
THURSDAY, 3 APRIL 2025

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

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

[Hybrid Sitting held with some members present in the House and some in virtual attendance through Microsoft Teams]

The House met at 10:00.

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 practise to date, hon members will participate in the Sitting of the House; both from here and the Chamber with the Presiding Officer and Table Staff, and by Microsoft Teams, and our Standing Rules have accordingly been amended to accommodate such hybrid Sittings.

Hon members, the quorum requirements for the Sitting of the House are provided for in the Constitution and the Standing Rules, unless there is an

indication of an anonymous 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, you will have your microphones muted and called to order. The Serjeant-at-Arms will record all members' attendance. Hon members, I wish to remind you that in instances where these directives do not cover a particular eventuality, the Standing Rules must apply and in instances where these rules cannot be applied, the ruling by the Presiding Officer is final.

Hon members, you are requested to please ensure that your microphones are muted when the Presiding Officer recognises you, and when you are done speaking to please mute your microphones. The media has also been granted access to the MS Teams meetings 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.

Hon members for the Sitting, Language Translation Services are available in the Chamber as usual, and on Microsoft Teams via the respective channels. Hon members in conclusion, 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.

The Secretary will now read the Order of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The SECRETARY: Consideration of the Principle of the Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B 1–2025]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I now recognise the Minister of Finance, Minister Baartman. [Interjection.]

† ‘n AGB LID: Godongwana het gesê, Gondongwana sê dit is oneties van hulle om verder by die [Onduidelik] te bly want jy kan nie teen dit stem... [Onduidelik.] [Tussenwerpsel.]

[An HON MEMBER: Godongwana said, Gondongwana says it's unethical of them to further stay with the [Inaudible.] because you cannot vote against it...] [Inaudible.] [Interjection.]

† ‘n AGB LID: Herman, Herman... [Onduidelik.]

[An HON MEMBER: Herman, Herman...] [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Can I please ask that the Table Staff check who the persons are that activated their microphones and I wish to remind the members that are attending the Sitting virtually, if you wish to raise a point of order or draw my attention, to please use the raised hand functionality and I will

recognise you. [Interjection.]

† ‘n AGBARE LID: Dit was die ...[Onduidelik.]

[An HON MEMBER: It was the ...][Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: If it is not a member, can you please, can I ask that the Table Staff please engage the person on the hybrid system, and if the person is not willing to adhere to the Rules to please exit the person from the hybrid Sitting. With that being said, hon Minister, my apologies, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you so much, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, members of this House, people of the Western Cape. Our Premier called upon our Government about members of this House and the people of the Western Cape to ‘Step Up’, and the 2025/26 Main Budget sets out this pathway to fund our vision for Growth and Jobs. South Africa is in a difficult fiscal environment. Money is tight and the demand for Government to deliver more, and for more people, is rapidly increasing. Our Western Cape economy continues to demonstrate resilience and economic growth, with projected growth of 0.9% in 2025 and 1.4% in 2026. Our provincial economy has rebounded from the pandemic, with our unemployment rate now at 19.6%, the lowest in the country; and employment growing by 12.4% since pre-pandemic levels.

Speaker, however, we simply cannot keep up with population growth at 19.6%, outpacing our economic and job growth gains. While we have made

impressive inroads over the past decade, we must do more and we will be stepping up to create a prosperous and safe Western Cape where businesses grow, jobs can be created and our communities can thrive. We have tabled a R269,5 billion budget to be implemented over the next three years. 95.4% of this total budget will come from National Government allocations with the rest being our own receipts.

As part of our Provincial Equitable Share formula over the MTEF, we have received R1,5 billion for Compensation of Employees resulting from the National Wage Agreement, as well as R113 million for the Presidential Youth Employment initiatives for teacher assistants for this financial year. Our Financial Year Budget for this year is R89,316 billion, of which we will allocate R87,9 billion to departments, R57,3 million will be direct charges for the Provincial Parliament, R1 billion to our reserves to mitigate disasters and unexpected external shocks; R176,9 million for our Asset Reserve for upcoming infrastructure projects; and R73,5 million in our Energy and Water Reserve for upcoming projects.

Speaker, this R269,5 billion budget to “Step up” for Growth for Jobs, will allocate R43,789 billion for Growth for Jobs; R3,955 billion for Safety programmes, R194,9 billion for programmes for Educated, Healthy and Caring Society; and for programmes in Innovation, Culture and Governance we will allocate R23,4 billion.

Our Growth for Jobs priority aims to create a R1 trillion economy, and create

600 000 jobs over the next decade; and to achieve this, we will use our Growth for Jobs funding via implementation of a 155 Growth for Jobs projects across key economic drivers and departments. Some of these will include driver investment which we will be setting aside R26 million for key investment summits, including leveraging the G20 & B20 summit; hosting the Regional Leaders Summit; and launching our Inaugural Provincial Investment Summit, aiming to unlock R1 billion worth of investment into our province.

We will allocate R382,8 million over the MTEF across 17 energy programmes to reduce reliance on Eskom, support businesses to keep their doors open, create job opportunities in the green economy, and keeping the lights on for residents of our province. We will further reconfigure our Energy Reserve to the Energy and Water Reserve, as we wish, to secure an additional 220 million cubic metres of water annually by 2030.

Speaker, to safeguard our residents, our infrastructure and our economy, we will allocate R205,8 million over the MTEF for Disaster Preparedness and Response. Our infrastructure is the foundation of a growing economy and over the next three years we will invest R30,879 billion over 924 projects, ensuring communities have better access to better roads, housing, schools and healthcare facilities, and to support mobility, we will invest R8 million over the next three years in a Freight Rail Revitalisation Framework to ease bottlenecks and boost port efficiency, and R4 million in the current financial year for the Intertown Rural Transport solution, providing transport solutions between rural towns.

Speaker, the safety of our residents and businesses is a fundamental priority, and we will therefore allocate over the next three years R3,955 billion to our Safety programmes, including R1,3 billion for LEAP, K9 Units and Law Enforcement Reaction Units. To support victims of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), the Department of Social Development will receive R235 million for the Victim Empowerment Programme, R822 million for Child Protection Services, and R353 million for Family Strengthening Programmes. To tackle gangsterism in our communities, we will allocate R96,6 million to the Provincial Joints Anti-Gang Priority Committee over the MTEF to support efforts to dismantle criminal networks. Through these investments and other programmes in our Budget, we will create safer communities across the province.

Speaker, when looking towards our spending of this Budget on Social Services, as a percentage, the Western Cape Government will spend 80% of our total budget on Social Services, allocating R101 billion for Education; R100 billion for Health and Wellness; R8,4 billion for Social Services; and R6,4 billion for Housing and Community Amenities. We will invest this R101 billion in Education over the MTEF, of which we will spend R74,2 billion on Compensation of Employees, or 74.28%. We will invest R4,3 billion over the MTEF in Early Childhood Development. We have secured R2,298 billion over the MTEF via the Budget Facility for Infrastructure for the Western Cape Rapid Schools Build Programme for Education infrastructure; and we will spend R113 million in the current financial year for the implementation of

the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative for teacher assistants.
[Interjection.]

Speaker, in Health we will invest R100 billion of the MTEF to strengthen our systems, of which we will spend R60,223 billion on Compensation of Employees, or 60,22%; and R295 million has been provisionally ring-fenced and allocated for the Tygerberg Hospital Redevelopment Health Technology in the 2027 financial year through BFI funding. We will further invest R8,4 billion in the Department of Social Development, including alleviating the workload of social workers through the Social Worker Integrated Management System (SWIMS) application. We allocated R4 million for its development and rollout. We will increase our subsidies for Services to Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, and Social Relief for Humanitarian and Disaster Response by R121,9 million, a 10,94% increase from the 2024 financial year; and we will allocate R15 million over the next three years for humanitarian relief.

These investments are laying the groundwork for an educated, healthy and more caring Western Cape; and finally the Western Cape Government wants to harness our leverage, our good governance. We want strong municipalities, a Future-Fit Province, leveraging technology for service delivery, and diversifying our revenue sources. To this end we will allocate R23,4 billion towards the Innovation, Culture and Governance cluster programmes.

Speaker, through this process I want to reiterate a point we have made

previously. The Budget is not just about numbers on a page, it is a plan to grow our economy and create jobs, and I hope that we will all engage today in the various programmes of this Budget to leverage our fiscal maturity towards Growth and Jobs. We will do everything we can to achieve the vision of our Provincial Strategic Plan. †Met kaalvoet oor Tafelberg as ons moet, agb Speaker. Dankie. [With barefeet over Tafelberg if we must, hon Speaker. Thank you.] I thank you.

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agb Minister. [The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister.] I now recognise the hon Nkondlo. Hon members, I just wish to remind you to the screen, your time, the digital clock is on the screen to guide your time. Thank you, hon Nkondlo.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Thank you. Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, members of the House, the public. Let me first, hon Speaker, wish to appeal to yourself and all of us in this House, that we send our message of support to the family of Cwecwe and many other GBV and child victims in our country. This is one situation that brings all of us as South Africans across our political divides, across any differences that we may harbour, that at times like this we need to ask what this situation means for ourselves and our children.

Speaker, allow me to recall that on Thursday, 27 March 2025, the MEC of Finance, Deidré Baartman tabled the Provincial Budget. It is worth noting the context that the National Government, the Ministry of Treasury, Enoch

Godongwana, tabled the National Budget on Wednesday 12 March, and yesterday we saw that Budget being passed. In the Budget the Minister proposed a 0,5% VAT increase, and the DA opportunistically rejected the proposed 0,5% VAT increase claiming to defend the poor, and this is the disparity in which we want to bring forth the double standard of claiming to defend the poor, while Government in this province, that is deeply rooted in policies that are actually driving inequality and systematically excluding the poor from the mainstream economy.

The tabled Budget by the MEC of Finance failed to address a number of issues and seeks to present a good governance as a mantra. However, we see through the smokescreen and the posturing. One of the burning issues that this Budget fails to address is the cost of living in this province, a cost of living as one of the pillars of the lauded GNU which our colleagues on the other side have actually signed and agreed upon. The DA in this province has been oblivion to the DA led municipalities here in this province, Premier, with the City of Cape Town as a lead in this, of abusing tariffs, driving high property rates and utility cost that squeezes the residents, especially the middle class and the poor. [Interjection.]

The DA speaks on both sides of the mouth. Its leaders are charading as champions of the poor as they lose their 2026 local Government political bait, you know to draw voters into their fold. Yesterday they were threatening litigation. I wonder who is paying for this litigation. Maybe the next step that we are going to see is them getting into a flight to go report to

the White House and getting South Africa punished with more tariffs and coming back crying foul about an economy that is not growing. [Interjection.]

As the champions of the poor, why have you been oblivious, and we never see you as a leader, Premier, and you as the MEC of Finance and of Local Government, you know, taking your municipalities to court? When the DA-led municipality imposed the 623 monthly surcharge on residents who installed solar power, as they were called “taxed on the sun” in Cape Agulhas. In the City of Cape Town they charge resident drought level water tariffs even after the floods that led to more than 80% of dams being full. The City of Cape Town also unlawfully have been charging, or overcharging residents higher electricity tariffs, with 2023/24 Nersa approved, a 15,1% tariff increase, and yet the City implemented a 17,7 tariff hike on top of its high prices of previous years, even when Nersa told the City that the tariff was unlawful, we did not hear a voice from this House, let alone the leader of DA in John Matric Steenhuisen. The municipality then applied to the North Gauteng High Court to set aside the Nersa decision of a 15,1 tariff increase, now they table a 2% increase for electricity tariffs.

Now this is the disparity we wish to point out. You take Nersa to Court because you want to increase the electricity tariffs beyond the said guidelines, and now you want to position yourself as the party of the poor. †Dit werk nie so nie. [It does not work like that.] A British couple on the “we live in Cape Town paid shares”, what they call the Cape Town price tag of a 23 570 per month, I am sure this is what it includes a budget for food, budget

for transport and many other things. I am sure this may be good for tourists and expats with dollars, with pounds, with euros and yen, given the exchange rate and the weak Rand. Maybe that is the reason why the DA, why you prioritise e-Visas, because you are definitely not interested in the residents of this country.

In a survey done by rental property management software South Africa PayProp, they say, I quote:

“Rent is a significant monthly expense for many South Africans and the Western Cape remains the most expensive province when it comes to rental prices. The cost of living in Cape Town compared to Durban, for example, is noticeably higher. A recent PayProp rental survey indicated that South Africa's average monthly property rental cost, R7 778 per month...” [Interjection.]... the Western Cape’s average rental is R9 185 per month, almost 1 500 more than the national average.” This is Seeff.

An HON MEMBER: [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): For those wanting to own [Interjection.] to own properties, in terms of property prices, according to Business Tech 2024, over the five year period from 2019 to 2024, the national average property

price rose by 23,8%, which amounts to an annual increase of 4,8%. Leading the growth was the Western Cape, where property prices surged by 35,5% during this time. The economic hub of the province is increasingly becoming expensive for its citizens. Cape Town's high cost of rent and services is forcing the working class families out of the city while benefiting the elite.

[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): The latest MERO indicated the number of indigent households in Cape Town which have increased 243 000

[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Nkondlo, please take your seat. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: The Premier is out of order. [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Hon members, there is a member on the floor. The member is allowed to make her contribution. I am going to allow a bit of latitude because it is a political debate, but please do not drown out the speaker on the floor. I know that it is very, the contestation of arguments is good and that is the purpose of Parliament, so I am not going to stifle robust debate, but please do not drown out the speaker on the floor. So hon Nkondlo, I will

protect you, you may continue.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): I oblige, Speaker, the truth is always very sour. The latest Municipality Economic Review then indicates the number of indigent households in Cape Town will have increased to 243 771 in 2023, representing 16,2% of all households in the Cape, as more families fall below the R7 500 monthly income threshold. This substantial rise is attributed to several key drivers, including an overall decline in income, the rising cost of living driven by increases in food prices, utilities, transport [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Nkondlo, please take your seat, my apologies. Hon Minister, is that a point of order?

An HON MINISTER: Chairperson, if the truth is always sour, is that why they are whispering sweet nothings to South Africa?

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, that is not a point of order, please take your seat. Hon Nkondlo, please take your seat. Hon Chief Whip of the Opposition, hon Bans, is that a point of order?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: No, I withdraw, you made a ruling.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Bans. Hon Nkondlo, you may continue.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): I am sure we must open a department of clowns, so that clowns can actually just go and lead the others. This substantial rise is attributed to several key drivers, including an overall decline in income, the rising cost of living. Please listen, Premier and MEC. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Nkondlo, please take your seat. Hon Chief Whip of the Majority Party, is that a new point of order, because I have already ruled?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE RULING PARTY: Hon Speaker, I would just like to know if the member is prepared to take a question on that comment.

The SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Hon Nkondlo, are you prepared to take a question?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): No.

The SPEAKER: The hon member is not prepared to take a question.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): The rise of the cost of living driven by increases in food prices, utilities, transport, and housing cost. While the City of Cape Town boasts lower unemployment rates than other metros, it has the second highest proportion of people living below the food poverty line in the country. When we look further in places like Beaufort West, registering the worst levels in the district, nearly half, 44,1% of households in the town are

classified as indigent, unable to afford basic services and necessities. The Central Karoo is in crisis with an unemployment rate of 29,9%, with this region facing one of the highest joblessness rates in the province. Food insecurity is escalating at an alarming rate. In Beaufort West 42,2% of residents struggle to afford food, up from 39,7% in 2022.

In Prince Albert the situation is even worse, with food insecurity rising from 39,8% to 43,6% in just one year. So I would understand why the hon Constable will always be raising and pleading with this DA Government to actually move infrastructure and other developments into Beaufort West, especially now that we have seen that they are able to actually pitch for an investment in Hessequa for a solar farm, that we are looking whether it is not going to pass the communities of [Inaudible] while asking that actually Beaufort West has got exactly the same sun, and I am sure if you can put a solar farm there, Beaufort West community and actually this kind of challenges of poverty can be resolved. So we join you member Constable on that one.

In the Department of Education a drastic R2,5 billion budget cut included administration, curriculum and infrastructure, this resulted in the Provincial Education Department cutting 2 400 teaching posts in response to budget shortfalls. We know when class sizes increase and resources are stretched, the quality of education declines, currently the learner education ratio from 33,66 in 2024 to 39,49 for the current year. Already disadvantaged schools which often lack sufficient resources are likely to bear the brunt of this shift,

deepening educational inequities in the province.

The Western Cape is currently facing a housing crisis. According to the National Department, by the end of September 2024, the Western Cape had spent just 41% of its housing grant and only 20% of its informal settlement upgrading partnership grant, far below the 45% benchmark required. Shockingly the Province also failed to submit a rollover application for unspent funds from the previous financial year, further jeopardising service delivery. This is a clear example of the DA's inability to govern in the interest of the poor. This Government is anti-poor, it is more concerned with being perceived as a government for the poor than actually being one. Currently the housing backlog in the Western Cape has risen to approximately 620 000. This housing crisis is a direct result of the DA's failure to prioritise affordable housing and land distribution.

It is important to put things into perspective. When the DA took over this province the unemployment rate was sitting at 16,9%. When you break it down in demographics the unemployment rate for Africans was sitting at 25,9 and for Coloured demographic at 17,9. Those were the levels of employment under the governance of the ANC here. Currently according to the Stats SA as of the fourth quarter of 2024, the Western Cape's official unemployment rate stood at 19,6%.

In leading up to the Budget speech we engage in Formal Traders Forum and the Black Business Forum, who have expressed their frustrations regarding

Government, particularly in this province. They expressed the lack of support and red tape in working with Government in the Western Cape, leaving them side-lined and ignored. Again in days leading up to the SOPA, we received a message from a practitioner within the tourism sector, the message read as follows:

“We are really struggling to get business and also to be included or invited to conferences in order for us to build connections. We do not know who to approach. You can imagine what we started. We want to offer the Whites who have started with us, offer us employment to work as guides for them, because they are well connected [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Nkondlo, your time has expired.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): As we conclude, the ANC demands the urgent need to address the housing crisis in the province. We demand that the DA Government prioritises... [Interjection.]

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

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): ... our Education Department and invest in the education of our [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, I now recognise... Can I just get an indication from the Minister if she needs the... Oh, okay, then I recognise the Minister of Health and Wellness, Minister Wenger.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The challenges that South Africa faces are enormous. Right now the South African economy is projected to grow by just 0,8% this year and 1,2% next year. After a decade of sluggish growth, underinvestment in service delivery and economic infrastructure, our country's unemployment rate remains alarmingly high at 31,9%.

Our ports, key to unlocking billions of rands in trade and job creation continue to underperform, as does our railway network. It is estimated that South Africa loses R1 billion in missed trade opportunities every day. This week, the North-West University Business School's Policy Uncertainty Index showed a sharp increase, from 65,7 to 78,6 in the first quarter of 2025; and what is it telling us, that both domestic and international investors are uncertain about whether South Africa's priorities, policies, and funding align to drive prosperity.

Speaker, a budget is a government's most significant policy instrument; it is a

clear expression of its priorities and goals. This is the first Budget of the 7th Administration of the Western Cape Government and the fourth under the leadership of the DA, and our priorities are clear, drive growth, create jobs, and ultimately improve the well-being of our residents. Over the next three years, R269,5 billion Budget will “step up” to invest in the people of the Western Cape, from creating jobs to strengthening communities and building a better future for all. 80% of this budget is dedicated to social spending, with Education receiving R101 billion, Healthcare R100 billion, Housing and Community Amenities R6,4 billion and Social Protection R8.4 billion. While the DA cares for the poor, the ANC cares for the ANC. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Yesterday, the ANC and many parties in this House, tried to gaslight South Africans about the real tax hikes that are being tabled in the National Parliament tomorrow, and we know this will make the poor, poorer [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: [Inaudible.] Yes.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: ... and increase the cost of living, making life more difficult for all South Africans. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: The fact that the ANC member is raising cost of living in this debate while at the same time supporting a VAT increase, is quite staggering, Mr Speaker. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: The ANC is not the party for the poor [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: The ANC is a party for the ANC.

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: By contrast the Western Cape budget creates an environment that supports all South Africans. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yeah, yeah.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: It helps businesses to grow

and create jobs while equipping our residents with the skills needed to secure employment. In fact, by the end of last year, employment in the Western Cape had increased by 12,4% since 2020. In the last quarter alone, the Province created 62 000 new jobs, contributing to the lowest unemployment rate in the country at 19,6% [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: A full 12,3 percentage points lower than the national average of 31,9%. This budget will continue... [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon Walters, is that a point of order?

Mr T C R WALTERS (DA): Yes Chair, the enemies of the poor are shouting and disrupting the speaker on the floor.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. Hon member, I am listening very carefully. As I indicated in the beginning, this is a political debate, I am not going to, I am going to allow a little bit of latitude. The minute I cannot hear the Minister, I will intervene. But I wish to remind all members that when a member is on the floor to please allow that member his or her opportunity to make their contribution. Please do not drown out the speaker on the floor, and the same respect for the two, all members, please

allow the Minister her opportunity. If you disagree you have, there are many other speakers on the speakers list that will have an opportunity to rebut the Minister's input if you so wish. Hon Minister, before you proceed, I saw another hand from the Chief Whip of the Opposition. Hon Bans, is that a point of order? Hon Bans, you raised your hand, was that a point of order?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: No, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, actually I wanted to say that please address this side of the House, we cannot be always listening to frivolous point of orders, it is wrong.

The SPEAKER: Hon Chief Whip, thank you very much. Hon members, thank you very much for your assistance for me to chair this House, I think I am very capable of doing so and applying the Rules [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Speaker?

The SPEAKER: So I will address the matter if it gets to that point. That was not a frivolous point of order at this point. Continuous point of orders becomes frivolous, and until such time I am going to allow the members their rights to rise on a point of order if they so wish. I now recognise, there is another point of order on the virtual platform. Hon member, I recognise you.

An HON MEMBER: Thank you very much, Speaker. Why must you allow a representative of our oppressors to teach us that whether we represent the poor or not? The DA remains our oppressor, and there is no way that she can

argue that they represent the poor [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not a point of order. Parliamentary privilege allows members to raise points of order related to procedure in terms of the Rules that was adopted by the House at the first Sitting of the House. Please do not abuse the platform to make comments when you do raise your point of order. With that being said, hon Minister, my apologies, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Speaker, the Western Cape Budget will continue to support the communities and families who rely on Government services the most. We can see this reflected in metrics such as life expectancy. The Western Cape has the highest life expectancy in the country and the UN's Human Development Index consistently ranks the Western Cape above national averages. This is what being citizen-obsessed means, and demonstrates that budgetary priorities can shape progress.

The hon member raised the City of Cape Town, where the City of Cape Town is spending R1,1 billion for bulk services and roads and informal settlements, a R133 million for new water, sanitation and waste installations. It is spending R10 billion on the MyCiti bus route expansions from Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain to Claremont and Wynberg. It is spending R272 million in informal trading infrastructure upgrades. The City has the South African record of R39,7 billion in infrastructure investment, which is more than the three Gauteng Metros combined. 75% of this will benefit lower income

households. [Interjections.]

In respect of electricity tariffs, the ANC-run Eskom increase in electricity prices is 11,3%, whereas the DA-run City of Cape Town, the electricity price increase is 2%. We see wasteful expenditure and poor performance in so many ANC-run SOEs, like Eskom and its devastating effects on the economy, wherein 2023 the South African economy forfeited R2,9 trillion in output due to loadshedding. R2,9 trillion. Or PRASA, where an audit uncovered around 3 000 ghost employees, but Speaker, not here, not in the Western Cape.

To realise our vision of creating hope and instilling dignity, so that people can live lives that they value, the Western Cape Government has outlined, in this Provincial Strategic Plan for the next five years, how we will coordinate our efforts to achieve progress. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that the Western Cape remains an educated, healthy, and caring society, with our focus remaining on our Growth for Jobs Strategy, creating safer communities by reducing and preventing violence, and fostering a culture of innovation and good governance. By leveraging the resources and expertise across provincial Government departments, by being truly transversal, we can continue to create an environment where our residents thrive and lead meaningful lives.

But, Speaker, we cannot achieve sustained economic growth if our provincial budget allocations do not reflect the needs of our residents. The Western Cape is the third-largest province in terms of both population and economic

contribution, yet we only receive the fifth-largest budget allocation.
[Interjections.]

Nearly 80% of our budget comes from the Provincial Equitable Share, but the term equitable is misleading. There is little fairness in a formula that disadvantages the majority of South Africans who live in urban centres like Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Western Cape. For example, Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, despite having smaller populations, over the MTEF, will receive R28 billion and R52 billion more than the Western Cape.
[Interjections.]

A fundamental revision of the PES formula is urgently needed to drive growth and job creation, which benefits all South Africans. Speaker, this Provincial Budget strikes the difficult balance of protecting the essentials for the poor and vulnerable who need it the most, and prioritising jobs and economic growth, as we “step up” for growth and for jobs. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister, your time has expired. Thank you very much. I now recognise the hon Constable. Can I just get an indication if you need the...

Mr N CONSTABLE (PA): Hon Speaker, good morning and good morning to all members in this House. Speaker, we are gathering here today to critically analyse this Budget, the Budget that was tabled from the MEC of Finance. With my limited time I want to recall some issues with regards to the

biasness to urban areas in the misalignment against rural areas. I also want to draw a line to the disparities when it comes to the allocation of grants, specifically in areas such as housing, basic services, and public transport.

But here is the crux hon Speaker, there is a debate currently with regards to revenue enhancement and how we support, and this Government wants to support, or say it supports municipalities. The question then arises, when it gets to revenue enhancement, and we spoke about it yesterday, and we spoke about it in the Local Government, what are we actually doing? Is it about enhancing revenue or is it about supporting economic development within the space of Local Government? I think that is the big question that we need to ask, because even if we enhance and we get revenue, will the municipalities be sustainable, and that is the big question that we need to ask, creating an environment for that.

Let us go into SMME support, hon Speaker. This Budget claims to support small, medium and micro enterprises, yet the reality tells a different story, and we need to tell the story to the people, and I think in our Standing Committees we have discussed it and there is evidence that the Budget is not really speaking to that. When it comes to housing development, the Budget touts investments in affordable housing, yet the allocation remains. This is properly skewed to rural areas and rural people outside the borders of the City of Cape Town. Public safety and crime prevention, I mean this is, all of us have an appetite to do so, but is the Budget really speaking to that, or can we create more, can we give more towards that specific Budget allocation?

But this Government also succeeds in certain areas and we must be fair in giving that. In the spirit of fairness we acknowledge where the Government has performed well. 1) Revenue collection, the Province has maintained strong fiscal discipline and improved revenue collection. 2) Certain infrastructure, certain infrastructure projects. Some transport and roads upgrades have been well executed in select urban areas, with the emphasis on urban. But it is a good thing that we are doing it. But let us agree, there is also underperformance when it comes to the expenditure, and it is shown, because we have given back a lot of money to National Treasury.

So Speaker, in my conclusion, because I have limited time, the Budget of 2025, much like its predecessor, continues to entrench inequality rather than address it. The Budget must prioritise the needs of broader population. It also, hon Speaker, fails the poor communities, and the evidence is there, the numbers do not lie. So from the Patriotic Alliance we demand a fair allocation of funds to rural municipalities, an end to political motivated budget priorities, increased oversight on under spending, under expenditure, and strict penalties to departments that failed to spend their budgets. 4) A restructured SMME funding model that prioritise disadvantaged communities. We do not oppose progress, we oppose selective progress. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Constable, your time has expired, but I will allow you to conclude your sentence.

Mr N CONSTABLE (PA): Yes, thank you. We do not reject economic growth, we reject growth that only benefits a few. The Western Cape Government and the people of the Western Cape deserves a government that works for all. Thank you very much, Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Constable. I now recognise the hon Lithakong on the online platform.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Thank you very much, Speaker, greetings to you and to the House at large. Speaker, it is important for me to begin my debate by addressing the issue of safety in the Western Cape, or lack of it, thereof which the Province does not seem to be able to provide to our people. Speaker, people thrive and live decent lives when they feel more comfortable and protected. This comfort cannot be made possible when one lives in a province with the highest number of contact crime and murder rate.

Somlomo, due to apartheid skewed special planning, the majority of our Coloured and African people stay in the townships which are located very far from where business and economic activities take place. Coupled with lack of adequate road infrastructure, as well as proper transportation systems, this then means that they must wake up very early, at around 3:00 am, in order to travel and arrive at work by avoiding traffic congestion. Somlomo, it is at the moment when our people try to access public transport at 4:00 am in the dark, that they encounter gangs who rob them of their belongings, rape and murder them. The issue of safety is getting out of hand and cannot be stressed

enough, as the demonstration recently by the case of Cwecwe in the Eastern Cape. Our children are no longer safe, even in school premises, and while the incident at issue might have taken place in other provinces, Speaker, our children in the province also remain in similar danger, which is sad and must come to an end.

Somlomo, the situation can only be addressed if the Budget adequately speaks to safety and those responsible to administer it provide innovative solutions to our current problems. Our youth, Somlomo, is not empowered enough and this Budget does not clearly outline what it will exactly do for youth for this province in order to help them be self-sustainable, lead innovation, get decent jobs, and be prepared to lead this province and this country into prosperity.

Somlomo, we cannot have the majority of our youth and social relief of distressed grant recipients, because that on its own shows that our youth is not productive enough, due to slim economic opportunities available to them. Somlomo, also the Budget must outline what exactly it will do for the youth of this province, so far as opportunities are concerned, so that less can rely on grant hand-outs. Moreover, empowering our people through economic opportunities do not only refer to providing for them with work, but also assist them to start their own businesses, while the Province counts real cash injection into their projects.

Speaker, as countries such as the US of America began to develop inward

policies, which seeks to keep the wealth of their nation within their country and empower their people, this then means that going forward, if other countries are to develop similar policies [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Lithakong, your time has expired; I am going to allow you to conclude your sentence.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Okay, thank you hon Speaker, it is for this reason why we need to invest in our own people to be the future employers of tomorrow. Thank you so much, hon Speaker.

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

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, the thing that really stood out for me last night, watching the vote in the National Assembly, was not the fact that the Budget was passed; it was the way that the ANC and some other parties celebrated the VAT increase. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear hear!

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Dancing around and singing as if they had won the World Cup, and you know hon Speaker, this shows just how disconnected the ANC is from the people who they are supposed to represent; so completely disconnected that they celebrate raising the cost of living and forcing more

South Africans into poverty. [Interjection.]

They would rather tax the average person to death than make simple cuts and concessions in the best interest of the country. [Interjections.]

The ANC is simply allergic to good governance. Hon Speaker, the thing that really pains the ANC though, is the fact that the Democratic Alliance governs the Western Cape so well and so fairly, and Speaker, this is precisely because the DA is committed to three things: good governance, accountability, and service delivery; and these are the principles that make the Western Cape such a beacon of hope and progress in South Africa, and why so many people are selling up elsewhere and moving here, putting up property prices in the process, and hon Speaker, we all know that this province has the lowest unemployment rate in the country, and this has not just happened by chance, as the ANC would have us believe, it is a direct result of DA policies that have helped to attract investment, create jobs, and support small businesses.

The DA understands that economic growth is the foundation of a prosperous society, which is why in the Western Cape we put so much care and effort into ensuring that our budgets are meticulously balanced with the best interest of all residents at heart. How we choose to allocate the money entrusted to this Government is not just a reflection of our own political manifestos, it should reflect what the people of our province want and need, the people who voted for all of us to be sitting here today. Our people want quality education for their children; a safe environment, job opportunities

and corruption free governments.

So let us consider Education expenditure, the DA-led Western Cape leads the way when it comes to the provision of quality Government schools, which is being increased by the Rapid School Build programme. This is because the DA puts people first, ensuring that the scant resources available are used effectively. Hon Speaker, some in the Opposition continue to pedal the narrative that the DA is cutting funding for Education in the Western Cape and only spending in certain parts of the province, that it is a tale of two cities where some areas get more than others and it is important that we correct that.

If we look at the breakdown for this appropriation you will find the following increases are there in terms of our spend on Education. The City of Cape Town, a 6,11% increase in education spending. West Coast Municipalities, a 6,03% increase in education spending. The Cape Winelands, a 5,41% increase in education spending. The Overberg Municipalities, a 6,00% increase in education spending. The Garden Route, a 5,51% increase in education spending, and the Central Karoo, a 4,78% increase in education spending. Now Speaker, this shows that there is in fact a significant increase in investment in education across all regions, and the narrative of a tale of two cities is really not applicable. This Government is making sure that it invests in education across the Western Cape.

You want to hear a tale of two cities? How about a tale of two provinces? Let

us be reminded of the audit results released at the end of last year for the Western Cape, with those of one of our neighbouring provinces, the Eastern Cape, under the jurisdiction of the ANC; and we will start with the Western Cape. Of our 30 municipalities, a staggering 20 secured clean audits, unqualified with zero findings. Another six received unqualified audits with minor issues and 15 of the country's top 20 performing municipalities are here, in the DA-led Western Cape. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Now Speaker, the ANC-led Eastern Cape paints a vastly different picture, a picture of financial chaos and mismanagement. Only four municipalities in that province managed to achieve clean audits, in the entire province. The Auditor-General flagged forty-three material irregularities across key Eastern Cape municipalities, including Buffalo City Metro and Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, and this has led to R632 million in financial losses. As a result, the people of the Eastern Cape are struggling to make ends meet. But what do we see from the ANC, celebrations because they managed to increase VAT. It is unbelievable, Speaker.

We also continue to hear unfounded criticism from some members of the House directed towards the Law Enforcement Advancement Programme, or LEAP, where this Government is working together with local governments to improve and augment the crime fighting capabilities of the various enforcement agencies. But hon Speaker, there are some who want this

Government to cut the funding for LEAP, they say that LEAP is not achieving anything.

Well, hon Speaker, the stats tell a very different story. A response to a recent question from my colleague hon Walters revealed the following, that since the inception of the LEAP programme until February this year, 745 firearms have been taken off the streets by LEAP. Those LEAP officers have made 40 065 arrests and mountains of drugs have been confiscated during operations, this range from mandrax, tik, dagga, cocaine, heroin, unga, ecstasy and more, the estimated value of the various drugs that have been confiscated amounts to around R10 million. They have also assisted in combatting environmental crimes and catching poachers and smugglers. Now hon Speaker, it baffles me as to why some members of the House opposed to LEAP seem to want these guns and drugs back in communities and the criminals back on the streets where they can keep killing children. I certainly do not and I can assure you that the people of the Western Cape do not either.

Finally, Speaker, it is important that we emphasise how this DA-led Government is working to make our province a more equal place for all who live in it. If we look at the investments in Education, Health and Social Services, which my colleagues will expand on later, you will see that this is a Government that truly cares about its people and is working to create opportunities and lift people out of poverty. South Africa has the worst GINI coefficient in the world. For those who do not know, this is the measure of overall income inequality. Do you know what hon Speaker, it is currently at

its lowest in the DA-led Western Cape, and it continues to come down.

But this is not a cause for celebration. We are not going to dance around and ululate about it like the ANC did when they increased VAT. For the DA, inequality is a clarion call to keep our noses to the grindstone and keep working to do a better job for all the people of the province. We say “yes” to the Appropriation Budget and “no” to ANC VAT increases. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Bryant. I now recognise the hon Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, Speaker. Greetings to all, I greet you all in the name of His Imperial Majesty, King of Kings, Lord of Lords. Speaker, as a start, just as a note, †as ons kaalvoet loop oor Tafelberg, dan loop ons binne in die see, ons gaan verdrink daar. [if we walk barefoot over Tafelberg, then we walk straight into the ocean, we are going to drown there.] Let us focus on the Budget. Hon Speaker, the Budget as tabled [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): The Budget as tabled, it is only numbers on a paper, but in reality the Budget needs scrutiny in its totality. The MEC states that unemployment in the Western Cape is at 19,6%, but what I see when I travel the province, I can state this is not true.

Speaker, just last weekend we visited Melkhoutfontein, and I can state without fear or favour, the unemployment rate is more than 90% for the predominant Coloured communities. Clearly 19,6% is a reflection only of some other groups other than Coloureds. †Daar was nie eens een *Coloured* op daai *site* gewees nie. Hou op om ons mense te mislei. [There was not even one Coloured on that site. Stop misleading our people.] Speaker, the Budget notes that agriculture will grow by 1,4% in 2025 and do better in 2026. The NCC hopes that the MEC will make sure that the biggest asset is in agriculture, the original Coloured farm workers are being paid according to the labour directives. Oh, MEC, I see in other areas farmers that employ foreign nationals are getting arrested, you need to step up, thank you.

The Report indicates that the Western Cape according to the Human Development Index has 40,3% people living under the food poverty line. Now with apparently only 19,6% unemployment figure, one of the two stats is incorrect. Now this confirms my earlier statement relating to unemployment, it is a much higher figure than 19,6%. Who is misleading who? Hon Speaker, we note that the WCED has an Energy Resilience programme, and they are spending close to R760 million on an energy programme, but 2 400 teachers just lost their jobs. We are now sitting with 60 to 70 children in the classroom. †Nou wonder ek, wie gaan daai *energy* tender kry? [Now I wonder, who is going to get that energy tender?]

Hon Speaker, the “Growth for Jobs” proposal, it needs some serious

interrogation. This programme seeks to develop 600 000 jobs by 2035, at the cost of R1 trillion. Speaker, take note, the City of Cape Town's 2022 census recorded 4,6 million people for Cape Town alone, and this 600 000 jobs is for the entire province? But 600 000 jobs will not even cover 25% of the unemployed youth, let alone the unemployment across all age barriers. Speaker, I am sorry to say the "maths is not mathing." MEC, "step up" or "step out." Speaker, it is clear that this DA-run Province is building a private army for the elite, for the Jewish, and friends of the colonisers. But, but, but, by the Bible, by the bullet, by the barrel of the gun, any which way our freedom will come. Amase.

The SPEAKER: Hon member, your time has expired. Can I just, I wish to remind the members in the gallery, you are more than welcome to observe the Sitting today, I wish to remind you that you may not participate in the proceedings on the floor. I now recognise the hon Marais. Hon Marais, do you need the podium? You may continue then.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, the National Fiscal Budget passed yesterday exposed the Government's incompetence in addressing long term economic stability challenges, giving no tax relief to the middle class. We have VAT increases, and then new tariffs announced by President Donald Trump spell disaster. Our AGOA agreement with the US is in ICU, spelling disaster for the Western Cape's agricultural exports. This will be detrimental to all of us, especially the poor and the middle income taxpayer. The Western Cape deserves better.

Hon Speaker, we are serving as a lifeboat to many in South Africa, this province. Everybody's flocking here. We are laden with many passengers on board, we are struggling to cater for all of them, we are struggling to even get our children into a classroom, we are sailing through a sea of turbulent waters. Underneath the surface of these waters, hon Speaker, lies the corrupt, made up of criminal syndicates and construction mafias, they are waiting for this Budget to be passed so that they can plan and execute their plunder of public funds. We must guard against that. Our high vacancy rates within our departments must not fuel corruption and inefficiencies. Every cent budgeted for must be spent for the purpose for which it serves.

The R300 million budget cut in the Western Cape housing allocation, due to under-spending, surely cannot be left unchallenged, Minister Simmers. We receive our Equitable Share based on the size of our population, but it has not kept pace with the rapid growth in the Western Cape. We are a large tax contributor to the National Fiscus. In 2018/2019 the Western Cape contributed 15,5% of the total tax revenue. Old age facilities for pensioners are in short supply in the Western Cape. Speaker, we call on the Minister to also please make sure that we can revive our manufacturing sector again, especially clothing and shoe factories. Chinese cheap imports have resulted in the closure of many of our factories leaving our people unemployed.

[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Marais, your time has expired, you can conclude.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Speaker. Thank you, hon Speaker, in conclusion, I would like to say our staff in the Province and administrators are the first line of defence against corruption. We support this Budget, but we ask that our funds be supported and protected and serve the purpose for which it was designed. I thank you. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Marais. Hon Minister, before I recognise you, because we are halfway through the speakers list, hon members I wish to draw your attention again to the time allocated in terms of the speakers list. I have allowed members to conclude their sentences. The speakers list with the time allocation has been agreed in terms of the Rules. Can I please ask for your cooperation to ensure that we stick to the times allocated as per the speakers list? Hon Minister, do you need the podium? Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, hon Speaker. Last week as hon members know, hon Minister Deidre Baartman presented the Western Cape's Provincial Budget which prioritises economic growth, safety, education, health, and social development. But hon members will also recall that a certain member from the ANC interrupted her budget speech with a point of order. Not on some fine point of parliamentary procedure, or even a fine technical detail on the budget. No! He was instead very upset that some members had looked at their cellphones. Well, clearly what he did not realise was that no one was more focused on their phone than the Leader of the

Opposition, Khalid Sayed; and hon members, we all know why. Because of course, it was at that very moment the Minister was presenting her Budget Speech, that the ANC's Leader of the Opposition in the City of Cape Town, Banele Majingo, was resigning and joining the DA.

Now Speaker, I am sure that the House would appreciate it if the Leader of the Opposition, who I notice is absent from the House, would take us into his confidence, and assure us that he is not considering the same today, that he is not considering the same today!

Now hon Speaker, Nelson Mandela said: "Education is the most powerful weapon with which you can change the world", and of course he was right, he was right! Education offers a lifeline to learners in even the most difficult circumstances, an opportunity to succeed no matter what their background or the challenges they may face. I have seen this in the stellar matric results of our schools, like COSAT in Khayelitsha and Spine Road in Rocklands, and Hector Petersen in Wallacedene. So, I am sure that Nelson Mandela would turn in his grave if he could see the state of Basic Education today in provinces across South Africa, because at every turn, every turn the ANC has made the wrong choice for Education. The ANC chose State-Owned Entities over Education.

Yes, we are a developing country, and our budget is limited. We have to make choices on how we spend the budget, and our choices reveal the priorities of our decision-makers. The ANC Government spent R331 billion

bailing out SOEs over ten years, instead of investing this money in service delivery for the people of South Africa. We wasted R48,4 billion, that could have been spent on Education, but was instead spent on the zombie state-owned airline SAA. Just with the money used to bail out this corrupt state-owned airline, we could have universalised Grade R, not once, but twice! We could have employed 9 680 teachers, not for one year, not for five years, but for ten years. We could have built 484 schools across the country, and if the ANC Government had felt that these options sounded a little like too much hard work, we could have given every single school in South Africa R1,9 million to spend on whatever their learners needed most. But instead, R48,4 billion was flushed down the drain, funding a chronically corrupt and failing SOE.

So why did the ANC do this? Well the answer is simple, it is hard to steal from a provincial education department, but it is incredibly easy to steal from an SOE. This is one of the bad choices made by the ANC, but of course there are more. The ANC also chose corruption over growing our economy. There can be no economic growth without a capable qualified workforce, which begins with delivering quality basic education. But here again we see the priorities of the ANC completely at odds with securing our children's economic future. The ANC, just a few moments ago, talked about defending the poor. While the ANC claims to defend the poor, but then it turns around and stabs the poor in the back with a knife called VAT. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes! Yes! [Applause]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: The ANC is not concerned that they are adding to the tax burden of parents so that they have less money to spend on the education of their children. [Interjection.]

The ANC is not concerned that the increased taxes on goods and services will drive up expenses for schools and divert funding from things learners really need, like text books and stationary, which goes to show that you can have an ANC Government or you can have economic growth, but you cannot have both. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Both! Hear, hear!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: A Local Government election slogan in 2026 for the ANC is likely to be something like this: “Working together to make the poor poorer.” [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes, hear, hear!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: In sharp contrast the DA Western Cape Government is making the right choices. We are allocating the largest budget in the Province to Education. We are prioritising learners by protecting learner transport, school nutrition, school subsidies and transfer payments to schools. [Interjection.]

We are building brand new schools faster than ever before and we are stepping up for growth and jobs in this province, and Premier, it shows. We are the province with the lowest unemployment rate; we are the province with the lowest youth unemployment rate. We are the province with the highest reading scores in the country. We are the province with the highest retention rate. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: We are the province with the...
[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please conclude.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ... top math results, top science results and top candidates in the country, because as ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa himself said [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, your time has expired.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: “There is one province that works and that is the Western Cape.” [Interjections.]

[The Deputy Speaker takes the Chair.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, your time has expired, thank you. I now see the hon Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AL JAMA-AH): Thank you very much and good morning hon Deputy Speaker, am I audible?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order members! Hon Brinkhuis, you are audible. You may proceed.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AL JAMA-AH): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, esteemed colleagues and fellow citizens of the Western Cape. I rise today to discuss the crucial role of the Provincial Treasury in our provinces, in our governments, and to express my concerns regarding the DA-led Government's management of our Province's finances. While the Provincial Treasury is mandated to prepare the Provincial Budget and access control over its implementation, I believe that the DA has fallen short in ensuring that our Province's resources are allocated fully and effectively to meet the needs of our citizens.

The 2023 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement revealed that the fiscal environment has deteriorated, posing a risk to our province's well-being. This is unacceptable, and it is clear that the DA's policies have failed to promote fiscal discipline and good governance. The Province is not prioritising to spend where most is needed, while retrenched teachers affect disadvantaged schools only. Crime is increasing, so is homelessness due to

poverty and unfair house and farm evictions. More money is spent on security in leafy suburbs, leaving businesses on the Cape Flats and surrounding areas to fend for themselves against criminal activities.

To address these challenges I propose that the Provincial Treasury intensify its efforts to improve Budget planning and implementation; ensures that the Provincial Budget is aligned with the needs of our citizens, and that its implementation is closely monitored, enhances fiscal discipline, implements stringent measures to prevent overspending and ensure that our Province's resources are used efficiently, promotes transparency and accountability, ensures that the Provincial Treasury's operations are transparent and that it is held accountable for its actions.

However, I am sceptical about the Province's ability to implement these changes, given the track record. It is time for a change in leadership and I urge my fellow members to join me in calling for improved [Inaudible.] that caters for all and not just preferred neighbourhoods, with enhanced fiscal discipline and increased transparency and accountability. The people of the Western Cape deserve better and it is time for us to demand more from our Government. I thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, member. Thank you so much, hon member Brinkhuis. I see the hon Kaizer-Philander.

†Me W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Baie dankie, agb Adjunkspeaker.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, met drie ANC-lede in die Huis, ek wonder net of die res ook besig is om by die DA aan te sluit, maar ons beweeg Adjunkspeaker. Agb Adjunkspeaker, lede en inwoners. Dit is 'n voorreg om vandag te praat oor die kritieke rol van maatskaplike ontwikkeling in die bou van ons gemeenskappe, afbreek van die armoedekringloop, en die bevordering van ekonomiese groei. Die Wes-Kaapse Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling doen noodsaaklike werk, nie net vir die onmiddellike welstand van ons mense nie, maar ook vir die langtermyn welvaart van ons provinsie.

Die Wes-Kaap, met 'n bevolking van 7,4 miljoen, is 'n diverse en dinamiese streek vol potensiaal. Tog staar ons steeds volgehoue uitdagings in die gesig. Werkloosheid, armoede, voedselsekerheid en die risiko van 'n kringloop van swaarkry oor generasies. Die Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling speel 'n sleutelrol in die aanspreek van hierdie uitdagings deur middel van kinderswelsyn, gesinsondersteuning, die voorkoming van dwelmmisbruik, en ekonomiese bemagtiging. Deur saam te werk met gemeenskappe en burgerlike samelewingsorganisasies verskaf hulle geïntegreerde dienste wat kwesbare burgers bemagtig en 'n maatskaplike veiligheidsnet bou.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, die partye in hierdie Huis, die ANC, PA, Al-Jamah en Good, wie gisteraand so gesing en gedans het Speaker, is die eerste partye wie ekstra finansiële druk op arm huishoudings en SASSA-begunstigdes plaas, inwoners wie se beperkte inkomste reeds dun gesaai is. Agb Adjunkspeaker, noodsaaklike menseregte-items sal duurder word en verminder wat kwesbare gesinne elke maand kan bekostig. Dit lei tot

verhoogde voedselsekerheidsprobleme, skuldafhanklikheid en swaarkry vir diegene wat reeds sukkel. Sonder inflasieverwante toelaagaanpassings of uitgebreide BTW-vrystellings sal die armes die groot las van hierdie vreugde en joviale uitbarsting van julle moet dra.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, in hierdie 2025/2026 finansiële jaar beplan die Wes-Kaapse Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling om armoede te verlig en sukkelende gesinne te ondersteun deur R53,8 miljoen in die Armoedeverligting en Volhoubare Lewensonderhoud-program te belê. Byna 90 000 kwesbare begunstigdes sal deur gemeenskapsvoeding en ontwikkelingsentrums, voedselverspreidingspunte en gemeenskapsvoedings-skemas, daarby baat vind. Voedselsekuriteit is belangrik in 'n provinsie waar 18,1% van huishoudings beperkte toegang tot kos ervaar. Voedselsekuriteit gaan nie net oor hulp nie, maar oor die skep van volhoubare oplossings om langtermyn toegang tot voeding te verseker. Agb Adjunkspeaker, in hierdie tye van ekonomiese swaarkry word ware leierskap gemeet aan die vermoë om die kwesbare te beskerm, nie om hul laste te vergroot nie.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, die onlangse misdaadstatistieke wat deur die Suid-Afrikaanse Polisiediens vrygestel is, toon 'n ontstellende werklikheid. Tussen Oktober en Desember verlede jaar, het die Wes-Kaap 'n gemiddelde van 14 verkragtings per dag gesien, met 'n totaal van 1 353 voorvalle wat aangemeld is, en hierdie syfers is mense, dit is vroue, dit is kinders, en dit is gesinne wie se lewens geskend is. Die Departement bly toegewyd om geslagsgebaseerde geweld aan te spreek deur plekke van veiligheid vir

mishandelde vroue en kinders te befonds, asook met die ondersteuning van GBV-ambassadeurs in hoë-risiko-gemeenskappe en Thuthuzela Sentrums wat onmiddellike sorg aan slagoffers bied. Die 365-dae veldtog teen GBV, wat deur die DA Wes-Kaap-regering geïnisieer is, fokus op die bevordering van bewusmaking, die verskaffing van ondersteuning, en die voorkoming van toekomstige geweld.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, soos die Minister van Finansies my aangehaal het, ek gaan nie nog lank praat nie want ons het 'n maatskaplike projek om reg te ruk. Wat ek wel kan sê, agb Adjunkspeaker, SASSA se kerntaak is om toelaes te versprei, maar dit lyk of die ANC Minister se kapasiteit oorskry word. Die voortdurende mislukkinge in toelaeververspreiding beklemtoon haar onbevoegdheid en 'n onvermoë om selfs die mees basiese prestasiestandaard te bereik. Teen hierdie tempo, agb Adjunkspeaker, behoort die ANC Minister en haar kamerade liever hulle parlementêre kaarte, agb Adjunkspeaker, in te ruil vir SASSA-kaarte, want hulle sal dalk dan kan sien uiteindelik hoe ons mense swaarkry, en ons mense se lyding kan verstaan wat hul mislukkinge op ons mense se lewens veroorsaak.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, deur vaardigheidsontwikkeling, werkskepping en gemeenskapsgebaseerde programme bou ons 'n provinsie waar sosiale welvaart en ekonomiese geleenthede hand aan hand gaan. Ons lig nie net mense uit armoede nie; ons lê die fondasie vir langtermyn-geskiktheid. 'n Florerende samelewing is een waar almal die vermoë het om suksesvol te wees, waar gemeenskappe sterk is, en waar mense bydra tot gesamentlike

groei. Agb Adjunkspeaker, die werk van Sosiale Ontwikkeling is om 'n beter toekoms vir almal te bou. Agb Adjunkspeaker, terwyl ons na die toekoms kyk, kom ons herbevestig ons verbintenis hier in die Wes-Kaap, om geleenthede te skep vir almal en waar dit toeganklik is, waar gesinne bemagtig kan word, en waar gemeenskappe veilig is en op hulle eie bene kan staan. Ek dank u Adjunkspeaker.

[Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, with three ANC members in the House, I'm just wondering if the rest is also busy joining the DA, but we move, Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, members and citizens. It is a privilege to talk today about the critical role of Social Development in the building of our communities, breaking down of the poverty cycle and the promotion of economic growth. The Western Cape Department of Social Development does essential work, not only for the immediate wellbeing of our people, but also for the long term prosperity of our province.

The Western Cape, with a population of 7,4 million, is a diverse and dynamic region full of potential. Yet we are still facing sustained challenges. Unemployment, poverty, food security and the risk of a cycle of suffering over generations. The Department of Social Development plays a key role in addressing these challenges through child welfare, family support, the prevention of drug abuse, and economic empowerment. By cooperating with communities and civil society organisations, they provide integrated services that empower vulnerable citizens and build a social safety net.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the parties in this House, the ANC, PA, Al-Jamah and Good, that last night were singing and dancing, Speaker, are the very same parties that place extra financial pressure on poor households and SASSA beneficiaries, citizens whose limited income is already spread thin. Hon Deputy Speaker, essential human rights items will become more expensive and reduce what vulnerable families can afford each month. It leads to increased food security problems, debt dependence and suffering for those already struggling. Without inflation related allowance adjustments or extended VAT exemptions the poor will have to carry the great burden of this joy and jovial outburst of yours.

Hon Deputy Speaker, in this 2025/2026 financial year the Western Cape Department of Social Development plans to alleviate poverty and support struggling families by investing R53,8 million in the Poverty Relief and Sustainable Livelihood programme. Almost 90 000 vulnerable beneficiaries Community Feeding and Development Centres, distribution points and community feeding schemes. Food security is important in a province where 18,1% of households experience limited access to food. Food security is not just about support, but about the creation of sustainable solutions to ensure long term access to feeding. Hon Deputy Speaker, in these times of economic suffering true leadership is measured against the ability to protect the vulnerable, not to increase their burden.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the recent crime statistics released by the South African Police Service shows an alarming reality. Between October and December

last year the Western Cape experienced an average of 14 rapes per day, with a total of 1 353 incidents that were reported, and these figures represent people, it is women, it is children, and it is families whose lives were scarred. The Department remains committed to address gender based violence by funding places of safety for abused women and children, also with the support of GBV ambassadors in high risk communities, and Thuthuzela Centres that offer immediate care to victims. The 365 days campaign against GBV, that was initiated by the DA Western Cape Government, focuses on the promotion of awareness making, the provision of support, and the prevention of future violence.

Hon Deputy Speaker, as the Minister of Finance quoted me, are not going to speak much longer as we have a social project to get right. What I can say, hon Deputy Speaker, SASSA's core task is to distribute allowances, but it seems as if the ANC Minister's capacity is exceeded. The continuous failure in allowance distribution emphasizes her incompetence and an inability to achieve even the most basic performance standards. At this tempo, hon Deputy Speaker, the ANC Minister and her comrades should rather exchange their parliamentary cards, hon Deputy Speaker, for SASSA cards, because they may then finally see how our people are suffering, and comprehend our people's suffering that their failures are causing on our people's lives.

Hon Deputy Speaker, through skills development, job creation and community based programmes we are building a province where social prosperity and economic opportunities go hand in hand. We not only lift

people out of poverty; we lay the foundation for long term suitability. A flourishing community is one where everyone has the ability to be successful, where communities are strong and where people contribute to common growth. Hon Deputy Speaker, the task of social development is to build a better future for everyone. Hon Deputy Speaker, while we are looking at the future, let us reconfirm our commitment here in the Western Cape, to create opportunities for every one and where it is accessible, where families can be empowered, and where communities are safe and can stand on their own feet. I thank you, Deputy Speaker.]

†Die ADJUNKSPEAKER: Baie dankie. Ek sien die agb Christians.

[The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I see the hon Christians.]

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, we must agree that the VAT increase is an onslaught on the most vulnerable, the poorest and the ACDP rejects the VAT increase.

Hon MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Hon Deputy Speaker, alarming to this province, as the hon Minister has said, is the increased demand on services and on the background of the turbulent global economic environment we are in. So, hon Deputy Speaker, safety is an important factor in this province. But I believe as the ACDP, more can be done, and I have said it over and over again. Bringing back the Walking Bus, making sure that our learners arrive

safely at school and back at home, is important.

Although there are 600 Neighbourhood Watches and CPFs, we still believe, hon Deputy Speaker, that there must be certain incentives for these Neighbourhood Watches. Females get up early in the morning, 5 o'clock in the morning, to make sure that a single mother or grandmother gets to the bus terminus safely, gets to the taxi ranks safely. I have asked it over and over again: even if they only get a funeral cover when they are killed on duty, will they assist.

But hon Deputy Speaker, let me just talk about Education. I have mentioned it in the Standing Committee. We believe, as the ACDP, partnering with the private sector is a must and this lesson can be learnt from Pinelands High School. Pinelands High School has 61 teachers and only 28 are paid by the Western Cape Education Department [WCED]. Pinelands High School, as an example, has got a class ratio of 1:17 and I want to, hon Minister, just say to the Principal, Mr Graham Sayer, well done because they also produced the top student in the country. The top student in the country! A 100% pass rate in matric, 86% bachelors. So, it shows you that something there is working and as a province, we can learn from that.

Apart from that, hon Deputy Speaker, they have 40 support staff and only five are paid by the WCED. This, I believe, is what the Government should do, more aggressively engaging with the private sector to make sure because we are not going to sustain taking from our reserves, hon Minister. On the

long term, it is going to hurt us. Taking from reserves is going to hurt us in the long term. I know it is necessary, but we need to do something to get the private sector involved. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, the 2025 Western Cape Budget claims to present a vision for economic growth, infrastructure development and social progress. However, a closer look reveals that this Budget prioritises short-term optics over long-term needs.

Despite allocating R101 billion to Education over the MTEF, our schools are struggling under the weight of the increasing enrolment, overcrowded classrooms and a shortage of teachers. To make matters worse, the Western Cape has once again, opted not to fund the full Equitable Share allocation for Education to Education: R31,3 billion that was allocated in the Equitable Share for Education, but this Province has decided to under-fund it by R2 billion in this financial year.

The additional R549 million allocated for Learner Growth over the next three years is simply inadequate. True investment in the future demands proper infrastructure, well paid teachers and expanded educational support, all of which is insufficiently addressed in this Budget.

Meanwhile, the Province has chosen to pour nearly R4 billion in Safety programmes, including R1,3 billion for the Law Enforcement Advancement Plan or LEAP and other policing initiatives over the MTEF. Additionally, the safety sector has received almost double its Equitable Share this year, jumping from R347 million to R684 million, funds that could have been bolstering Education.

Despite these massive expenditures, crime and gang violence remain rampant. More policing and reactive measures are not enough. Addressing the root causes of crime, poverty, inequality, and lack of economic opportunities is essential.

On the Health front, the Department of Health faces a R405 million shortfall following the withdrawal of USAID and PEPFAR, funding for HIV and TB programmes. Despite an overall allocation of R100 billion over the MTEF, frontline services remain overstretched and critical programmes are at risk. The Province should have anticipated this funding back and taken proactive steps to secure alternative revenue to protect public health.

Equally concerning is the Government's increasing reliance on private funding to fund public infrastructure, with plans for a R200 billion pipeline of bankable projects by 2030. Private investors expect a return which could lead to creeping privatisation, user fees for essential services and reduced public accountability. The details of these agreements remain opaque, raising concerns about long-term financial risks. If these projects fail, taxpayers

will ultimately bear the burden.

This Budget underfunds Education, overspends on ineffective policing, allows healthcare crises to deepen and invites private interests into public infrastructure without transparency. The people of the Western Cape deserve leadership that prioritises their needs, not one that shifts responsibility to the private sector ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Herron ...[Interjection.]

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): ...while neglecting systemic challenges. Thank you.

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

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Deputy Speaker, let me begin by congratulating hon Minister Baartman and the team of Provincial Treasury for putting together a budget during a very difficult financial time period in our country.

Hon Speaker, after 30 years of ANC mismanagement, our country has now finally run out of money. Our national economic policies, which are ANC policies, and our international relations policies, which are also ANC

policies, have brought us to where we are today: on our knees.

Hon Deputy Speaker, from 2015 to 2024, the Western Cape population increased by 19,6%. The main reason being people run away from ANC provinces to a Province of Hope.

†Hon Deputy Speaker, ons het 'n 15-jaar Waterplan wat kyk na populasie en ekonomiese groei in hierdie provinsie. Waterbronne en waterinfrastruktuur in elkeen van ons munisipaliteite. Agb Deputy Speaker, ons gaan meer moet doen om watervermorsing, lekkasies ensovoorts te verhoed, en ons gaan meer aandag aan die hergebruik van water moet gee in die toekoms.

Ek is dankbaar vir die aandag wat waterprojekte in hierdie begroting geniet: R118 miljoen in die mediumtermyn vir die Departement van Omgewingsake en Ontwikkelingsbeplanning om 38 waterbronne te monitor om kwaliteit en volhoubare water te verseker; R43 miljoen vir die Departement van Plaaslike Regering om munisipaliteite met ons munisipale watervolhoubaarheidsfonds te ondersteun.

[Hon Deputy Speaker, we have a 15-year Water Plan that looks at population and economic growth in this province. Water resources and water infrastructure in each of our municipalities. Hon Deputy Speaker, we will have to do more to prevent wasting of water, leaks, and so forth, and we will have to pay more attention to recycling water in future.

I am grateful for the attention that water projects receive in this Budget:

R118 million in the medium term for the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning to monitor 38 water resources to ensure quality and sustainable water; R43 million for the Department of Local Government to support municipalities with their municipal sustainability fund.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, through the Department of Local Government, a sustainable infrastructure development and financial facilitation programme, we have secured R73 million from Switzerland and R33 million from Denmark which will contribute towards R154 million needed to take 17 water and wastewater projects valued at more than R2,2 billion, from feasibility to bankability.

To ensure the successful rollout of the CEDAF programme, we appreciate the allocation of R13,3 million to fund the dedicated project management support programme for this province. Locally, we are also experiencing climate change. Winter storms have destroyed infrastructure in recent years. We are challenged by wildfires and the next drought is only one dry winter away.

†Agb Deputy Speaker, ons rampbestuursafdeling is al wat tussen ons en die lewensverlies en beserings van eiendomsbeskadiging staan ten tye van vloed, veldbrande en ander onvoorsiene rampe. Ons erken dus die R205 miljoen wat oor die mediumtermyn belê word om ons rampgereedheid-grondslag te versterk. Ons moet eenvoudig belê in die vroeë waarskuwingstelsels, mannekragopleiding en toerusting om situasies te kan

hanteer wanneer dit gebeur.

[Hon Deputy Speaker, our disaster management division is all that stands between us and loss of life and injuries and property damage during times of floods, veld fires and other unforeseen disasters. We therefore acknowledge R205 million that is invested over the medium term to strengthen our disaster readiness foundation. We simply have to invest in the early warning systems, manpower training and equipment to handle situations when it happens.]

It is essential that we rethink our approach to infrastructure projects in the context of climate change. We need to rethink safe development protocols with river flood lines and potential storm surges along our coastline. We will spend R120,6 million on maintenance and repairs at our CapeNature reserves, but we need to do it in such a manner that it can withstand future storms.

Hon Speaker, this links to the very important work that the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning does with EIAs. We will continue to stream EIA processes to ensure compliance and mitigate environmental risk associated with infrastructure projects. The allocation of R9,5 million will strengthen the EIA systems over the MTEF period.

†Ons land se skuldvlakke is te hoog, agb Speaker. Ons kan nie meer leen nie. Nou wil die ANC BTW, of VAT, verhoog.

[Our country's debt levels are too high, hon Speaker. We cannot borrow any more. Now the ANC wants to increase BTW, or VAT.]

South Africa does not have an Airforce anymore, hon Deputy Speaker. We have zero defence. Under the ANC Government, everything is broken. We have 11 Rooivalk helicopters: not one is working. We have 24 Augusta helicopters: not one is working. We have four Super Lynx helicopters: not one is working. We have eight other helicopters. Guess what? Not one is working. We have got 39 Oryx utility helicopters. Guess what? Out of a fleet of 86 helicopters only one is working and that one is reserved for the President.

Hon Deputy Speaker, Swaziland can take us tomorrow with three hang gliders ...[Laughter.] and we have got no defence, hon Deputy Speaker. That is how pathetic the ANC Government is. [Interjections.] That is what they think about the residents of South Africa ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Deputy Speaker, to get out of the mess the country is in ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, there is a point of order.

†Die MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME: Agb *Deputy Speaker*, ek is erg bekommerd oor wat ek nou gehoor het en daarom wil ek vra of ek 'n vraag kan vra aan die agb Minister oor die

toestand van ons Weermag.

[The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Hon Deputy Speaker, I am very worried about what I have just heard and therefore I want to ask if I can ask a question to the hon Minister about the condition of our Defence Force.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, are you prepared to take a question?

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Deputy Speaker, with respect, I do not have time, but I think it values discussing in a Standing Committee. Can I continue?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may proceed.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: [Interjections.] Hon Deputy Speaker, to get out of the mess the country is in, we need economic growth. We all know that. The global economy is set to grow by approximately 3,3% in 2025. We are only expecting a growth of 0,8% in South Africa. How is this possible for a developing country like South Africa to grow less than the global economy?

The answer is, of course, the ANC who over the past 30 years made disastrous economic choices.

An HON MEMBER: Ja!

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Agb *Deputy Speaker*, die Wes-Kaap is steeds die provinsie met verreweg die beste munisipaliteite in land. Dit het baie harde werk gekos om daar uit te kom en dit is steeds baie harde werk om dit daar te hou. Dit is net stabiele plaaslike regering wat beleggers uit die private sektor lok. Ons moedig beleggers aan om ons ekonomie te laat groei en om werk te skep.

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Deputy Speaker, the Western Cape is still the province with faraway the best municipalities in the country. It required very hard work to get there and it is still very hard work to keep it there. It is only stable local government that draws investors from the private sector. We encourage investors to grow our economy and to create jobs.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, that is why we appreciate funding in this Budget that goes to initiatives which support and strengthen our Local Government, such as R12,6 million for capacity building and support to municipalities; R19,6 million to strengthen municipal supported initiatives; R3,9 million for the Thusong programmes, including service centres and satellite offices; R4,6 million for the Thusong's service centre grant for operational support; R9,1 million for Community Development workers operational support grant; R12,2 million for the municipal service delivery and capacity building grant;

R63 million over the MTEF for the Western Cape financial management capability grant to support municipalities with water, energy and financial planning programmes; R49,7 million towards the regional or RSEP programme, regional planning and management programme for 13 municipalities over the MTEF programme.

†Of, agb Deputy Speaker, as ek agb Minister Baartman kan aanhaal: [Or, hon Deputy Speaker, if I can quote hon Minister Baartman:] we must ensure that our municipalities are bright, shining lights on the hill. The Western Cape Government must enable them in this regard, to capacitate them to drive economic growth and job creation in the Western Cape.

Hon Deputy Speaker, not only do I support this Budget of 2025/2026, but I also appreciate and acknowledge it for being in a very tough or being in touch with the current challenges we must face in our country and in the province.

To the Opposition benches, through the hon Deputy Speaker, if you do not support this Budget, you were either not paying attention during the discussion process or you still do not understand the Budget. I thank you. ...[Applause.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. I see the hon Windvogel.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker of the House and the suffering masses of our people in the Western Cape. We meet today in the sacred month of April, a month where we remember our fallen heroes and heroines. We remember the blood of Chris Hani that stained the earth of Boksburg. It is the unbroken spirit of Oliver Tambo in exile. It is the fine cry of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela who stood in the trench of Soweto and said: they think because they have put my husband on an island, the ANC is finished, but I am still here. The people are still here and as long as I live, I will fight.

Today, we are continuing this fight. We fight against a budget that is not just an insult to the poor, but a declaration of war. A budget that says to the homeless mother in Khayelitsha: sleep on the streets. To the sick child in Gugulethu: die in an overcrowded clinic. To the unemployed father in Beaufort West starving quietly. This is not just a misgovernance, this is cruelty.

Look around you, hon Deputy Speaker. There are two Western Capes. One Cape where the wine flows in Constantia, where MPLs and councillors dine in Camps Bay restaurants, where White children attend schools with Olympic sized swimming pools.

In another Cape, the Cape of Storms, the Cape of the poor. The Black African and Coloured, the forgotten. Where clinics have shortages of

medicines, where patients are being turned away, where schools have no textbooks, where police stations have no hope. The DA built this divide. They sustain it, they profit from it. While the DA boasts about economic growth and the lowest unemployment rate, 7 970, seven hundred nine hundred and, ...[Interjections.] seven thousand ninety, ...[Interjections.] seven thousand ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...seven hundred ...[Interjections.] 797 000 of our people are unemployed in this province and a further 1,5 million people are not economically active. The number of unemployed people in the Western Cape is more than 50%, the population size of the Northern Cape, and those who are not economically active are more than half the population of Lesotho.

This clearly shows that we have a serious crisis of unemployment. The stepping up for Growth for Jobs mantra by the hon MEC is another blue lie to mask their failures and expose that they are doing nothing to address the job crisis in the province. †Maar onthou, die Here is die Here en Hy sien alles. [But remember, the Lord is the Lord and He sees everything.]

Indeed, you need to step up by stopping to mask your failures to create jobs by comparing the Western Cape unemployment to other provinces.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the DA has turned the Western Cape into the gangster paradise. The raid on J P Smith and Limberg's office proved the DA's ties to the underworld. [Interjections.] So, you must really step up and stop lying to the people. While the DA preaches about good governance, 620 000 families are neglected on the housing waiting list. The DA not only failed to spend R300 million on housing grants, but they are also cutting Human Settlement expenditure by over 69 million in this budget.

This is not just misgovernance. This is a hatred of the poor. While they posture about Safety, teachers in Philippi need police escorts just to enter their classrooms and women markers barricade their doors against gangs. The hon MEC claims to be investing R3,9 billion for Safety over the MTEF, while in actual fact, the Safety Budget has been slashed by R11 million in this Budget. This is the DA real legacy. A province where the rich thrive, and the poor are left to die.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are having this debate as South Africa burns with rage over the brutal rape of Cwecwe, a girl who went to school in the Eastern Cape and never came home safely.

As we echo the loud cries of justice for Cwecwe inside the walls of the Legislature, we must know that everyday women and children in the province are hunted. In these three months between October and December 2024, 1 957 women were sexually assaulted and 1 353 women and children were raped. Yet, the DA's response is pitiful: R235 million over the next three

years to support Gender-Based Violence. That is only R78 million for Victim Empowerment this year, less than the cost of a single luxury estate in Camps Bay.

This is not just incompetence, it is complicity. The DA cautioned perpetrators by underfunding shelters, ignoring survivors and refusing to declare GBV a provincial emergency. What do they expect from a party that protects Farrel Payne and Graham Paulse who are accused of sexual harassment. Female coworkers inside the Government office. [Interjections.] What do you expect from a party that allies with AfriForum who defend rapists and murderers in court.

The DA's betrayal extends beyond our borders. Their reckless lies about White genocide with Donald Trump alongside AfriForum and Solidarity readily caused the withdrawal of R405 million in USAID in HIV and TB funding. Today, 7 000 vulnerable children risk losing lifesaving treatment because the DA chooses racial fearmongering over public health. This is not just incompetence: it is treason against the poor.

We cannot allow the DA to continue undermining our national independence in this fashion. Hon MEC Ivan Meyer betrays South Africa by visiting Taiwan, threatening our trade with China. The DA has sabotaged AGOA by joining AfriForum on ...[Interjection.]

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

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...crying about our nation ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member. Are you able to take your seat?
There is a point of order. Yes.

Mr T C R WALTERS (DA): Hon Chair or hon Deputy Speaker, can you make a ruling as to whether it is parliamentary for the enemy of the poor to call the hon Minister a traitor? [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I will not comment on the content of the particular speech. Hon members are fully aware that should they wish to bring a substantive motion they are able to follow the Rules in that regard. But I see the Chief Whip.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, the hon member Windvogel is in violation of Rule 59(b). She is, indeed, reflecting on the integrity of our very hon Minister of Agriculture. [Interjections.] I think she needs to be asked to withdraw, and we know her record on withdrawals, so please ask her to withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I will consult the Table Staff in that regard and revert back. [Interjections.] Hon member Windvogel, kindly proceed. ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Or apologise. [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, in an attempt to play party politics in National Government and the posture like they are defending the poor, the DA rejects the National Budget. [Interjections.] There is no reason why the DA should continue to form part of the GNU. The DA must step up by stepping down out of the GNU. [Interjections.] While they posture as a party for the poor at National Parliament, here in the Western Cape, they are proposing a budget that is anti-poor.

†Die veiligheidskwessie by die Laerskool Bontebok in Swellendam is kommerwekkend, met dele van die gebou wat die risiko loop om in te stort. Dit is onaanvaarbaar dat die situasie vir ses jaar afgeskeep word, ten spyte van die vorige skoolhoof wat die Departement gewaarsku het. Die welstand en die opvoeding van die studente moet 'n prioriteit wees. Dit is van kardinale belang vir hierdie Departement om onmiddellik op te tree om die infrastruktuurkwessie aan te spreek en om te verseker dat die skool 'n veilige leeromgewing is.

[The safety issue at the Primary School Bontebok in Swellendam is of concern, with parts of the building running the risk of collapsing. It is unacceptable that the situation has been neglected for six years, in spite of the previous principal having warned the Department. The well being and the education of the students must be a priority. It is of cardinal importance for this Department to immediately act to address the infrastructure issue and to

ensure that the school is a safe learning environment.]

And we will not rest. We will fight as Mama Winnie did for the Western Cape that works for all its people, not just the rich. The ANC rejects this Budget. I thank you. ...[Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Windvogel. I see the hon Johnson. [Interjections.]

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, South Africa stands at a crossroads: a failing national economy, a fiscal vice tightening under ANC mismanagement, and a National Budget shrouded in uncertainty. The Western Cape refuses to retreat. While others falter, we step up keeping this province open for business, resilient in crisis, and unshaken in our commitment to those that the ANC has once again, left behind.

We are committed to confronting these challenges head-on, and as the DA, we remain resolute in our determination to support the most vulnerable by stabilising essential social services relied upon by so many, such as quality education, healthcare and social care, which are crucial for paving the way to a brighter future. Because in this province, dignity is non-negotiable.

Furthermore, we will continue our efforts to build a better future for everyone who calls the Western Cape home by prioritising and investing in the key elements of a thriving and growing economy that creates more jobs

and opportunities for everyone.

As we turn our attention to the Main Budget for the Western Cape, it is an absolute honour to be speaking in support of this Budget.

The bulk of the Budget, around 80% of the total spend, is directed toward social services over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, ensuring quality education, healthcare, and social development, while simultaneously fostering an enabling environment that removes barriers to economic growth and job creation. Over the MTEF, more than R215 billion will be allocated towards social frontline services including Education, Health and Social Care.

Hon Deputy Speaker, firstly, children are the future of this country, and we will continue to invest in Education. The Western Cape Education Department initiatives such as the Back-on-Track programmes and the Rapid Schools Build programmes are yielding positive outcomes. However, despite these advancements, the WCED is still facing significant challenges. Our schools are experiencing an unprecedented rise in student enrolment, leading to overcrowded classrooms and deteriorating learner-teacher ratio. This rapid growth necessitates an urgent response, including improvements in education infrastructure and increased funding for hiring more teachers.

For this very reason, this Government will be investing R101 billion in Education over the MTEF: R4 billion for Early Childhood Development

(ECD) to improve foundational learning; R2 billion for School Infrastructure, including rapid builds to address overcrowding; and R549 million for additional teachers to reduce learner-educator ratios.

Secondly, we remain committed to investing more funding in quality healthcare in our province. The Department of Health and Wellness continues to excel and can take pride in their achievements, even with fewer resources. Every Health Department is facing a financial crisis that jeopardizes its healthcare system. Unfortunately, no one is immune, but the Western Cape's Department is doing whatever they can despite being pushed to the brink. They are still managing their finances responsibly and our facilities are not running out of supplies like we are seeing in some of the other provinces under ANC control.

To strengthen the Western Cape healthcare system, R100 billion will be invested over the MTEF: R19 billion for healthcare workers in 2025/2026, restoring staffing levels post-pandemic; R295 million for Tygerberg Hospital redevelopment, modernising critical facilities.

Thirdly, hon Deputy Speaker, while the National Treasury still does not recognise social workers as frontline services, the Department of Social Development continues to address and deliver for the citizens of the Western Cape, despite facing several challenges due to increasing population in the province. Invested in Social Development over the MTEF will be R8.4 billion including R235 million for GBV victim support and R822 million for

Child Protection Services. And lastly, R142 million for food security programs, tackling rising poverty.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the Growth for Jobs strategy is not just about reaching a R1 trillion economy. It is about building an economy that works for the entrepreneur in Khayelitsha, the farmer in Beaufort West, and the factory worker in George. It is a budget for all, which is why we are targeting inequality at its roots: infrastructure, jobs, and energy.

To achieve this, we are prioritising key drivers: R31 billion for critical infrastructure, connecting rural towns to urban hubs and unlocking productivity across all regions; R42 million to cut red tape, ensuring the Western Cape remains the easiest place to do business in Africa; and lastly, R382 million for 17 energy projects, adding 1 400 MW of new capacity by 2030 to keep industries running and households powered.

The results speak for themselves. The Western Cape already boasts the lowest inequality in South Africa, with a Gini coefficient of 0,59, yes, which is still too high, but it is a testament to our commitment to inclusive growth. Our Human Development Index of 0,76 is the highest in the country and it reflects better education, healthcare, and living standards. But we can and must do more.

To those who say this Budget only works for Cape Town and big cities, this is an absolute lie. Take the Central Karoo, where per capita spending is 34%

higher than the provincial average, more than R15 000 on every resident compared to R11 600 in the rest of the province. ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): This is not accidental; it is a deliberate down payment on equity. By directing resources to rural regions like the Karoo, which is definitely not a leafy suburb, we are rewiring the engines of growth for all our people.

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

†Mnr P JOHNSON (DA): *Agb Deputy Speaker*, ek, deur u, sou hoop dat die agb Constable aandagtig geluister het na wat ek nou net gesê het. Maar kom ek sê dit vir nog 'n slag in mooi Afrikaans. Vir diegene wat sê hierdie begroting werk net vir die Kaapstad-metro en ander groot stede, dit is 'n absolute leuen. Hier in die Sentraal-Karoo-distrik waar die per capita besteding van hierdie Wes-Kaapse Regering 34% hoër is as die provinsiale gemiddelde van R11 634, daar spandeer hierdie Regering R15 609 vir elke inwoner.

Dit is nie net toevallig nie, dit is 'n doelbewuste verhoogde uitbetaling om gelykheid te bevorder. Ek hoop regtig vandag was die laaste keer dat ons in hierdie Huis gaan hoor dat die Wes-Kaapse Regering nie kyk na die mense van die Karoo nie. Laat die syfers maar die praatwerk doen.

[Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, through you, I hope that the hon Constable listened attentively to what I have just said. But let me say again in nice Afrikaans. To those who say this budget only works for the Cape Town Metro, it is an absolute lie. Here in the Central Karoo District where the per capita expenditure of this Western Cape Government is 34% higher than the provincial average of R11 634, there this Government spends R15 609 for each citizen.

It is not just a coincidence, it is a purposeful increased payment to promote equality. I really hope today was the last time that we are going to hear in this House that the Western Cape Government does not look after the people of the Karoo. Let the figures do the talking.]

But hon Deputy Speaker, growth cannot thrive without partnership, and this is why this Budget allocates R403 million to Wesgro over the MTEF period, a direct investment in enabling investment. Wesgro has already secured R8,7 billion in new investments which is expected to enable close to 11 000 future jobs, while to date the agency has already secured over R2.6 billion in export declarations: proof that when Government and business work together, we do not just grow economies, we can transform lives.

Hon Deputy Speaker through you to hon member Nkondlo on the cost of living. The hon member ignores the fact that Cape Town's utility increases are lower than other metros because we are governed better. ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Our property prices reflect success. People flock here because we create jobs, and we attract billions in investments.

If the ANC governed competently elsewhere, perhaps residents would not need to move to the Western Cape for opportunities.

Hon MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): If that is too much to ask, they should start doing something constructively and petition their colleagues in National to allocate more funding to the Western Cape so that hon Minister Tertius Simmers can build more houses for the residents of the Western Cape.

To the hon Herron, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, to those claiming that the Safety Plan is diverting funds from core services like Education, this is simply not true. Hon Deputy Speaker, an additional R1 billion has been allocated from the Provincial Revenue Fund over and above what we received from National. Let me be clear: the Safety Plan is not taking funding away from any essential services.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the DA in the Western Cape is stepping up. We are proving that growth and justice are not opposites, they are partners. With this Budget we call on businesses, communities, and every level of

government to join us. Together, we will build a province where progress is measured not just in rands, but in lives uplifted from the Winelands to the West Coast, from Cape Town to the Karoo. This Budget works for you.

Hon Deputy Speaker, to this end, the DA supports this Budget. I thank you.
...[Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Johnson. I now see the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you so much, hon Deputy Speaker. I will try my best to get to every topic, but I know that my colleagues will also be quite robust in making sure that we all are readers within the Budget Vote week that is coming up.

I want to start with VAT, hon Deputy Speaker. There is going to be a 0,5% increase in VAT in year one and then, another 0,5% increase coming in year two. That is essentially a 1% increase. Our goods and services. Now, I am not talking about other things. I want to show you the impact it may have on the Western Cape Government Budget.

The Western Cape Government Budget, currently our goods and services, †die goed wat ons koop. Die tafels, die penne, die medicine, die plasters, die goed wat ons koop word goods and services in hierdie blou boek genoem.
[the things that we buy. The desks, the pens, the medicine, the plaster, the

things that we buy are called goods and services in this blue book.] We are going to be spending in this financial year, R19,074 billion on goods and services across our respective departments. That is what we speak about when we say *mos* now procurement.

Now, if you take 1% of our procurement budget of goods and service, †*almaal betaal* [everyone pays] VAT, hon Deputy Speaker, including Government departments pay VAT on goods and services. So, the medicine the member is complaining about that there is not enough money for medicine, there is going to be a 1% increase on VAT which means the hon Minister is going to be able to buy less plasters, less medicine.

If there is an increase of 1% on VAT, then the energy hike from NERSA that they are complaining about: ...[Interjections.] when you buy your electricity, you see the VAT percentage of your electricity is going to go up. So, when you buy that, please I want people to make a note. They must look at the VAT percentage now at 15% and then they must compare the VAT hike on the electricity bill after the VAT increase. [Interjections.] So, if you take an approximate 1 percentage point on our current financial year, which is not budgeted for, hon Deputy Speaker, so which means that hon member Christians spoke about how there are going to be risks going into our reserves. Now, the question is when there is an external shock, that is what we mean in finance: external shocks. †*Die geld moet van iewers vandaan kom.* [The money must come from somewhere.]

So, we are going to have to pay. Approximately 1% is R190,74 million just on our goods and services. So, when the members come and they say they want more medicine, we are going to send them back to go and ask for R190,74 million for medicine because medicine is also in our top five items for procurement specifically. [Interjections.]

Just so that it is clear, hon Deputy Speaker, just so that it is clear because I want it on record. I want the history to record it. The following political parties at a National level voted for VAT: [Interjections.] the UDM, BOSA, the Patriotic Alliance, ActionSA, Rise Mzansi, Al Jama-ah. [Interjections.] Hon member Brinkhuis who is online.

An HON MEMBER: Shocking!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ANC, IFP, PAC and GOOD. [Interjections.] And I want it recorded in the Hansard for the rest of history that these are the people who voted for VAT. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members! [Interjections.] Order, hon members. [Interjections.] Order, hon members. Please proceed, hon Minister. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Unlike other hon members, I do not have to ask you to protect my time given that I have unlimited time today to speak. [Interjections.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is true that the Western Cape is becoming more expensive, but the reason the Western Cape Government is becoming more expensive is because National Government is becoming more expensive, and I am going to tell you why. I am going to go through the list.

Energy: NERSA has increased the electricity tariffs. Hon member Wenger, for example, mentioned to us that the Eskom electricity price increase is 11,32%, but in the City of Cape Town, for example, as an example, it is only increasing by 2%. Two! [Interjections.] That is more than a 9-percentage point difference. [Interjections.]

In terms of personal income tax: now, I want to speak to the people of the Western Cape about personal income tax. We have not had increases in the personal income tax bracket for a long time and now, what the National Government is doing is, it is not increasing the inflationary portion of the personal income tax bracket. [Interjections.] Hon Deputy Speaker, I would like to tell people how it is going to affect their personal income. [Interjections.] There are some ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members! Hon Minister. Hon members, the running commentary is drowning out the hon speaker. We are wrapping up the debate. Hon Minister, I trust that you will now be able to proceed.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. So, hon

Deputy Speaker, if you are getting a salary and if it is now R10, let us make it ten because we must keep the information simple. If you get a salary increase from your employer that is inflation or above inflation, because your employer wants to do the right thing. They want to make sure you are able to adjust to the cost of living in the economy. But if the tax bracket that you are in, for a National Government, does not increase, then there is a possibility that you might end up paying more taxes because your salary increased, rather than less. So, the ANC National Government that put the VAT into the books, they are not doing you a favour.

In terms of the VAT specifically, we have already mentioned how it will increase even electricity, it will increase every good and service in the Provincial Government.

In terms of the Central Karoo and hon Deputy Speaker, one of the new innovations that we did this year, is we actually did this little summary booklet if hon members or constituency heads want to take it to their communities. In this summary booklet, and I am going now to the Central Karoo, the Central Karoo is getting the highest per capita spending amount from the Western Cape Government from our Province. This is at R15 609. The provincial average is R11 634, which means that our spending from the Western Cape Government is approximately R4 000 more per person in the Central Karoo than the average Western Cape resident. ...[Applause.]

†Dit is in die boek. [Tussenwerpsels.] [It is in the book.] [Interjections.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, readers are leaders. If you are not going to read, then I do not know what you want me to engage on. In terms of Beaufort West and energy, and this has come out previously. †Beaufort-Wes se boeke is anders as die munisipaliteite wat sterk is want jy is onder die finansiële *recovery plan*. [Tussenwerpsels.] [Beaufort West's book are different from the municipalities that are strong because you are under the financial recovery plan.] [Interjections.] Get your books right first and then we will talk about PPPs. We cannot talk about PPPs and the luxuries. [Interjections.] You cannot have a champagne taste on a beer budget. [Interjections.] You must get the books right first and then you can consider your PPP.

Hon Deputy Speaker, on housing and ...[Interjections.] hon Deputy Speaker, I want to just quickly speak on housing. The Department of Infrastructure has spent their housing budget. There is no money to give back because they spent what they told the National Government they would spend. So, we will fight to get our money back because there is no underspending. They got the data wrong. They must give us our money back and I am sure that hon Minister Simmers will help the hon members to show them how we are going to be fighting for our money back.

I know there is another province that will also be fighting for their money back and perhaps, the ANC needs to be careful what they are arguing for because it is very much an ANC province that has the same problem where National got their data incorrect.

In terms of, † *govern* julle nie Gauteng nie? [Tussenwerpsels.] [oh, don't you govern Gauteng?] [Interjections.] Oh, okay. [Interjections.] Then, hon Deputy Speaker ...[Interjection.]

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

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Hon Deputy Speaker ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon Minister has unlimited time. Just to again indicate to the hon members that interjections, running commentary, will ultimately further extend the time that the hon Minister will use today. [Interjections.] May we hand the floor back to the hon Minister. Thank you. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Okay. On Education. Let me quickly deal with the numbers in the book † *en ek het mooi pink notatjies vir my gemaak hierso* [and I have made nice pink notes for myself here.] We are going to invest R101 billion on Education over the MTEF, for the three years, page 167, of which we will spend R74,283 billion on Compensation of Employees. That is page 176. You will also see on that same page that it is a 4,51% increase in Compensation of Employees.

Then, for the 2025/2026 Equitable Share allocated to the Department, it amounts to just under 45% and that is higher than the National Treasury

recommendation of our full Equitable Share allocation. That is page 173. That is an 8,79% increase in the Equitable Share for Education.

Then, and I am going to come to the full Equitable Share now. I just want to go through the respective departments. Hon Deputy Speaker, in Health we will invest R100 billion, page 221, over the MTEF to strengthen our systems. Of this, R60,2 billion is on Compensation of Employees or 60,2%. This is an 8,36% increase in Compensation of Employees. In the financial year, the Equitable Share allocated to the Department will amount to just under 36% of our full Equitable Share allocation, which is a 5,77% increase on page 231. Now, the 36 and the 45 is important. I will get back to that now.

The weighting of the Education and Health garter in the PES total, when you go and unpack the PES, and I will get to Social Development now, amounts to 75% of the data input into the National formular. We, in the Western Cape, are going to spend just under 81% of our Equitable Share just on Education and Health. The 6-percentage point difference that you will see in the Health Budget, that amounts to R5,7 billion. To put that into context, the hon members on our other side of the House are asking us to cut the Health Budget. That is what they are asking us to do.

To put the R5,7 billion into context. In the Health Budget, Provincial Health Services cost approximately R5,136 billion. The full programme. Then, Healthcare Support Services, that deals with the warehouse, the medical depot, your laundry services, your engineering, your forensics, your orthotic

and prosthetic services, that is approximately R691 million. So, if you add that up, that is what this House is asking us to cut from the Health Budget because the 36 plus the 45 gets you to 81%.

Now, let us get to the Social Development because there is a poverty component. National does not call it Social Development, they call it the poverty component. In the PES, the poverty component data input is 3%. We are allocating to the Department of Social Development 3,96% of our Equitable Share, of our full total Equitable Share. So, if you add Health and Education and Social Development as data inputs into the PES, you will get 78%.

If you look at our actual where we are putting the PES amounts, Education, Health, Social Development, the total is 84,62%. That is more than 6-percentage points higher than the PES. So, what this House is asking is that we must cut Health, and we must cut Social Development. That is what this House is asking of us. And just to make a note of it that the PES is actually a funding tool and not a budget tool, and despite that, we are allocating even more than what that recommendation would be to our three departments so that we can make sure that we are able to bolster services in our province.

In terms of the Black Business Forum. I actually invited the Black Business Forum to the Budget Speech: me. Not other hon members of this House. So, I am not sure what the extra frustrations are that they may have raised, but we actually have a very good relationship with the Black Business Forum

where we are now sharing information.

We even said to them if they do not understand how to apply to certain programmes across Government or programmes across Government that are open for applications, we will send them the respective links and information. [Interjections.] Even, for example, in our procurement client centre. We have lots of training that people can connect to, whether you are a small business ...[Interjections.] or an entrepreneur, we have lots and lots of training across our province in terms of the procurement client centre that we can link people to.

In terms of where one hon member said that the Budget is not pro poor. Hon Deputy Speaker, I completely disagree. Not only is the Gini coefficient which measures inequality, the lowest in the Western Cape of all provinces, but 80% of our full Budget, including now when you add the provincial money to the national money that we are getting, 80% of our total Budget is going to Social Services. This is majority for Education, for Health, for Social Service, Housing and Community Amenities.

We will also be spending more than R2,1 billion on nutrition in schools. We will be spending more money in DSD on nutrition and Health will be spending money on nutrition because we also need to bring that food poverty figure down. Just because we are the lowest, it does not mean that we are not going to work to get it even lower. We are going to work to get it even lower, but we need to also give credit where credit is due.

Hon Deputy Speaker, in terms of hon member Constable who asked whether the revenue enhancement will be sustainable. The reason we have the revenue enhancement programmes is in order to help you become sustainable because there are a lot of pressures on municipalities in our country. So, we need to be able to help them to become sustainable and we are actually, from the Financial Management Grant, we are actually going to support 12 municipalities, including all three local municipalities and the district in the Central Karoo, with programmes from that Financial Management Programme to assist them with financial sustainability across their finance, energy and water programmes.

In terms of whether we can give Housing more money. Hon member Constable, if National gives more money, we can pass on that money to the Department of Infrastructure. But I know the Department of Infrastructure is also going to be very innovative in terms of exploring alternative and blended revenue sources.

In terms of underspending, I will just quickly deal with it generally and then, specifically. So, some underspending sometimes you will see because someone owes you an invoice. So, if Deidré owes Jaco an invoice, when must Jaco pay it if Deidré is not going to give the invoice to him. Jaco can only pay the invoice when Deidré gives it to him. So, some of that general underspending might be something like that and you must interrogate the department to ask what that is, for example, for.

Some underspending, for example, and hon Mr Meyer will agree with me. In the Western Cape Government, we do not do fiscal dumping. We are not going to get money on 27 March on the day that Deidré tables our Budget for the Western Cape Government, but then you expect us to spend money within two working days. How do you spend R300 million in two working days when you get it on 27 March? † Nee man, [No man], hon Deputy Speaker.

We do not believe in fiscal dumping and in those cases, you ask for a rollover, and you show that we are going to spend the money, but we are not doing this fiscal dumping. Because if we do not want National Government to do fiscal dumping where they try to get rid of money, then we also cannot do fiscal dumping. We will do the rollovers, but we are not going to act like you can spend R300 million in two working days. It is not okay.

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Then, on Human Settlements, we have already dealt with it. Human Settlements have spent their money. Hon Mr Simmers can tell you the money is spent because the things have been delivered. So, there is no underspending. National must not. They cannot take the money. What money are they going to take back? No, no, no! We are going to challenge that.

Then, in terms of what hon member Constable said that we only support

economic progress that benefits the poor. But, hon Deputy Speaker, the PA is part of the hon members in the National Assembly who supported the VAT and VAT affects all of the poorest people in South Africa. I do not understand. You cannot say that you only support economic progress that benefits the poor, but then you vote for VAT. You cannot have the two in the same. [Interjections.]

Hon member Lithakong spoke about that residents are waking up early for transport. [Interjections.] I completely agree, hon Deputy Speaker. It is unacceptable that the residents ...[Interjections.] in our country and particularly in the Western Cape, do not have more access to ...[Interjection.]

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

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Is the hon Minister prepared to take a question?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, are you prepared to take a question?
[Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Hon Deputy Speaker, I am currently responding to questions, but I will take your question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Leader of the Opposition, you may proceed.
[Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Okay. Could the hon Minister explain to us how she is going to be able to manage her viewpoints on the VAT increase, on various other issues such as the NHI nationalisation with the new coalition partners, the MK party and the EFF? Thank you.

[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may proceed, hon Minister. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Well, the interesting thing and I have said this before to hon members of the House, in committees. I have said this before and there is a love letter that a particular national department will eventually get. I actually think it has already been served upon them this week, but I cannot be 100% sure.

But in the Provincial Treasury, for example, even before coalitions and the GNU *†en al die goeters*, [and all the things], we work with maturity. There is a thing called, hon Deputy Speaker, called fiscal maturity. We must be able to be mature in the debates that we have, and we will work with the National Treasury with or without a coalition because we want fiscal maturity. We want to be honest with one another, we want to work with one another. We want the best for the residents in our province. [Interjections.]

So, we will continue working with the respective departments because it is not your money. It is the peoples' money. You get taxes from all nine

provinces that goes to National. It is not your money. [Interjections.] You are not doing us a favour by allocating provinces money from taxation. [Interjections.] It is your job. It is your job to allocate taxation money to the nine provinces. [Interjections.] So, we are going to continue working well with the respective departments. [Interjections.]

In terms of the hon member, hon Deputy Speaker. I was responding to hon member Lithakong's question. She said that, you know, residents are waking up very early for transport and I completely agree. We need reform when it comes to rail, and I asked that the hon members of this House to please join us in our call for devolution of rail because we need to be able to get our economy moving. That includes getting people to work in a safe, affordable and reliable manner.

In terms of youth employment and social services and balancing the Social Services budget. The hon member is correct that if we grow and create jobs, we will end up spending less on our social services spot. It is a given because if you are able to have access to a job, you are not necessarily going to need the social service net. But we need the social service net because we need to be able to protect the most vulnerable of our communities.

Hon member Lithakong also asked why I did not mention youth unemployment. I did actually have a section on youth unemployment in the Budget. It was quite long, but it is also on pages 93 to 96, and 113 to 115 of the Overview Book. It is quite a bit, so I would encourage the hon member

to go through those. If there are particular questions for respective departments, to raise them through the respective budget votes.

In terms of the underemployment not being true: it is true. The population growth has been 19,6%. So, when you look at 12,4 % employment growth over the period, you cannot say that there is no employment growth. Because what is happening is that the population growth is outpacing all of the economic gains we are making. I actually do not know of areas currently that are growing economically at 19,6%. So, even 12,4% employment growth in our province is really absolutely. We have outshone ourselves.

In terms of employment for Coloured people. So, in the PERO that we tabled last year, Coloured employment between the Second Quarter of 2019 and Second Quarter of 2024 increased by 6,2%. In the same book, African employment has also increased. The race that you will actually see in the PERO that has decreased, is actually White employment. Now, in the Western Cape, we are not about race, but if you are going to bring statistics, then please also acknowledge that African and Coloured employment over the past decade, has increased.

In terms of Agriculture and farm workers ...[Interjections.] and labour laws, I would like to encourage the hon member because the hon member made reference to the possibility of illegalities. Hon Minister Meyer has been very clear. If there are illegalities that are happening, please report it to him so that they can investigate the respective matters.

In terms of building and the army for certain groups of people. Hon Deputy Speaker, I am not going to endorse blasphemy in this regard, but just to be clear. The areas where we are prioritising hotspots are Delft, Khayelitsha, Philippi East, Nyanga, Mitchells Plain and Gugulethu. This, the hon Minister is doing based on data and evidence because we need to be able to get the crime statistics down in those areas particularly because when you look at the overall data and evidence, that is where the majority of that murder and contact crime is occurring. [Interjections.]

In terms of what hon member Wenger asked us to please review in the PES for population growth, and we are working hard to be able to get National Treasury to really review that formular for the population growth. Part of this is the fact that we are the third largest province in terms of population, while we are getting the fifth largest or fifth smallest share in terms of the Provincial Equitable Share formular.

Hon member Bryant, I agree with you regarding the successes of LEAP, and I hope that the House will support our call for National Government to also increase the SAPS resources, and that it is distributed fairly to the areas that need it the most, and that those be assigned in the areas with the highest crime rates.

To the hon member Marais from the Vryheidsfront – Freedom Front Plus – regarding that we must challenge the housing data. We will definitely

challenge the housing data and hon Mr Simmers is leading that fight to challenge the housing data in this regard.

Hon member Brinkhuis spoke about that our provincial fiscal environment has deteriorated. I just need to correct that. That is not the province that reference was previously made to. It is the National fiscal environment that has deteriorated. He said that we are only spending on secure and leafy suburbs, but hon Deputy Speaker, I just mentioned the six areas, for example, where we are spending our LEAP resources. According to the Opposition, I do not think they would interpret this as leafy suburbs.

Hon member Brinkhuis also spoke about us enhancing transparency in terms of the spending. Hon Deputy Speaker, the type of documentation does not include all the extra documentation that departments also publish. We publish our full Budget, the overview, the summary book. The public procurement disclosure reports to the Province. The infrastructure investment document and report, which we also tabled last week. We table financial and nonfinancial expenditure to the Budget Committee every quarter. We table infrastructure spending and progress every quarter to the Budget Committee.

So, hon Deputy Speaker, I would actually now like to make an executive authority commitment to this House. [Interjections.] If there, and this is particularly to respond to hon member Brinkhuis, if there is a new innovation in transparency that you wish for the Provincial Treasury to assess and

consider, please submit it because I do not recall you ever submitting an innovation and transparency.

But hon Deputy Speaker, here is my condition. Readers are leaders. So, we will consider the new innovation, but the hon members of this House must please read the documents because you cannot not read the documents and then you ask for the same information that was in the same documents that we have already tabled. [Interjections.] So, please, if you promise to ready, we promise to consider new innovations.

To hon member Kaizer-Philander, sorry. †Ja, buurvrou, ons kan nie lank praat nie. Ons het 'n projek. [Tussenwerpsels.] [Yes, neighbour, we cannot speak for long. We have a project.] [Interjections.] We are going to take this Growth for Jobs plan in the Provincial Strategic document, and we are going to push for the Growth for Jobs. We are going to push for Safety. We are going to push for an educated, healthy, caring society and an innovative culture and effective governance.

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: We are pushing for it, and we have tabled a budget for that.

Hon member Christians mentioned incentives for Neighbourhood Watches and the Walking Busses. We do have a very tight fiscal environment in South

Africa, so my first question would really be how do we assess for sustainability? Because that is a big matter that we need to consider in budgets, but perhaps with the respective departments, that is a big question that needs to be answered: sustainability. But not just that sustainability, it is how you are sustainable in the context of the National Government having to actually provide for the South African Police Services, but not adequately or sufficiently providing for it.

In terms of reserves and getting the private sector involved. Definitely, this is why we are exploring alternative and blended financing. We are going to establish an alternative and blended financing framework, and this will assist departments in their work. We will appoint dedicated capacity for this alternative and blended financing that we will be exploring. We will appoint an infrastructure to assess the projects because you have to assess the projects that come through before you go to the Loans Committee at the National Government level. You need to be able to have an infrastructure pipeline and Infrastructure is assisting us with that particularly by putting that infrastructure pipeline together for Government.

So, we are exploring alternative and blended financing, and we are also working with the World Bank and National Treasury on a credit guarantee vehicle in order to de-risk infrastructure projects.

In terms of having dealt with some of the Education items. Then, in terms of the PEPFAR funding gap. Hon Deputy Speaker, I did mention that the reason

we increased the reserves in the first year was in order to anticipate the possible external shocks that might be coming to this system. So, when a shock has not materialised yet, we leave it in the reserve until it is necessary to be able to tap into that. There have been a number of external risks that are in the system at the moment, that have not necessarily materialised just yet.

In terms of saying that Growth for Jobs is just a mantra. It is not just a mantra. It is even in line with the work that was tabled in the National Medium Term Development Plan. It is not just a mantra. We are serious about Growth for Jobs. We have seen it in our previous statistics, and we will work even harder to get our unemployment rate down even further. The hon Premier gave us a very ambitious target to get to, so we need to be able to get to that and we will work very hard in that regard.

The Safety Budget being slashed. So, I just quickly need to... now, I am going back to the reserves because this is an accounting change that the hon member is referring to. So, on page 137, you will see that the Western Cape Liquor Authority is no longer classified as Departmental Receipts. It now goes to the Provincial Revenue Fund first. So, you are going to see a decrease on the one hand, and you are going to see an increase on the other hand. So, the money is not gone. The money is not going somewhere else. It is an accounting change because it is now considered a taxation that has to go to the Revenue Fund specifically.

But despite that, in Year 2 and Year 3, you see that the Budget then compensates and increases again in Year 2 and Year 3. Year 2's one is R779,9 million and in Year 3, it is R812,96 million. But there is a note in the book regarding the changing of how it is considered in accounting terms, essentially.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we do have a lot that we still have to do, but we cannot claim that this Budget is anti-poor. Of this Budget, 80% is going to Social Services and just under 85% of our total Equitable Share is going to Education, to Health and to Social Development.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to end off by just saying thank you to everyone through the different committees, the different chairpersons and the robust debate. We always try our best to take some of the recommendations even and to try and see where we can improve upon our work. As well as thank you my hon colleagues in the Cabinet and as well in the respective departments who worked very hard to put this together.

But hon Deputy Speaker, I want to end off by saying to the people of the Western Cape and I know there is a lot happening on TV right now regarding the National Government. I have got a lot of question regarding whether the Western Cape Government doors are going to close. They will not. The Western Cape Government remains open. ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Whether the National Budget gets passed or not, ...[Interjections.] the Western Cape Government remains open. Our services will not stop. [Interjections.] Part of the reason that our services will not stop is because we prepare. [Interjections.] We prepare for the possibility of external shocks. We prepare for unavoidable and unforeseen expenses. This is what good governance means. [Interjections.] Good governance means planning for the possibility of external shocks and we will make sure that the Western Cape Government remains open for the people of the Western Cape. I thank you. ...[Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. Hon members, that concludes the debate on the Consideration of the Principle of the Bill. Are there any objections to the approval of the Principle of the Bill? Agreed to. The Secretary will now read the Bill.

The SECRETARY: Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B 1–2025].

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, the House will deal with the separate Vote on 4 and 7 April 2025.

That concludes the business of the day. The Secretary will now end the meeting, and all hon members will be exited from this Sitting. Hon members, the House is adjourned.

[House adjourned at 12:25.]