you see on average a lesser climb in murder than anywhere else, but that is a subject for something else. [Applause.] [Interjections.]

I want to say that when we started this term of office I kicked off by saying that we are in a very, very difficult financial position in this Province, but let

me start by going back to the previous term of office, and as early as 2020 we started writing to the Presidency and we started writing to the Finance Minister, and these are all of the letters that we have been writing to them expressing the financial crisis that we find ourselves in, in this Province. We have been highlighting it and I will just take you back to the intergovernmental dispute that we declared, because the hon Nkondlo, and I am not allowed to say she lied to the House, but what she did do is mislead the House. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order, order, members! Is that a point of order, hon Sayed? What is your point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Speaker, I am sure you have noticed I have not risen on a point of order since the start of the Seventh Administration, but I think... [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: But I think on this particular one, I do need to. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: I think it is unparliamentary for the Premier to point to the hon Nkondlo. [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Yes, we cannot have this in the House. He is an hon member!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: We have just concluded Women's Month. [Interjections.] That is intimidating. He must not do that. Thank you. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order, members! Hon members, can I remind all hon members to please speak to the Chair and not directly to a member. Hon Premier, can you please speak to me?

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, Speaker, and thank you to the hon leader of the Opposition for that point of order. I shall not point at the hon member; just raise a point that in actual fact she was misleading the House. She said it was fully funded. Well, it actually was not; it was only funded to the tune of 64% and of course what that led to was last year an in-year cut of R1,1 billion. Now that R1,1 billion has to come from somewhere. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

†n AGBARE LID: Jy verstaan nie!

[An HON MEMBER: You don't understand.]

The PREMIER: It has to come from somewhere, so let us actually go back and have a look at how we find ourselves in this position. Now we know that we have a debt in our country... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, please take your seat. Hon members, we are dealing with a matter on the Order Paper in terms of Rule 143, which is a Matter of Public Importance. There is a different process. This is not an ordinary debate or ordinary Subject for Discussion. This is a Matter of Public Importance. Can I please ask that you allow the citizens of this province to hear the inputs in terms of Rule 143? That is why we have allowed or I have allowed this debate to happen, because it is in the interest of the citizens of this province.

I understand that interjections and heckling are allowed, but you are creating an environment where the citizens cannot hear the inputs by the various speakers on the Speakers List. I please ask that you work with me. Hon Premier, my apologies. You may continue.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, Speaker. How we got here was mismanagement of our budgets in South Africa by the ANC over the last term and a half. So if we have a look at the last term and a half this graph shows you funding and under-funding, and guess who was funded versus under-funded? The funding only went to higher learning, social nets in other words social grants, and bailouts, but I will come to the bailouts shortly. Under-funding, under-funding of R139 billion; this is in Human Settlements,

Public Transport, Basic Services; under-funding of Community Development. R139 billion – under-funding of Policing / Community Safety Policing, but the under-funding of Education year after year after year to the tune of R80 billion while we funded SOE bailouts, in other words, we rewarded bad management of SOEs to the tune of R500 billion, half a trillion rand went to the bailout of SOEs and not to Education and not to Health... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: That is right.

The PREMIER: ...and not to Policing. Do you know... [Interjections.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Talk about the... [Interjections.]

The PREMIER: Do you know that there is a risk; there is a risk in this province... [Interjections.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Talk about it!

The PREMIER: There is a risk in this province, Speaker, of 2 500 posts in the teacher space. Do you know that we are – there are 11 000 policing posts too few in this province, 11 000! We know that nearly a 1000 nurses' positions could not be filled last year. Why? Because of this problem... [Interjection.]

The total under-funding of Education across South Africa, not just in this

province, but across South Africa.

We also know that the last time the Census helped us adjust our budget was in 2011, the 2011 Census, and in 2013/14 there was an adjustment to our budget where we get 10% of the allocation.

We know that we are the fastest growing province in South Africa. We are the third most populous province in South Africa, in other words the third-most people, but we get the fifth-most money, so that we do not get our fair share of the budget. [Interjections.]

The people of this province, our teachers, we do not get our fair share. [Interjections.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): You are misappropriating...

The PREMIER: It is kept and given to the wrong thing, like debt-servicing costs and like bailouts of bad management in our SOEs. But you know what, Speaker, it is not only in this province... [Interjections.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Die waarheid maak seer.

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): The truth hurts.]

The PREMIER: It is not only in this province that education and our educators are at risk. Think about the 11 092 educators at risk in KwaZulu

Natal right now, or think about how other provinces budget... [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Speak about the Western Cape.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: Think about how other provinces budget and the way they budget is they say: "There is going to be no risk to teacher posts, but we do not have enough money. We are going to run short of money this financial year."

An HON MEMBER: Who?

The PREMIER: I am thinking about the Eastern Cape now. They are going to run out of about R600 million this year. So guess what happens?
[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: The last three months of the year the teachers just would not get paid!

HON MEMBERS: Jo! Jo!

The PREMIER: They just would not get paid. The nurses would not get

paid. People have to bring their own food to the hospital. They have to bring their own sheets. That is the consequence of the kind of ANC budgeting that we have been dealing with for the last term and a half. [Interjections.]

It is totally, totally unacceptable and each province has these problems, each province, but there is only one province that has the audit outcomes, the good governance systems and that is why we put the warnings out; we show where the cuts are going to come and we are going to fight to the very end to make sure that we get every cent that is due to us. We want our fair budget. We want our fair share.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): What are you going to do with...

The PREMIER: So that we can employ more teachers, not less. We need more teachers in our education system, not less. We want our fair share to enable to do that. [Interjections.]

Look at the current wage negotiation at 12%. We have a 0,4% GDP growth rate. It has come up from a 0,1 but it is not even at 1% but we are sitting with SALGA negotiations that just in the City of Cape Town are going to have to find another R2 billion. Where does that come from? The citizens!

At the moment we are sitting with a 12% suggested increase for the next budget. We could not fund the last over-inflation rate budget. Why are we not even starting as a baseline on what inflation is, because we have no

growth. What happens, we get worse off! Now guess what, the real warning is being IMF'd. If the International Monetary Fund comes into South Africa because we cannot afford, we are going bankrupt; we cannot afford to pay our loans; if that happens – well jeeppers, then you will see real cuts happening across the board in our country! [Interjections.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): That is a strategy... [Interjections.]

The PREMIER: We cannot... [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: We cannot afford this kind of budget increase through these crazy wage negotiations. We should baseline it at inflation, if not less, but Speaker, in this province we run it properly.

We have a full track record of all of our letters, all of our pointing out with data why we should be getting a fair share. We are going on 2 October; Minister Baartman will be following up on this debate, which will give you detail into our disputes and where we will be fighting. We will fight for every single nurse, for every single teacher, for every single police officer, because we believe in the citizens of this province. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: What are you going to do now for the... [Interjections.]

The PREMIER: The Opposition parties here, I have not seen one word, Speaker... [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order, members! Premier, please take your seat. Hon members on my left-hand side, there is a continuous running commentary from my left-hand side.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Can he stop shouting?

The SPEAKER: Can I please ask, there is a member on the floor and I am on the floor now!

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Ask him to stop shouting.

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, my apologies, you may continue.

The PREMIER: Thank you, Speaker. I will speak with a much lower tone, but if they start to raise objections I will raise my voice above those objections.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you, Premier.

The PREMIER: So that people can hear what I have to say. [Interjections.] But we will go in to this budget process; we will make sure we are continually fighting for you, the citizen. That is what this is about. Not one

of these political parties in this House who the citizens voted for have stood up and said: "We are going to fight for our fair share in this province. We are going to fight for our citizens in this province to make sure that our teachers get paid, to make sure that we can grow our teacher numbers." Not one of them is fighting for the citizens of this province. [Interjections.]

They decide to make this into a political fight when this is actually about our Province and our fair share of the budget. So I will tell you, Mr Speaker, that this side of the House we will fight for our teachers. We will fight for our nurses and our doctors. [Interjections.]

We will fight for those police officers that we are due in this province.

An HON MEMBER: Yes.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Why does he not address the correct...

The PREMIER: We will fight for every single state employee to make sure that we can grow our support of services to the citizens because ultimately we will fight for you, the citizen in this province. I thank you. [Applause.]

HON MEMBERS: Hear, hear!! [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Premier. Order members!
I recognise the hon Jacobs.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): You first send the letter; then you fight.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, Speaker. Greetings to all! Let me greet the Aboriginal. !Gâi lgoas.

HON MEMBERS: !Gâi lgoas.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): There we go! Speaker, you know, when we go, "Oh but he says, she says, he says, she says" – what happened to the Government of National Unity?

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Yes!

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Anyway, the NCC rises that this issue is of great concern. Speaker, for many years the DA-led Provincial Government placed the shortages of funds on the doorstep of the ANC, the majority party in the Government. Now Speaker, the Government of National Unity now has a DA Minister of Education and the proposed budget cuts now are even bigger, higher than before. Is this GNU a sinking ship? How do you rescue South Africa if you cannot even rescue education? I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Jacobs. [Interjections.] Order, members. I recognise the hon Marais.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you very much, Speaker. Speaker, am I audible?

The SPEAKER: You are indeed audible.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you. Speaker, losing approximately 2 400 teaching posts is tantamount to sending our education system into an ICU. Whatever progress we made since COVID will be completely wiped out. The simple truth is that the quality of education will effectively diminish with less teachers than what we had in 2021, but the root cause of the national fiscal emergency dilemma was the constant bailing out of failing State-owned Enterprises fuelled by these three nemeses namely corruption, cadre deployment and the racially-based Black Economic Empowerment policy.

Speaker, in concluding, the education system will be on life support in 2025 and we hope this is not a rehash of the old, outdated rightsizing and downsizing policies of our previous Government. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Marais. I recognise hon Sayed.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Speaker, today we gather to confront a critical issue that affects the future of our children; the well-being of our educators and the strength of our economy, this DA Provincial Government's decision to cut nearly 2 500 teaching posts from January next year. This is not just about budget, Speaker. It is an attack on

education in the Western Cape, especially for those in disadvantaged communities.

I want to extend my deepest sense of gratitude to the hon Herron of the GOOD Party for ensuring that this urgent debate is taking place today. Some are quick to lay the blame solely on National Government cuts, budget cuts, but this does not survive contact with the truth, Speaker. We are aware of Premier Winde's decision to divert funds from Health and Education, and yes, we will remind him of that to prop up a failed Safety Plan. [Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Yes.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: We have my colleague, the hon MEC Maynier's failure to use R829 million of the allocated Education budget between 2019 and 2023, money that was sent back to National Treasury instead of being used to uplift our schools. This is on top of the money that is wasted on the school evaluation authority, which I am glad that SADTU basically opposed a few years ago and the BackOnTrack Programme. This crisis did not arise overnight, hon Speaker. The Western Cape under-funding of Education has been consistent for years. Only 37% of the Provincial Budget goes to Education, compared to a national average of 41%.

Worse still, just 72% of the Education Budget is dedicated to compensating staff, well below the national average of 76%. These numbers tell the story of a province that has neglected its teachers and children.

The consequences of this chronic under-funding are clear. Even six years ago nearly half of our Grade 3 learners were in overcrowded classrooms with over 40 students. Today some schools face classes of 50 or even 60 students. This is unacceptable and will now sadly get worse.

The impact will especially be devastating for under-resourced schools where students need more attention, not less. Class sizes will balloon. Individual support will diminish and the stain and the strain on educators will be unbearable and let us not forget, education is the most powerful tool that we have to combat youth unemployment. While overall youth unemployment sits at over 40%, among graduates it is just 9%. Education is not just about personal empowerment or social welfare; it is the foundation for the thriving economy and the key to breaking the cycle of poverty and inequality.

Let me be clear, Speaker, because people are talking about the blame game. While we understand the need to try and balance the books, this cannot come at the expense of our children, our economy and South Africa's future. The statement of intent from the Government of National Unity is clear on this matter. Supporting our young people through education is the single most important thing we can do for our country, and this message goes to National Government as well. The ANC stands in firm opposition to these reckless cuts and we stand in solidarity with civic movements, trade unions and community organisations who are protesting these decisions and are present with us in the gallery today.

We fully support teacher Union SADTU in the dispute against the Western Cape Education Department, and I am glad that our worker leaders can see firsthand the disdain, the disdain with which this Government and the Premier of this Province thinks of workers.

Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Yes.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: They say, the Premier says here that he is fighting for workers, but proudly, proudly wants to fire the same workers. [Interjections.]

Our children deserve better. They deserve classrooms where they can learn and thrive, not crowded spaces that stifle their potential. Education is not a privilege; it is a fundamental right and we will not stand by while this Provincial Government or any government for that matter erodes the very foundation of our future. I thank you. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Sayed. I recognise the hon Minister Baartman.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY: Thank you, hon Speaker and esteemed guests. South Africa is currently facing a difficult fiscal environment and the Western Cape, despite its sound fiscal management, has not been immune to these pressures.

This includes high national debt cost, rising inflation and impact of public wages on provinces.

Speaker, I brought my 2024 Budget Book with me so that I am able to just accurately quote the particular figures. Out of an R84 billion Provincial Budget the Department of Health and Wellness receives R30,4 billion and the Western Cape Education Department receives R30,4 billion and R30,8 billion, totalling R61,2 billion or 72,85% of the total Provincial Budget.

We have actually, when you look at the Budget Book, added extra money from the Provincial Reserve Fund – our own provincial money – to the equitable share portions of Education and Health to increase the particular budgets and when you look at the Budget Book, the Education Budget and personnel numbers increase year upon year upon year.

The National Government's decision in 2023 to sign an unfunded multi-year Wage Agreement has left all nine provinces with a massive financial shortfall. In the Western Cape this amounted to R1,1 billion mainly affecting the Department of Health and Wellness and the Western Cape Education Department. The WCED currently has the weight of the 36% budget shortfall, which equates to an unfunded R3,8 billion over the next three years. The National Government's decision to only fund the 64% of this Wage Agreement has forced the Western Cape into a position where it needs to decide between a bad situation and an even worse situation.

Despite our best efforts, including the WCED's R2,5 billion in cuts in Administration, Curriculum and Infrastructure we still face a massive budget deficit.

Without interventional financial relief from National Government the WCED is confronted by a situation where we may be forced to reduce the basket of educator posts by 2 407 in the coming year. I want to state this clearly. The reduction in the number of teachers needs to be an absolute last resort – an absolute last resort. The National Government decides not to fully fund teacher salaries, and I will get to the responses from National Government a little bit later. The Western Cape Government understands the important role that our teachers play, not only in sharing knowledge, but also in building and moulding the futures of our children and communities. Many of us in this House today are here because of the product of teachers who have poured into us and shaped us, and we are going to work tirelessly to avoid these cuts.

However, National Government's failure to fully fund the Wage Agreement has left us with few options, and the Western Cape is not alone in facing these financial challenges. Provinces across the country such as KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Gauteng are all grappling with similar and possibly bigger shortfalls. This Wage Agreement has placed every province in an untenable situation, but the Western Cape has not sat back. I met with the National Minister of Finance, Minister Godongwana, on 17 July to raise the fiscal emergency faced by Education in the Province and requested the

National Treasury's commitment to fully fund the public wages for all Provinces.

On 1 August I followed this up in writing with a letter highlighting the exact financial impact this will have on the basket of posts in Education.

On 6 September I received a response from the National Minister of Finance. His letter was dated 4 September and I would like to quote from his letter, his response to the Western Cape:

"Furthermore, the ongoing negotiations regarding the basket of posts between the Department of Education and Labour and the impact of the 2 407 posts which will result in a shortfall in the 2025/26 and 2026/27, have been noted. These negotiations must consider the current fiscal constraints and all commitments by the Western Cape Department of Education should be managed within the allocated baseline, as no additional funding will be provided given the challenges indicated above." [Interjections.]

That is the response from the National Minister of Finance on 6 September. This is why, Speaker, tomorrow at the first National Budget Council for the upcoming National Budget Process, I will be continuing to lobby Minister Godongwana and the eight other provincial Finance MECs to ensure that frontline services, like our teachers, like our nurses and doctors are protected first within the National Budget process.

The National Treasury should further consider reviewing conditional grants across the board to make sure that we increase the provincial spending envelope, which according to their budget circular, has indicated to all provinces that it must remain the same. The answer cannot be that we must choose between teachers and nurses and doctors, it cannot be the answer. We will continue to fight for teachers and learners alike. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY: Despite the strained fiscal environment the Western Cape Government has consistently worked to deliver in the best interests of our teachers and our learners. In the national context where many provinces under National Government have faltered, we have continued to prioritise the needs for our learners and teachers.

I have mentioned the increase on the budget as well as the personnel numbers, and just for the reference for the Hansard, you can find that on pages 178 and 200 of the Provincial Budget book.

Through the BackOnTrack Programme the Western Cape has further been able to reverse the learning losses caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic and thanks to the input from our dedicated teachers this year alone we will provide 338 000 learners with additional support they need to catch up and

improve their learning outcomes.

We also embarked on an ambitious infrastructure programme, the Rapid School Build Initiative, as supported by the National Treasury currently as well, to expand access to education by building schools faster and more efficiently than ever before, and this year R860 million has been allocated to building new schools in the areas most in need, ensuring that even amidst this crisis we continue to look ahead to secure the future. And just to note, Speaker, we even used some of our provincial money in terms of infrastructure in the past year.

To avoid cutting teachers posts we have already frozen the recruitment of most public service staff, encouraged schools to convert contract appointments and restrict the appointment of substitute teachers. However, Speaker, this is a national emergency and it requires a national solution. We cannot solve this on our own and together with National Government we must step up and request National Treasury to fulfil the obligation to fully fund public wages for all nine provinces and save teachers posts. I thank you.
[Applause]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I recognise the hon Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, this is a provincial emergency requiring a provincial response from the Provincial Government that has got R62 billion allocated to it in this financial year to address services that the people of the Western Cape need. We all know that there have been budget cuts across the country, but this Government must make a choice between funding something that is not working, like a Policing Plan, and funding schoolteachers, and it has made the choice to rather fund something that is not working, than save schoolteacher posts and the Premier can quote stats but the stats speak for themselves. This project of Western Cape Safety Plan has been going for six years.

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Ja.

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Yes.]

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): In the first quarter of 2020 there were 797 murders. [Interjection.]

The PREMIER: That is not true.

The SPEAKER: Order members!

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): The next year there were 992 murders in the province. The next year in the first quarter of 2022 there were 994. In 2023 there were 939.

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Ja. Luister!

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Yes. Listen!]

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): In 2024 there are 1 138. [Interjection.] The number of murders has gone up every year since this plan was introduced...

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): ...as has the rate of murder gone up every single year since this the plan was introduced. [Interjections.] This Government can make better choices and that is all we are asking them to do... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): ...to choose between policing, defunding Education and Health to fund this Policing Plan that is not working, or to look at other areas in their budget where they can cut back to find a minuscule amount of money relative to the large budget to fund these teachers posts. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Let them serve money!

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): They could for example reduce the R5 billion that has been allocated over the next three years to boosting safety interventions. They could reduce the R21,8 billion that has been allocated

over the next three years to fund innovation and governance culture. They can cut from those kinds of projects in order to save teachers, but I guess what we really need is an explanation. [Interjection.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Ja!

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Yes!]

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Did this Government deliberately table an inaccurate budget before the elections to mislead voters ahead of the election... [Interjection.]

The PREMIER: What?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Ja, exactly! Yes.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): ...or do we have political leaders who do not understand their own budget? Whichever it is, it is undeniable that this Government has made unbelievably uneducated choices with its funding allocations. [Interjection.] [Applause]

The SPEAKER: Hon Herron, your time has expired. [Applause]

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Herron. [Interjection.] Order

members! [Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): What in terms of the pro-poor budget?

An HON MEMBER: You cannot deliver...

The SPEAKER: Order! In terms of Rule 143, I now recognise...
[Interjection.] Hon members!

An HON MEMBER: They are out of order, Chair.

The SPEAKER: Hon members on both sides of the House, I am on the floor.
[Interjection.] Are you finished hon members? [Interjection.] Can we
continue? Hon members, in terms of Rule 143 I now afford the Minister of
Education, if he so wishes, Minister, an opportunity for 15 minutes in terms
of the Rules to respond. [Interjection.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL: Jo! 15 minute!

[Ms R WINDVOGEL: Jo! 15 minutes.]

The SPEAKER: Order members! I have deliberately quoted the Rules because
it is the first for this term of office, so that I want to take you with me on
this journey of making sure that we hold the decorum of the House. Hon
Minister, you have 15 minutes to respond, if you so wish. [Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): What choices do we have?

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): What choice?

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, Speaker. On Monday, 2 September 2024, I visited one of our high schools to engage with the staff about the work that the school was doing to improve the learning outcomes. During my visit the principal informed teachers that the school would unfortunately lose teaching posts for the 2025 school year. It was clear from the conversation that the impact of losing posts would be significant. I could see that teachers were concerned and uncertain about how this would affect their learners, and I could see some of the teachers looking around the room thinking, “Will it be me?”

I realise that this will be a very difficult time for our teachers. Our teachers take on so many roles above and beyond being a teacher. They are also parents, they are protectors, they are social workers, they are caregivers and they are confidants to our learners. [Interjection.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Class sizes and workloads will increase, and the uncertainty and anxiety will take a personal toll on our teachers and on their families.

I also recognise the pressure that the decision has placed on our principals who will be responsible for managing the impact of the reduction in posts at their schools. The reduction in posts will mean that some contract teachers will not be reappointed after their contracts end on 31 December 2024, and some permanent teachers will be asked to move to another school where there is a suitable vacancy. We understand that this will result in difficult choices for our schools. It will increase class sizes and it will negatively affect teaching and learning in the Western Cape. But, Speaker, we must all understand that we are in this position because the National Government did not fully fund the 2023 multi-year Public Service Wage Agreement. We were short-changed by National Government receiving only 64% of the cost of the nationally negotiated agreement, leaving the Province to fund the remaining 36%. Despite implementing drastic R2,5 billion in budget cuts, including on Administration, on Curriculum and on Infrastructure, we still face a R3,8 billion budget shortfall over the next three years.

The situation is critical, which is why we have taken drastic action to cover the massive budget shortfall. We risk of course compromising our ability to pay for daily operating expenses like school feeding, learner transport and transfers to school.

The National Treasury knew exactly what their decision would mean for education in our country. In the medium-term Budget Policy Statement for 2023 the National Treasury stated that their decision could lead to larger class sizes and higher learner teacher ratios, possibly resulting in weaker

educational outcomes. Speaker, we are not alone in facing this fiscal emergency. Other provinces are in the same, if not a worse situation. You do not need to take my word for it, take the word of the KwaZulu Natal Education MEC Siphon Hlomuka, who said in the *Sunday Times* in the past weekend, and I quote:

“The Department is left with little to no funding for the payment of fixed operational costs, municipal accounts, payments to suppliers within 30 days, procurement of learner support material and affecting transfer payments to schools.”

We are not alone, but we have been open and honest about the challenges we face and about what the decision by the National Government will mean for our schools and for our teachers and for our children across the country.

Speaker, the decision to reduce the basket of posts was not taken lightly. To deal with the R3,8 billion shortfall we would have to hollow out our non-personnel spending to become a department that only transfers salaries and does not offer any support to our teachers, to our learners and to our schools. So we made some clear decisions on what spending we needed to protect in the face of this massive budget shortfall.

Firstly, we agreed that we would protect schools for learners with special education needs from the reduction in posts. These are our most vulnerable learners and require extra care and support from our Department.

Secondly, we agreed that we would not cut funding to school feeding or learner transport. We cannot have learners go hungry or be unable to get to school.

Third, we agreed that we would not cut the funding that our schools receive to pay their daily expenses. Schools rely on this funding to pay for everything from water to lights to stationery. We cannot have a situation where schools cannot write exams because they cannot afford paper, or have their electricity disconnected because they cannot pay the bill or cannot afford cleaning products to clean children's bathrooms.

Now, Speaker, the hon Brett Herron claims that we are defunding Education in the Western Cape. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: The Premier said that.

An HON MEMBER: It is a National Government competency.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Now if that is his claim, how does he explain – how does he explain that Education now has the largest budget in the Provincial Government? [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: In our Province?

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: How does he explain that we have added R6,39 billion to the Education budget baseline over the past three financial years? [Interjection.]

How does he explain the fact that we have implemented the biggest learning recovery programme in the country? How does he explain the fact that we have added over 1 800 teaching posts in schools in the greatest increase in at least a decade...

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Only to cut them the next term.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: And how does he explain, how does he explain the fact that we are building more schools... [Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): At the National Department... [Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...faster than ever before with our Rapid School Builds Programme? [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order, order! [Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: No, the facts demonstrate that Education is clearly a key priority in the Provincial Government. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat, my apologies. Hon

Masipa, is that a point of order?

Mr NP MASIPA: Yes, Speaker, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr NP MASIPA: My point of order, Speaker, is that the hon member Brett Herron is running commentary while the speaker is on the floor. [Interjections.] Can you rule on that one, hon Speaker? [Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Will you please rule... It is not just in the House...

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. That is firstly not a point of order. [Interjection.] I will maintain the decorum of the House. I do not need any assistance from the floor. [Interjection.] Hon members, can I please ask that you allow the member on the floor an opportunity to respond. [Interjection.] As I indicated in the beginning of this debate, this is a matter of public importance in terms of Rule 143. Under normal circumstances I will allow a lot more latitude for interjections, but because of the nature of this subject in front of us, I do think that we should allow the members of the public that are sitting in the gallery, and the members or the citizens that are watching this debate the opportunity to listen and to hear the input by the Minister.

I would also like to remind the hon members that in terms of Rule 143(3), the Minister has the opportunity to respond for 15 minutes. I have a duty to protect the Minister and provide the Minister an opportunity to respond. So can I please ask members that you please work with me and Hon Minister, my apologies for the interruption. You may continue. [Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, Speaker. I am in fact listening to the hon Brett Herron's running commentary and once again he is wrong. He claims that the success behind the Rapid Schools Build Programme is as a result of additional BFI funding, which he does not seem to realise will only be allocated in this year's Medium-Term Budget. [Interjections.]

The fact is, Speaker, the fact is that Education is clearly a priority for the Provincial Government. Again equally, how does the hon Brett Herron explain the even greater budget for shortfalls in other Provincial Education Departments and how does he explain the headline in today's *Witness*, which screams: "No funds to absorb KZN's unemployed teachers!" [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: The Western Cape make choices about...

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: The hon Brett Herron was clearly listening with his mouth and not his ears when I delivered my Budget Speech earlier this year because in that budget speech I warned about the budget blow. [Interjection.]

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): No!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: I said that we would be forced to implement cost-containment measures, including building fewer schools and employing fewer teachers, and I went on to say... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: He did not!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...that the budget blow would put pressure on our schools and on our teachers. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Haibo!

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): He did not. He is lying.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: The hon Brett Herron seems to be completely oblivious to the facts, but also oblivious to the national fiscal emergency, to the cause of the national fiscal emergency, and to the effect of the national fiscal emergency on all Provincial Education Departments. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Hon Speaker, it is time for him to wake up and understand that we are in a critical situation which affects our learners,

which affects our teachers, and which affects our schools. It is time to get serious, which is why I am doing everything I can to fight for our teachers in the Western Cape.

I have written to the National Minister of Basic Education, Siviwe Gwarube, outlining in detail the severe impact that the National Government's decision is having on our Province and on our schools. I have met with the Deputy Minister of Finance, Ashor Sarupen, to brief him on the severity of the situation. I have briefed the Council of Education Ministers in detail on the budget shortfall our Department is facing and on the impact this will have on teaching and learning. We have participated in a Special Council of Education Ministers meeting under the leadership of the Minister of Basic Education, Siviwe Gwarube, to discuss the impact of the fiscal emergency and the failure to fully fund the Wage Agreement, and we follow up with a Special Council of Education Ministers meeting next week with a view to all the provinces and National Ministers working together to engage with National Treasury.

Then, hon Speaker, I have to ask, what is the hon Brett Herron doing? Well, what I would expect is for him to support our fight for teachers, and to support our fight for education, but instead he chooses to fight those who fight for our teachers and fight those who fight for education. [Interjection.]

It is time to get serious, to stop indulging in political theatre and start fighting for education and fighting for teachers. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: But you are fighting them.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: We find ourselves, Speaker, at a critical point.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): But you are fighting them!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: We find ourselves at a critical point. We have to decide as a country once and for all whether basic education is actually a priority for South Africa. [Interjection.]

In the past when it came to a choice between protecting our children's education and bailing out corrupt State-Owned Enterprises, the previous Administration made the wrong choice every time and bailed out corrupt State-Owned Enterprises. [Interjection.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): You are doing that exactly now!

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!!

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): You are doing it now.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: That is in the past.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Wrong choice!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: So let us now dedicate ourselves to a greater cause, which is, we must work together to ensure that basic education is at the centre of the economic growth agenda and not relegated to the welfare agenda, and because basic education is at the centre of the economic growth agenda, we must work together to ensure that it is at the centre of the Government of National Unity's agenda. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: So, Speaker, I invite the political leaders in this House, the teachers' unions, the activists and the parents, to fight alongside us rather than against us, for basic education, for our teachers, so that together we can deliver quality education for every child in every province in South Africa. I thank you. [Interjection.] [Applause]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. [Interjection.] Order members! [Interjection.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Minister, withdraw the announcement.

The SPEAKER: Order! Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon members, that concludes the debate on this subject.

[Debate concluded.]

The SPEAKER: We now move on to Interpellations as printed on the Question Paper in terms of Rule 197, and I recognise the hon Minister of Education, Minister Maynier. [Interjection.]

INTERPELLATIONS

1. Mr B N Herron asked Mr D J Maynier, Minister of Education:

With regard to the education of learners with special needs in the Western Cape:

- (a) How many learners with special needs are placed in mainstream schools and
- (b) How does his Department ensure that all learners with special needs have access to their right to education?

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, Speaker. The Western Cape Education Department is committed to supporting learners with special needs in mainstream schools. The Western Cape Education Department currently accommodates a total of 17 323 learners with special education needs in various mainstream environments across the province.

These learners are supported in one of three mainstream environments: public ordinary schools, full-service schools and of course schools with support classes. The learners' support needs are identified following the screening,

identification, assessment and support process, which is an important part of the referral pathway in the Western Cape Education Department. To ensure that appropriate support and interventions are provided the Western Cape Education Department is of course committed to providing support to all learners with special needs. To achieve this, the Department employs a structured approach that includes the following key strategies:

Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support: this process of course identifies and addresses special needs while also enabling schools to detect barriers to learning and providing interventions.

The Inclusive Education Framework, of course learners with special needs are integrated into mainstream education environments and provided with support.

Assessment and accommodation: additional time or alternative formats for assessment are provided for learners with special needs for equitable participation in assessments, and of course we have our inclusive support plans where each learner with special needs is assigned an inclusive support plan which outlines the specific support required.

We have our full-service schools and support classes, our specialised support services, our teacher training and capacity building which include ongoing professional development provided to help teachers support learners with special needs, and of course collaboration and partnerships.

The Department collaborates with parents, with caregivers and external specialists to provide a holistic support system for learners. We are committed. We are committed to these services while we acknowledge the challenges of consistently meeting every learner's needs, due to the limitations in resources, staffing and infrastructure. We will continue to fight for the funding to ensure that all learners in our province can receive quality education.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, Speaker, and thank you to the Minister for the answer. I mean the question in the interpellation was posed, I mean, not out of nowhere; it was posed out of concerns raised with us about the special needs learners and the experience of their parents and of teachers, especially teachers that are in mainstream schools and children who are in mainstream schools where they have special needs or being identified with special needs. Students with disabilities in this province obviously have the right to an education and those standards are set out in policies and law, and as I indicated we have received numerous complaints from concerned parents and community members over the education standards that these children face, especially those that are in mainstream schools, and we are basically failing these pupils or these learners. The education they are receiving is not anywhere near any academic standard and leaves these students unemployable due to the lack of employable skills. The final guidelines for special needs

education are clear on this matter, as the Minister would know, we must not only ensure that these students have the necessary material but they also have the content presented in a way that is adapted to suit their needs. The adaptation to help students prepare for the real world is not being adhered to in this province for these 17 000 odd learners. In fact concerned teachers are saying to us, and they are referring to their schools as, and I quote, “over-glorified daycares.” The students are not toddlers obviously, and this Administration must be held accountable for the way that their education is being handled in this province.

What are the alternative courses provided for these students to aid them in their futures? The required alternative courses of woodwork, plumbing or hairdressing, amongst a whole lot of others that are in the policy, are not offered to these learners, despite an education policy requirement that they are offered to them, and with the failing curriculum and resources, can we really be surprised when we see research papers such as “Barriers to the employability of people with disabilities in South African Public Service”, highlighting the marginalisation of special needs students in the Western Cape, and this research is from 2023, so it is not outdated and old, and as a community and as a legislature we must acknowledge that this marginalisation is real. If these students enter the job market with no employable skills and no National Academic Certificate, we are leaving them to drown in the current unemployment epidemic facing our youth. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker takes the Chair.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon Herron. I now see the hon van Wyk.

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!!

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): Thank you Deputy Speaker. It goes without saying that providing quality education to learners with special needs remains a vital part of any Education Department's core mission, and I am glad to see the WCED and Minister Maynier continuing to take the issue seriously. As many of us are aware, the Western Cape produced South Africa's highest ranked Matric candidate with special needs last year, and my hope is that this year will see similar sterling results.

However, this Sitting has seen the debate on the reduction in the number of teaching posts in the Western Cape, and the National Government created circumstances which have forced us to make this happen. With this in mind I would like to ask the Minister to explain to us what his Department is doing to support these learners in special needs schools and what impact the reduction in the basket of posts will have on that support. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon van Wyk. I see the Leader of the Opposition, hon Sayed.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you hon Deputy,

Speaker. Deputy Speaker, the data on this particular matter, as the hon Herron has pointed out, reveals both progress but also significant challenges in the Provincial Government's commitment to inclusive education.

While the Province has indeed made strides in integrating learners with disabilities into mainstream schools, significant gaps remain, hon Deputy Speaker. The data shows that universal access for five- to six-year-olds, stands at 66,40%; for seven to 15-year-olds at 93,10% and alarmingly only 55,90% for the 16- to 18-year age gap, hon Deputy Speaker. This drop in accessibility for older learners with disabilities is deeply concerning. The challenges faced by these learners are multifaceted, from physical barriers such as inadequate infrastructure like the absence of wheelchair ramps, to a lack of tailored support and resources in mainstream classrooms. These obstacles prevent full participation in our education system.

The hon Maynier must tell us what specific hindrances are impeding universal access for the 16- to 18-year old age group. How does the Department plan to address the infrastructure deficits and ensure that schools for special need learners are equipped to provide the necessary support? Are there any urgent programmes in place to tackle these barriers? I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see the hon Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Deputy Speaker, the problem with integration of special needs learners into mainstream schools appears to be that those schools are not adequately prepared or resourced in order to provide the educational needs that are specific to those special needs children and anecdotally the stories we are hearing is that children are simply bumped up from one grade to the next without any outcome of their education in the grade that they have been bumped up and that is why teachers are saying that we are basically glorified day-care operators or professionals because those mainstream schools are not capacitated or resourced in order to provide the niche and the unique education needs of those children.

There are also complaints that, like in many sectors of our society, poor and communities with people of colour, have different standards for their education and resources. We receive complaints that special schools in higher income areas not only have more resources, but they also hold their students to the correct standard that is in the national policy, grading and working with these students personally to find their niche and make them employable or skilled, and meanwhile, for thousands of learners dumped in mainstream schools, students with special needs are ignored, wrongly assessed and under-resourced, and this leads to those students with special needs having to switch between languages to learn, being wrongly assessed and transferred, leaving with a lack of personal tutorage and no alternative skills to learn.

There is simply no justice here and this Government is failing some of the most vulnerable citizens of our province, and we owe the students and the parents of children in this province with special needs a just and equal education and we ask the Minister to look into what is happening with special needs students and their education in this province. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see the hon Minister David Maynier.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

I wish to reiterate of course that the Western Cape Department remains committed to supporting all our learners, especially our learners with special needs, to ensure that every learner gets access to quality education.

I would like to thank the hon Brett Herron for his interest and his focus on learners with special needs. He spoke of concerns raised by parents and concerns raised by teachers, and I would appreciate it if he would be prepared to share those concerns. To share the concerns of parents and of teachers so that we can look into the specific cases and work together to ensure that those learners receive the support that they need.

The hon Van Wyk asks about the impact of the reduction in basket of posts on special schools. We have, as I mentioned in my speech, taken steps to ensure that the basket of post reduction will not affect special needs learners

in our special needs schools, precisely because our special needs learners are the most vulnerable learners and require the most support from our Department.

The hon member also asks what we are doing to support learners with special needs in our special schools. I am very proud of the fact that this year we are providing an additional R71,4 million to improve our support particularly to learners with autism spectrum disorder and we are providing funding for learners with profound intellectual disabilities with an additional R70,4 million allocated to support these vulnerable learners.

We have completed two special needs schools this year and have been adding dozens of extra classrooms to existing special schools to accommodate more learners, and continuing this commitment for the coming year as part of our Rapid School Build Programme, we will build 30 additional classrooms for learners with special needs at special and existing schools.

The hon member Khalid Sayed points to the good work that the Department has done to support our special needs learners ... [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...but he does identify the fact that there are still significant gaps.

So let us work together to close those gaps, and he goes on to ask what impedes, what are the major impediments. Well, one of the major impediments, as he knows, is that provinces do not receive funding for special needs learners. Most members will know that while the number of learners in public ordinary schools are included in the formula that determines the Provincial Equitable Share, it does not include learners in special needs schools, and I know that fellow members in this House have raised this matter as a matter of concern in the past, and I think that we need to work together to ensure that our learners with special needs are counted and are included and are funded in terms of the Provincial Equitable Share formula, and I look forward to working with the hon member Brett Herron and the hon member Khalid Sayed in order to achieve more support for our learners with special needs in the Western Cape. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: And you got to have more money.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. [Interjections.] That concludes Interpellation 1. We will now proceed to Interpellation 2. I again see the hon Minister for Education. [Interjections.]

2. Ms T Lithakong to ask Mr D J Maynier, Minister of Education:

What is the reason behind the proposal announced by the Head of the Western Cape Education Department to cut teacher posts in the province and (b) how will that move affect the teacher-to-learner

ratio in the province, if at all?

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I am certainly earning my salary this afternoon in the House. [Interjections.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, we have of course traversed this topic in the special debate this afternoon, but let me reiterate a couple of points.

First and most importantly, the decision to reduce the basket of posts was not taken lightly. We understand of course that this will result in difficult choices for our schools. It will increase class sizes and it will negatively affect teaching and learning in the Western Cape.

We have worked hard over the past five years to reduce the average teacher-to-learner ratio in our province from 1:37,4 in 2020 down to 1:34,2 in 2024. However, with the reduction in the basket of posts that ratio will go back up to 1:36,7 in 2024.

We must all understand that we are in this position because the National Government did not fully fund the 2023 multi-year wage agreement. We were short-changed by National Government, receiving only 64% of the cost of the nationally negotiated agreement, leaving the Province to fund the remaining 36%. Despite implementing a drastic R2,5 billion budget cut, including, as I have said, on Administration, Curriculum and Infrastructure, we still face a R3,8 billion budget shortfall over the next three years.

I have said that the situation is critical. If we do not take drastic action to cover the massive shortfall we will compromise our ability to pay our bills, which includes of course the salaries of teachers. Finding R3,8 billion within our budget is extremely difficult and it is not achieved by cutting small programmes, and even if we cut key programmes like #BackOnTrack, we would not come anywhere close to dealing with the shortfall.

The only way we can close the gap would be to cut critical support to schools in poor communities, including school feeding, learner transport and payments to schools. We would have to hollow out non-personnel spending to become a department that only transfers salaries and does not offer any support to our teachers, to our learners in our school.

The fact is that we should never have been put in this position and I am doing everything I can to fight for our teachers here in the Western Cape, and again I would urge the members of this House to fight alongside us and not against us ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...for our teachers. [Interjections.]

The National Government knew exactly what the financial impact of the decision not to fully fund the wage agreement would be, and the National

Government knew it would affect teaching and learning in all our provinces.

That is why I have called on all political leaders and the teachers' unions and the activists and the parents to join us in a greater cause to ensure that basic education becomes a key component of our growth agenda, rather than a minority priority in our welfare agenda, and to stand together to ensure that basic education becomes a priority for National Government so that we can deliver quality education for every child in every province across South Africa. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon Minister.

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear, hear-hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I now recognise the hon member Lithakong.
[Interjections.]

†Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Asbonge Sekela Somlomo.

[Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): We thank you Deputy Speaker.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are audible, yes.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Hon Deputy Speaker, the Western Cape is one of the three provinces in the country, alongside Gauteng and KZN, which continue to experience rapid learner growth due to population growth,

semigration, urban migration, etcetera.

This then necessitates the Province to increase its Education budget in order to build more classrooms and hire more teachers for purposes of avoiding classroom overcrowding, as well as making sure that they produce quality education.

Deputy Speaker after the COVID-19 pandemic the cracks within the Western Cape Education System were laid bare as the Province had the worst teacher-to-learner ratio in the whole country. That is one teacher for every 37 learners, which meant that classrooms were overcrowded.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the issue of classroom overcrowding provides all sorts of problems which are destructive to both learners and teachers alike, and impacts on quality of education as well as the health of teachers.

Hon Deputy Speaker, having to constantly control and manage a large crowd on a daily basis has a consequence of taking a toll on one's health. Immediately after the pandemic, it was found that teacher absenteeism in the Western Cape schools was low compared to other provinces, and teachers must be applauded for that. However, it was sadly discovered that part of the reason for their absenteeism was associated with depression and heart disease.

While the argument is not to say that teaching on its own will lead to such

health implications, but an argument can be made that having to contend with a larger crowd of learners on a daily basis can impact on one's health. Similarly, hon Deputy Speaker, when teachers are then absent due to illness, it is learners who suffer the brunt as their education is impacted.

So part of a solution to all this is to increase the infrastructure in the form of creating more classrooms as the learner population continues to grow in the province, as well as the hiring of more teachers so that the teacher-to-learner ratio can be reasonable and manageable. I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see hon member Van Wyk.

Mr L D VAN WYK: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Once again this Sitting remains dominated by the question of the basket of posts reduction in 2025, and we have discussed at length the issues surrounding this topic. In my debate speech I discussed the fact that the WCED has had no choice in this matter.

To reiterate once again, this is a crisis caused by National Government's failure to adequately fund the 2023 public sector wage increase. [Interjections.] There are some who have suggested making cuts to other areas of the Education budget. [Interjections.] It is my belief that these cuts would be to the serious detriment of many learners in the Western Cape, and would still not cover the shortfall which National has left us with.

For that reason I wish to ask the Minister what would cutting the #BackOnTrack programme, as some have suggested, mean for learners in poor communities? Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see the hon member Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, can I
...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will wait for you.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Oh, thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your time will commence as soon as you start with your sentence.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Have a break, have a KitKat. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Greetings in the name of His Majesty, righteous.

Hon Deputy Speaker, as the NCC we wish to inform this House that using Mitchells Plain as an example, we notice that there are 17 high schools and 47 primary schools.

Now, hon Deputy Speaker, the Western Cape Education Department Area South envisages 444 educators to be cut due to this budget issue as

mentioned, but, hon Deputy Speaker, our schools will lose educators, but our community will lose more than just educators. We will be losing our sons and we will be losing our daughters, because it is public knowledge, hon Deputy Speaker, that most of the children within Mitchells Plain are either not in school, or attend schools out of Mitchells Plain, or they attend schools 15 to 20 kilometres from home.

Now, hon Deputy Speaker, this cut will only increase a huge amount of kids not in school, ready to become bait for human traffickers and gangs, as the projected 60 kids per class will only create an unbearable situation, but it is sad to see after 15 years the ruling party in the Western Cape has created nothing and done nothing for the Coloured community besides temporary schools, temporary teachers, temporary programmes, as if we are a temporary community, forgetting you found us here. You found us here.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the Western Cape top 20 high schools will not feel this. Their parents will pay high school fees and the SGB posts will cover these shortfalls, if there are any, but, hon Deputy Speaker, bearing in mind these are DA strongholds and one cannot but wonder is this not part of the plan to keep the Cape Flats uneducated?

Hon Deputy Speaker, the sudden destruction will have a negative effect especially on the poor in the no fee schools, because the Cape Flats has got many of them. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Jacobs. I see the hon member Sayed.

An HON MEMBER: They found us here as well.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and let me thank the hon MEC for his response.

While also thanking him for his response to this important interpellation, I want to also say that there is no use – yes, of course we want to all work together and we will work together, and I think in various instances we are working together to avert the crisis. However, working together is important, but we cannot start by first declaring ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...a crisis ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...by first going out there creating massive psychological problems amongst learners, creating uncertainty amongst teachers, by going out there and saying, “No, these are the amount of posts that are going to go.” You cannot do that. You first try to seek solutions ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...and then you make such announcements.

So let us be builders and not breakers, as the hon Steenhuisen so aptly says at the National Assembly.

Overcrowded classrooms, under-resourced schools and overstretched teachers are already our reality, [Interjections.] and now we are about to make it worse. Nearly 2 500 teachers gone. This is what this Department wants. More than R800 million sent back to National Government in just four years. It is how you manage the budget.

The key to a stronger economy, I will emphasise again, is education. The key to personal empowerment is education. The key to pulling our most disadvantaged communities out of poverty is education. Yet the Democratic Alliance would rather send money back because they cannot spend it. [Interjections.] What they do keep they waste on failed schemes. They look after the rich while stealing an education from the poor.

An HON MEMBER: Ja!

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: Then they blame others for their

failures.

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: Then they also say, and I am glad that our trade unionists are still here...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, please ...[Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: They want to play ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: ...please conclude.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: I am wrapping up. They want to play the working class up against one another ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...by saying that the cuts are as a result ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member ...[Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...of the wage agreement. [Interjections.] So they want workers to feel ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayed ...[Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...that because workers are getting a better salary other workers ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayed!

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...must lose their jobs. That is disingenuous ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayed, please take your seat.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...and that is simply disgraceful. The ANC stands ...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please take your seat, hon member Sayed. [Interjections.] Your time has expired. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Disgraceful! Disgraceful!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, as you are fully aware, interpellations has a time limit. [Interjections.] I would once again caution members to stick to the time limit as per the notice that has been circulated. I now see the hon member Lithakong.

An HON MEMBER: Disgraceful!

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. [Interjections.]

† 'n AGBARE LID: Sies! Sies!

[An HON MEMBER: Siss! Siss!]

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Hon Deputy Speaker, we are in this current situation where teachers' post are targeted because of a one-sided decision that was taken by the Premier of this Province some five years back in 2019, when he initiated budget cuts against the Provincial Health and Education Department in order to fund his so-called Safety Plan. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Health and Education in this province were robbed more than a billion, which ended up going into waste because it makes no sense for one to spend more in trying to halve the murder rate in the province, but then the same murder rate continues to increase out of control.

The Education budget should have been left alone, we still maintain that, and the Province should have created a working relationship with the South African Police Service in order to tackle crime in the province. The budget

that was supposed to be used to fight crime in the province is that of SAPS and not of Education, but that was not possible due to the hostile nature of the DA-ran Provincial Government.

An HON MEMBER: Haibo!

Ms T LITHAKONG: †Somlomo, [Speaker,] the DA Government is chaotic and cannot get its priorities right. Recently their leader, who is the Minister of Agriculture, poked his nose in a Bill that has nothing to do with his Department, by threatening their fake GNU arrangement will be compromised if the President signed the BELA Bill into law. [Interjections.] One would expect the Minister of Basic of Education [Interjections.] to deal with the matters involving the BELA Bill but no, because it is a mess, in that party everyone just stands up, neglect their duties and focus on something that has nothing to do with them.

In conclusion †Sekela Somlomo, [Deputy Speaker,] I would like the Minister to respond whether there will be any additional classrooms erected or built for 2025 in order to balance the teacher-to-learner ratio, and whether additional teachers will also be hired over and above the ones we currently have, as well as converting contract teachers into permanent posts. I thank you, †Somlomo. [Speaker.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Lithakong for sticking to the time. I now see the hon Minister Maynier.

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

To the hon member Lithakong, we of course do need to expand access to education in order to reduce overcrowding, as she suggests, and we do need to invest in infrastructure which of course is precisely why we have launched our Rapid School Build Programme which is building more schools faster than ever before, ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Where is ...

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...and as I said earlier we expect to receive R2,5 billion in additional funding so that we, over the next three years, can supercharge our Rapid School Build Programme and build more schools ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Unless ... [Inaudible.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...to expand access and reduce overcrowding at schools in the Western Cape.

To the hon member Leon van Wyk. Of course cutting the #BackOnTrack programme would first have very little impact on the sheer size of the

shortfall and more importantly, in doing so we would remove, [Interjections.] we would remove, and think about this, revision classes for Matrics, we would remove books for foundation phase learners.

An HON MEMBER: Sjah!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: We would reduce extra classes and teacher training for schools hardest hit by the pandemic, which of course are those schools in poor communities.

Then to the hon member Jacobs. The Rapid School Build Programme has expanded classes at several schools in Mitchells Plain, and I would like to remind the member that one of our top 20 schools, which is well-known to members in this House ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Ja.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...Spine Road High, is right in the centre of Mitchells Plain. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: It is the only ...[Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: To the hon member Khalid Sayed.

An HON MEMBER: It is the only school.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: We are in fact not underspending as the hon member knows. [Interjections.] In fact ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: It is a top school [Inaudible.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...our Department, our Department has been allocated in the last financial year an additional R115 million ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: They can only mention one.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...which was underspent in other provinces so that we can expand ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Why?

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...access to education in our province, [Interjections.] and I am quite sure that some members of the public who have joined us here, would be shocked to hear that the hon member Khalid Sayed, if I recall correctly, [Interjections.] voted against that additional appropriation to expand access to education and reduce overcrowding in our schools.

I also want to say to the hon member that we are not declaring a crisis, we

are dealing with a crisis [Interjections.] and we are dealing with it decisively and that crisis was caused by National Government's failure to fully fund the 2023 wage agreement and years and years of bailing out zombie State-owned ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: You are sending money back ...

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...enterprises across South Africa.

An HON MEMBER: You are sending money back to [Inaudible.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: I have said before and I will say it again, we are now at a critical point. We have to decide as a country once and for all, once and for all whether basic education is actually a priority ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...here in South Africa ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: †Hlalapansi. [Sit down]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...and I look forward to the hon members ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: †Hlalapansi. [Sit down.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...joining me in that great cause. Thank you. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. [Interjections.] That is the end of Interpellations. Order, members.

We will now deal with Questions as printed on the Question Paper. I wish to once again advise hon members that once the hon Minister or Premier has started the reply to the oral question as printed on the Question Paper, hon members must use the chat facility of this particular Sitting for the House, to indicate whether they have a follow-up question. There are also four opportunities for follow-up questions, but the hon member who has posed the initial oral question as printed on the Question Paper, will have the first opportunity for a follow-up question. Thereafter other hon members may then use the remaining minutes and remaining opportunities to ask a follow-up question. I now recognise the hon Premier.

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY

1. Ms B M van Minnen to ask Mr A R Winde, Premier:

With regard to the Western Cape Government's Digital Skills Training Programme available to the public at Cape Access Centres

in the Western Cape:

(a) What skills are members of the public who participate in this programme equipped with and (b) what impact do these skills have on the employability of those who complete this training?

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you very much to the hon member Van Minnen for the question.

In reply (a), the ICT skills which the participants acquire during the training programme empower them with essential skills to compete in the job market and improve their digital literacy in order to participate in the digital society.

Participants are equipped with a variety of essential digital skills during these courses:

- Participants learn the fundamental concepts and skills related to using devices, managing files, understanding networks and ensuring data security.
- Participants learn how to do web browsing and effective information searching, online communication and email usage.
- Participants gain proficiency in using Word processing applications to create, format and finalise everyday documents such as letters.

- Participants also get to know how to use spreadsheet applications, develop, format, modify and utilise spreadsheets, including the use of standard formulas and functions, and the creation of formatting of graphs or charts.
- They also learn how to use presentation tools in creating, formatting and modifying and preparing presentations with various slide layouts, both display and printed distribution.
- And an important focus is exposing participants to IT security in terms of identifying and the protection against common security challenges in ICT, teaching them how to operate safely online.

These skills collectively ensure that participants are well-prepared to navigate and utilise digital tools effectively and securely.

Apart from the above we also found that some skills are a spin-off from training received, below are a few examples:

- Teaching training skills. So Riaan Macelli from Goedgedacht Farm wrote:

“I had the privilege to serve the community by teaching them the basics to computer, start doing Maths classes for primary school children.”

- Confidence amongst participants to improve their lives, as indicated by Cheslin Swarts from Clanwilliam and I quote:

“I successfully completed the e-learning course. I found a new job at Clicks as a cashier and only after a month of intensive searching I was promoted from cashier to an advisor in the medical aisle, and after one year was promoted to the management team.”

- Start or improve business and create work for fellow community members, as indicated by Faizal Hendricks, founder and owner of Swag Services in Clanwilliam, and there I quote:

“My dream was to start my own business so that I can work for myself, but also to create work opportunities for my community and a legacy for my child. The basic e-Learner course was way better than I could have imagined. My plan is to follow my dream. I am currently the owner of Swag Services. We do the following installations: DSTV, OVHD, repair and many more. I finally can do my own quotations, posters and business cards.”

- And then lastly:

“The ability to study further.”

This comes from Micheala Rhode from Bella Vista, Ceres, and there I quote:

“In 2017 I applied for the basics and e-Learner course and I got an international e-Learner licence with an opportunity. Afterwards I was enrolled in N6 Management Assistant courses. With the ICT skills I gained at the centre I was able to complete the course with ease.”

And then (b), hon Deputy Speaker. Enhanced job prospects. IT skills significantly enhance job prospects and help meet the demand for skills relevant to the Fourth Industrial Revolution and economic growth.

Rural development. Access to these skills in disadvantaged and rural areas where the majority of the Western Cape Government e-Centres are located, is a significant investment in rural development and socio-economic inclusion.

Then employment attractiveness and marketability. Having IT skills and certification makes candidates more attractive to employers and boosts their confidence in applying for competitive jobs in the local market. It allows candidates to apply for diverse career opportunities and achieve faster career progression.

Then lastly, practical benefits.

- Training at Western Cape Government e-Centres enables individuals to complete tasks more efficiently in job situations.
- Citizens gain access to internet facilities, allowing them to search for and apply for jobs at the e-Centre while training.
- They have immediate access to templates for creating curriculum vitae.
- E-Centre sometimes invite Government agencies for in person recruitment drives on site. Awareness is provided on these at training sessions at the e-Centres.
- And it serves as a point of access for completing SARS registrations online, making them a place for budding entrepreneurs to access these resources.

Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I now recognise the hon member who posed the question. Hon member Van Minnen, do you have a follow-up?

Ms B M VAN MINNEN (DA): Thank you, hon Chair, but I am working remotely, so it is going to be hon member Walters, thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Duly noted. I now see the hon member Walters.

Mr T WALTERS (DA): In the Premier's opinion, what is the importance of ensuring a digitally skilled and future focused workforce for the Western Cape future? [Interjections.] Hey, Luthuli House does not write my questions.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, please take your seat. [Interjections.]

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and to the hon member Walters for that follow-up question. [Interjections.]

Of course, I mean enabling your citizens digitally really enables them to play a part in the modern world. So it is really critical that these are the kind of services offered in these centres. We have 75 of them now and of course we have launched our first mobile, and hopefully we will have a few more mobiles into the future because that enables us not only to be in a small place like Klaarstroom, but you can actually have these mobiles that can go further into much more rural areas of the Karoo, for example.

So that does enable specifically our youth to play a meaningful role into the future. I also think that as we are moving forward into this new tech-enabled world, it is interesting, initially it was about how do we use the platform for coding courses, but now, I mean young people are not going and doing a coding course because AI will do the coding for you.

So they are learning to do AI type applications through these programmes and I remember visiting Chloe Dicks in Grassy Park the other day. This was during Women's Month that I was visiting some businesses, and she told me she was fully self-taught through the internet systems that we make available to our citizens, on coding and now she has developed her business and her business is offering services to people in the community and she did all of that herself online while doing those trainings.

Then of course I think the project that we managed to pull down through the Amazon investment into their training programme, which is a million training opportunities, it is the first time they have done it outside of America, they did it here in the Western Cape and it was interesting, I visited that space the other day and they are offering one million free Cloud computing and that kind of project training courses with certification that is recognised across the world, and it is amazing, in the first year 300 000 people have got certified across the province and they are using these online because it is an online training programme. You can go on site, but it is a very small training facility, but you can go online, so you utilise these facilities not only for the programmes that we offer, but also for other programmes that the economy offers, and that again makes our youth much more employable and can play a part in the modern world.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I have not noted any other follow-ups.

I will now again recognise the Premier, Question 2.

2. Mr T C R Walters to ask Mr A R Winde, Premier:

How will the memorandum of understanding recently signed by the Western Cape Government, the City of Cape Town and the South African Police Service assist in the achieving of his Government's Safety Plan objectives?

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you to the hon member Walters for this question. This is about the memorandum that was signed just the other day.

So the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety informed me that the agreement seeks to address the lack of coherence of planning and implementation of efforts to prevent, combat and investigate crime, and also to maintain public order between the South African Police Service, the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety, and the City of Cape Town and their various layers of law enforcement and Metro Police.

As per paragraph 2 of the agreement:

“The objective of this agreement is to record the cooperation of the parties in purpose of a shared vision for safety and security within

the City of Cape Town, encompassing various initiatives, programmes and strategies aimed at promoting a safe, secure and conducive environment.”

And there of course there are seven sub-programmes within. These deal with the:

- “2.2.1 creation of a shared safer city vision that maximises integrated relationships with spheres of government and civil society;
- 2.2.2 development of programmes, plans, interventions and infrastructure that will seek to reduce levels of crime;
- 2.2.3 development of an aligned approach to support and enhance economic performance within the province;
- 2.2.4 ensuring that a conducive platform is created that traverses decision-making levels of all spheres of government and other relevant stakeholders;
- 2.2.5 building internal capacity to ensure successful delivery of the area of cooperation as set out in clause 5;
- 2.2.6 undertaking research and development, procurement and

commissioning of technological infrastructure where resources are integrated; and

2.2.7 alignment of strategies aimed at promoting safe and secure environments as well as the coordination of implementation thereof.”

Eight joint workstreams have been established to develop annual plans to give effect to the objective of this agreement. The result of the workstream engagements will feed into an overarching annual plan to be signed off by the Steering Committee of the cooperative agreement.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon member Walters.

Mr T WALTERS (DA): Thank you, hon Premier. That was quite comprehensive. It is natural for you to speak from a Western Cape perspective, but I think it is also important to inform how National Government approaches it.

So in your opinion, what advice would you give, as a Premier, to the National Minister of Police to ensure the success of this agreement? How do you believe National Government should approach this? Thanks.

An HON MEMBER: Do not ask opinions ...

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, member Walters.

So of course National Government is integral in part of this agreement and perhaps I must actually use this opportunity to thank Minister Mchunu. I mean within a month of him being appointed we were already having meetings about how we can work together and this is really a refreshing new space in policing in our province, which we did not really have in the last term.

I think it is obviously driven by a Government of National Unity, a coalition at a national level. A new Minister that really is open to different ideas and that is really refreshing. I mean we have had some really good engagements with him and that is why this is the first agreement of its kind in South Africa and in the discussion with the President along with the Minister and the Deputy Minister, as well as the Province and the City, we have agreed as well that this is the basis of an agreement that will be rolled out in other provinces as well, because we need to see how it works differently in different provinces.

Different provinces have different challenges. I mean gangsterism is a big issue for us in our communities here in the Western Cape and so, how does the GNU, through the National Government, make sure that we have different focus areas around dealing with gangsterism, the drug trade, closing that down, linking through to all of those facets of policing, whether it is gender-based violence, it is incorporated in the agreement, or whether it is what we

are seeing in extortion, and so different provinces will design it, but we are the first province and I really do welcome this new way of approaching this issue and, ja, there is a whole lot of areas of focus, as I have said, eight different work streams, and we will try things, we will do different things.

As you have said in the beginning from the Safety Plan point of view, let us try something and see if that brings about change. If it does not work we will change it and try something else because we cannot continue with 27 000 murders in our country, or 4 000 murders in this province and it just gets worse every single year, it cannot be. So we have to try different things and I think this is a really serious and a good step forward in tackling it in a different way.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon member Bryant.

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Premier, you mentioned again how the Western Cape is leading the way when it comes to initiatives such as this one and it is fantastic to also hear that we now have a Minister finally at a national level who wants to work towards finding solutions, but, hon Premier, what is it that you have found in particular with our municipalities here in the Western Cape under the DA control, but specifically the City of Cape Town, what has the City of Cape Town brought to the party to enable this memorandum to be signed and what are we doing differently here that could possibly be replicated elsewhere?

Thank you, hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much. I think for a long time there have been programmes on safer cities, but really how did we get it across the line and get it going, and I think that was a big driving force from the City itself.

I think the other area that the City really brings to the table is the added technology that they have been investing in for a long time. So whether it is ShotSpotter, whether it is Eye-in-the-Sky and the drone technologies, how those fit into a system that we are now looking at integration across the board of those systems.

An HON MEMBER: [Inaudible.] gave you money.

The PREMIER: In this province we have got our data and evidence that comes out of our medical system, the Hector System, and that is interesting because it does not exist in other provinces and they are saying, "Well, how do we get this and can we share it?" and absolutely we want to share it. So I think technology plays a very important role.

I also think that looking at what is happening say, for example, and it is not only in the City of Cape Town, what is happening at the moment with the building of that combined centre in Mossel Bay. That is also making a big difference, where Mossel Bay is proactively creating a space where from the SAPS to traffic to even the environmental people who deal with rhino

poaching or poaching in our oceans, they are also sitting in that control room.

So it really is how do we bring all of that to the table and say can we work together to make sure we are building those new systems, and there are a lot of these systems that currently do not talk to each other.

Our traffic camera system does not talk to the police management system. The police management system is not connected to the City's Epic System and we have got to get all of those, but that is part of the technology stuff, and maybe something that is quite interesting; I spoke about technology in the City. The training facility that is now in place that we actually got through a partnership with New York, which is a virtual training facility, it is the only one on the African continent and it is interesting, tomorrow some of the SAPS officers are now going to do firearm training at that city's training facility, and that just shows you there is now suddenly a new environment, a new way of thinking.

So now our SAPS officers are actually going to be able to utilise that training facility, which really is, I want to say light years ahead, but it is so much more modernised than just going to a shooting range and shooting at a fixed target, because they can create real life systems or scenarios.

So you will be going into a school with a shooting, or you will be going into a narrow street without street lights, because you can recreate the environment and then you can go and learn and play it back again, find out

where you were slow, where you need to work on your effectiveness in that specific shooting environment. So this is about enabling new tech that is being embraced by the South African Police Services.

So I think those are the kind of new ways of doing things that are coming to the table and we are agreeing that we are sharing in all of this together.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Benson Ngqentsu, I see you.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Thank you very much ...[Interjections.] ...hon Deputy Speaker, and thanks hon member Walters for bringing this question.

Today is the 12th day since the signing of the cooperation agreement. Are there any deaths since the signing of this agreement? If so, how many and also the area of their concentration? Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member Ngqentsu, we have been over this. It is one follow-up question. Hon Premier, I will allow you to answer the first part and the one question that was posed. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: You can answer to both.

The PREMIER: So thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. [Interjections.]

The PREMIER: Of course the answer must be yes ... [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: The answer is [Inaudible.] questions.

The PREMIER: Of course the answer must be yes. If you have 4 000 murders in a province in a year, [Interjections.] we are talking about hundreds of people that are murdered in our country every single day. So of course it is yes, but I also want to say, hon Deputy Speaker, that the hon member, and I know he is new, so we will forgive him for that, [Interjections.] but this is kind of saying, okay, fine, he wants a real detailed analysis and I suppose what I could do is go back to that chart that I was using earlier, but it is really a new question.

If he wants to unpack the number of murders ... [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: You say you do not have the answer.

The PREMIER: ...the number of deaths in each specific policing precinct, quite frankly that detail actually probably comes from a national department, but I will ... [Interjections.] him for that and I think if he really wants that kind of detail, I am more than happy for him to place that as a written question or even as a verbal question ... [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: [Inaudible.] would have answered.

The PREMIER: ...if he is really interested in that kind of answer.

[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: That is a bias.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. The final opportunity I see hon member Marais.

Mr G MARAIS (FF+): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you for the opportunity.

Hon Premier, I just wanted to know from you in your discussions with the National Minister, and we welcome this approach, joint approach in solving crime, but in your discussion with the National Minister will the police reservists also form part of the plan going forward in combating crime?

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

Obviously the actual document and the work streams put together were put together by our Police Oversight and Community Safety Department led by Minister Anroux Marais, and of course the City team, led by Alderman J P Smith.

So I cannot and I did not discuss specifically with the President and the Minister in that engagement about reservists, but I want to say to you that I

think it is something that seriously has to be looked at because I think in the last while it is a competency that has been let to leave the system of policing and we really should look at how we bring it back.

So in my own discussions with the Minister it was not part of our discussion. We had a much higher level discussion, but I want to say to you that probably that is a very good question to ask in the Oversight Committee with the Minister, because I absolutely support you on that idea that we need to enable more and more opportunities for reservists who are really people who are passionate and want to make a difference.

So I absolutely support you on that and we need to find ways of bringing it back, because I think those decisions to actually disband the usage of reservists have been a big failure in the last years in policing in our country. Thank you. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order members! Question 3, I see the hon member Cassiem. The hon Premier.

3. Ms A Cassiem to ask Mr A R Winde, Premier:

Whether his Government intends to shift funds from Education and Health; if so, what are the relevant details?

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, but can I thank

the hon member Cassiem for the question and the answer is no.
[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Cassiem, do you have a follow-up question?

An HON MEMBER: It is for the first.

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, yes, I do.

Due to the crisis which the Education Department currently face with regards to the potential cutting of teachers' posts in the province, I want to ask the Premier, did you learn anything from the past about compromising the Education budget in the Province and the consequences which comes along with that in the long term? [Interjections.]

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you to the hon member Cassiem for that follow-up question.

Obviously I know what she is talking about. She is talking about when in 2019 when I first became the Premier and understanding that unfortunately crime is devastating our communities and we had to make a decision on what are we going to do differently about fighting crime.

I had asked for devolution of power and the then Minister Bheki Cele said to

me, “Over my dead body.” He was not interested at all in the citizens who were being shot and murdered and raped in our province, and so we had to think differently, and so obviously we put a Safety Plan together and when you put a plan together you have to put some budget aside for it, and of course in our Province 80% of our budget goes to Education and Health, and so for every rand that you put towards a project, you know that if you had to divide it up there would be a significant amount coming from the two biggest areas of your budget. That was in 2019.

So of course we have had many reports on the programme and I think specifically if I want to say what about the lessons, and I think specifically on the Safer Schools Programme, because I am talking about education, and specifically on the health system, and the 1% of the budget that we pulled together, actually less than 1% of the budget that we pulled together to look at safety issues, and I think that my lesson is definitely looking at money well spent, and I think about the previous question about how we have used that to now get to a stage where we have got a National Government saying, “Let us talk about different policing models. Let us talk about how we work together to build safer society.” It is absolutely something that I would not reverse.

I would look at it and say it is exactly what I would do over again, and remember, this was in 2019. We have moved on a long time since then. We are now five years later. Well, it is actually just over four years of the Safety Plan and the implementation of the Safety Plan, and how it makes a

difference.

In education obviously building a safer environment for our learners. Of course in health, and we use the health data, which is very interesting to see other countries now – I was at a Stellenbosch University symposium with criminologists from around the world and how at that meeting there was a Dutch criminologist who said they cannot believe this system called Hector and how it is feeding into deployment and creation of hotspots in crime fighting, how effective that is, and he was saying, “Well, I am going back to Holland with this idea to say how can we build a similar system to what you have built here.” And of course we know that every time you stop a murder that that person does not become a burden on the health system and it is exponentially, if you read – and hon member Cassiem should know because she was part of the last term, that we have a very extensive document called the Burden of Disease - if you have a look in that document the actual cost of safety on our health system, you would also see that that is probably at the end of the day money not just well spent, but a lot of money saved.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon member Walters.

Mr T WALTERS (DA): So what measures has the Premier’s Government taken thus far to ensure the insulation or the protection of the Health and Wellness and Education Departments from budgetary shortfalls?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): That is a new question. That is a new question.

The PREMIER: I agree with hon member Nkondlo that that is a new question, but I will endeavour to answer it.

If you think back over the last five years and if you think how the budget [Interjections.], and you heard in the debate the Minister of Education actually replying on the exact change and increase in the percentage of our Provincial Budget and how we have increased that over time, number one.

Number two, I think as you know, I mean that is where 80% of our budget goes, but that is why we have got this massive fight on our hands, to make sure that we get our fair share. That is all we are asking. Not an unfair share, we want our fair share and we have got to have mechanisms that this gets corrected far quicker than we have seen in the past.

As I said in the debate, 2011 census corrected in 2013/14, which took us to 10% and we are now in excess of 10%. That is the same formula that is being supplied and of course if you go back – I do not know where I wrote it down, but how the budget has actually increased in 2019. In Education specifically it was R23,6 billion and now sitting at R30,55 billion.

So of course it is about protecting, it is about making decisions and we are going into that process now I think on the 30th – no, sorry, sorry, on 2 October is our next big engagement. Minister Baartman and myself will be going up and being in the extended Cabinet, and we will take this fight to the

extended Cabinet to make sure that we push for our fair share.

Then of course from there we have got budget policy statements, adjustment budget. We will be fighting for a better share in adjustment budgets and then of course we go into our own M Tech the end of this year and then M Tech 2 beginning of next year, so that we also make those decisions of apportioning, shifting, cutting, stopping doing things so that we can actually keep our focus areas funded. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not see any further follow-ups.

I now – Question 4, and I recognise the Chief Whip.

An HON MEMBER: Hon Deputy Speaker, I understand that Question 4 has been withdrawn.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question 5, I see the Chief Whip.

An HON MEMBER: Question 5 likewise has also been withdrawn.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question 6, I now see the hon Minister of Social Development, Jaco Londt.

6. Ms W F Kaizer-Philander to ask Mr J J Londt, Minister of Social Development:

In the light of concerns that the recent census contains inaccuracies:

(a) What impact do the flawed data have on his Department's ability to identify and to support the most vulnerable communities in the province effectively and (b) what measures will his Department implement to mitigate the effects of these inaccuracies and to ensure that all residents in need can still access essential services?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, and to hon member Kaizer-Philander, thank you for the question. I am going to give a shortened version and then I am going to make sure that we expand so that we fully understand.

So, yes, Census 2022 has limitations, but is still very useful to the Department of Social Development for planning. However, DSD does not only use census data, but also uses many other sources of data such as Stats SA surveys, Stats SA thematic reports, data from other Government departments and the City of Cape Town, data from parastatal research houses such as HSRC, MRC and CSIR, and data from universities.

Now that just sounds like we are throwing out a lot of names, so let me just unpack that a little bit for members of the House and for those listening.

There is a definite census undercount. The recent South African census had

an undercount of approximately 32%. Now all censuses worldwide usually have an undercount. Statistical methods have therefore been developed to measure and account for this undercount so that the final census figures can be adjusted for that undercount.

The census figures released for 2022 by Statistics South Africa have been adjusted for the undercount. However, a reasonable undercount is usually a single digit undercount, which can be adjusted by using various statistical methods.

The unusually higher undercount of Census 2022 has, however, questioned the reliability of the adjustment factor applied to the census data. At the higher levels of geography, such as a national level and provincial level, the adjustment factor should be fine. However, at lower levels of geography, such as the local municipal or sub-municipal levels, the adjustment factor comes with much larger margins of error, which makes the numbers less reliable.

The census, although a very important source for a population headcount and for planning purposes, is not the only source of headcount data. The Mid-Year Population Estimates published annually provides a population headcount by five year age cohorts disaggregated by sex at a national, provincial, district municipal, and this includes the metro, and local municipal level.

Now the non-release of economic data. Stats South Africa has decided not to release any economic data from Census 2022. Therefore no employment and income data will be released. Traditionally census data on these variables has been poor. Survey data from the Quarterly Labour Force Survey and Income and Expenditure Surveys provide better quality data on employment and income.

The census is taken once every 10 years and, as it says in the name, the Quarterly Labour Force Survey that is taken at a quarterly level. The IES is done on a three year cycle and therefore not only the QLFS and the IES data are a more accurate reflections of economic data, but it is also updated more regularly. The only drawback being is that it is not available at a sub-provincial level.

Low level data. So the survey data usually only provides data at a national level and a provincial level. Sub-provincial data can only be drawn from larger scale community surveys which are conducted between censuses.

Censuses are the datasets that provide data at sub-municipal level, down to suburb and enumerator area levels. No such data will be released from Census 2022. The lowest level at which data will be provided will be at an electoral ward level.

Now this is a challenge for planners because censuses only happen every 10 years and wards often gets moved in-between censuses. The other data

sources are therefore used for planning purposes. The Department of Social Development therefore uses a variety of data resources to report and to inform its planning.

The alternate sources of data, as stated above, is the following:

1. The Causes of Death Report, which is published annually with data at a magisterial district level.
2. The recorded live births, published annually with data at a magisterial district level.
3. The Community Survey, published between censuses, five years after each census, with data at a municipal level.
4. The General Household Survey, published annually with data at a provincial and a metro level.
5. The Income and Expenditure Survey or Living Conditions Survey, published alternatively every three years, with data at a provincial level.
6. Victim of Crime Survey or Governance Public Safety and Justice Survey, published annually with data at a provincial level.
7. Mid-Year Population Estimates, published annually with data at

municipal level.

8. The Quarterly Labour Force Survey which is published quarterly with data at a provincial and a metro level.

In addition to the datasets above numerous reports are also published by Stats SA on various themes such as:

1. The mortality and causes of death in South Africa.
2. The Gender Series Volume XI: Women Empowerment.
3. Youth in South Africa, the 2024 version.
4. Subjective Poverty in South Africa: Findings from the General Household Survey 2019 and 2022.
5. The Migration Profile Report for South Africa: A Country Profile, 2023.
6. The Marginalised Groups Indicator Report of 2022.
7. Child Series Volume II: Crime against children, 2022.

And many similar reports.

The Department also collaborates with the City of Cape Town and various provincial departments that have data at a suburb level that they share with the Department.

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning provides spatial data and settlement level data.

The Department of Health and Wellness provides health data at a public health facility and health district level.

The Western Cape Education Department provides school enrolment data at school district level.

The parastatal research organisations, such as the Human Sciences Research Council, the Medical Research Council and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, also regularly publish data and reports, such as the substance abuse data published by the MRC.

Academic institutions in the country also publish various research reports and data on a range of subjects all relevant to the Department.

Now this is a mouthful, hon members of this House. However, we can all condense this in a very short phrase. The Western Cape is not receiving its fair share of the budget based on the population that we have in this province, and that not only negatively impacts the Department of Social

Development, that negatively impacts every single department in the Western Cape.

We are the third most popular province in the country. We only receive the fifth highest share of the budget. This is something that we must take hands across the aisle, because each and every one of us represents voters in this province, from The Craggs to Murraysburg to Van Rhynsdorp to Athlone to Mitchells Plain, and if we do not stand up and fight for this at every opportunity we can, we are failing the residents of this province, and until we get our fair share, it is going to negatively impact us in delivering the services we are ready to deliver should we get our fair share of the budget. I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I now see the hon member Kaizer-Philander.

Ms W KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and please allow me to thank the Minister, through you, for a very comprehensive and extensive response to the initial question.

Hon Minister, I also note that you made mention of the various data sources and I think that in a way puts one's mind at ease because the last thing that you want is that the most vulnerable be affected by these inaccuracies, as it is widely regarded.

Hon Minister, given the census data as we have it now, it is widely regarded

as an estimate rather than an accurate count. So I think you have mentioned it in your latter comment that no department can really allocate or plan effectively in terms of resources based on estimates.

So, hon Minister, I would like to know from you, is there a need for the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape at this point, for you and the Department, to adjust any internal human resources to continue supporting the most vulnerable communities, considering that this Department is a welfare-driven mandate? Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

So since it is Public Service month and I sound very clever reading you all of this information, but we have professionals in service of the voters of this province that has put all of this together, that collate all of this information, overlay the data and make sure we have the most accurate data available at our disposal to make data-driven decisions.

Now this Department, similar to Health, similar to Education, we have many staff that work at the coalface and I can say unequivocally we do not have enough staff to do all the work that is needed to service the most vulnerable, but if we get our fair share of the budget we should be able to look at it and say where can we, based on the data available, deploy our resources, but we have gone further.

We do not have enough funding as we should have, but we have used the technology that is available to us, technology developed in-house, driven by the professionals that work in this Department, the SWIMS app, and that app now ensures that our social workers can reinvest thousands, if not millions upon hours, back to the most vulnerable.

Now, colleagues, you can do a quick calculation. Between the NGOs that we fund and the DSD social workers we have got, it is about 1 400 give or take. If we only save 10 minutes per case file that we do digitally instead of working on those old brown envelopes, that is already 14 000 minutes saved by one case on one day.

If we then take that and we multiply just by three cases a day, and they do much more, but just three cases a day, that is already 42 000 minutes saved across the province only by social workers that are in DSD and the NGOs. That is one day.

If you multiply that by a five day work week, and our social workers do not just work 08:00 to 17:00. After hours they get called out, over weekends they are called out, but if we only use five days, that takes us to 210 000 minutes saved per week using technology.

If you multiply that across a full year, you multiply that across a term, we have saved millions of minutes by using technology developed by our

professionals, to reinvest back to the most vulnerable in our province.

But there is a bigger challenge. We need to make sure that it is not just the Western Cape that buys into this. We need to make sure that we have all departments, all municipalities also buying into this, because if you have a child travelling from Merweville, started the interventions there, and that child is now living with family in Vredenburg, that social worker in Vredenburg does not have to start from scratch getting all the information, seeing what interventions have been done. That social worker can pick up the baton from the one that left it in Murraysburg and continue the interventions that are needed, and it is even more important that we advocate that this gets rolled out across the country, because if we can save so many millions of minutes and hours in the Western Cape, imagine the power if we roll that out in the entire country.

So if you have a child coming from Qunu that has started the interventions there and now looking for better education in the Western Cape, the intervention started by the social worker in the Eastern Cape, that baton can just be picked up in the Western Cape and we can run forward.

So, yes, we are looking to get more social workers, hon Chairperson of my Standing Committee, that are making sure that we do our job, we are also using technology and making do with the little bit that we have to stretch it a lot further to service the most vulnerable and those in need. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon member Bryant.

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, the Minister spoke about the fair share on a couple of occasions and how we should be taking hands as the Parliament to work together to argue for our fair share.

I was just wondering whether or not the Minister had any advice for colleagues in the Opposition benches as to how they can assist us in fighting for that fair share? Some techniques ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: It is a new question.

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): ...some guidance ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: That is a new question.

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): ...some strategies that would assist. Thank you.

An HON MEMBER: You are wasting our time.

An HON MEMBER: It is a workshop here.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon member

Bryant.

An HON MEMBER: It is a new question.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: So I am going to
...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: It is. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: ...acknowledge that I actually do not know how other political parties' internal mechanisms work. I can make assumptions on how it works, but it will be a guessing game, but if I do have to give an educated guess to you, I will also raise it on how we do it internally because we now have members that form part of the GNU, we have colleagues that is the same party that we have a Minister that we can pick up the phone and say, "Minister Leon Schreiber, we have got a problem," and he returns your call.

In that way if we have issues that we want to raise in our Cabinet, we have advocates elsewhere for us that can also take it up, and the same where we have colleagues across the board representing the voters of the Western Cape, because it is not about political parties, it is about the voters of the Western Cape and every single person represented in this House, they earned their right to serve in this House. It does not matter if you have got one seat or you have got eight seats, if you lost four seats or if you gained three seats,

that does not matter. The only thing that matters is that you earned your right to serve in this House and therefore every single one of us from one hymn sheet must ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, are you able to take your seat?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: I am able to do so, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do so. [Interjections.] Hon member Nkondlo?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker, [Interjections.] please can you rule on us being abused here. The original question here, it is here, we can read. It has got nothing to do with what the MEC now is going on and on and on about, and all other members here they get to be told to stick to the original question. So why are we being abused?

We are not interested in how other members are interested to talk. [Interjections.] They can go to tea and talk about how multi-party can work, or else they can at least put a question on that matter. We cannot allow Parliament to actually degenerate to this. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Deputy Chief Whip?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. I just wish to rise on Rule 203(d) which says:

“A supplementary question must relate to the original question or to the reply.”

An HON MEMBER: It is not even ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): ...as the hon member has done so, hon Deputy Speaker. ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: No, no ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon members. Hon members, we have 11 minutes remaining. I would want us to continue and maintain the decorum of this particular House, but I will again indicate to the hon members. If an hon member is reaching, please refrain from reaching to such an extent where you pose an entirely new question. So, I will allow the hon Minister to conclude this section of his particular reply, but also again caution the hon members. We are all here in order to serve the residents of our province and not to overreach to such an extent where it is a new question. Hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. So, as I was getting to how we can advocate as people who earned our fair share and yes, hon member, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, you earned your fair share in this House. Although you lost a third of your seats, that is the fair share that voters decided to give to you, but you still have to advocate for the residents of this province. With your colleagues at a national level, you have access to the National Minister of Finance to say, 'I am a member of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. I represent the voters of the Western Cape Parliament. We are not getting our fair share of the budget in the Western Cape.'

As an hon member of the Western Cape Parliament, even if I am an ANC member, I will fight that voters of this province will get their fair share. Because if we raise it here, we do not do so because we are grandstanding, we are playing politics, we are doing so because voters, residents in this province, are being short-changed by the National Government and we are not getting our fair share. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. [Interjections.] [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon Minister. Order, hon members. I now see the Chief Whip.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, just a correction earlier. Questions 4, 5 and Question 7 will stand over until the next Sitting as agreed with the hon Minister and the hon

members.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Duly noted. I trust that the hon Petrus took note of that particular comment, and the Table Staff will accordingly minute your input. I now see the hon Minister Simmers.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Hon Deputy Speaker, through you to the hon member Jacobs. My response is as follows and I confine it to the context within which I believe he is asking this question.

9(a): A total of five social housing projects have been constructed in historically Coloured areas, comprising a total of 2 506 rental units.

Your (b) part: Each social housing project is managed independently by social housing institutions, meaning the Department does not have direct real-time access to detailed demographic data for each project. This information changes on a regular basis as new tenants move in. However, based on the most recent data, approximately 1 770 social rental housing units across these five projects are currently occupied by Coloured families.

9(c): The Department, in collaboration with municipalities across our province, implements an Integrated Residential Development Programme. This programme assists families with a monthly income of less than R1 850, as well as those who are unemployed or do not receive a fixed income as it caters for families earning between R0 and R3 500 per month. It provides

serviced sites with prioritised groups also receiving a standard Breaking New Ground' or BNG house. Allocation of these housing opportunities follows the standard policies set by the respective municipalities. Thank you.

(The Speaker takes the Chair.)

The SPEAKER: Hon Jacobs, my apologies. Your first follow-up.

†Mnr D G JACOBS (NCC): Dankie. Dankie, agb Minister. Ek wil net vra, kan die agb Minister vir ons so 'n lysie stuur van al die areas waar hierdie *Social Housing* gebou is, sodat ons ook maar self ons eie *oversight* kan gaan doen *because* die agb Minister sien, daar is 'n *difference between real reality and a glossy report*. Dankie.

[Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you. Thank you, hon Minister. I just want to ask, can the hon Minister send us a small list of all the areas where this Social Housing has been built, so that we can ourselves do our own oversight because you see, hon Minister, there is a difference between real reality and a glossy report. Thank you.]

†Die SPEAKER: Agb Minister.

[The SPEAKER: Hon Minister.]

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: Agb Speaker, my Engelse sin het nou uitgehardloop, so ek gaan Afrikaans praat. Deur u, agb Speaker, aan die agb lid. Die lid het, en ek verneem en verstaan dat die agb lid 'n eerste

termyn-lid van die Wetgewer is. Daar is 'n jaarlikse verslag wat my Departement uitreik. Ons kategoriseer alle projekte, insluitende Sosiale Behuisingsprojekte wat alreeds voltooi is, waarmee ons besig is en wat ook in die pyplyn is. Ek sal deur u, agb Speaker, vir die agb lid dan van so 'n lys voorsien, maar ek dink ook alle agb lede - want weereens benadruk ek, en ek verwelkom verantwoordbare oorsig, gegewe dat ons weet die agb lid is baie lief vir Tiktok en hy is nou en dan baie lief om by verkeerde plekke oorsig uit te oefen. Baie dankie.

[The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE Hon Speaker, my English sentence has run out so I'm going to speak Afrikaans. Through you, hon Speaker, to the hon member. The member has, and I heard and understand that the member is a first term member of the Legislature. There is an annual report that my Department issues. We categorise all projects, including Social Housing projects that are already completed, that we are busy with and that are also in the pipeline. I will, through you, hon Speaker, then provide the hon member with such a list, but I also think all hon members – because again I emphasise and I welcome accountable oversight given that we know the hon member loves Tiktok and now and then he loves to exercise oversight at the wrong places. Thank you.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. I recognise the hon Wessels, hon Masipa. May I just get from the Table Staff: is there anyone I am missing? Hon Wessels.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Through you to the hon

Minister. I would just like him to briefly explain the difference between social housing and BNG or fully subsidised Government housing projects. Thanks.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Wessels. Hon Minister, there is a component to a new question in that question. So, I, as always, I am not going to dictate how you respond, but I will allow you an opportunity now.

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: Baie dankie, agb Voorsitter en Speaker. Ek het in my oorspronklike replek op die agb lid se vraag eintlik verwys na die ander komponent waarna die agb Wessels ook verwys. So ek gee nie om om dan beide komponente van hierdie vraag te beantwoord nie.

In die eerste instansie, sosiale behuising as sulks self vorm deel van die sambreel van bekostigbare behuising. Dit is nie 'n eienaarskapmodel nie, maar 'n goedkoper huurkomponent verbonde tot die Menslike Nedersettings familie. Hierdie het natuurlik 'n spesifieke strata waarop dit ook fokus, agb Speaker, en as sulke individue wat toegang kry tot en sosiale behuising benut, moet hulle verstaan dat dit is nie 'n eienaarskap-voorbeeld in behuising nie. Dit is slegs 'n goedkoper huurkomponent waar die Staat 'n subsidie nie aan 'n individu oorbetaal nie, maar die Staat betaal 'n subsidie oor aan 'n sosiale behuisingsinstituut wat hierdie fasiliteite van nature namens die Staat bestuur. Maar die voordeel daarvan is natuurlik dat die huur wat so 'n ontvanger van hierdie vorm van subsidie ontvang, dan eindelijk tot soveel as meer as 50% minder as die markverwante huur in die spesifieke area betaal.

Die ander komponent van die vraag van die agb Wessels verwys natuurlik na die ou RDP of soos ons tans dit noem, die BNG-program wat 'n volle staatsubsidie is in die naam van die individu, wat gekoppel is aan 'n behuisingsprojek, maar wat 'n eienaarskap- of titelakte-oordrag aan die begunstigdes van daardie projekte voorsien. Natuurlik is die kriteria van beide baie na aan dieselfde. Al verskil is die een is eienaarskap en die ander een is 'n baie goedkoper nie-markverwante huuropsie wat nie eienaarskap bied nie. Baie dankie.

[The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you, hon Chairman and Speaker. In my original reply to the hon member's question I actually referred to the other component to which the hon Wessels also refers. So I don't mind to reply to both components of this question.

In the first instance, social housing as such forms part of the umbrella of affordable housing. It is not an ownership model, but a cheaper rent component associated with the Human Settlements family. This of course has a specific strata on which it focuses, hon Speaker, and such individuals who get access to and utilise social housing, should understand that it is not an example of ownership in housing. It is only a cheaper rent component where the State pays a subsidy not to an individual, but the State pays a subsidy to a social housing institute naturally managing these facilities on behalf of the State. But the advantage of it is of course that the rent such a receiver of this form of subsidy receives, eventually pays more than 50% less than the market related rent in the specific area.

The other component of the question of the hon Wessels refers of course to the old RDP or as we currently call it, the BNG programme that is a full State subsidy in the name of the individual, that is linked to a housing project, but which provides an ownership or title deed transfer to the beneficiaries of those projects. Of course the criteria of both are very close to being the same. The only difference is the one is ownership and the other is a much cheaper non-market related rent option that does not offer ownership. Thank you.]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agb Minister.

[The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister.] I recognise the hon Masipa.

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, my question really relates to the Conradie Social Housing. [Interjections.] The hon Minister recently visited this social housing project, and I will assume that this social housing also includes historically disadvantaged Coloured people. So, the question is, hon Minister, what is the progress with regard to this social housing that you just visited recently? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Masipa. Again, hon Minister, that is a new question. If you are not able to provide the answer, I would accept that ...[Interjections.], but again like always, I am not going to dictate how you respond. Hon Minister. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: That is nonsense. That is nonsense.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: No, thank you very much, hon Speaker and through you. I am in a position to actually answer the hon member because again in my original response I referred to the Integrated Residential Development Programme. Now, the Conradie Better Living Model or Conradie Site in Pinelands, encapsulates the entire RDP programme within the Human Settlements family. We have, and I will answer the one component which has been asked which refers to the Social Housing Project.

As part of the Conradie Project, there is indeed, Phase 1 of the Social Housing Programme has been fully tenanted. I actually visited the site on Monday and Phase 2 is set to yield just under 700 social housing units. As we currently stand, both blocks which will be eight stories high, 80% of the construction is nearly complete. We have already approved the pre-tenanting phase or the Social Housing Institute, which is Own Haven which manages the social housing units at Conradie, and has indicated that up to 70% of possible beneficiaries have been preapproved. Obviously, my Department plays a very limited role in the Conradie project in terms of social housing, in that Own Haven also deals with the applications, not the City of Cape Town nor the Provincial Department of Infrastructure. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon members, that is the end of Questions for Oral Reply. Outstanding replies will be printed in Hansard. We now move on to Questions to the Premier without Notice in

terms of Rule 204. Hon members, I wish to remind you that two follow-ups per question posed which relate to the initial question, will be allowed and only the hon member, in terms of Rule 204, is allowed to ask the follow-up questions. I now recognise the hon Jacobs.

QUESTIONS TO THE PREMIER WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, good day, hon Premier. I hope you are good, sir. Hon Premier, a company called TCC has been charged with fraud and will make an appearance at the Bellville Commercial Crimes Court on the 20th of this month. This company has been red flagged by your political peers in the City of Cape Town and they are no longer providing any services to the City of Cape Town.

Can the hon Premier please explain to us how this Provincial Government found it so retrospective to award the Somerset Hospital tender to the alleged fraudsters, TCC. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Unfortunately, that is a very difficult question to answer. I have got no idea who TCC is and of course, as a politician in our Government, we do not get involved in tenders at all. So, if you really want the answer for that, can you please put it in writing. I will get you all the detail.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Premier. Hon Jacobs, do you have a follow-up question?

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): No, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: You are covered?

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Yes.

The SPEAKER: Alright, then we move on to the next ...[Interjections.] Order, hon members. I now recognise the hon Lekker.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): †Mandibulele Somlomo. [Thank you Speakers.] Hon Speaker, in May 2023, the DG signed into law the Western Cape Government Harassment Policy⁰. The policy recognises harassment as a violation of human rights and is classed as unfair discrimination, which the Provincial Government condemns and shall not tolerate. Could you please clarify whether the Western Cape Government Harassment Policy has been applied in the cases of Farrel Payne, Graham Paulse and former MEC, Albert Fritz. If so, could you provide the relevant details. If not, could you explain why the policy has not been applied in these cases. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, before you respond. Hon member, I wish to remind you that you can pose one question. You had three questions in your

submission. So, hon Premier, I am not going to allow you to respond to all of those because an hon member is allowed one question. There are two opportunities for follow-ups.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much. I know that we had a formal question where I could actually bring out the policy and deal with it, which is a question I got from the hon Leader of the Opposition on these issues. I actually have also had a one-on-one with the hon Leader of the Opposition post that question, on some of these issues. So, if the hon member really wants that key detail, I would be very happy to give it to her if she asks me in writing on that. I know that there is one question in writing already on it. But I will say to her, what I can say that the 2023 policy was definitely not used for the previous Minister Fritz because I fired him long before 2023.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon Lekker, your first follow-up.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Thank you. You may not have answered on the two who are still in your Administration: Graham Paulse and Farrel Payne. But be that as it may, I would like to know. In light of your Government's harassment policy, commitment to treating allegations seriously and with sensitivity, why were those reports of investigations into these cases, including those conducted by Adv Jen Williams, not shared with the victims and when, okay, were not shared with the victims.

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, before you respond to that question because

that is a question on the Written Question Paper that is currently ...[Interjections.] because I checked the Draft Question Paper before they distributed it. It is my job to check that. So, it is on the Written Questions for the Draft Paper. So, I am going to take advice from the Table Staff before you respond to that question. So, if you can just give me a moment. If the Table Staff can just advise me, because it is as asked on the Written Question Paper. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Did you caucus?

An HON MEMBER: Ja, caucus ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Is there anyone saying.

An HON MEMBER: Caucus, right caucus ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: No, no, it is ...[Interjections.] Hon members, I am trying to apply the Rules in the interest of transparency and consistency. There is a Draft Written Question Paper out with exactly that question already on the Question Paper. So, I need to establish if I can allow the same question in the House for Oral Reply, that is already on the written paper.

Thank you very much, hon members. Hon Leader of the Opposition, can I confirm that there is, in fact, such a question in your name on the Written Draft Question Paper as distributed to all hon members.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Yes, there is.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. In that case, there is a question on the Written Question Paper and therefore, hon Premier, you will not respond to that question posed. Hon Lekker, in the interest of transparency and consistency, I will give you an opportunity to pose a different follow-up question. Hon Lekker. Hon Sayed, is that a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Yes, you see. [Interjections.] That particular question is a question for Written Reply and is differently worded to the manner in which the hon Lekker is posing her question. That question was ...[Interjections.] was submitted a while ago. I do not think it is correct to suppress the hon member. Allow the hon member to ask the question because the nature of the question is different. It is not exactly the same. Thanks.

The SPEAKER: Hon Sayed, I have already ruled, but just in the interest of moving forward, hon members, I will just give some context to that ruling. The context and the content of the question posed by the hon Lekker to the hon Premier is exactly the same content and context as per the question on the written paper. In the interest of not suppressing you, hon Lekker, I am going to allow you an opportunity to ask a different follow-up question to the initial question posed. [Interjections.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): †Mandibulel. [Thank you.] Considering the fact that the two perpetrators, Farrel Payne and Paulse, are still in the workplace environment, how will ...[Interjections.] You must listen properly.

The SPEAKER: Hon Lekker, please speak to me.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Listening is a skill.

The SPEAKER: Hon Lekker, speak to me. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: You must not speak to the ...[Interjection.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Listening is a skill, and this man must not disrespect me just because he is a man, and I am a woman. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes.

The SPEAKER: Hon Lekker, please speak to me. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: He is such a nice man.

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. There is an hon member on the floor.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): It starts from here, on harassment, what the hon

Premier is just doing now-now, here in the House. He is not respecting the very same policy of his own Government, and I refuse to be treated as a victim by him.

The SPEAKER: Hon member, can you please pose your question.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Thank you. Considering that the two people that I have mentioned are still in the workplace while the victims are at home, what is his Government doing in protecting the victims in the WCPP or in Government?

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much. My answer to that question is: what she has just asked me is untruthful.

The SPEAKER: Hon Lekker, your final opportunity. [Interjections.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Who is that?

An HON MEMBER: Object.

The PREMIER: It is not true.

An HON MEMBER: Whose ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. [Interjections.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): I would actually like to ask ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Lekker, it is on.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): What is it that is untruthful about what I have asked from this information because he needs to share the information. Thank you. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): You are always invasive.

The PREMIER: So, there are two different cases here. The first case, as was said in this House in the last question, is being dealt with in the courts as well as by the CCMA. They have been investigated within the Department by the Accounting Officer, the Head of Department, whose responsibility it is to deal with that, make a decision on whether they should be suspended or not, whether a person should stay in the job or not, or whether they should be at home, which they are not at home. That is the first question. So, that part is untrue.

The second question is about a different individual in this Government. It

was investigated in 2011 and that case, the investigation, said that there was not sufficient evidence, and it was thrown out. The second ...[Interjections.] the second time, I then asked for an independent investigation. Although it was already closed, I asked for a second independent investigation which was done outside, and it gets dealt with in the question that has been sent to me by the hon Sayed. In that case, and of course, I do not want to put the findings here on the table, but that case's detail is now being asked for. The detail has gone and been redacted by the outside investigator. There has been an objection to it. It has got 90 days, I think, and it is in process, and that person is not at home.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Hon Premier. Hon members, that brings us to the end of that question. I recognise the hon Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AL JAMA-AH): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I am covered for today. Apologies for my voice. I am not in the best of health. I have got a bit of the flu, and I will let my opportunity stand over. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Brinkhuis. I recognise the hon Bosman.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, through you to the hon Premier. Hon Premier, are you able to perhaps tell the House how will the establishment of the Energy and Water Council

contribute to water security for the people of the Western Cape?

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much to the hon Bosman for the question. So, I think as this House knows, around two years ago I established an Energy Council because the dates that we were given was that 2023 was going to be worse when it came to loadshedding, than ever before. So, this was in 2022 that we established the Energy Council.

That Council pulled together universities, municipalities, outside investors, the World Bank, National Government. It pulled together all of these partners to deal with this crisis where we did not have sufficient energy in our system. The Energy Council then established the target of 5 700 megawatts of power. We had programmes within Government in our hospitals to make sure that they could keep the lights on in our hospitals during loadshedding. In our schools, we had programmes. We supported local authorities with funding for generation systems to keep sewerage going and to keep pumpstations going, et cetera, et cetera. I think that is fairly common knowledge that that is what this Energy Council was set out for.

At the start of this term, specifically driven by the hon Minister Bredell, saying that we understand climate change is affecting us more and more, and that the suggestion was that I do exactly the same with water as I did with energy. We set up a Water Council and that it becomes a priority. We had a

meeting two weeks ago on water specifically. That then led to the decision that we are going to formalise the Council and join the two together. So, we have already had our first meeting of the Water and Energy Council. That took place last week.

Of course, those water plans are now being established in the similar way to the establishment of the plans that were put in place around the Energy Council and energy security, ending loadshedding and creating a competitive private sector investment environment so that we could actually get sufficient energy for growth and jobs, but also to mitigate the risk. Exactly the same or similar kinds of programmes.

We already have a 15-year water plan, but what does that mean for every municipality? What does it mean for National Government, what does it mean for our regions? What does it mean for the current water system at a dam level from National, what does it mean from municipalities' points of view and reticulation, and how do we do the assessment as to where the highest risks are? That work is happening.

So, this new platform, which is called the Energy and Water Council, then gets feedback every month which we will get. It gets divided into two. There are some commonalities with Ministers across the two Councils, but of course, the universities or the private sector or the municipalities using those different areas of focus, will come in and out of the Council as needed, along with National Government, who we have asked to partner with us in both of

these Councils.

So, of course, Energy is way ahead. Water will now be catching up and we will be happy, once those plans are in place, to report back to this House of how those plans are developing and what those targets are because we know that with climate change, just as we have had more rain than we have had since we have been measuring rain, in such a short period of time, within a few years it could be exactly the opposite, as we have experienced before with Day Zero. So, that is the importance of the Water component added to the Council.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Premier. Hon Bosman, your first follow-up.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Through you to the hon Premier. How will the Energy and Water Council affect water policy from the Western Cape for the Western Cape Government, as well as municipalities within the province? Yes.

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. So, as I said in the first part of the question or answer that we already have a 15-year water plan, but we will not necessarily, it could lead to provincial policy and then provincial policy could also lead to provincial legislation. Of course, we cannot

develop policy for National or Local Government, but what we can do is develop frameworks that will then, alongside those individual municipalities, perhaps then develop their own.

Unless we are looking at umbrella-type policy, for example, on water harvesting or water. At the moment we have got rules which do not let water be shared between catchment areas. There could be a change there, but that would come out of the work that we are developing.

I think some of the lessons that we learnt the last time we had that severe drought, for example, when the Overberg region helped the City with making sure that some of the water from their system could transfer over. But, of course, that was a special programme specifically just for that drought. But what could happen is you could actually end up with a new system where we actually do allow water to flow, but that will come through that development of policy from the Council itself.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Premier. Hon Bosman, your second follow-up.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker and again, through you to the hon Premier. Hon Premier, are you perhaps able to elaborate more on the types of activities that this Council will engage and maybe also emphasising on the participation of citizens as well.

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier.

The PREMIER: First of all, I think once we have done the risk analysis, like we did with Energy, we will then create an environment where we will highlight and identify where those risks are. Remember, in water, it is a little bit different to energy supply because energy supply is one single component broken down into different mechanisms of supplying that energy. So, it could be green and renewable, it could something new like gas coming in.

In this case, water is much broader. So, water would then deal at a Local Government level with, for example, sewerage and sewerage systems. That in turn could also deal with reuse of water, which is already happening, for example, in the City. One of the biggest reuse programmes on the continent is being invested in the City at the moment, and that could be replicated sharing best practice with other municipalities in the sewerage space.

The other would be on water collection. The water management system, the supply system. We know how many million litres of water we need per person per year and how population increases determine whether we have got sufficient water. At the moment, it looks like that is not going to be sufficient, but we also have to establish whether we have got enough storage capacity, can we build more or do we need new systems like using more ground water with the recharge into the ground water systems. So, it is almost more complex, but we will also apply similar kind of processes with

enabling municipalities, looking at potential funding sources.

At municipal level, it does make it much easier because even the borrowing of money at municipal level, they have got a revenue model which is not the same in a provincial context. We do not have the revenue model, so it would have to be a different kind of funding and borrowing systems, blended finance, for example. Then also, linking through to National Government which also has a different environment and context, and specifically big bulk water which links through to both levels of Government. But that is going to come and will be developed in the plan as we move forward.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Premier. Hon members, that brings us to the end of Questions to the Premier without Notice. We move on to Statements by Members in terms of Rule 145, and I recognise the Democratic Alliance. The Democratic Alliance?

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. [Cough.] My apologies. Hon Speaker, the Democratic Alliance in the Western Cape welcomes the sentencing of Yamkelo Jacobs for his involvement in the 2017 supermarket robbery in Parow, where over R4-million intended for South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) beneficiaries was stolen. This crime is an attack on the systems meant to protect our vulnerable communities.

To put this into perspective, the R4-million stolen could have been providing Social Relief of Distress Grants to approximately 10 810 individuals in the Western Cape. This robbery, alongside the alarming reality that SASSA has lost more than half a billion rands over the past 10 years due to 1 174 people unduly benefitting from social grants through fraud and corruption, highlights the magnitude of abuse within the system. These acts of fraud and corruption threaten the integrity of our social support mechanisms meant to serve those in need.

The Khayelitsha Magistrates Court has sentenced Jacobs to 12 years imprisonment for robbery with aggravating circumstances, with four years suspended along with another 12 years for counts 2 to 13. He was also declared unfit to possess a firearm and will serve eight years in total.

Hon Speaker, while the sentencing is a step towards justice, we urge the authorities to prioritise charges against the remaining accused to ensure swift and complete justice. Hon Speaker, the DA remains committed to safeguarding the systems designed to support the most vulnerable. Criminal acts that undermine these social safety nets will not be tolerated. We owe it to our elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents to ensure that these vital systems are protected. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I recognise the ANC.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Hon Speaker and distinguished guests. I stand before this august House to highlight the severe underfunding and neglect of the Office of the Children's Commissioner by the DA-led Western Cape Government. This is a critical issue that demands our immediate attention.

On 23 August 2024, the Children's Commissioner presented to the Premier's Standing Committee, outlining profound challenges that hamper the Office's ability to fulfil its mandate. These challenges include severe funding shortages, inadequate staffing and systematic bureaucratic hurdles. Currently, the Office operates with only three permanent staff and two contract workers, far below the approved staffing complement of 12. This glaring deficit severely impairs the Office's capacity to address critical issues facing our children.

Despite numerous appeals from the Children's Commissioner for a permanent office and additional resources, these requests have been met with indifference. The Office has been allocated only R5-million in core funding; an amount grossly inadequate compared to other departmental units. There was supposed to be a director at level 13, but due to insufficient funds, the Office had to prioritise frontline staff over a critical position.

It is evident that the DA-led administration is not committed to strengthening the institution of Children's Commissioner. This neglect undermines our ability to advocate for and protect our vulnerable citizens, our children. We call on the Provincial Government to rectify this injustice by providing

adequate resources and funding to the Office of the Children's Commissioner. Our children deserve a government that prioritises their rights and wellbeing. It is time for us to invest in their future and ensure that the Office ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Lekker, your time has expired. Please conclude.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): ...that the Office of the Children's Commissioner can effectively serve its crucial role and be taken and be fitted like ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, honourable ...[Interjection.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): ...Chapter 9 institutions.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Lekker. I recognise the Patriotic Alliance.

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Former MAYCO member for the Human Settlements Department, Malusi Booi, allegedly received R2,5-million in cash and Rolex watches from the 28s gang boss Ralph Stanfield and has appeared in court yesterday alongside nine accused of tender fraud to the tune of R850-million. What measures will the City take to prevent these kinds of tender irregularities because innocent people have lost their lives in the scope of the employment because underworld kingpins

have managed to get the tenders awarded to them?

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise the Democratic Alliance.

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Recently, the Department of Home Affairs has announced the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme, an innovative group visa system designed to process payments for mass travellers from China and India. Hon Speaker, tourism is a cornerstone of the Western Cape economy. The Minister of Home Affairs stated that a 10% increase in tourism could result in an annual economic growth of 0,6% leading to additional jobs. Most travellers from Europe and Asian countries prefer to travel in large groups and adapting the visa system will ensure that the Western Cape capitalises on this market.

The City of Cape Town has been advocating for visa reform due to its great potential to grow and support the tourism economy. This Trusted Tour Operator Scheme, together with the City of Cape Town's 5-point tourism programme which is focusing on expanding flight routes, boasting cruise tourism and promoting Cape Town as a prime conferencing destination, are crucial for tourism. These 5-point tourism strategies have enabled the City of Cape Town to tap into available global tourist markets. It is worth noting that this scheme was created in collaboration with the Department of Tourism, the Presidency, and Operation Vulindlela. The GNU in action!

The report also noted that at the moment, Indian tourists account for only

3,9% for all international visitors to South Africa and China for only 1,8%. It is hoped that the Western Cape will attract most of these tourists which bodes well for growth, job growth, support and will definitely support both the formal and informal business sectors in tourism, helping the Province to realise a R1-trillion economy by 2035. I thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise the Economic Freedom Fighters.

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, the EFF would like to take this opportunity to condemn PRASA's intentions to appeal a Western Cape High Court ruling which recently ordered them to return the belongings of homeless people. The ruling follows a decision of PRASA to use its contracted security guards to illegally evict homeless people residing along Marine Drive on the Foreshore, on both 19 and 22 August. The homeless people have been residing in the area for more than 10 years when security guards from PRASA decided to illegally evict them and confiscate their belongings.

Hon Speaker, Section 26 of the South African Constitution makes it unlawful to evict someone from what was their home without a court order, which shall only be granted after the court has taken all consideration into account, including the personal circumstances of the person. The recent High Court ruling ordered PRASA to return homeless people their belongings or build them temporary habitual dwellings that offer shelter and privacy. However,

instead of PRASA easing the pain, hon Speaker, and the hardship of the poor by complying with the court order, the agency elected a hard route which will not only delay the implementation of the order, but also subject these poor people to endless suffering.

Hon Speaker, in conclusion, the EFF will not tolerate the unbecoming conduct from the State where the dignity of homeless people is trampled over due to the fact that they are poor and helpless. We all have a part to play in assisting them to make sure their lives improve and they become well integrated into society, as well as making sure that they enjoy the full benefit that the State has to offer.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I recognise the NCC.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Hon Speaker. Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, the NCC rises with concerns in this House noting the arrests and the court appearance of the nine officials from the City of Cape Town and the previous MAYCO member for Human Settlements. †Ons noem nie name nie. [We don't mention names.] The allegations of corruption and extortion and others in the Human Settlement environment are exactly what the NCC has been advocating. Investigate and bring the perpetrators to book.

Hon Speaker, some applicants are on the waiting list for more than 30 years and people of Beacon Valley are still waiting for their houses. However, hon Speaker, many of these people have passed away as forgotten people, waiting

to stay on a property while corruption in the City of Cape Town can easily separate the dreams and hopes of a community. Hon Speaker, we have seen that happening many times. Now, can the hon Minister of Local Government please do some proper oversight on the City of Cape Town Municipality before the entire Civic Centre, including the Mayor, gets arrested. Thank you. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I recognise the ANC.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Speaker, esteemed hon members and distinguished guests. Today, as we commemorate the death of Steve Biko, we honour the courageous leader whose life was a testament to the enduring struggle for justice, equality and empowerment. Biko's brutal death at the hands of apartheid security forces in 1977, remains a stark reminder of the sacrifices made for freedom and the relentless pursuit of dignity for all South Africans. Steve Biko's vision of Black consciousness was not merely a political ideology, but a clarion call to awaken the collective consciousness of a people oppressed and marginalised. His belief in the power of self-awareness and self-reliance was a challenge to the systemic injustice of his time.

Forty-seven years later, we must be seized with the reality exposed in today's debate of the situation of the Black child's right to education, when their vulnerability is weaponised in a battle by a government who wants to prove to National Government, the power or what they claim is to be their fair

share. As we reflect on Biko's legacy, we must confront this harsh reality to the values that he championed under this threat. The threat of neo-liberal policies that have increasingly shaved our governance and economic policies that led to decisions that prioritised budgetary constraints over the fundamental right to quality education.

As we remember Biko today, let us recommit ourselves to his vision. Let us unite under his banner of Black consciousness and Black Economic Empowerment and push back against neo-liberal tendencies that seek to dismantle the very foundation of equality and opportunity. We must advocate for policies that invest in the future, ensuring that every child in the Western Cape receives quality education regardless of their socio-economic status and regardless of the colour of their skin. I thank you. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Nkondlo. I recognise the DA.

Mr T C R WALTERS (DA): Hon Speaker, I would like the House to note that the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 30 August between the three spheres of government, presents a huge opportunity to the people of the Western Cape. It is an opportunity to unlock new resources and ideas, and to create a new culture of positivity and shared success in the war against crime. If implemented in the true spirit of a shared vision, the MOU presents a real roadmap for communities to create hope where nothing, but despair previously existed.

In a time in which criminals are becoming ever more organised and brazen, we cannot let our law enforcement entities labour individually. The time is now to form a true community which can work together to take the fight to criminals. It is of historic importance for this very reason that this MOU cannot become an empty gesture by politicians, nor can it become an ideologically motivated excuse for further centralisation according to a preset and outdated agenda. For years we have seen what happens when an overly centralised and archaic approach to service delivery is taken, not just in policing, but in governance at large.

The people of our province are tired of the empty promises. It is time for real solutions to safety to be tried and expanded by taking policing to the citizenry of the province in the spirit of participative democracy. It is clear that change is needed throughout our country, so let us not centralise inefficiency and make community safety less accountable. Let us rather get devolved, people-centred solutions properly resourced by an unbiased new Government of National Unity and make the people who elected us to this House, proud of their decision.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise the Freedom Front Plus.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Hon Speaker, the Freedom Front Plus notes as well, notes its concern about a former municipal office bearer, public office bearer, who once held a MAYCO position in the City of Cape Town, and was a member of the Democratic Alliance. He has also been arrested by the South

African Police within this week, and it is alleged that he had links to the organised gangs and was involved in fraud and corruption ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member, there is an hon member on the floor. [Interjections.] Order! Honourable ...[Interjection.]

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Hon Speaker ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member, my apologies. [Interjections.]

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): May I continue, hon Speaker?

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members! [Interjections.] Hon Marais, you may continue.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, this further led to cancelations and delays of many planned housing projects due to extortion. Crime of this nature delays the provision of adequate housing and infrastructure. It prolongs the suffering of the homeless and the effective delivery of services to our citizens among other negative effects.

We call on every public servant, public office bearers, including officials who work in any State department or municipality to either vacate their positions if they are involved in any criminal or illegal activities or to hand themselves over to the police. The constant reports of corruption committed

by public office bearers and corrupt politicians are damaging our people's trust in the State, who are supposed to carry the highest position of honour, dignity, integrity as honourable members of society. The Freedom Front Plus further commends the South African Police for their hard work in arresting these perpetrators. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise Al Jama-ah.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AL JAMA-AH): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, no statement today. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The ACDP. [Interjections.] GOOD?

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): No, thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, the Supreme Court's judgment on the sale and use of the Tafelberg Site in Sea Point has essentially allowed for the City and the Province's attempts at addressing spatial injustice to continue to go unaddressed and exist in name only. The intended use of the site for developing affordable housing units has once again been delayed by the Provincial Government.

The Appeals Court appears to have been convinced by an array of provincial and municipal policies to address apartheid planning, without considering whether the DA-led Province or Metro intended to implement them. Although the Province and Metro have wielded past initiatives such as the 2010 inner-City Regeneration Plan and the Transport and Development

authority tabled in 2013 as evidence of their supposed efforts at addressing segregation and housing and justices, none of these have been implemented.

Now, the hon Premier has doubled down on his failure to honour his 2019 commitment of settling the Tafelberg dispute and making the property available for affordable housing. The Province has undoubtedly failed the working-class families of Sea Point, unabashedly turning a blind eye to the housing crisis that the Tafelberg Site could have contributed to resolving. The multitude of promises and initiatives by the Western Cape Government have not been followed through nor implemented.

The housing development of the Tafelberg Site would have been a crucial leap toward the creation of a socially integrated Cape Town. It could have allowed the working-class to become part of an otherwise segregationist city. Redressing the structural plight of working-class families in the historically White and affluent area that is Sea Point, is the constitutional responsibility of the hon Premier and the constitutional rights of his constituents. The judgement of the Appeals Court has not absolved this Government of that responsibility, and we call on the hon Premier to honour his 2019 commitment and his moral and legal obligations. Thank you. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Herron. I recognise the DA.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Extortion is severely disrupting critical infrastructure projects across the Western Cape,

delaying progress and negatively impacting our communities. A recent DA parliamentary question revealed that six Western Cape Government construction sites valued at over R390-million, have been targeted with projects mostly in housing and education, are facing delays of up to three years. These criminal acts not only hinder essential services, but also erode public trust.

Yet, while the DA takes decisive action against the wrongdoing such as in the case of the former Councillor Malusi Booi, who now faces serious charges of colluding with gang members to unlawfully award tenders worth R850-million, the ANC stands idle ...[Interjections.] as these criminal acts unfold. The DA by contrast ...[Interjections.] acts swiftly ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): ...and decisively to ensure accountability within Government.

To combat these threats of extortion, the Department of Infrastructure has implemented a robust prevention plan in close collaboration with Ward Councillors, project steering committees and other local stakeholders. This proactive approach has already begun to yield positive results ...[Interjections.] enhancing security, streamlining reporting and improving oversight of the affected areas.

Hon Speaker, extortion and corruption are a direct assault on the wellbeing of our communities. ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): The Democratic Alliance fully supports the Western Cape Government's effort to combat these crimes, ensuring that essential services are being delivered without further delay. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon members! [Interjections.] Hon members, that brings us to the end of Members' Statements. In terms of Rule 145(6), I now give one or more hon members of the Executive an opportunity to respond to Members' Statements for not more than five minutes collectively, if they so wish. I recognise ...[Interjections.] Hon members, if you want to continue with your interaction across the floor, I am going to allow you to do so, but I am not going to compete with you. Hon Minister Maynier.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, hon Speaker. Steve Biko would have been shocked at the impact of the national fiscal emergency on Education and he would have joined our fight for teachers, and he would have joined our fight to make basic education a priority in South Africa.

[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: And I would strongly suggest that the hon member does the same. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. Are there any further inputs from the hon members of the Executive, if they so wish? No further inputs and that is the end of Members' Statements.

MOTIONS

The SPEAKER: Hon members, we have now moved on and we now deal with Motions, Notices of Motions in terms of Rule 151. In terms of Rule 151, all notices of motions by the hon members are required to be delivered to the Secretary for placing on the Order Paper. Hon members, these motions have been duly submitted and published on the Order Paper below the line.

MOTIONS WITH NOTICE

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the efficiency and effectiveness of the Western Cape Safety Plan in addressing crime in the province.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the state of public healthcare in the province.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the Provincial Government's programmes to address poverty and unemployment affecting the Black majority in the province.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the challenges related to health infrastructure and the significant delays in key infrastructure development projects, as well as the Provincial Government's plans to address these issues.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AL JAMA-AH): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the negative impact the retrenchment of educators will have on children's right to education and the proposed cuts to teaching posts which poses a real threat to education.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

The SPEAKER: I now move on to Motions without Notice in terms of Rule 150. I would like to inform you that in terms of Standing Rule 150 pertaining to Motions without Notice, condolence and congratulatory were submitted to the Programming Authority prior to this plenary on 10 September 2024. Hon members are also reminded that Motions without Notice pertaining to congratulatory and condolence, will not be allowed in this Sitting that have not been processed by the Programming Authority.

I have been informed that in the Programming Authority meeting of 10 September 2024, political parties did submit the names of the hon members in the desired order of speaking and who had wished to move a Motion without Notice in this Sitting of the House. I will therefore, just for noting and for purposes of the Minutes, call out the hon members whose names have accordingly been submitted and approved.

The following hon members' motions have been approved by the Programming Authority as follows: hon W F Kaizer-Philander, hon F

Kamfer, hon P Z Lekker, and hon R Windvogel.

MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): I move without notice:

That the House congratulates the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks) for successfully bringing charges against Yamkelo Jacobs who, in 2017, robbed a supermarket in Parow of R4-million that was intended for SASSA beneficiaries.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes with deep concern that on the early morning of 3 September 2024, Mr Husain Mukadam, a 72-year-old elderly man, was the victim of a horrific burglary at his home in President Brand Street, Panorama; further notes that Mr Mukadam was subjected to an abhorrent act of violence when three individuals forcibly entered his residence, bound him and subjected him to physical assault, which resulted in his untimely death; extends deepest condolences to Mr Mukadam's family, especially his grieving wife, Hasiena, and their son, Mustafa, who have endured unimaginable distress during this painful time; and calls on the SAPS to undertake an exhaustive and rigorous investigation to identify

and apprehend the perpetrators.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes with grave concern the brutal murder of 23-year-old Nadia Britz whose body was discovered under horrific circumstances in Heinz Park on 26 August 2024; further notes that the brutal nature of her death – strangulation followed by severe blunt force trauma – has shocked the community and left her family and loved ones in profound grief; welcomes the arrest of Deon Williams who has been charged in connection with Nadia Britz’s murder; and extends heartfelt condolences to Nadia Britz’s family during this immensely difficult time.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes and celebrates Jackye Majawie, a remarkable individual whose unwavering dedication and selfless work have made a significant impact on our community; further notes with pride that Jackye Majawie, a prominent LGBTQI+ activist from Delft, has been honoured with the LGBTQI+ Community Activist 2024 Award by Cape Town Pride, a testament to Jackye’s tireless efforts and profound

commitment to advocating for the rights and safety of the LGBTQI+ community; celebrates Jackye's achievements and continues to support her vital work; and extends heartfelt congratulations to Jackye Majawie for this prestigious honour.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

The SPEAKER: Hon members, I now put the motions duly submitted and approved by the Programming Authority to the House. Are there any objections? No objections, agreed to. Hon members, these motions will appear in the Minutes of the proceedings and in Hansard, in each individual member's name as if the member had read them out aloud.

I will now afford the opportunity to the hon members to move Motions without Notice in terms of Standing Rule of 150(2)(d). This could also include Motions without Notice that were not approved in the Programming Authority meeting. Hon members, I wish to remind you that 30 minutes as per Standing Rule 150(2)(d) will start now. I recognise the hon Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Where is my podium. [Laughter.]

An HON MEMBER: Do not worry.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): I will un-move my ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Can the Table Staff please stop the clock.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Ja, I like to move my hands when I speak. Freedom of movement. [Laughter.] Freedom of movement. [Laughter.] [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. Hon Jacobs, your time starts now.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I move without notice:

That this House notes as a matter of urgent concern regarding the recent arrest and subsequent court appearance of officials from the City of Cape Town. The allegations in question pertain to corruption, extortion, and other serious misconduct within the Human Settlements sector. Hon Speaker, the presence of corruption within these departments poses a significant threat to the realisation of the community's housing aspirations and the integrity of the public service. As the Western Cape Provincial Parliament (WCPP), we must denounce such actions and express our commitment to addressing and rectifying these issues to safeguard the interests and hopes of our communities. I so move. Thank you.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? No objection, agreed to. I recognise the hon Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AL JAMA-AH): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. I am covered with this Motion without Notice. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I then move on to hon Cassiem. Hon members, just, can you please stop the clock, so that I can just explain. So, Motions without Notices have been agreed by the Programming Authority and those that have not been agreed, come to the House. So, one of the motions that was not agreed upon at the Programming Authority are those that are now being delivered in the House for the House to make a decision on them.

Hon Brinkhuis intended to move a motion. He is not moving that motion and for that reason, that motion is not being entertained and I move on. Hon Cassiem. Hon Cassiem. [Interjections.] Hon members, hon Cassiem is online, so I am just going to give the hon member an opportunity. Hon Cassiem? In the interest of time, I am moving on. I recognise the hon Lithakong.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Thank you, †Somlomo. [Speaker] I move without notice:

That the House notes that †indlu iqaphele oku, umlilo oqhume e

Siyanyanzela e Danunu ekuseni ngoleshlanu umhla westhathu ku September. Imikhukhu engamashumi amabili aneshlanu itshe yanqonqa apho ishiye abantu abangamashumi amane anesixhengxe bengenamakhaya. Ubuhlungu lixhoba elikhubazekileyo elingumama elithe lahlangulwa ngunyana walo onamashumi amabini anesthathu eminyaka, yonke impahla, impepha zesazisi zintunyekwe lomlilo. Olu sapho likwiphulo lokwakha kwakhona kodwa umama uxhomekeke kwimali yendodla. I EFF icela wonke umtu norhulumente angenelele ngendawo yokuhlala loxa lomama esalinde indlu elungiselelwa abakhubazekileyo, ngoba ayivakali nqam into yokuba abantu abangomama ikakhulukazi abakhubazekileyo abathathelwa nqalelo kwisabelo sezezimali. [the fire that erupted in Siyanyanzela Danunu in the morning of Friday the 3rd of September. 25 shacks burned to the ground and left 47 people without homes. Sadly a disabled victim who is a women was saved by her child who is 23 years of age, all their belongings and identification papers were burned by the fire. This family is in the process of building again but the woman is dependent on her pension. The EFF is asking for everyone and the government to intervene with a place to stay while the women is awaiting the house built for disabled persons because it doesn't exactly sound right that women especially the disabled are not cared for in the budget..] I so move †Somlomo. [Speaker.] Thank you very much.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? There is an objection, and the motion will be printed on the Order Paper. I recognise the hon Windvogel. [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes that September is the National Suicide Prevention Month, a critical time to raise awareness about mental health issues and the urgent need for effective suicide prevention strategies; notes further with concern the significant increase in mental health challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a rise in the prevalence of psychiatric illnesses and suicide rates in the Western Cape; acknowledges the alarming statistic that approximately 280 000 suicide attempts occur annually in South Africa, highlighting a silent crisis that demands immediate attention and action; and calls upon the Western Cape Government to implement and enhance mental health support programmes, focusing on prevention and early intervention strategies. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? No objection, agreed to. Hon Ngqentsu.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Ngqentsu.

The SPEAKER: Ngqentsu.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes and welcomes the recent arrest of Malusi Booi, former member of the City of Cape Town's Human Settlements' Mayoral Committee representing the new liberal Democratic Alliance and his co-accused ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Who?

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC):

Appreciate that the arrest ...[Interjections.] is a crucial development in the ongoing effort to address corruption and extortion within our Government institutions; acknowledges that the details emerging from the ongoing case against Malusi Booi reveal significant evidence suggesting that the Democratic Alliance (DA) has played a role in facilitating and abetting extortionist activities ...[Interjection.]

Hon MEMBERS: Haai!

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC):

...in the Western Cape; calls for a comprehensive investigation
...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC):

...into the extent of the DA's involvement in the corrupt activities associated with the Booi case. This includes examining any potential complicity or negligence on the part of DA officials and ensuring that appropriate measures are taken to hold accountable all those involved; commends the South African Police Service (SAPS) for their tireless and effective work in dismantling the corrupt networks and criminal enterprises that have compromised public trust; and reaffirms this august House's commitment to upholding the principles of transparency, integrity, and accountability in public office. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

An HON MEMBER: No.

Hon MEMBERS: Objections!

The SPEAKER: There is an objection, and the motion will be printed on the Order Paper. [Interjections.] Order, hon members. There is no need for debate. Order! [Interjections.] Hon members. [Interjections.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): You ...[Inaudible.] will this mean that new...

The PREMIER: The last part was good.

The SPEAKER: Hon members, there is no need to ...[Interjections.] Hon members, there are 30 minutes allocated for Motions without Notice as per the Standing Rule and until you work with me, the clock is ticking. There was an objection to that motion, and the motion will be printed on the Order Paper, and you will have an opportunity, when your time comes, to debate it if you so wish, but now is not the time. Hon member, I recognise you, you can continue. [Interjections.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Thanks, hon Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes Premier Alan Winde's expenditure of more than R1-billion on a Safety Plan that has proven to be ineffective; notes further that despite this substantial investment, violence continues to surge, particularly in poor working-class communities and the failure to

achieve tangible results raises serious concerns about the management, execution, and accountability of this initiative; notes further that the recent surge in violence from 2 September to 8 September, resulting in 22 deaths and 29 injuries, highlights the urgent need for a thorough review to determine why the plan has failed to deliver the promised improvements in community safety; demands transparency regarding the allocation and utilisation of the Western Cape Safety Plan, which includes summoning J P Smith, MAYCO member for Safety in the City of Cape Town to appear ...[Interjections.] before the Committee to account about the implementation of the Safety Plan; calls on Premier Winde to go back to the drawing board, review the current implementation plan and devise a new strategy within the context of the cooperative agreement ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC):

...broad framework. Such must be done to address the persistent violence and insecurity plaguing our communities; and further calls for an independent impact evaluation of the Western Cape Safety Plan to assess its effectiveness and to provide a comprehensive analysis of its shortcomings; and calls on the hon Premier to ensure that there is a relationship between Safety Plan measures and socio-economic development as a basis to address the persisting chronic

underdevelopment in the WC. I so move. New liberals will heckle.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

An HON MEMBER: Object. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: There is an objection, and the motion will be printed on the Order Paper. Hon members, I do not understand why there are interjections and heckling because you have an opportunity to object and then, the objection will be printed on the Order Paper. [Interjections.] Hon members, I now recognise the hon Lekker.

An HON MEMBER: It has going to be †lekker. [nice.] [Laughter.] [Interjections.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House expresses its deepest shock and outrage at the tragic shooting that occurred at a barber shop in Browns Farm, Philippi, yesterday, which resulted in multiple injuries and fatalities, condemns in the strongest possible terms the violence that continues to plague our poor working-class communities in the Western Cape; acknowledges that

such acts of violence not only cause immense suffering to families but also instil fear within the community, undermining the safety and security that every resident deserves and are a grave reminder of the urgent need for effective crime prevention measures in our communities; calls upon the South African Police Service (SAPS) to expedite their investigation into this shooting to identify and apprehend the perpetrators of this heinous crime; and conveys condolences to the families of the deceased. I so move. [Interjections.]

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Hon members, I ...[Interjections.] I do not know how to; I do not know what to say anymore. [Interjections.] No, I think the problem is ...[Interjections.] the problem is that you must do your conversations over a cup of coffee or tea in the members' dining room, not on the Chamber's floor. [Interjections.] Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

An HON MEMBER: No!

The SPEAKER: No objections, agreed to. I recognise the hon Windvogel. [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes with concern the recent confirmation of a second case of Monkeypox (Mpox) in the Western Cape, involving a 38-year-old male patient who sought medical attention at a private practice in Cape Town; notes further that this case raises significant public health concerns, particularly as the patient has no recent history of international travel or contact with a suspected or confirmed Monkeypox case, suggesting possible local transmission of the virus. We commend the Department of Health and Wellness for their swift response in activating the Outbreak Response Team and initiating contact tracing and monitoring activities; urges all identified and suspected contacts to cooperate fully with health officials during the contact tracing process to prevent further transmission of this disease; and calls on the Provincial Government to prioritise public awareness campaigns to educate the community about the symptoms, transmission, and prevention of Monkeypox. I so move. [Interjections.]

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Windvogel. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? No objection, agreed to. I recognise the hon Windvogel. [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes with pride the recent signing of the Basic

Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Bill into law by President Cyril Ramaphosa; ...[Interjections.] notes further and acknowledges that the signing of this transformative piece of legislation marks a significant milestone ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC):

...in our ongoing efforts to address and resolve the challenges facing our education system; recognizes that the BELA Bill represents a substantial step forward in transforming our education sector, as it aims to strengthen administration and governance, make Grade R the new compulsory starting age, and enhances oversight of languages and admissions policies, all of which are pivotal in addressing longstanding educational challenges; notes further and commends the National Minister of Basic Education for her unwavering commitment to the full implementation of the Bill if signed into law; ...[Interjections.] calls for the swift and effective implementation of the BELA Bill to ensure that its objectives are met and that all communities, especially those in underserved areas, benefit from the reforms and reaffirms this august House's commitment to improving the quality of education in South Africa and to supporting legislative measures that contribute to an inclusive, equitable, and effective education system. I so move.
[Applause.]

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, honourable ...[Interjections.] Order! Order, hon members. Thank you, hon Windvogel. Hon Minister, is that a point of order and what is your point of order?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES: Hon Speaker, my point of order is that the hon member is misleading the House.

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES: The President, Cyril Ramaphosa, has not signed the Basic Education Law's Amendment Bill ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: I object!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES: And the first sentence ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Never have we heard that here. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES: The first sentence of the hon member's motion says that for signing of

...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Wherever have you heard such a thing?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES: ...the BELA Bill into law, into an Act ...[Interjections.] and it is not correct.

An HON MEMBER: No. Wherever have you heard such a thing?

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. [Interjections.] Hon members, order! Hon members! [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: It is going to be signed.

The SPEAKER: Hon members, I am going ...[Interjections.] Hon member, that is not a point of order. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Slip!

The SPEAKER: You have an opportunity to object. It is not for the Chair to ...[Interjections.] Order, hon members! It is not for the Chair to adjudicate on the content or the input that is being delivered by an hon member. The ...[Interjections.] Hon Minister, I am addressing your point of order, but you are conversing across the floor. So, that is not a point of order. It is not for the Chair to adjudicate on the content of an hon member. The part of the

process is to object to the motion being moved without notice, and you will have an opportunity once I have put it to the House.

Hon Nkondlo, is that a new point of order?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): I am covered.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon members, I ...[Interjections.] Honourable, I will now put the motion. Are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

Hon MEMBERS: Objection!

The SPEAKER: There is an objection, and the motion will be printed on the Order Paper. [Interjections.] Hon members, that brings us to the end of Motions without Notice. [Interjections.]

(The Deputy Speaker takes the Chair.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members. [Laughter.] During the debate on 5 September 2024, points of order were raised by hon members concerning interjections made by the hon Windvogel. At the time, I undertook to consult Hansard and revert back to the House with a ruling if necessary. [Interjections.] Hon Windvogel, are you able to stand? I have now had the opportunity to consult the transcript and wish to rule as follows.

The hon Windvogel, in an interjection, said to the hon Minister Mackenzie who was speaking at the time:

“You lie!”

Hon Windvogel, that is unparliamentary language and the hon Windvogel must withdraw the remarks unconditionally. [Interjections.] I now give the floor to the hon Windvogel.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): If so, hon Deputy Speaker, I withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Windvogel, the word ‘unconditionally’ is very clear in our dictionary. I require you withdraw unconditionally.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): The problem is, I cannot remember. So, now I must withdraw things I do not know. So, that is why I am saying so, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would not want to have a debate. I would humbly request that you withdraw as it is unparliamentary, and I will definitely make the time to take you through the Hansard as well. [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): I withdraw if so. [Interjections.] I withdraw. I withdraw ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, the hon Windvogel has withdrawn the remark made during 5 September indicating that the hon Minister Mackenzie has lied.

Hon members, that concludes the business for the day. The Secretary will now end the meeting, and all hon members will be exited from this Sitting. The House is adjourned.

The House adjourned at 18:04.