
WEDNESDAY, 30 MARCH 2022

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 Deputy Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may be seated. A very good morning to our members, our Ministers, our guests in the House and those that are connected virtually. As we proceed with the third session of our Appropriation Bills, before I proceed may I just remind you, I am sure by now I do not have to read out all the Rules, but just to ensure that you are all properly connected, that you have sufficient audio and video. If you are joining on the hybrid session and hon members, please, if I can remind you that no interjections are permitted during these hybrid sittings and in this regard I draw the attention

of the hon members to Rule 40 of the Standing Rules.

I will now begin and I will ask the Secretary to read the First Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 7 – Social Development – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2–2022]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr Secretary. I recognise the hon Minister Fernandez.

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier, hon members of this august House, special guests and members of the public that are online, members of the media, fellow South Africans. Good morning, †goeie môre, [good morning] †molweni nonke [greetings everyone], As-Salaam-Alaikum [peace be unto you].

Hon Deputy Speaker, I rise to table the Budget for Vote 7 against the backdrop of two tumultuous financial years. In the wake of the COVID pandemic, our resources have had to be realigned from the original 2019-2024 Provincial Strategic Plan towards supporting the Provincial COVID Recovery Plan, and in particular, its wellbeing and dignity and safety priorities. What was first thought to be a temporary disruption to our way of

life has fundamentally transformed ... [poor connectivity]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, just give me a second. Can we please check that all other microphones are muted and that your two devices are not next to each other? Please, if my Table staff can assist. Thank you very much. Minister, you may proceed.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. What was first thought to be a temporary disruption to our way of life has fundamentally transformed it and presented new challenges and exacerbated existing challenges. COVID-19 has impacted the already fragile socioeconomic landscape. Its impact has been severe and will be felt for some time to come. This is especially so given that our economy was in a technical recession before COVID-19 hit our shores. Communities are soaked in trauma as they reel from unemployment, poverty and many social ills that are prevalent in society.

Earlier this year, Deputy Speaker, the National Minister of Finance, Enoch Godongwana noted that the country's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to grow by an average of only 2,1% this year. This low growth rate has left the nation with a shortfall of funds at the very time when Government services to address socio economic ills are most needed and this situation has of course, been further aggravated by the ongoing misappropriation of public funds at a national level, most notably the very funds which were meant to procure PPE, TERS and Social Relief of

Distressed payments to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable households, workers, farmers and small businesses.

Hon Deputy Speaker, although the Western Cape remains a beacon of hope in a country dominated by ineffective governance, we are not an island. The economic situation of the country is being felt by every man, woman and child in this province and other provinces. At the same time the Western Cape's population is growing rapidly as it is in South Africa's other economic centres, such as Gauteng. The Budget we table today is therefore a stark reflection of the joint challenges posed by decreasing revenue and rapidly increasing need for services.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are clearly being asked to do more with less. Our budget is therefore aimed at harnessing our Department's constitutional and legislative functions in service of the Western Cape Government's COVID Recovery Plan. The Department's focus area in support of this plan into area is the provision of statutory and court ordered interventions for children and youth at risk, humanitarian relief support to communities, support to the homeless, combating the scourge of gender-based violence, improve leveraging and coordination across service delivery areas and spheres of Government to achieve greater impact and efficiency and the filling of priority service delivery frontline posts that are currently vacant.

The total Budget allocation for the Department over the 22 MTEF starts at R2 285 335 000 for 2022/2023 financial year. This amount has been adjusted

to exclude the R391 million allocated to the Early Childhood Development Budget as this function is shifting on Friday, the 1st to Budget Vote 5, the Western Cape Education Department.

Taking this reduction into consideration, our budget for 2022/23 is nearly an R85 million reduction compared to the projected allocation for the year in our pre-COVID MTEF. In the outer years of the MTEF our projected Budget is R2 277 442 000 for 2023/24 and R2 340 016 000 for 2024/25. The totals therefore decrease from year one to year two by R7 893 000 and then increases by R62 574 000 in year three. This, hon Deputy Speaker, is of course subject to any further changes in the highly uncertain economic environment in which we are operating.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this Budget I table today is therefore primarily characterised by either maintaining or cutting our budget allocations from the previous financial year. However, in order to aid us in our work to support the COVID Recovery Plan, the Provincial Treasury has made some additional target allocations to the Department. These include an earmarked amount of R25 million for food relief to vulnerable families that will support food distribution centres and community nutrition development centres across the province. This amount is made over and above and existing R28 million in the Department's Baseline Budget for this purpose, bringing the total allocation for food relief to just over R53 million for 2022/23 year. This amount serves to support the Provincial COVID Recovery Plan, wellbeing and dignity priority area, responding to the food crisis that we are facing in

this province as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic impact thereof.

An earmarked amount of R3 million for the conversion of the Robbie Nurock Community Health Centre into a homeless shelter that will initially accommodate approximately 120 beds, with the possibility of further expansion in the future. During the COVID pandemic the Department has already increased the number of funded bed spaces for homeless adults from 1500 to about 2400 at 27 shelters each day.

We remain aware of the important role that shelters play in ensuring that many vulnerable citizens, who do not have their own homes, are treated with dignity and respect, even though there is no regulatory framework to support these individuals. The Provincial Department assists the homeless by fully or partially funding NPOs that work directly to assist and empower the homeless, with skills training, reuniting them with the families and integrating them into our communities. The Department received an additional R2 million to enable mobile connectivity with many individuals working away from the office. An additional R1 million earmarked for the digitising of the Non-Profit Organisation Management System (NPOMS) and R1 million for the development of a Mobile Client Service System to support social workers in the field more effectively to deliver efficient services.

Hon Deputy Speaker, R21 333 000 has been earmarked for the funding of non-governmental organisations which has been used across various

programmes to help mitigate the large cuts to transfer funding in the Department, a serious issue that I will unpack in a moment.

Funding for safety parents we increased to make provision for a much-needed tariff increase from R27,00 rand to R34,50. I cannot thank each and every safety parent enough. Safety parents are passionate individuals who care deeply about children and help us by opening their homes as places for temporary safe care as an extraordinary measure that can be used by designated social workers or police officials where they believe on reasonable grounds that the child is in immediate danger. As a Department we believe a child's immediate and extended family is best placed for them to flourish and develop. However, if we have reason to believe that a child is unsafe in their own home, they will have to be removed through a detailed process and be placed in a temporary safe care.

Hon Deputy Speaker, R40 million is earmarked for compensation of employees to provide for the 2022/2023 Wage Agreement, which includes a 1,5% pay progression and increases in housing allowances and medical aid contributions over the MTEF. This additional allocation is currently only applicable to the 2022/23 financial year. No provision has been made yet in the MTEF for the carry-through effect of the Wage Agreement.

Apart from these additional earmarked amounts, the Department has made provision to cover all of its existing contractual obligations entered into via procurement processes and our operational expenditure received inflationary

increases over the MTEF to cover statutory price hikes in areas such as security services.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the additional earmarked amounts received from Treasury will assist us in our drive to implement the COVID Recovery Plan Priorities that we support, and in the case of wellbeing and dignity, that we lead. However, I return to my earlier point that this Budget sees more cuts than we can afford, and there is no avoiding the reality that we are facing a hard year ahead. Various measures have been put in place to minimise the direct impact of these cuts on service delivery to citizens.

These include, and are not limited to, we have started engagements with various NPOs in an effort to understand and assist as best we can with the limited resources available to us. No new staff or external bursaries will be awarded for the year, although current bursary obligations have and will be maintained. Maintenance budgets for office and facilities have been reduced. Austerity measures for stationery, printing and office supplies will be applied, hence my having to read my speech back-to-back. The procurement of IT equipment is being reduced, and it affects the Departmental Technology Refresh Program. The allocation for IT equipment will be maintained over the MTEF. Hon Deputy Speaker, of all the cuts, I am particularly concerned about the impact of the R25 million shortfall of funds to fill the vacant posts. The Department has had to reduce its recruitment plan to cover the shortfall. This will result in significant additional pressure on the remaining staff in the Department, who I might add have worked really hard throughout this

COVID pandemic. The workforce is tired, they are stretched to capacity and face even greater demands, as we see and have to contend with an increased population growth, deepening social ills and widespread economic hardship.

I am even more concerned about the sustainability of our key partners in service delivery. The non-government organisations that we fund, many organisations have already closed their doors or are on the brink of closure due to the reduction in private sector and donor funding. COVID-19 as well as the preceding economic downturn has placed immense pressure on the NGO sector and irregular sources of funding from both private and public sectors. Therefore the work and services that NGOs – particularly in the social sector – have continued to provide, is commendable, but it is becoming increasingly unsustainable. Sadly, the Budget we table today sees a net reduction in transfers of around R40 million.

Hon Deputy Speaker, a shrinking NPO sector will render more citizens vulnerable and without adequate welfare services to assist them. In turn, this places at risk the Department's ability to cope with the needs of the citizens as enshrined in the Constitution. Services affected include child protection, humanitarian relief, youth development, and substance-use disorder services, as well as services to persons with disabilities and older persons. We are currently involved and engaging in a series of meetings with the NGO sector and I have committed together with my team to doing everything we can to mitigate the impact of these cuts for the coming years, coming here and improving our support over the medium term.

I acknowledge and thank the entire non-governmental organisation sector, NGOs, NPOs, CPOs for their support and valuable contribution in alleviating many of the social ills and challenges faced by our most vulnerable citizens, and deeply regret that we cannot do more to sustain our support for the valuable work that you do.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I will provide a brief overview of how these additions and cuts affects each programme:

Programme 1, the decrease of R810 000 from the revised estimate of R238 895 000 in 2021 to R238 085 000 in 2022/23 is due to a reduction in baseline allocations. This will affect support services in the Department which has a knock-on effect on service delivery. In the outer years of the MTEF the budget allocation for Program 1 increases to R245 723 000 and in 2023/24 increases to R249 127 000.

Under Programme 2, Social Welfare Services, the decrease of R25 133 000 ran from the revised estimate of R1 065 000 000 in the 2021/22 year to R1 040 000 000 in 2022/23 is due to the reduction in the baseline allocations and budget pressures. The budget allocation thereafter increases to R1 049 000 000 in 2023/24 and then increases to R1 073 000 000 in 2024/25. The impact of baseline budget reductions will lead to less transfer in subsidy payments to older persons and services to people with disabilities and an inability to fill many social service posts within the Department.

Programme 3, which is children and families, the increase of R9 985 000 from the revised estimate of R438 361 000 in 2021/22 to R448 346 000 in 22/23 is due to the additional funding received for Social Development Welfare NPOs and homeless shelters. The budget allocation hereafter decreases to R448 309 000 in 2023/24 and then it goes back up to R471 134 000 in 2024/25. At the same time, there are some budget reductions which will affect social service organisations supporting families.

In terms of Programme 4, Restorative Services, the increase of R10 291 000 or 2,2% from the Revised Estimate of R458 488 000 in 2021/22 to R468 779 000 in 2022/23 is due to additional funding received for Social Development Welfare NPOs. The budget allocation thereafter increases to R474 469 000 in 2023/24, and R485 319 000 in 2024/25.

The Gender-Based Violence Programme will therefore not face significant budget cuts, but budget reductions will affect substance abuse and social crime prevention over the short term and some of these are based in our GBV NPOs.

Programme 5, Development and Research, there is a decrease of R3 488 000 or 3% in the revised budget of R93 433 000 in 2021/22 to R89 985 000 in 2022/23. In the outer years of the MTEF, this amount is projected to decrease further to R59 927 000. Since the R25 million earmarked allocation for food relief is a once off allocation, the programme's allocation is projected to increase slightly from there to R61 804 000 in 2024/25. The immediate

impact of baseline budget reductions for the year 2022/23 will lead to less transfer and subsidy payments for the EPWP Programme and Youth Cafés with the EPWP reduced to the R4 978 000 Incentive Grant.

In conclusion, hon Deputy Speaker, the reality of fiscal constraints and Government-wide reprioritisation across the MTEF demands that this Department and the entire Social Development Sector or Social Sector, establish innovative ways in which our services can be delivered to the citizens of the Western Cape.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has compounded socioeconomic uncertainties, requiring a transversal whole-of-society approach to promoting improved safety, wellbeing and dignity. We definitely need to work with other spheres and departments of Government, civil society organisations, the private sector, and most importantly communities in order to move forward towards recovery. In this regard, we will continue to build relationships with all stakeholders who have an interest in improving the lives of residents in the Western Cape.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic will not deter the Department from striving to deliver a comprehensive network of Social Development Services both effectively and efficiently to the poor, the vulnerable and those with special needs, and, before I conclude, I would like to thank all members of this august House for their support and robust oversight. I also wish to thank the Head of Department Dr Robert MacDonald, the management and

staff of the Department of Social Development, our NPO partners and importantly, all the social service professionals throughout the province who assist us daily.

I also wish to thank the hon member Gillion for support as the Chairperson to this Committee and I would like to take the opportunity to formally welcome the hon member Plato as the Chair for the Standing Committee and I wish to say thank you to all the members of the Committee. Your support has been invaluable. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I now recognise hon Bakubaku-Vos.

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. Am I audible?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are audible, thank you.

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. Deputy Speaker, hon Leader of the Opposition, hon MEC and hon members. Yesterday Stats SA released the Quarterly Labour Force Survey for Quarter 4 of 2021 showing that the official unemployment rate in the country increased by 0,4% to 35,3% in Quarter 4 2021 compared to Quarter 3 2021.

The increase was recorded in five provinces, with the largest increase

recorded in KwaZulu-Natal, followed by Mpumalanga and the Western Cape.

The year-on-year changes to the unemployment rate in the province showed a 5,5% increase from 22,5% in Quarter 4 2020 to 28% in Quarter 4 2021. Over the same period the expanded unemployment rate increased from 26,8% to 30,4.

The Western Cape once prided by the Premier as the Province for jobs, now has an unemployment rate of over 30%. This tragedy ends really scary as the majority of the unemployed are youth, including those that are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). Nationally, the NEET rate increased by 2,9% from 41,8% to 44,7% in Quarter 2021. With the Western Cape being home to 2,4 million young people between the ages of 15 and 34 years, surely we have to be concerned and scared at this latest unemployment figures. This is a ticking time bomb that can explode any second from now.

The Department in its Annual Performance Plan has noted that – are this proportionality affected by unemployment and poverty?

The Department committed that it will continue to provide programmes and interventions that facilitate the holistic, positive development of young people to be productive individuals as family and community members. As stated in the act of this Department this will be done through digital literacy skills, stimulating entrepreneurship, develop basic digital competencies to address the digital divide, with the particular emphasis of Not in Education,

Employment or Training, youth in rural communities.

In addition, the Department will provide after-school programmes at Youth Cafés to support youth in transition, Grades 10 to 12, with academic and overall skills development. Further offerings at Youth Cafés includes sign language courses, sexual health related service to raise awareness and prevalence of GBV; drug and alcohol counselling as well as community-based crime prevention [Inaudible, poor connectivity.]

Hon members, in light of the above challenges and the stated interventions to address them, it is shocking that the budget for the Youth Development Programme of this Department has been cut. The Budget for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Rehabilitation Programme has been cut. During our engagements in the Standing Committee meeting we highlighted our discomfort with the direction the Department is taking to address the challenges of youth development. In response to the increased demand for services the Department cuts budget. This will not only limit access to service for youth on the ground, but it will also lead to possible job losses in the NPOs whose budget has been cut.

The Act acknowledges that drug use, misuse and abuse continue to present challenges to the health, safety and wellbeing of individual families and communities in the province. If you understand this reality, then why are you cutting the budget allocation for this? [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, if you can just take your seat please.

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: Deputy Speaker, we have proposed...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, just take your seat. Can I have one minute.

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: Okay.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: One minute. Hon Sayed?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker, just a caution, the heckling and discussions has the ability to disturb the speaker, particularly in the context of an online hybrid sitting. That is why you have amended the Rules and that... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, hon Sayed, I did not hear, was that in the House?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): In the House, yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will monitor.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): In the House. If we can just, we are not saying people must not heckle, but if it can be toned down. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will certainly check, sir, thank you very much. Hon member Bakubaku-Vos, you may continue.

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker, and I thank Comrade Sayed for raising that. We have proposed in the Standing Committee meeting the urgent need for this Department and the Department of Health to partner on programmes to substance-use disorders. [Poor connectivity.]

The MEC must give us an update on the development on the Drug Master Plan aimed at combating and reducing the prevalence of substance-use disorders. What is the update regarding the establishment of Local Drug Action Committees and when will this be established in all municipalities and how will you fund them while cutting budgets? What we need is an additional Drug Rehabilitation Centre especially in working-class communities. Moreover, the EPWP and Youth Cafés are not enough to resolve the above youth challenges. We have raised in the Committee meeting that we need a Youth Development Strategy in the Province that will speak directly to these social pathologies affecting youth.

Member Kama made a seminar call to the MEC Marais during the deliberations on Vole 14, Cultural Affairs and Sport, which is the lead Department for coordinating of youth programmes in the Province. I reiterate the cause and the demand for a Youth Development Policy. If it is true that indeed a policy in this regard exists, then make a copy of such policy

available.

Hon members, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families, poverty and unemployment is not receiving the attention it deserves. The disease has left a number of children orphaned in the province.

There are a total of 28 child-headed households in the Department's database and there is no data on the number of child-headed households created by COVID-19. I call on the MEC and the Department to conduct further investigation on this.

In the face of the rising unemployment rate and the poverty level, this Budget does not make any additional allocation for humanitarian relief. The 2020 General Household Survey reported that 13% of children and 10% of the total population are living in the households reporting insufficient food. There is no doubt that this number has increased drastically due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department needs to conduct its research to provide the latest data on the prevalence of child hunger and food poverty in the province.

In response to this, this Department's budget for humanitarian relief is a mere R58 million. Remember, member Mackenzie also complained about this in the Standing Committee meeting and was told that the additional R53 million for food relief, which the MEC claimed as her victory last year, was actually an allocation from the National Government.

This Government only has the R58 million to spend on Community Nutrition and Development Centres (CNDC) as well as on providing cooked meals to qualifying beneficiaries at 105 feeding sites across the province and 411 community kitchens. As already stated last week during the budget debate, this is not enough and will not bring sustainable solution for poverty. We must continue making calls for the accelerated implementation of the basic income.

I want to reiterate the call I made last week for this Provincial Government to consider increasing the number of funded CNDC in poor working-class communities. One CNDC for a large community like Stellenbosch, for instance, is not enough. There is a serious need to consider increasing this number of funded CNDCs. Moreover, hon MEC, a number of funded CNDCs operates on very small spaces and many are in need of infrastructure maintenance projects. Your Department must find means to make this possible.

The HOD Mr Robert McDonald rejected our calls out of hand and claimed that they do not have budget for humanitarian relief and additional CNDCs, and redirected us to the National Government.

Finance Minister Comrade Enoch Godongwana announced in his Budget that the Department of Social Development will receive the largest allocation of R58,6 billion over the medium term. This will go forward toward Project 4. This will go towards Project 4. ...pressed to initiate a new expanded Child

Support Grant for double-orphans, this is to encourage the care of orphans within families rather than foster care. Secondly, to provide for inflationary increases to permanent social grants; thirdly, R44 billion is allocated for a 12-month extension of the R350 Social Relief of Distress Grant. Hon members, we must welcome this intervention by the National Government.

Deputy Speaker, I remain concerned by this Department's role in the hiding of Fritz's "sex for job scandal". Our questions regarding the number of Fritz' victims who are working for the Department are not fully answered. We have written to hon Plato requesting an urgent meeting to receive a detailed update from the HOD about what he knows about the Fritz scandal. We are yet to receive the data. Hon Mackenzie, whose constituency is in Mitchells Plain where the victims resided, must be given a chance to come clean about what he knows. We want the Fritz report to be made available to members. This is an expanded investigation. Premier Winde must not treat it as his personal report. It is clear that the Premier is in contravention of Rule 73 on refusal to disclose information. [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member...

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: It is shocking that there is no GBV policy in the Provincial Government. The budget for GBV is not enough. The Victim Empowerment Programme only has a budget of R67 million to design and implement integrated programmes and services to support care and empower victims of violence and crime, in particular women and children. This is

simply not enough.

Deputy Speaker, while we welcome the commitment to provide specialised social work interventions to schoolgoing children and youth in the [Inaudible.] Risk Policy, presence in the Province, we want to remind the Department about our calls for placement of unemployed Social Work graduates in schools. There is a high demand for psychosocial support in schools. It is for this reason that we have called for the partnership between this Department and the Western Cape Educational Department to place the unemployment social work graduates in schools.

There are shortages of social workers in the Department. The official has explained that there is a shortfall of 147 social workers at coalface. This contributes to a high social-worker-to-population ratio.” We are calling on the Department to create more employment opportunities for unemployed social workers graduates.

We remain alarmed by the high number of child deaths in the province. Over 1000 children died in the province in the past 12 months, including those who were murdered and those who died in accidents. This proves that Western Cape, especially the poor working-class communities, is not safe for children. A number of children fall victim to gangsterism. We need more programmes to protect children.

We welcome the Budget increase for the Child Care and Protection

Programme but we are concerned with budget cuts for care and services to funding these programmes. The ongoing child murders clearly show that...

[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, your time is up.

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: ...we need to give the Children's Commissioner more funding and make it an independent entity. [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You need to stop, hon member.

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: We are shocked by the budget cuts for the programme service to older persons as well as services to persons with disabilities.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member!

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: This is totally unacceptable and we will not support a budget that will weaken support to vulnerable persons.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, your time is up.

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: I have told the MEC about the case of a person with disability who is facing eviction from an old-age home in Gugulethu.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member!

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: We are calling for the MEC's urgent intervention on this matter. The ANC does not support this budget. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can we mute her please? Why has she not been able to be muted? All right. Can I find out why we are not able to do that, to mute, when I am asking? Please! Clearly the member cannot hear but I cannot have her take over for another 10 minutes. I am sorry, hon member, you have been muted. You were way over your time.

Thank you very much, hon members. I will only do that if it really is that you are not listening or hearing me. I now recognize hon member Mackenzie.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Thank you, Deputy Speaker, and thank you, Minister Fernandez and her Department for this Budget Vote. We in fact welcome the allocation for the 2022/2023 financial year as part of the *Budget to Push Forward*.

Hon members, hon Bakubaku-Vos made three very important statements actually, but she is directing it to the wrong people, and I am going to quote herself, so hon Bakubaku-Vos, via you, Deputy Speaker, I am quoting her. She said if you understand the realities you would not do budget cuts.

Her second statement is that Government – I presume she wanted to speak to her own political party – does not understand the impact of unemployment and COVID-19 and does not receive – I think she meant the impact or the attention it deserved and the statement, her third statement is on increased funding for social services.

Now we all wanted to do that. In fact, hon Deputy Speaker, I would like to drive a Ferrari, but I cannot afford it. That is the reality of the matter, and she is not addressing the right people responsible for the situation that we find ourselves in at the moment. Minister Fernandez and her Department and the Western Cape Government have gone to extraordinary lengths to support all the organisations that rightfully so deserves funding, gender-based organisations, NGOs, many of our NGOs dealing with the social ills, including the millions of undocumented individuals that are in this country that this Department and this Government consistently in the Western Cape, like many other provinces, are trying to accommodate with social services, in hospitals in schools. That is what we are doing and the reason that we are sitting with this problem is because the party that she is a member in good standing of, including their bad partners, the GOOD party, has built a washing line instead of a proper border fence.

The reasons we are dealing with the social challenges, because our borders are porous. So with three very important statements, she needs to make in ANC branch meetings, even if it is only the three branches of the 116 that they have, that is where those statements should be addressed, and should be

addressed in the National Assembly, the National Council of Provinces, so her statements are valid, but she is addressing the wrong people, because they are responsible for what we are sitting with, hon member.

Hon Ministers and hon members, we know the demand for social release has significantly increased over the last two years and it was this Western Cape Government and this Department that made available R53 million, if I remember correctly, under the last budget and this financial year, a further R25 million to strengthen food relief measures, including an additional R15 million, so she misunderstood my quote in the meeting or she did not properly read the page in the budget book and I am going to quote from that budget book:

“The Department further strengthens food relief measures to support...”

†Hulle het dit sterker gemaak, in Afrikaans. [They made it stronger, in Afrikaans.] I do not know what the Xhosa word is, but I am sure the hon member can Google it. So hon members, we strengthened, it means to make it stronger, not decrease. That is as far as I know, the Oxford definition would go. Hon member, we are sitting with a SASSA problem in this country. In fact, it was the hon Lindiwe Zulu, I think, who said the last time there is a corruption problem in her Department. We now see that hon Bathabile Dlamini, who destroyed the Social Development Department, was found guilty and ironically on 1 April, on April Fools' Day she will be sentenced, but we are the fools. The poor are the fools on April Fools' Day, because she

single-handedly destroyed Social Development SASSA in this country. It was her Social Development. Right now, if you go to Mitchells Plain, the people outside Social Development Offices stand in the rain to receive their social grants. The people outside post offices, they made no provision, the Department, that the April fool will receive on 1 April and make responsible for that, and despite, yes of course budget cuts take place, because of the National Government we have to find the best way in dealing with the province and interestingly, hon Bakubaku-Vos did not deal with a very important matter. If she goes to SASSA's website, she will see the Western Cape has 16 SASSA offices; the Northern Cape, 57, which one can understand the size of their province, but the Eastern Cape, the most corrupt province in the country, has also over 50 offices. I wonder what they do in those offices except for stealing – the words of my cousin, †“hulle gaan net werk toe om te steel in daai provinsie [they only go to work in that province to steal.”]

But in the Free State, one of the smallest provinces, we have 23 offices. If hon Bakubaku-Vos and the ANC really, really cared about social development, about gender-based violence, but all the issues they would like to talk about they should ask for consistency across the board. 16 offices versus 23, in our poor rural side of the Western Cape, it is a disgrace, and I am deplored at some of these statistics which the hon members in their inputs and via their colleagues in the NCOP or in the National Assembly, do not once raise.

Last year, we went on two oversight visits and I know the hon Bakubaku-Vos was very helpful and very good on those oversight visits, where we dealt with our senior citizens, our elder and our old age persons, and we welcome the support this Department has given to those members of our community who sadly many people do not take care of, hon Deputy Speaker, and I want to take this opportunity to ask that all of us, including members of this House, when we – if you know of people in the senior homes or the elder homes that we ask our community members, or cousins, our fathers and mothers, not to dump the individuals in these care homes. That is our collective responsibility, because it is sad to see that many of these individuals, their families, do not call them. Their families do not visit them that we really take care of us. So we do support this budget, hon Deputy Speaker.

It is tough times and it is not going to get easy when you sit with 47% unemployment caused by the National ANC Government, who sadly do not pay any attention to the unemployment crisis which is rife. It is a disaster. That is another disaster and none of the policies that her party has implemented is dealing with their disaster. Cabinet members who waste money, Cabinet members who bizarrely tried to implement policies last year, in fact, the Social Development Minister, Minister Fernandez will respond to that 12 000 or some bizarre policy that they – they draconically where they had to withdraw after the middle class outraged about it. It was their ANC Cabinet and the ANC in the Western Cape, †tjoepestil, doodstil! [Silent, dead quiet!

They say nothing on these critical policies that impact the Western Cape of which they are elected members of the Legislature for, so we fully support this budget and we call on all members to work with our Social Development Department, work with our communities, with all the scourge in our social ills in our communities to ensure that we can play a proactive part in helping this Department, given the terrible national governance ill policies and implications of this budget. We thank the Minister. We thank the Department and my colleagues. Let us support this Budget and work to make our communities better. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now call on hon Makamba-Botya.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: [No audible reply.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you there, hon Makamba-Botya, are you online? I do not see. She is online.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Deputy Speaker, am I audible?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I can hear you now. You may proceed.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Okay. Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker.

The hunger and food security are some of the key challenges which continue to affect communities in the Western Cape. The recent figures from the

General Household Survey Project that 17% of households in the province go to bed without food; this is very much concerning taking into account that such percentage does not take into account the homeless staying in the streets.

The Provincial Department of Social Development must provide more funding to NGOs that distribute food packages to those without food. The Department should also encourage the establishment of new NGOs in remote areas specifically, which it will fund to distribute food. Unemployment, Deputy Speaker, is also a major contributor to the hunger in our communities and the Department does not only assist people in getting food but must also assist them to access employment opportunities. Deputy Speaker, the Department should work with community leaders, social service personnel, and NGOs in order to identify and assist child-headed households. The Department needs to make a real intervention in this regard to make sure that children in these households get birth certificates; get registered for child support grants, enrolled for school and get adequate food assistance. Child-headed households, Deputy Speaker, remain vulnerable in our society and a big percentage of this budget must go towards their assistance.

Deputy Speaker, the Department must play a leading role to make sure that homeless people are removed from the streets and housed in decent shelters. They must be provided three meals a day and those struggling with substance addiction or abuse must also get medical social assistance. Deputy Speaker, this Department should also pay attention to the issue of crime related to

GBV, unlike the Premier of the Western Cape and other Departments which do not want to accept the real impact of crime in the Western Cape. We have now recently had a case in Theewaterskloof of a councillor who has resigned because of the shenanigans that are happening in that municipality of a councillor who is not expelled yet. She has been implicated in the GBV matter.

At least this Department notes it as a real challenge with Western Cape demonstrating higher numbers of Gender Based Violence and sexual-related crimes when compared to other provinces in South Africa. This is a real challenge that must be tackled head-on and we must not be told that the Safety Plan is working whilst women and children continue to be sexually violated and abused in greater numbers on a daily basis.

This Department, Deputy Speaker, must work on measures that will prevent social ills. Shelters for women suffering from abuse must also be increased in order for every woman in this province to get assistance and care. The Department, Deputy Speaker, must also run an extensive programme which shows the youth the dangers of substance abuse as a prevention measure, and also assist those already battling with substance abuse.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member, your time is up.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: On that note, Deputy Speaker, we are not supporting the Vote. Thank you. [Time expired.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Can I just check, Mr Secretary, is the GOOD party online? I recognise GOOD, hon member August.

Mr S N AUGUST: Hon Deputy Speaker, Social Development has for the longest period of time proven to be the antidote to crime. In a country where crime happens at every turn of the corner, and especially in a province as unsafe as the Western Cape, it is greatly disappointing that the Western Cape Government has not positioned the Department of Social Development as a weapon with which to combat inequality and a direct intervention to decrease crime. The Department notes the importance of its function to provide a framework of social intervention. However, community driven action remains outside its area of focus.

We acknowledge that the pandemic hampered many development initiatives. However, this very Department has been struggling to adequately spread its budget priorities as it is operated in a stressed fiscal environment since before the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Provincial Department of Social Development celebrates the transfer of safe houses from the National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure as a success story. Considering this Department's own shortcoming. It is quite disappointing that they are either unable or incapable to think outside the box when it comes to prioritising key interventions that can impact lives, fight inequality, and empower communities to take charge of their future.

In the 2022/23 Budget Address, MEC Maynier allocated an additional spend on Social Development of R136 million over the medium term. These funds will go far if MEC Fernandez should start considering inter-departmental programmes, especially with Community Safety for this Administration to get a holding grip on the escalating crime and community violence. Social Development can do a great deal more, and it requires those in charge to start applying their minds innovatively with the meagre financial resources that they have. Thank you. Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon August. I now recognise – I think hon Marais is not on. Mr Secretary, not on, okay. We will move on to hon Brinkhuis. Over to you.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. †Bismillah hieragman nir rajeem. [In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious and The Most Merciful.]

The wellbeing and social development of communities in the Western Cape is in a very, very big crisis. The Al Jama-ah believes that the Budget for 2022 is a far cry from the social needs of the poor and the needy and thus this budget will not address the social needs of the Western Cape. Shelters for abused women and children struggling to keep their doors open. There are still not enough psychologists and social workers to counsel school children.

Also, what plans are there to prevent children from begging at dangerous

intersections on public roads? This has been happening for many, many years where young children are begging at robots during school hours and after school hours. I thank you, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Brinkhuis. I now recognise hon member Plato.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Hear-hear!

Mr D PLATO: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon members, hon Minister Fernandez. Hon Deputy Speaker, I rise in support of the Provincial Budget for Vote 7. I welcome the allocation of almost R2,2 billion Rand for the Western Department of Social Development's 2022/2023 Budget.

This Department has a major role to play in the eradication of poverty, unemployment and other pervasive social ills such as gender-based violence within this province. This is a broad mandate, and one which we, as a Provincial Legislature, must make every effort to support because a strong Department of Social Development means a nurtured and guided youth, relief for the unemployed, food for the hungry and skills for the workers of tomorrow.

In fact, when one reads the Department's Annual Performance Plan and understands how much the Department has and seeks to impact the lives of the most vulnerable in the province, one can only applaud our Minister of

Social Development, Sharna Fernandez and the team for a job well done. The simple fact is that the Western Cape Department of Social Development is functional and effective. We are proud of the work that the Provincial Department and its entities have achieved in the face of growing callousness and corruption by the National Department and its entities.

If there is less corruption it means there are more funds available that we do not cut budgets as the other members have indicated. That is where it is coming from. We can all see that the National Department of Social Development is on the brink of total collapse. Where have you heard, the Minister arrested and appear in Court for corruption activities and that sort of thing? In the absence of an effective ANC National Department, it has been the Provincial Government that stepped up in order to protect the dignity of the most vulnerable in society. I am sure that there are some in this House, who are itching to rebut the DA successes by highlighting the supposed successes of the African National Congress Government in terms of Social Development and Social Welfare for the vulnerable.

Speaker, there is nothing for them to boast about, especially not in relation to the following, and listen to this hon Deputy Speaker. The ANC Minister of Social Development, attempted to block NGOs and good Samaritans from providing food to the poor and vulnerable at the beginning of the lockdown, It took the DA and NGOs going to Court for this decision by Minister Lindiwe Zulu to be reversed.

While millions of poor South Africans were seeking relief from the meagre R350 Social Relief of Distress Grant, public service and police were unlawfully benefiting from this relief. When the poorest of the poor required SASSA's help during their most difficult time during the pandemic, their offices were running at minimal capacity even during those times the draconian state of disaster allowed for increased staff capacity and then I want to ask what hon Mackenzie has said hon Deputy Speaker, the long queues, people standing the whole night long. The other day I visited the office in Bellville. You cannot believe it, queues up to 500 / 600 metres long and that sort of thing and that is happening in South Africa and then we, the DA, gets criticised for not doing enough in Cape Town and in the Western Cape. But who is in charge of those offices and who is mistreating their own people? It is the ANC themselves, and we must face the brunt for that and that message the ANC must get.

During the lockdown, when our most vulnerable were seeking relief, disability grant recipients had to endure the indignity of long queues to renew their applications. These applicants were met with water cannons from the police supposedly at the behest of the National Minister of Social Development.

Deputy Speaker, in the vilest display of the ANC's disgrace the ANC National Cabinet spent R19 million on luxury cars. When millions of South Africans were desperate, had to stay behind closed doors during the hard lockdown without finding work, and when we could not go and say goodbye

to our loved ones who passed from the pandemic, when the National Government and its Ministers showed disdain, this Provincial Government showed care and dignity and continues to do so going into this new financial year. The Department's projects over the last financial year focused on providing relief to the most vulnerable in our society.

[Inaudible.] on the Child Initiative Project will support our youth. The Youth Café Programmes provide skills for our teenagers and young adults. Our feeding projects provide vital food relief for the hungry and our partnerships with NPOs allow us to provide critical services to the physically and mentally disabled.

The comment about the Youth Cafés and Programmes and Projects and that sort of thing, I just want to remind the members it is not only this Department focusing on youth and youth interventions and projects. It is with other Departments exactly the same. We heard about it yesterday and the day before, education, sports, arts and culture and also some other departments, such apart from Social Development.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this Department's mandate is becoming even broader and this is it, and looking at the figures that are impacting our figures and people refuse to understand that, the in-streaming of people from other provinces could potentially increase and we see the increase already.

Looking at the last unemployment figures released by Stats SA a couple of

days ago, in two provinces that are bordering the Western Cape, Northern Cape and Eastern Cape, the unemployment figures have risen to well over 50%. In the Eastern Cape this figure is at 50,1% and actually in the Northern Cape 50,1% and in the Eastern Cape it stands at 53,2%.

Our residents in addition to underlying population growth mean that the Department has to serve and this is it, hon Deputy Speaker, more people with a budget that is constrained as a result of the National Government endemic looting and corruption, and we need to cater for all those people coming in. We do not say no for that and people refuse, members refuse to understand that hon Speaker, the budget needs to be stretched to cater for those people, to give them relief, to help them, to support them, and that is where our unemployment figure is also beginning to rise steadily in relation to people coming and seeking relief in the Western Cape. They cannot get it in their own province, because that is where the looting and corruption are taking place. They come and look for refuge and comfort in the Western Cape. That is what the facts are telling us.

Despite the budgetary limitations across the board, we are pleased by the continued commitment by the Department to support communities and that support, as the hon Minister has indicated in her speech that will continue. To address social ills and imbalances in the Western Cape communities is a mammoth task and a whole-of-society approach is required if we wish to overcome the present challenges in respect of the hardships our people are facing. The Department continues to support issues related to GBV and we

support these measures. I am not going to say much more about that. I think the hon Minister was quite clear about GBV.

The Department addresses these issues with partners such as NPOs and other welfare organisations and even other State Departments. We duly recognise the major role played by NGOs and welfare organisations, with many of them operating under difficult circumstances. We thank the many NGOs that have and continue to partner with the Department in delivering services to our citizens.

Despite budgetary constraints brought on by the National Government we need to wage the war against poverty and other social ills. This Department is gaining momentum in making huge strides towards this objective and making impact where it most matters. This budget speaks to poverty alleviation and the eradication of GBV as well as addressing unemployment, women and children's issues and the reintegration of the homeless. GBV continues to be a key priority of the Department, and the Minister rightly said, the Department does everything possible to play a meaningful role in eradicating that problem with the stringent partnerships of our NGOs and whole-of-society approach.

Breaking the cycle of poverty and unemployment remains imperative. We welcome the Department's whole-of-society approach towards each of us playing our part in ensuring that the message of education, being the key to empowerment, is steadfastly implanted in the communities across the board.

Our people must get this message, we can overcome poverty, we can overcome hardships if we take certain steps and one of the critical steps to take is to make sure our children stay in school, hon Deputy Speaker, that they pass matric and then after matric not to go and work, that they attend a college, that they attend a university, that they obtain a form of a qualification that will open doors for them. As Nelson Mandela have rightly said a number of years ago, education and education will be the key to empowerment. I think that message stays true even years after his passing.

Deputy Speaker, we also acknowledge our social workers who have the enormous task of dealing with a variety of cases across the province. Deputy Speaker, while the continuation of the SRD Grant will go a long way in assisting the poor, the only way we can elevate our people from poverty is through creating conducive environments to shine, access opportunities, be entrepreneurial and create jobs. We especially welcome the increase of almost R10 million that is allocated to the protecting and nurturing of our youth. This funding will go a long way to ending cycles of poverty, unemployment and crime at their source, and in conclusion, finally, hon Deputy Speaker, the Budget of the Department of Social Development speaks to many pressing issues of our most vulnerable society and with programmes such as “I am the Child” and other initiatives, concentrating on the hungry, destitute, receiving the necessary assistance they require. It is with confidence and great confidence that we support this Budget Vote. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now recognise hon Minister Fernandez.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Deputy Speaker, allow me to thank all the members for their contribution to this very important debate today. I note that a lot of what I mentioned in my opening remarks has been repeated and the members are correct. Crime is on the increase, poverty is increasing, unemployment is increasing, but what has not happened is funding to the province has not increased based on the number of citizens living in this province. So we have not increased social workers, we have not increased teachers, we have not increased nurses and doctors, yet we are placed under immense pressure and I would like to believe that we have become the victims of our own success, because you see people coming from other provinces to come and enjoy the services in this province.

Allow me though, to preface my response to all the hon members and I also want to say, Deputy Speaker, it is inappropriate, in my opinion through you, for members to posit information here as fact, when it is not in fact, true. It is actually factually incorrect and I will alert you to the Stats SA GBV stats which will actually show where the highest numbers of gender based violence is. I have always been very clear that the Department of Social Development cannot or should not be politicised because hunger, gender-based violence, addiction does not know a colour.

†Hy dra nie 'n *skipper* nie. Dit is nie geel of rooi of blou of groen nie. [He's

not wearing a skipper. It is not yellow or red or blue or green.]

When people are hungry, we have a duty to serve them. When children are enslaved to addiction, we have a duty to serve them and so it is in this respect that I am going to respond in a manner that is unbecoming of me but I do believe that there are some real issues that need to be surfaced because we cannot be taking responsibility for a dysfunctional National Government. It is imploding, they do not have a “send / receive” on their laptops, I have sent endless emails to SASSA. I do not even have the courtesy of a reply, not even an acknowledgement of receipt.

On the days of Minmec meetings, you get your agenda on the morning. It is a complete shambles. So I want to say that, despite all of this, this Department with just over 2500 staff have worked hard and relentlessly to keep themselves intact because the Department too have human beings who have been impacted by COVID. So I want to say that but, Deputy Speaker, it would be remiss of me not to mention the failure of SASSA, and as the hon Mackenzie mentioned, maybe the anger or the responses are misdirected, but SASSA has a duty in terms of the social services app to provide Social Relief of Distress, and what has happened, when COVID came along, SASSA no longer did school food parcels, school uniforms, starter kits for fires, they switch to SRD 350 and that was the solution to this problem. Well guess what happened? 13 million people applied and the system crashed and then my office became a call centre for the National SASSA. Do you know that a SASSA official from Namibia called the Western Cape to ask us to get in

touch with SASSA. That is how bad it is.

When we talk about – the hon Mackenzie raised the number of SASSA offices, hon Deputy Speaker, I was in Khayelitsha last week. We have a shared service office which is owned by the Department of Social Development. Yet SASSA has taken over that entire office. It is a complete mess. The dignity and wellbeing of the beneficiaries waiting in that queue, there is just no regard, and again, I am going to be writing a letter and I trust that the Minister is going to respond.

It is unacceptable that in a province where we have the highest number of people with disability grants, you might remember last year I had to basically summon SASSA and thereafter we met them once a month, every Monday from 02:00 to 03:30, to help them work down that 52,000 disability grants because they had no plan on the first day that I met him, and unfortunately, SASSA has dropped the ball on the most vulnerable in this province. We talk about the draconian regulations that were implemented. Many of you will remember, we were told we could not buy chicken at Woolworths. We could not wear *plakkies*, all of the above, and then we heard about the ECD Sector or NPOs that could not serve hot food. The insanity of SAPS who should be assigned to taking care of crime, SAPS was going around acting on an imperative or a policy stance that was taken in KwaZulu Natal and went around to NPOs in this province to close NPOs from providing vulnerable hungry children with a hot meal of porridge every morning. It took civil society, hon Deputy Speaker, to step up and say, “Minister Fernandez, we

support the view that you make, that children cannot be deprived of a hot meal”, whoever conjured up that regulation, but sadly, I think yesterday in the House we heard about the quality of our thinking, I think there is a need to improve the quality of our thinking. So we have the Stimulus Relief Fund, so I hear the hon member Bakubaku-Vos, and maybe I shall start from the top which is the easier way to go.

The hon Bakubaku-Vos talks about firstly, a Youth Development Strategy. The Youth Development Strategy is firmly vested in the dignity, in the wellbeing and dignity workstream and I think it is an important point and Premier has been trying to make – all the Ministers have been trying to make it but the Opposition refuses to see. We do not work in silos any longer.

I lead the dignity and wellbeing workstream together with Minister Schäfer, Minister Mbombo, Minister Marais, and Minister Meyer, because we take a cradle-to-the-grave approach. The first 1000 days is in Health, from Health the ECD and Schooling is with Minister Schäfer; Sports, Arts and Culture has a role to play with after school and Sports Arts and Culture is also the Department that leads the Youth Strategy because we now work transversally, but other departments feed into that Youth Strategy so I do need to emphasise that we have a safety workstream. DSD is part of the safety workstream because there are areas that are cross-cutting. We have a jobs and economic recovery workstream led by Minister Maynier. We are a part of that too so I would like to believe that this is the only province that has taken a different view rather than wallow in the mud of corruption that we are facing. I mean I

have not switched on my TV for months. It is just gloom and doom, it is just theft and corruption. I mean, on an epic scale like we have never seen before.

We talk about Local Drug Action Committees. The plan, the draft plan is in the process. It will be in my office by mid-April.

The Western Cape Substance-Abuse Forum is very active. I attend their quarterly meetings where I can, but the Local Drug Action Committee resides in a Local Government space. So again, member Bakubaku-Vos, through the Chair to you, in the municipalities where DSD have signed memorandums of understanding and intent, Local Drug Action Committees have been established. It is in the dysfunctional municipalities where there are politics and coalition infighting that there is no regard for the rights of citizens. There is no Local Drug Action Committee. There is no Gender-based Forum. There is nothing going on. It is all about stealing money, who wears the chain and who is large and in charge and who controls an area or a precinct.

Child hunger is very real, yet it is not limited to this province. You might have seen in this morning's headline how many children have died in the Eastern Cape of poverty and malnutrition and it is sad. Any child that dies anywhere in the world is a child too many, but we also saw earlier in this week on eNCA that the KZN NPO sector has virtually collapsed, DSD have not maintained the support to them for the last six, seven years, and the system has actually crashed. So whilst there is this comparison and this bashing of what is happening, we are trying and we are almost acting in

tandem with other provinces to provide them with the necessary support. They have no idea what the ECD stimulus payment is about, and remember, under Level 5 and 4, hon Deputy Speaker, 100,000 teachers, ECD teachers were placed out of work. They were mostly women. They were offered a Stimulus Relief Package. Well, guess what? The National Department of Social Development decided they would manage that process and they botched it completely. Of the R52 million that we got we only received seven batches and we have paid out just about half of that. They have now discovered that they cannot cope. So guess what, it is now being pushed to provinces and provinces now need to run around to make sure that we can get that stimulus relief package to those vulnerable women who take care of our children.

So if we listen to understand to what is playing out here, we are all subjected to what is happening at DSD at a National level and I can tell you, without any blink, there is nothing happening there. There is a very limited understanding of what is happening on the ground, people's lived experiences and I am deeply concerned, there is a breakdown between National DSD and National Treasury and on the point of member August around celebrating houses, we were invited as the Department of Social Development Western Cape to attend a media briefing on 4 March 2020, I think it was, by Minister Zulu and Minister De Lille who had identified six properties that national owned in this province to be used for shelters. The counting province was also afforded six properties. Well guess what? The hon Herron, before the hon August came around, accused me of playing politics with gender-based

violence, but in Minister De Lille's own Department, they were at odds with each other, sixes and sevens, so the memorandum was only signed in October, despite the big media launch in April, in March.

Despite all of that, together with only our Provincial Public Works and stakeholders and here the NPOs become very important. We got all six our houses up and running, functional by the 30th of June last year. Guess what the question in the National Assembly that was asked, what happened to the six safe houses in Gauteng? They were returned to National Public Works because DSD and National Public Works are at odds with each other and they still need to sort it out. So whilst member August says we celebrate, we have a lot to celebrate, because we have 26 functional shelters in this province with Saartjie Baartman being the biggest one in the country. We have 27 shelters for homeless people and if you do a comparative exercise, I would like to ask the members of the Opposition go and look what is happening in other provinces and then you can see that you can benchmark against the Western Cape.

The increase for CNDCs, I alerted member Bakubaku-Vos, I was in Genadendal, I was in Vredendal, I was in Murraysburg, I was in Klaarstroom, I see the poverty, but as a former banker having spent 30 years in banking, one needs to understand that you can only spend what you have, otherwise you are going to operate at a deficit and we are not allowed to operate overdrafts in Government despite the fact that some of the poorly run municipalities and National Government, Provincial Departments manage and

run overdrafts. You can only work with the money that you have and to that end we have actually engaged, we started talking to NPOs in November last year already. Last Friday at 2:30 until 04:00 we met with at least 20 NPOs online and they agreed and they said: “Minister, with your support we are going to put something in place so that we can keep this sector afloat in this province because it is collapsing everywhere around the country.”

The shortage of social workers is very real but as you would have heard that with the cuts we would need to prioritise. The Department, all the chief directors, regional directors have sat down and we are now sitting down as a team and saying where is the need the greatest. However, hon Deputy Speaker, the number of informal settlements that have emerged over the last two years has made it increasingly difficult because in Social Development, if you understand it, areas are mapped out, NPOs work certain areas and Social Development work certain areas, and with this new development of informal settlements popping up, there is extra pressure on our social workers to go in and to serve.

So on the question, member Bakubaku-Vos, hunger and food insecurity is very real. I think last year, the R53 million we allocated, the additional money Local Government allocated was not to celebrate or to brag, it was a direct response to the inability of the National Government to deal with what was a crisis, which we had alerted them to, we raised the red flags. Similarly, with the homeless, under Level 4 and 5, there were regulations saying all homeless people had to be housed in facilities and that food would be

provided through a national contract. Well, that national contract was a mere R50 million. And within four weeks it had run out. What were we to do as a Province? We could not sit back and watch our people suffer, we had to come up with a plan. So we did not do it to brag or celebrate, we did it to address the need that existed, and sadly, that regulation has resulted in what we see now on the streets in terms of homelessness, because it has come with many unintended consequences that we need to deal with.

In terms of child-headed households, we are working closely with all stakeholders. We have established, despite Home Affairs being completely dysfunctional, a good working relationship with key players there and they support the Department directly to assist us to get birth certificates for children so that we can get them in school. I also need to alert the members that there are not only Social Development social workers, there are Social Development workers in the Department of Health, in the Department of Education and in some other Department. So if there is an issue in schools, normally the school social workers, Department of Education social workers would be alerted.

If there is a need for a referral, the referral would come to DSD so I think that is also another area that we are going to deliberate on as to how we can improve our efficiencies in that area.

In terms of gender-based violence, I think it is important, if you look at – I think, I do not know if it was the hon August, but someone indicated that we

have the highest rate so I just very quickly want to... I have it on my phone because I prepared and I did my homework for this engagement.

The Stats SA talks about “femicide Stats SA 2017, femicide rates across South African Provinces.” First is the Eastern Cape; second was the Northern Cape; Free State; KwaZulu Natal, it goes on and here, this is exactly. Let me tell you: the ever experienced of partner violence is the highest in the Eastern Cape for physical violence, while North West had the highest rates of sexual violence ever experienced, and on that list, it is the Eastern Cape, the North West Province, Mpumalanga, Free State and then the Western Cape.

†So dit is onderstebo gelees maar die boek is maar seker daar nou ’n probleem. [So it was read upside down but the book is probably a problem there.]

It is my duty to alert this House to facts because it is easy to come and pedal misinformation. This is a public platform, members of the public are listening in and tuned in and we have a duty to be honourable and to speak the truth and nothing but the truth.

Hon Deputy Speaker, number three, the hon August, I have already dealt with the issue of the dysfunction that exists at the National Department of Public Works. I appreciate the fact that Minister De Lille made the effort to provide us with the six properties. However, the debacle in the Department left a lot

to be desired.

Hon Brinkhuis, I agree completely with you. It is a crisis. I have raised the red flag. However, we are reliant on funding that comes from National and if there is a disconnect between the National Department of Social Development and National Treasury, we unfortunately bear the brunt. So social workers for school children, I have covered that, we have social workers in education, and they serve as a referral pathway.

Hon Plato, thank you for your inputs. I think that they were meaningful. They address the issue, but it would be remiss of me, Deputy Speaker, to say that we are facing challenging and tough times in the year ahead.

The ECD migration, the function shift happens on Friday, that cohort will be moved to Education. However, we have a statutory duty, there are certain pieces of work that the Department is compelled to do, in terms of the Children's Act, the Older Persons Act and I understand more than anyone else, the impact of substance abuse and gender-based violence, having personally experienced it. I think the issue of the Fritz scandal, I cannot comment at this stage, because I was not in that Department at that time. The Premier has led in terms of the responses, but I can assure you that if there is any woman or any man or anyone who feels the need to step forward and speak, then I think people should be afforded that. But I need to also alert this august House. I stand here as a survivor of gender-based violence and I said it once before, I only found my voice when the perpetrator died so

please do spare a thought for those women, especially young women who are affected. It takes courage to stand up and to say, “Me too”, and so I think we should not play politics, but understand the trauma and the secondary trauma that not only victims but perpetrators too experience and so we remain...
[Interjections.]

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Deputy Speaker, Deputy Speaker, I had my hand up. I am not sure if you can allow me platform to speak to the Minister.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, do you have a point of order? I did not see your hand up. I see it now.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: My hand is up, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: It is not a point of order. I would like to know if the Minister can take a question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will ask the Minister.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Deputy Speaker, no, I think I have overrun in terms of time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: I will engage the hon member outside of this session.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Noted.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: But I think it is important that we must acknowledge that gender-based violence is a scourge, however we have the Safety Plan and the area-based teams and I still do not think most of the members understand the concept. But I was part of the Swartland launch and DSD, SAPS, the NPA, everyone sits in that meeting. I was out in Klaarstroom on Monday evening. I was in Prince Albert yesterday at the request of SAPS to get the area based team up and running to address the issues of substance abuse, school dropouts, teenage pregnancy, crime, and-and-and, and I think it is a fundamental mind shift that needs to happen. It is not departmental any longer. It is a transversal whole-of-government approach and I also want to say it requires a whole-of-society approach and having sat in that chair, hon Deputy Speaker, for five years, I still maintain that the mudslinging that happens in this House does not benefit the citizens of this province.

What we should be talking to is how we are going to work together to improve the lived experiences of people in this province, but instead, what do we do? We do not alert the Minister or the Department. We wait for an opportunity to come into the House and grandstand as if it is meant to score brownie points and you know what that does to the electorate, they lose faith

and trust in elected public servants because as far as they are concerned, we are perceived to be wasting their time and data and boosting our own agendas so I do want to ask members, let us think consciously about your contribution to any debate that you make and how you show up. Do you show up authentically in the interest of your constituents or do you show up wearing your jacket that is driven by the politics of the stomach? I thank you.

[Debate concluded.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. That concludes the debate on Vote 7. I will then ask that the officials who are going to be joining for the Human Settlements debate please come into the seating area here. Thank you very much.

Minister, are you waiting for special guests? They are all up there. Are they going to stay up there? That is fine. No problem. If you are ready then we can start. Thank you very much. The Secretary will read the second order of the day.

†Die SEKRETARIS: Debat oor Begrotingspos 8 – Menslike Nedersettings – Wes-Kaapse Begrotingswetsontwerp.

[The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 8 – Human Settlements – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2–2022]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr Secretary. I now

recognise hon Minister Simmers.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier, hon Cabinet members present and also logged in virtually, members of the House present and logged in virtually, our Department's special guests, hon Deputy Speaker, for whom it is also their first time to be in the Legislature, so I do welcome them as well, but also our multitude of guests that are logged in via the innovative ways in which this Parliament has sought to reach the people of the Western Cape.

Hon Deputy Speaker, at various intervals in life, opportunities are presented to us. The question that would almost always accompany this opportunity is will you actually seize this opportunity?

This is a pertinent question, particularly from a human settlements perspective.

†Agb Adjunkspeaker, hierdie is uiters belangrik, want uit 'n menslike nedersettings oogpunt word geleenthere gebied en geskep om individue en hul geliefdes se omstandighede daadwerklik en op 'n grootskaalse wyse te verander. Hetsy dit 'n tipe behuisingsgeleenthere is, hetsy dit 'n eienaarskapsgeleenthere is, of dalk 'n bemagtigingsgeleenthere – die eindresultaat is dat hierdie geleenthere drastiese verbetering teweegbring.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Hon Deputy Speaker, this is extremely important, because from a human settlements point of view opportunities are offered and created to change individuals' circumstances actively and in a large-scale way. Whether it is a type of housing opportunity, whether it is an ownership opportunity, or perhaps an empowerment opportunity – the end result is that these opportunities bring about drastic improvement.]

So from the outset, I would like to make it known that the 2022/23 Human Settlements Budget of R2 414 805 000 is a budget with an opportunity for you. This means that just as in the past and more so moving forward, this budget's primary purpose is to ensure that the lives of our people are improved.

Hon Deputy Speaker, as a Department that is mandated with the delivery of human settlements, and this being integrated human settlements, I am pleased to inform this House that during the 2022/23 financial year, 11 210 housing opportunities will be delivered. This will consist of 2 747 sites and 8 463 top structures. †Dit beteken dat meer as 11 000 kwalifiserende begunstigdes die geleentheid gebied gaan word om in verbeterde en veiliger omstandighede, wat waardigheid teweegbring, te leef.

Die individue wie vir hierdie geleenthede geteiken word is bejaardes, en dis nou persone wat 60 jaar en ouer is; individue met 'n gesertifiseerde mediese ongeskiktheid; persone wat 15 jaar en langer op die behuisingswaglys is; agterplaas bewoners, wat uniek prioriteit is vir ons Wes-Kaap; huise waar

kinders die hoof is, en ek moet benadruk hier wag ons vir die duidelikheid van ons die Nasionale Regering, wat 'n huishouding is wat deur 'n kind bestuur word, natuurlik militêre veterane.

Dis uiters belangrik om ook hier te noem dat ons slegs die agent is wat die militêre veterane se huise bou. Alle prosesse word deur die Nasionale Departement van Militêre Veterane afgehandel.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[It means that more than 11 000 qualifying beneficiaries will be offered the opportunity to live in improved and safer circumstances that bring about dignity.

The individuals who are targeted for these opportunities are the aged, and that is now persons who are 60 years and older; individuals with certified medical disability; persons who for 15 years and longer have been on the housing waiting list; backyard dwellers, which is a unique priority for our Western Cape; houses where children are the head, and I must emphasise that here we are waiting for clarity from our National Government, which is a household managed by a child, and of course military veterans.

It is extremely important to also mention here that we are only the agent which builds the military veterans' houses. All processes are completed by the National Department of Military Veterans.]

It is vital to point out that as much as this is our criteria, it all starts with you being registered on the Housing Demand Database.

Over the last few days, the National Minister of Human Settlements, Minister Kubayi, announced various revised subsidy quantum as it pertains to both the Human Settlements Development Grant and the Informal Settlements Upgrade Partnership Grant. These will take effect on 1 April, and given the increases in these quantum, it will have an impact on our targets which will have to be adjusted downwards.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is important to point out that the majority of our projects are continued from previous years and the bulk capacity would have been taken into account when they were approved. Bulk infrastructure is one of the biggest challenges we face as it is an inhibiting factor when it comes to new projects.

Now as a forward-thinking and solution orientated Government, we view every challenge as an opportunity. It is for this reason that I am pleased to inform this House that the numbers will be increased in the wake of our advanced planning to unlock opportunity, as I will indicate here today.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the reality in the Western Cape is that there are currently approximately 568 000 residents on the Western Cape Housing Demand Database, who have expressed a need to be assisted by the State for a housing opportunity. I need to emphasise, for those that are logged in, a

housing opportunity, not a house.

Given that the Western Cape has the highest employment rate of just under 70%, many of these residents would not qualify for a fully State-subsidised housing opportunity, as their household income would likely exceed the R3 500 threshold.

State assistance, however, is still required as many of these residents have a household income that ranges from R3 501 to R22 000. †Dit is waar bekostigbare behuising 'n kritieke rol speel, want die Wes-Kaap het 'n unieke uitdaging om op te los. [That is where affordable housing plays a critical role, because the Western Cape has a unique challenge to solve.] To address this unique challenge, we focus on two programmes, namely FLISP and Social Housing.

In terms of FLISP, hon Deputy Speaker, there has been a huge demand for FLISP in the Western Cape. In fact, 3 695 applications have been approved by my Department since April 2020 to date. This was against a target of 1 800 between the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years.

At this point, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Mr and Mrs John and Tamaryn Nortjé, a lovely couple who accessed the FLISP subsidy, received an amount of R49 000 and have been living in Forest Village since November 2021, and I would love to quote Mrs Nortjé in this. She said:

“We are really happy with our home. The subsidy has helped to significantly reduce our bond repayment. There is nothing better than not having to live in someone else’s backyard. If more people are able to access FLISP, we will have fewer backyard dwellers.”

†En baie dankie vir u *quote*.

[And thank you very much for your quote.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, for the 2022/23 financial year we aim to assist 1 478 people. It is for this reason that we welcome the policy amendments to the Financed Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP), that has now been delinked. This means that it is no longer just a mortgage only option, but other sources of finance may be utilised to acquire a property and applicants with a household income of between R3 501 to R22 000 can access FLISP, or as it will now be called, “Help me buy a Home”.

Part of these options that can now be accessed via possible qualifying beneficiaries are:

Firstly, housing loans that are granted or guaranteed via pension and provident fund.

An unsecured housing loan from any registered lender.

Housing loans granted or guaranteed by a cooperative or community-based savings scheme, or as we commonly like to call it “stokvels”.

And lastly housing loans supported by employer-based schemes.

This is a significant shift and a game-changer for the affordable housing market. We regard this overhaul as a true victory for all citizens, but more so for residents of this province, as we have been advocating for these amendments for a very long time, and finally it is now a reality.

We have already experienced an influx of queries and applications, and for this reason we have streamlined our processes to ensure that no delays are experienced when we commence on 1 April.

†Oor die volgende paar dae sal daar verder uitgebrei word oor hoe FLISP in die Wes-Kaap toegepas gaan word, sodat daar duidelikheid is om al die onsekerheid wat dalk tans bestaan uit die weg te ruim. [Over the next few days we will expand further on how FLISP is going to be applied in the Western Cape, so that there is clarity to eliminate all the uncertainty that may currently exist.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, I am also pleased to announce to this House that civil engineering services on our Deferred Ownership Pilot Project in the non-Metro Cape Agulhas Municipal Area have been completed, and that construction is due to commence imminently.

Now for those hon members that might not be familiar with this project, this innovative initiative seeks to provide not only FLISP units to qualifying

beneficiaries, but also to provide an opportunity for those beneficiaries who have fallen short of end user finance approval.

These beneficiaries will be provided an opportunity to take out an option for purchasing a house. Furthermore, the initiative will assist them to improve and rehabilitate their credit score and affordability rating, and this acquired proven property track record will enable them to obtain end user finance to purchase the property which they have been renting.

This is also the ideal moment to mention that we do not work in isolation, but believe in partnerships as the Department, as the development of beneficial partnerships remains a critical element for the acceleration of affordable housing. Partnerships with all major banks are in place and are in the process of being improved or revised. A number of other exciting partnerships are being pursued by the Department, all of which will assist the Department in the delivery of its goals and objectives going forward.

Now we move to social housing. †Agb Adjunkspeaker, in die Kaapse Metro het ons verskeie voorbeelde van suksesvolle sosiale behuisingsprojekte. Hierdie sluit onder meer in Anchorage in Glenhaven, Bellville; Regent Villas in Mitchells Plain; Bothasig, en die Maitland Mews waar konstruksie onlangs afgeskop het. Duisende inwoners het reeds of sal eersdaags toegang hê tot bekostigbare behuising.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Hon Deputy Speaker, in the Cape Metro we have various examples of successful social housing projects. These include amongst others Anchorage in Glenhaven, Bellville; Regent Villas in Mitchells Plain; Bothasig, and the Maitland Mews where construction started recently. Thousands of residents already have or will soon have access to affordable housing.]

One such social housing beneficiary, who is with us today in the gallery today, is Mrs Badroeniesah Joubert who is visually impaired and was afforded [Applause.] – thank you – and was afforded an opportunity through the Anchorage Social Housing Project in Glenhaven in Bellville. I visited Ms Joubert at her home shortly after they moved in, and her words to me were, and once again, with her permission, I quote her:

“Minister, I am happy here. I chose Anchorage to assist me in becoming self-sustainable. The dream is owning my own home one day. This place is really comfortable and suited to my needs. We are ecstatic to live here in the Anchorage community.”

Over the next five years we will also see a number of further social housing opportunities in areas such as Woodstock, Salt River, Goodwood, Heideveld, Elsiesrivier, Mitchells Plain and potentially Oranjezicht. It is important to note that these opportunities are at various stages along the development pipeline.

I am happy to add that the first non-Metro Social Housing project, called

“Mountain Ridge” in Dal Josafat, Paarl, has been approved by the Social Housing Regulatory Authority and will provide 362 new social housing units. Construction is planned to commence early in the 2022/2023 financial year.

Furthermore, there are a significant number of new projects in the pipeline in other non-Metro leader towns, such as Stellenbosch, George and Mossel Bay.

We also welcome the National Minister’s announcement that the qualification criteria for household income have been amended, and the new bracket is now R1 850 to R22 000 gross monthly income. This will, amongst others, enable particularly young graduates and young couples, who could not previously access housing opportunities due to earning higher than the previously prescribed household income band, to access these opportunities.

†Agb Adjunkspeker, hierdie wysigings stel ons beslis in staat om baie meer persone, net soos mev Joubert wat vandag hier met ons is, ook by te staan. Gegewe dat bekostigbare behuisingsgeleentede ons prioriteit is, sien ons daarna uit om die nuwe wysigings te implementeer.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Deputy Speaker, these amendments definitely enable us to also assist many more persons, just as with Mrs Joubert who is here with us today. Given that affordable housing opportunities are our priority, we are looking forward to implementing the new amendments.]

It has been quite unfortunate to note in the media though, that there are those who are criticising the various amendments to the policy and suggesting, believe it or not, that we are only assisting middle-income earners. It is prudent that we do not seek relevance by playing with people's lives and spewing misinformation. I would advise the critics to conduct some research and please let this be a substantive research sample before engaging in a debate where you are devoid of the facts.

Hon Deputy Speaker, informality is also a reality. The upgrading of our informal settlements continues to be a priority for us. In fact, we have identified 50 informal settlements for a variety of upgrade interventions through our ISUPG business plan. This is anchored in a transversal and provincial-wide informal settlement upgrading strategy to enhance, simplify and accelerate informal settlement upgrading interventions through an innovative, people-centred and partnership-based approach.

A critical point to make today, is that since 2016, Western Cape households have enjoyed the highest rate of access to services compared to the national average. Our province currently has 958 informal settlements, with 527 of those falling within the City of Cape Town region. All of the remaining 431 settlements across the province have been assessed, categorised, ranked and prioritised per municipality via the Department's Informal Settlements Database.

We are particularly focused on incremental housing, and more so for residents in our informal settlements. This places us in a strategic position to eliminate the growing backlog for houses and for basic municipal services. Initially, hon Deputy Speaker, we conceptualised two options, and this has now increased to 4, which are being considered. One particular option that we are leaning towards, is the provision of a site that has a starter house with a 40 square metre frame structure for future extension. Not discounting any of the others three options, but at this stage we are of the view that this option will make a significant impact in the improvement of the living conditions of those who are residing in informal settlements.

But how does this starter house look, that we are conceptualising?

A total area of 20 square metres will be under roof and enclosure.

It will have a bathroom, which is enclosed, with toilet and provision on the concrete floorspace will be made for a shower.

There will be a wash trough for multi-purpose use, obviously part of the concrete floor; and

Hard standing floor finishes on the balance of the 40 square metres, and there is a ready-board also.

So just as with any of our other programmes, this new initiative will also have a set criteria.

Hon Deputy Speaker, today I am also pleased to have 62-year-old Ms Mirtle

Verrooi with us. Hon Deputy Speaker, Ms Verrooi is visually impaired and wheelchair bound. Now in 2019, I do not know if the hon members can recall, she lived in horrendous conditions in an informal settlement in the Blue Downs area. It was broadly covered by various media houses, all for the wrong reasons obviously, and when I was informed of her need, I ensured that immediate action could be taken.

†Ja, daar was ‘n paar uitdagings aangaande ID dokumente en ‘n paar ander kwessies, maar ek wil vandag aan alle beamptes van my Departement wat verseker het dat mev Verrooi bygestaan kon word, baie, baie dankie sê. Mev Verrooi, baie dankie dat u ook vandag met ons kan wees.

Toe ons onlangs met die Nasionale en Adjunk-Nasionale Minister u woning besoek het, het u vir my vertel hoe lekker u voel en bly u is dat u uiteindelik veilig voel en dat u lewe sonder vrees.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Yes, there were some challenges regarding ID documents and a few other issues, but today I want to thank all officials of my Department who ensured that Mrs Verrooi could be assisted. Mrs Verrooi, thank you for being here with us today.

When we recently visited your house along with the National and Deputy National Minister, you told me how well you feel and pleased you are that

you are eventually feeling safe and are living without fear.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, but also allow me to announce today that our Individual Subsidy applications will be opening on 1 April. Some of you might have noticed the communication that was issued yesterday, and I hope you do share it as far and wide as possible, hon members.

This subsidy is aimed at residents with a household income of between R0 and R3 500 and allows one to:

Buy an existing house;

Buy a house on a plot-and-plan basis, or

To finish an incomplete house.

The subsidy amount is just over R200 000 and is paid not to the beneficiary, but to a seller, a conveyancer, a financier or contractor, depending on the case that you state on your application.

As there is a limited budget, assistance with this budget is only provided once a year and is allocated on a first-come-first-serve basis, and we are envisioning to assist 1,600 possible beneficiaries. Priority will be given to applicants who are elderly or have special needs, particularly people living with a medically certified disability. I would therefore like to encourage those who would like to apply, to urgently do so when we start on 1 April.

How this is also not assisting the poorest of the poor, only the uninformed so-called community activists and organisations that claim to represent communities would know. †Dit gaan 'n mens se verstand te bowe, agb Adjunkspeaker. [It boggles the mind, hon Deputy Speaker.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, this is a budget with an opportunity for you, but “for you” means ownership, which is a key driver of this Provincial Government, because we believe that ownership is true empowerment, and if there is one opportunity I refuse to miss, then it is the opportunity to assist our residents in becoming fully-fledged and legal home-owners of their properties. Sadly, this is a privilege that many of our people have never had in their lives.

†Agb Adjunkspeaker, dit is een van die redes waarom ek vandag vir mnr en mev Kooste van Louwville, Vredenburg, genooi het om deel te wees van hierdie verrigtinge. Toe ek verneem het dat hulle as 'n paartjie op Vredenburg alreeds meer as 50 jaar gewag op hul titelakte, het ek gesê daar moet so spoedig as moontlik 'n plan vir hierdie paartjie gemaak kan word, en op 15 April verlede jaar kon ons uiteindelik die oorhandiging doen, en ek sal nooit mev Kooste se woorde aan my vergeet nie, en ek moet sê, gegewe haar ouderdom, was sy ook baie hups op die dag toe sy hierdie woorde geuiter het, en ek haal haar aan:

“Vandag is ons ontsettend bly en dankbaar teenoor die Here dat Hy ons gespaar het om hierdie dag te sien en te ervaar. Ons het nooit gedink dat die dag sal kom waar ons titelakte in ons hande sou hê nie, want die gewag het

lank geduur. Vandag is ons trots en baie bly dat dit wel hier is. Hierdie beteken baie vir ons. Dis nou ons huis, ons grond en niemand kan dit van ons wegneem nie.”

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Hon Deputy Speaker, it is one of the reasons why I today invited Mr and Mrs Kooste van Louwville, Vredenburg, to be part of these proceedings. When I heard that they as a couple in Vredenburg have already waited for more than 50 years for their title deed, I said we have to make a plan as soon as possible for this couple, and on 15 April last year we could finally do the handover, and I will never forget Mrs Kooste’s word to me, and I must say, given her age, she was also very sprightly on the day when she said these words, and I quote her:

“Today we are extremely pleased and grateful to the Lord that He spared us to still see and experience this day. We never thought that the day would come where we would have our title deed in our hands, because the waiting was long. Today we are proud and very pleased that it is indeed here. This means a lot to us. It is now our home, our land and no-one can take it away from us.”]

Hon Deputy Speaker, the difference we are making in people’s lives is tangible and lifelong. This is our continued commitment, as a Department, to the qualifying residents of the Western Cape.

For the 2022/23 financial year, our aim is to empower even more residents through the handing over of a title deed. Despite the National Government stopping the Title Deed Restoration Grant, we will continue to hand over title deeds. In fact, we will place this powerful document in the hands of no less than 10 150 qualifying beneficiaries during the new financial year, so that more residents can be empowered like the Koostes. Hon Deputy Speaker, this is part of the reason why this is a budget with an opportunity for you.

Hon Deputy Speaker, in taking it a step further and as part of being innovative, our officials are currently investigating which systems can be adopted and/or created to ensure that when beneficiaries receive their fully State-subsidised homes, they receive title deeds at the same time, and can I say there is one or two sites where this is already busy happening, proudly.

†Ons hou ons mense ten volle bemagtig en werk strategies daaraan om hierdie titelakte-plan 'n werklikheid te maak. [We keep our people fully empowered and are working strategically to make this title deed plan a reality.]

Unlike the ANC and the EFF we are not in the business of seeking to disempower our people by taking their land away. We are empowering our people by giving them ownership. As challenged before, the members of these parties should voluntarily actually give up all of their property to the State, so that we can see what exemplary leadership looks like.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is common knowledge, particularly since I have mentioned it in this House before, that were it not for the Western Cape, where we have an expanded unemployment rate of 30,4%, our country's unemployment rate would today in all likelihood be out of control. The next best performing province is the ANC-led Free State where their expanded unemployment rate sits at 44,2%.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this year we are once again supporting the efforts of this Western Cape Government to get our people working. Through this budget, we will ensure that 1,000 jobs are facilitated within the build environment.

It does not stop there because we will make sure that a combined minimum of 50% of the infrastructure grants – in our case it is the HSDG and the new ISUPG grants – will be paid to HDI contractors. Their empowerment and support are of utmost importance, as it is a known fact that these entities help to ensure that our people are employed.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this leads now to innovation, and in this province, when we identify opportunities that will assist in contributing to the overall well-being of our people, we seize it and immediately start initiating a process that ultimately leads to implementation. One of these initiatives is our Western Cape Asset Finance Reserve for Human Settlements. The Western Cape is the only province in the entire country to have such a fund. This is a fund that is not pocketed by friends, cronies and associates. No, the funds are

reinvested so that residents of this province can benefit.

This reserve is self-funded from, amongst others, the selling of FLISP units or sites, and the selling of business or Government sites in our IRDP projects. All revenue collected in excess of the Department's revenue target is transferred to this fund to ensure that revenue derived from the investment of the HSDG grant, will be available for future capital investment in human settlement projects.

This Western Cape reserve has several applications:

The money is used to improve the insufficient Municipal Infrastructure Grant allocations for municipalities.

The money is used to assist municipalities to unlock the value of strategic assets, including land and buildings.

The money is used for job creation initiatives, including developing business or industrial hubs and many other initiatives.

And the money is used to provide co-funding to municipalities to access the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant funding where the condition is that the municipalities must co-fund from their own resources an amount equal to the grant and must only be utilised to unlock affordable housing opportunities, including building FLISP units to sell, and funding deferred ownership units where the sale will only take effect after a minimum of 2 years.

†Hierdie Wes-Kaapse Reserwefonds versterk munisipaliteite sodat hulle hul

infrastruktuur kan ontwikkel en op 'n vlak kan kry waar meer inwoners veral toegang kan kry tot bekostigbare behuisingsgeleenthede.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[This Western Cape Reserve Fund strengthens the municipalities so that they can develop their infrastructure and get it on a level where more residents will get access to especially affordable housing opportunities.]

Last Friday the National Minister of Human Settlements addressed the media about some of the policy changes mentioned earlier. One of the items she mentioned were, and I quote her:

“Digitisation of the beneficiary list to make it more reliable, transparent, easily accessible and avoid fraud and corruption.”

This is commendable and a step towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution, but once again, hon Deputy Speaker, it is a leaf taken out of the book of the Western Cape, as we have launched our WCG App in March 2020 already. This App ensures that our citizens can easily access information on Government housing assistance, and register for the first time, or update their details on the Housing Demand Database.

With our continued commitment to incorporate technology, we are in the process of developing a mobile reporting App to enhance the reporting

process that enables officials to report in real-time from the field; to digitise contract management documents on the MyContent system; to allow for easy retrieval of documents such as agreements; and to improve the Western Cape Housing Demand Database to enable municipalities to effectively manage the registration of housing demand by citizens, and to enhance the executive dashboard that reports on projects currently.

In the 2022/23 financial year, the focus will be on enhancing the interaction with citizens, through digitising our Subsidy Application process with the focus on FLISP subsidies and the transfer of title deeds, as well as developing a Citizen Complaints System.

†Die begroting bied ons die geleentheid om baie meer effektief te wees en dit alles tot die voordeel van ons inwoners in die Wes-Kaap. [The Budget provides us the opportunity to be much more effective and all of that to the advantage of our residents in the Western Cape.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, as part of my conclusion, I would like to inform this House that after today I will be embarking on a roadshow to various districts and municipalities to present this budget, their allocations, as well as engaging them on some of the quantum amendments as announced by the National Minister.

The Western Cape Human Settlements and Infrastructure Team forms a transparent and engaging Department. We believe that we are stronger and

better when we work together, particularly when we work with a critical partner such as a Local Government.

At this stage I would like to thank my acting HOD, Ms Phila Mayisela; my CFO, and the rest of the senior management team for their unwavering support and commitment to changing the lives of our people, but to also thank all staff in the Department for all the hard work and contributions that they are making to ensure that we are working effectively and efficiently.

I would also like to thank my Head of Ministry and my Ministry staff for the work which they also do to ensure that we stay on course to our road that we have envisioned when I became Minister in 2019.

And finally, and let me be clear, hon Deputy Speaker, with this budget we remain committed to accelerating human settlements delivery, while promoting social inclusion through the development of integrated, resilient, safe and sustainable human settlements in an open opportunity society, as we build the Western Cape of the future together for you. I thank you.
[Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I now recognise hon member Lili.

Mr A LILI: [No audible response]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Lili? I see you are online.

Mr A LILI: Thank you very much, Hon Deputy Speaker, or beautiful Deputy Speaker ... hon Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may proceed. Hon member Lili, you are on mute, you may proceed.

Mr A LILI: Yes, I am having difficulties. Okay. At the height of the hard lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19, thousands of poor residents, including young people who were displaced from the apartments they rented, moved to establish new informal settlements in unoccupied land across many municipalities in the province.

This was in response to many job losses, which rendered many unable to keep up with the rising rental fees. Our people live in inhumane conditions due to poverty and high inequality. Those who were fortunate moved to the backyards in their family's homes. Sorry. Hon Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Lili? Is there a ...[Interjections.]

Mr A LILI: Yes. This is the state of human settlements in the Western Cape. These are the real lived experiences of the people. The dissidents or victims of forced removals of apartheid remain entrapped in the townships on the outskirts of the cities, as far away as possible from the places of

opportunities.

The Department in its Annual Performance Plan has stated that the housing backlog is now more than 500 000. It has acknowledged it is a challenge to assist these people with housing opportunities. However, the Department has stated that due to the diminishing budget envelope, they have been forced to reprioritise the beneficiary selection criteria and reserve the subsidised houses only for the most vulnerable in society.

The focus will now be placed on:

The elderly, 60 and above.

People living with medical certified disabilities.

Those 15 years and longer on the waiting list.

Backyard dwellers, only for new Greenfield Projects; and

Approved military veterans.

Hon Deputy Speaker, what about children-headed households? Why are they not prioritised? Another worrying factor is the project for backyard dwellers being only in Greenfield Projects. What about the backyard dwellers in Khayelitsha, Nyanga, Delft and Mitchells Plain? I am concerned with the statement the Department has made where it said, and I quote:

“The Western Cape is unique as approximately 70% of its citizens are employed. It is against this backdrop that we will be making a concerted

effort in the 2022/23 financial year to focus our energies on the affordable housing market. The affordable housing market comprises of those individuals who earn too much to qualify for a fully subsidised house but earn too little to access a home loan or mortgage”.

This is a wrong diagnosis and exposes the direction the DA is taking with regards to human settlement provision. This same diagnosis has influenced the City of Cape Town’s draft Integrated Human Settlements Sector Plan. The DA and its municipalities are moving away from the non-financed linked subsidies. Housing delivery for the poor is no longer a priority for the DA.

As the ANC we demand the continued the focus of housing delivery for the poor in the Western Cape. This Department acknowledges that access to housing opportunities promotes safety, well-being and dignity for our residents. This is an important principle of human settlements as the opportunities we deliver have a great future impact on the communities we serve.

These communities should include the poor, especially those in informal settlements. In this respect, the ANC welcomes the nearly half a billion rand allocated by the National Government in the Informal Settlement Upgrade Partnership Grant for provinces. The Department and the MEC must tell us what the plans are to develop houses for the poor who are trapped in the temporary location areas, which have since become permanent settlements in the province. Despite the housing needs the budget for the administration

programme has been decreased.

The budget for housing needs, research and planning has been decreased. The budget for Human Asset Management has been decreased. The ANC will not support these budget cuts. We welcome the budget increase for housing development, but it must go towards addressing the challenges identified above. The ANC is concerned that there is not a single mention of low-cost housing in the budget speech. The focus is now on social housing, and this shows that the DA does not care about the poor because it is the poor that need low-cost housing and not just housing sites. While there have been cuts to equitable share, other grants have ensured that there is actually an increase in the Human Settlements Budget.

So the DA must stop complaining about cuts from the National Government and start delivering integrated human settlements to our people. The budget worry for the ANC is that this budget does not mention a single word about the new Department for Infrastructure as announced by the Premier at his SOPA. Is the Department budgeting and planning going on as usual as in the previous year, or is it that the MEC and the Department called the Premier's announcement a bluff?

The ANC does not support this budget. The ANC wants housing delivered in the inner city and near places of opportunities. The budget does not take this need seriously. The Conradie Better Living Model is not enough. The ANC is shocked that the Provincial Government repeats the same mistake it did in

Forest Village where it built new settlements with no provision for a public ordinary school. This is wrong and will not be supported by the ANC.

Human Settlements has a vital role in fighting gangsterism and violent crimes in communities. In the past financial year, the MEC bragged about building houses with stoeps to fight crime. This remains laughable. Our demand is for the Department to make investments towards improving accessible informal settlements and this Department invests towards improving lighting in the crime hotspot areas. The ANC rejects this budget. I thank you, Mrs Deputy Speaker or Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. [Interjections.] Order! I now recognise hon Makamba-Botya.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. It is quite interesting for the Minister to come here and mislead the House, making false claims that the DA Government is providing communities with title deeds. Who are these beneficiaries and when our people continue to be landless in this province?

Hon Deputy Speaker, the Western Cape Government's efforts to provide housing remain a disaster, with a housing backlog exceeding half a million, and not counting people staying in informal settlements who are yet to register for housing. The Department of Human Settlements in the province is failing and the Minister does not want to acknowledge that fact.

Every time when people occupy an open space for purposes of providing shelter for themselves, this Government wants to claim that they were going to build houses in that particular land, and now their plans have been stalled.

Each and every year this Department fails to utilise its budget fully and often ends up returning it to the Provincial Revenue Fund, or have it allocated to other departments.

Hon Deputy Speaker, since 2019 people outside Arcadia Place in Observatory have been residing outside on the pavement. These people have now established an informal settlement closer to the Main Road, which continues to grow. The Department should have acted on our call back in 2019 to find that community alternative accommodation after they were evicted from what was previously an old age home building.

People staying in Arcadia Place are formally backyard dwellers from townships such as Nyanga, Philippi and Khayelitsha, who could no longer afford rent due to unemployment and lack of opportunities to sustain their livelihoods.

The numbers, hon Deputy Speaker, have since increased as a result of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the area is now a fully-fledged informal settlement.

People of Dunoos, hon Deputy Speaker, and Kosovo have been promised to

be relocated to less congested parcels of land since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were told that they would be reallocated before the end of 2020. It is now 2022 and the Department is still scraping the surface and not sure about its next step.

If the provision of housing in the province continues to move at a snail's pace, people will continue to lose hope in the DA-led Government and continue to occupy open lands. The reason for the increase in informal settlements in this province, hon Deputy Speaker, is owed to the incapability of the Provincial Housing Department. The Department must speed up its processes of building houses for people.

The reason why others do not even apply is because they do not have hope that they will end up being provided a decent house under this Government and in this lifetime. So the solution is just to take the next unoccupied and available land. Due to these failures of the Department, hon Deputy Speaker, the EFF will not be in support of this Vote. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now recognise hon member August.

Mr S N AUGUST: Hon Deputy Speaker, South Africa has a housing crisis. This is a fact. The Western Cape has a housing crisis and Cape Town has a *status quo* crisis. This Government has done everything in its power to ensure that the city remains inaccessible to citizens that would greatly benefit from

low-cost inner-city housing.

In 2021, there was a housing backlog of 369 000 applications in the Metro and 225 000 applications outside the Metro. Hon Deputy Speaker, many opportunities were given to the Provincial Government to show the people of this province that they care about spatial integration, that they oppose apartheid spatial planning, and that they are working hard for the almost 600 000 people in the Western Cape to have a home.

As a reminder to this House, it is under this very DA Government that Cape Town has been named the most unequal city in the world, and it is this very Government who decides to further gentrify the city centre by pushing poor people of colour to the furthest ends of Cape Town. This Government decided to underspend R46 million of its 2019/20 Human Settlements Budget, and it is this Government who wilfully decides to maintain the order that Cape Town should remain uninhabitable to labourers, factory workers, artisans and craftsmen employed in the city.

The Premier stated in his 2021 SOPA that 1 000 low-cost units will be built across the province, and the current MEC for Housing confirmed that they are at various stages of development. Considering this, currently in George an entire development of State-built housing is standing vacant and the province has a worrisome backlog of title deeds.

The snail's pace that Human Settlements is taking in developing housing

units is telling of its true intention to correct the housing ordeal of the past. I am asking this Government to prioritise the rollout of low-cost housing units on well-located land parcels in the city centre and expedite the building of affordable homes in the rest of the province.

We hope that the newly formed Infrastructure Department will see that 2022 ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Mr S N AUGUST: ... ushers in a change to priority when it comes to giving ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member.

Mr S N AUGUST: ... people in the Western Cape a dignified home. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I now recognise hon member Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. †Bismillah hieragman nir rajeem. [In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious and The Most Merciful.]

The poor oversight by the Western Cape Government contributed to escalating the costs of a unit in District Six, worth R400 000 to R4 million. The Province's poor oversight allowed the construction of 107 units to be built on clay without proper foundations. It was based on this reason why the Kalam Construction, who built the first phase, refused to be considered to build the phases 2 and 3. There is no proper foundation, which means the structure may collapse in time to come.

The Department also failed to properly engage with claimants on phase 3, especially the elderly and those with special needs. These claimants must now use two staircases to the units. The victims of the Group Areas Act have waited for 20 years to return to District Six. This is worse than the demolition of homes and the forced removals. District Six was a hub of resistance, and the memorisation thereof is nowhere to be seen, which is also being hidden by the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Al Jama-ah calls for the 40 hectares of land stolen to be confiscated without compensation, so the 60,000 residents forcibly removed from District Six can benefit from intergenerational wealth. Further developments in District Six should exclude white developers as they were in cahoots with the apartheid Government to declare District Six a white area.

We further note with concern that this budget does not address the urgent need for low-cost housing for the poor. This despite National Government's increase in grants for Human Settlements. We are, however, concerned about

the Province's cut to the budget in municipalities ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: ... for housing projects. I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I now recognise hon member Maseko.

Ms L M MASEKO: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, Premier, Cabinet Ministers, Leader of the Opposition, and hon members, and also, I would love to welcome the Department's guests to this budget debate.

Hon Deputy Speaker, Minister Simmers presented to us a budget that gives hope to our communities, a budget that cares for our communities, a budget that gives safety, a budget for education, and a budget for dignity.

After he gave us a budget that represents all that, hon member Lili came in to debate. Hon member Lili, for us to really champion inequality there is no way that we can remove it from the corruption. The more we fight corruption, and if you can help us to fight corruption from National, then they can deal with inequality. I know you love your oversight; you will definitely attend to that from your national colleagues, to make sure they really stop looting, so that

we can attend to our oversight to fight inequality.

Now the housing backlog, hon member Lily Lili, again, we need finance that is in the pockets of your colleagues from National. Attend to that one again also.

The child-headed households, hon member Lili, you know it is one of our priorities in the Department of Human Settlements, and I am getting a little bit worried that as we talk to the Department, as we engage with them, it seems like you do not listen to the Department, as we again and again mention the priority list for the Department of Human Settlements, those who have to be prioritised for housing.

The backyard dwellers: Minister Simmers, when he took over from Minister Madikizela, the first change or addition to the priority list was the backyard dwellers. I am just surprised that hon member Lili now does not know that the backyard dwellers are one of the priorities for human settlements, but again it is free information that I will give to you, what the priorities are.

The informal settlements, I will attend to when I respond to hon member Makamba-Boya ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, just take your seat for a second. I see there is a hand up, please. Hon member Nkondlo, do you have a point of order? My apologies, I did not see that.

†UNksz N D NKONDLO: Sekela Somlomo, ndingathanda ukucela intoba umamelisise, uzame ukucela umama osesihlalweni othethayo ngoku, angathethi nqo kutata okanye ilungu lalendlu ilungu utata uAndile Lili, athethe naye edlula kuwe njengoSekela Somlomo, enkosi.

[Translation of isiXhosa paragraph follows.]

[Deputy Speaker, I would like you to listen very carefully and try to ask the member, not to speak direct to the Hon member Andile Lili, but to speak through you. Thank you.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Secretary, I have no idea what the point of order was. It was too late for me to convert. So is it, just can I have a second please? Unfortunately, hon member, I did not have time to translate that as quickly as I did not have my translation on. Can I just clarify what that point of order was, and whether it was a point of order as a ruling? Hon member Maseko, can you assist me, please?

Ms L M MASEKO: Hon ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Hon Speaker ...

Ms L M MASEKO: Hon Deputy Speaker, she was raising a point of order that I must speak through you, of which she is right, I was ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, noted, thank you.

Ms L M MASEKO: I acknowledge that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon – no, please do not shout at me over the microphone. Hon member Nkondlo, I have received the translation that you have asked to speak into the microphone. I will ask hon member Maseko to do that. Thank you very much. You caught me off-guard there for a second. You may proceed, hon member.

The L M MASEKO: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, through you. Hon Member Makamba-Botya mentioned the issue of the title deeds. The National Government stopped the grant for title deeds, and it is this Government that is going beyond that to make sure that there is an allocation for title deeds, because we do care about our communities in the Western Cape, and title deeds give dignity to our communities.

So we will continue, irrespective of the National Government that has cut that grant, although again they say they champion the needs of the poorest of the poor, as they mention it.

The issue of the land invasion campaign, through you, hon member Makamba-Botya, is an EFF ripple effect that is causing the backlog of about 600 000. The more the campaign of land invasion happens, the more we are going to have a backlog. So the hon member, through you, hon Deputy

Speaker, cannot come here and say that we are not, as the Department of Human Settlements in Western Cape, fighting the backlog.

The more we do deliver, the more they create that demand and still we are performing more than any other province in this country. If what I am saying, hon Deputy Speaker, is not the truth, they need to mention which province is championing human settlements more than this province.

Now, hon member August, through you, hon Deputy Speaker. In 2019, during the elections, there were land invasions in Theewaterskloof. The Good Party went there to have meetings and there is a land invasion there where they now need services. That demand was created by the Good Party for votes.

Now again, that political weapon that is being used, that this Department or this Government does not give services when the demand is being created using housing. It has to stop if they want to see this Department eradicating the backlog of the housing.

Now they cannot come and grandstand here and say the backlog has not been reduced while they create that demand. Again, they create the demand, and you have the ANC that is looting the country and said this Department has to make sure that we eradicate the demand that they create. That is not going to be possible unless they take responsibility.

Now hon member Brinkhuis, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, District Six,

is the mandate of the Department of Agricultural Land Reform and Restitution. It is not the mandate of the Department of Human Settlements. In fact, as the Standing Committee, we are giving a hand because they failed to build about 100 and something houses for more than 10 years. They are saying “we champion housing”. Allocate a certain amount from the restitution grant so that those claimants can have the houses and give dignity to that community. Those houses that are being built on the clay are not from this Department. This Department does not do that. This is Western Cape. We champion what we say we are doing.

So you can, colleague, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, ask the question, maybe we will get the answer. Why did they build on top of clay, and if there is clay, we do oversight in this Parliament. We would have seen that there is clay, because where they build the houses, we go and visit.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, just take your seat. Hon member Makamba-Botya, what is your point of order?

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Hon Deputy Speaker, my point of order is I just want to find out if the hon member can give us information on the said agenda about what the DA has done, instead of responding to our statements. Now she is taking the role of [Inaudible.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Makamba-Botya, that is not a point of order. If you are asking whether the member will take a question, the member

may answer that, but the member may not engage – over to you, hon member.
Are you going to take a question from hon member Makamba-Botya?

Ms L M MASEKO: No, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No?

Ms L M MASEKO: We will attend the Standing Committee, we can engage there.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, but please take your seat. I see hon member August. What is your point of order?

Mr S N AUGUST: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The Chairperson is misleading the House to say that Good has created this backlog by saying ...[Interjections.]

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

Mr S N AUGUST: ... that there were political meetings at this specific ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not ...[Interjections.]

Mr S N AUGUST: ... place. I have no knowledge of it ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: ... a point of order.

Mr S N AUGUST: ... and she is misleading this House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not the point of order. The hon member may continue. Thank you very much.

Ms L M MASEKO: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Let me say what this Department did and what is it that it is going to do. I rise confidently in support of the Human Settlements Budget Allocation of 2022/2023 of over R2,4 billion. The Western Cape Department of Human Settlements Budget Vote 8, represents a developmental process that is presented by two wide-ranging categories, namely the Human Settlement Programme Cycle, and Human Settlement Project Cycle. That is the programme and the project cycle.

This budget provides a synopsis of the challenges, intricacies and dilemmas identified in the human settlement ecosystem, and proceeds to present innovative recommendations on solutions for each of these. It also contains the phases, steps and anticipated outcomes for the Strategic Plan and Human Settlements Annual Performance Plan, and lists the solutions related to each programme, which include improved efficiencies; liveable neighbourhoods; access to adequate housing, and empowerment opportunities for citizens in the Western Cape, and security of channels through home ownership.

Housing in South Africa continues to be a mammoth task and a great challenge. The last financial year saw the Provincial Department being challenged by two pandemics; that of COVID-19 and the ever-present corruption inherent in the ANC-run National Government. Hon Deputy Speaker, history directed that when we evaluate the human settlements demand on our beneficiary database, you will see it is mostly based on income statistics only, and the assumption from our municipalities that all qualifying households on the database within the qualifying income brackets are in need of housing.

The hope from municipalities is that the allocation for housing to their respective municipalities will increase, but the reality is that this is not possible. State-capture and the looting have caused this country over R250 billion, and with less than half of this money, we would have been able to eradicate the housing and title deeds backlogs in this province, but despite this, hon Deputy Speaker, the Department of Human Settlements has not only stood behind its goal of delivering on its mandate to the citizens of the Western Cape, but has also promoted jobs, safety and well-being for all.

Hon Deputy Speaker, when we build, the Department has empowered the building contractors. The Department has empowered historically disadvantaged individuals, women, youth contractors, as well as small, medium and micro enterprises through its projects. This highlights how the Department has ensured that every cent it spends goes towards the creation not only of housing, but of jobs as well.

The Department has also partnered with private and public sector partners to train young and unemployed people in skills relevant to the built environment. Hon Deputy Speaker, the vast majority of the Department's budget this year, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, hon member Lili, more than R2,2 billion will go towards the Housing Development Grant, but for the reasons I have outlined, this money will create jobs, also an education beyond its mandate.

When we build in the Western Cape, we do more than just build houses. We build communities. The Department of Transport and Public Works in partnership with the Department of Human Settlements, has developed the Better Living Model. The Model envisions entire new communities being built into the existing urban landscape, maximizing the use of land as they do so. These integrated mixed-use developments will not only include low-cost social housing, but also provide retail spaces, schools, hospitals and public parks, to name a few.

As a result of the model, the Western Cape Government will create not just housing, but entire communities built around shared economic and social spaces. We have not just imagined this, hon Deputy Speaker, we built it.

The Conradie Park Development, which in recent months has seen its first residents take ownership of their properties, currently contains 170 units of social housing; 570 more of these units will be completed this year, but the Conradie Park Development will be so much more than just a place for people

to live in. Once it is completed, the development will contain affordable schools with space for more than 1,600 learners; a hospital, retail environments and community spaces to promote the local economy.

With projects such as this one, hon Deputy Speaker, we are building more than houses for those who need them. We are building homes that our citizens can own, cherish and take pride in.

The increases in funding in this budget will ensure that developments such as Conradie Park can be replicated on other sites across the province. These sites will lay the groundwork for new hubs of economic activity, transforming places such as Melkbosstrand, Stellenbosch and Worcester into centres of affordable housing, which promotes social cohesion as well as economic growth.

The new business districts which these areas create will lessen the influx of commuters in the Cape Town Metropolitan area, thus reducing travel costs for many citizens. With this budget, hon Deputy Speaker, we move one step closer to attaining these goals.

Over the coming year, the Department will also continue to make great strides to improve the delivery of housing to those who most need it. We know that solving the backlog of housing would cost over R100 billion; more money than the entirety of the Western Cape's equitable share, but by increasing the efficiency of our tools, the Department will be able to stretch

its budget as far as possible and help the highest number of people.

Last year, the Department developed a mobile app to streamline its services to allow end users to easily access the Department's services. I look forward to seeing the ways in which this Department will continue to innovate and harness technology to improve its services.

This budget also allows the Department to continue to bridge the gap in home ownership for those citizens that earn too much to qualify for the Breaking New Ground Programme, but too little to buy a home outright. The FLISP programme subsidises the cost of housing for first-time owners and lowers the barrier for entry into the housing market.

The Provincial Department has been instrumental in pushing for the FLISP programme to broaden its criteria for beneficiaries so that more citizens can afford to become homeowners. I can now proudly say that we can now call this programme the Help Me Buy a House programme.

Therefore, unlocking affordable housing opportunities through the FLISP programme is incredibly important if we are to give beneficiaries any chance of owning their own home. FLISP gives first-time homeowners who earn between R3 501 and R22 000, and who have never received Government housing support, the capital injection that they need to make owning their own home a reality.

Of course, hon Deputy Speaker, there is always more to be done. We look forward to seeing the Department rise to the challenges of the coming financial year. We look forward to the upscaling of municipal councillors in the use of the Department's tools so that social housing can be allocated to groups that need it the most. We look forward to the clearing of the title deeds backlogs in municipalities across the Western Cape, and of course we look forward to the completion of developments such as Conradie Park, which will improve the well-being of so many of our communities.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is vital that we in the Provincial Parliament always push for innovative ways to react to the needs of housing in our communities, and to devise sustainable solutions to service delivery challenges. It is vital that we do this because we know that the pathetic ANC-led National Government cannot or will not help. This DA-led Provincial Government has to be innovative enough to give hope to all South Africans.

I applaud the Western Cape Government for this Budget Vote and Minister Simmers, as well as this Department, for their creativity as trendsetters in overcoming the incompetence of National Government for the betterment of the Western Cape and its communities.

In November, the Standing Committee on Human Settlements heard directly from the District Six claimants who had already spent so much of their lives dispossessed of their land, and now found themselves waiting longer still for housing as a result of the incompetency of the National Department of

Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

Just imagine, hon Deputy Speaker, what could be done if the National Government was as passionate about solving the housing problem in this country as this Provincial Department is? Yes, we need to acknowledge the challenges: the challenges of land invasion, queue jumping and shack farming. We need to acknowledge the challenges of intimidation to the extent of shooting at some of the project sites; the community dynamics – just to name a few of the challenges that are going to need a whole of society approach to eradicate the criminal element in all this, but the DA-led Western Cape Government has planned for the future.

With this budget and together, hon Deputy Speaker, we will push forward to build innovative ways to improve services to our citizens. We will build communities that are free from the legacy of apartheid spatial planning. We will build affordable, sustainable housing, and with that housing we will build resilient, resident-led and engaged communities that will persist for years to come.

We will build a province that delivers quality housing to all. We will build this because our citizens have already waited too long. We will build because the National Government will not.

An HON MEMBER: Sjø!

Ms L M MASEKO: We also need to look beyond just Government. This is why the Western Cape is partnering with the private sector and creating policy solutions that will see affordable housing opportunities in and near economic hubs.

The Provincial Inclusionary Housing Policy Framework, the first of its kind for any province, is currently being finalised by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning and will ensure that mixed housing developments become part of the fabric of the Western Cape spatial planning, but Deputy Speaker, things are continuing to fall apart at a National Government level.

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, our national landlord, has admitted that at least 1 300 of its own properties have been invaded and only by January would they have finalised a contract for the issuing of evictions. This means that after the contract has been awarded, only then that eviction notices can be processed. Did that happen? Your guess is as good as mine.

With this budget, hon Deputy Speaker, 11 210 housing opportunities will be delivered. 50% of the Human Settlements Development Grant will be awarded to contractors in targeted groups. 1 000 jobs will be facilitated. 50 informal settlements will be provided with interim engineering services, and some will be upgraded to phase 3. 700 houses will be built using sustainable building technologies, and 10 150 title deeds that will give dignity to our deserving

beneficiaries, will be handed over.

In closing, hon Deputy Speaker, we recognise that there are no simple answers to complex questions, and there are no quick fixes to long-term systematic problems. Housing in South Africa will continue to be a mammoth task and a great challenge, which is why I say again every department and every sphere of Government must play its role, protect this land and support the dignity of our people while looking beyond our walls to the rest of the society to find innovative ways to give residents every opportunity possible.

I want to thank Minister Simmers, the acting HOD, Mayisela, and the Department of Human Settlements, for always being available as we engage with them in the Committee when we ask those difficult questions on behalf of our constituencies. This financial year will not be different, and the engagements will continue. My appreciation to acting HOD, Phila Mayisela; CFO, Francois de Wet; the senior management, and the Department at large.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the DA supports Vote 8, I thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now recognise hon Minister Simmers.

†Die MINISTER VAN MENSLIKE NEDERSETTINGS: Agb Adjunkspeaker, eerstens moet ek vir u sê toe ek nou die lede se insette geluister het, en dis bitterlik baie weinig dat ek die Bybel aanhaal in hierdie Huis, dat ek vir u

benadruk vandag, het ek gedink aan Hosea 4 vers 6 wat sê, en ek gaan dit vir u lees, die Afrikaanse vertaling, 1953:

“My volk gaan ten gronde weens ’n gebrek aan kennis omdat hulle die kennis verwerp het.”

En u gaan nou verstaan hoekom ek hierdie Bybel teksvers gekies het.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Hon Deputy Speaker, firstly I have to say to you when I now listened to the members’ input, and it is very seldom that I quote the Bible in this House, that I emphasise to you today, I thought of the Book of Hosea 4, verse 6 which says, and I am going to read it to you, the Afrikaans translation:

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you as my Priests.”

And you are now going to understand why I chose this Bible text verse.]

Listening to the members’ inputs and statements as part of their speech, I was actually wondering: we provide so much information through the Standing Committee, obviously for those that attend the Standing Committee, but it seems that all this knowledge is lost once we start engaging each other in this

House.

So, I would like to thank hon member Maseko firstly as the Chairperson for seeking to put the spotlight on certain issues that were raised, but also responding to it effectively and efficiently, and really I want to thank hon member Maseko for indicating that as part of the undertone of a budget for you, it speaks to hope, it speaks to care, safety and dignity. So, I really want to thank hon member Maseko, which is something clearly that the Opposition parties in this Legislature are totally missing, †want my volk gaan ten gronde weens n gebrek aan kennis wat hulle verwerp het, agb Adjunkspeaker [my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge that they have rejected, hon Deputy Speaker.]

So now let me focus on some of the key aspects touched on by members. To hon member Lili, I really wonder if, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, if he has actually read our mid-term delivery report that was issued last year. I really, really wonder. [Interjections.] †Maar dis nie vir my om te beantwoord nie, dis nie my party nie. [But it is not for me to answer, it is not my party.]

The hon member correctly states the impact of COVID-19 and the fact that people who could not afford to pay rent, that were living in backyards in areas like Khayelitsha, ultimately were pushed out and they had to seek another way to ensure that they had a roof over their heads, but there is something the hon member actually fails to touch on, when he actually does attend Standing Committee, hon Deputy Speaker.

When COVID-19 started under lockdown alert level 5 – we have the Rental Housing Tribunal and we issued not one, not two, but three statements, stating that no individual must be or can be evicted in the formal sector and the informal sector, but I think just like we saw today earlier on, perhaps, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, †die selfoon opvangs was baie swak daai dag. Die agb lid is nie bewus daarvan nie; kom ons vergewe hom daarvoor [the cell phone reception was very poor that day. The hon member is not aware of that; let us forgive him for that.]

But secondly, and this links into yesterday's debate, when the hon member of the EFF, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, said, and I believe he must still refer to Hansard, that:

“It is not only the EFF, but also the ANC that encouraged people to invade land.”

So how can the hon member today in this budget bemoan the status of human settlements, bemoan the fact of new informal settlements, but his party, and him indirectly, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, are the drivers of these new informal settlements?

†Dit is darem nou wragtag darem waar. Jy kyk nie elke oggend in die spieël nie. [That is now really true. You do not look in the mirror every morning.]

Then the member goes further. I am going to expand on this. Yes, when we talk about backyarders, we are aware of these informal areas, but through you, hon Deputy Speaker, and to our public that are listening, not every person in the backyard will ever qualify for a full state-subsidised house because, my question is, how many of them are actually on the Housing Demand Database? How many of them do not earn more than R3 500? That is something the hon member Lili seems to miss when he seeks to bring his point across. [Interjections.]

Furthermore, hon member Lili, through you, hon Deputy Speaker ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, if you can just take your seat. Hon member Lili, what is your point of order?

Mr A LILI: [No audible response.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Lili, what is your point of order?

Mr A LILI: Hon Deputy Speaker, no, all I wanted to ask, hon Deputy Speaker, is whether the MEC would take questions?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Lili, is it a point of order or not? [Interjections.] Then I cannot actually take your comments [Inaudible.]

Mr A LILI: No, it is a clarity on whether he willing to answer a question after his speech?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You asked the Minister a question, hon member Lili. If you can just repeat the question – oh, no, let me first find out if the Minister is going to answer your question. Minister, are you willing to take a question?

†Die MINISTER VAN MENSLIKE NEDERSETTINGS: Agb Adjunkspeaker, die agb lid moet die Staande Komitee bywoon.

[The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Hon Deputy Speaker, the hon member should attend the Standing Committee.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, no, technically the answer is no. So unfortunately – the Minister can continue now and thank you.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

†Ek gaan weer herhaal, want dis een van daai verskietende ster oomblikke van die agb lid waarna [Onduidelik.] ek in [Onhoorbaar] verwys het.

“My volk gaan ten gronde weens ’n gebrek aan kennis, want hulle verwerp dit.”

Nou hierdie is nou weereens 'n voorbeeld van waar jy kennis verwerp, dankie, agb Adjunkspeaker.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[I am going to repeat, because it is one of those shooting star moments of the hon member to which I referred to in [Inaudible].]

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you as my Priests.”

Now this again is an example of where you reject knowledge, hon Deputy Speaker.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, furthermore, the hon member, like so many other of the Opposition members, questions what our plan is. If they actually listen to the speech, we unpack the monetary value, what we will be seeking to accomplish, and within the Standing Committee, when we unpack the entire budget – where the hon member Lili arrived 45 minutes late, hon Deputy Speaker, so once again poor reception – we unpack each and every line item; how we are going to spend this budget.

Perhaps the member needs to sensitise himself, hon Deputy Speaker, with his party member that was actually present, to what was discussed at that Budget Vote. [Interjection.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, then I move now to the EFF ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Take your seat. Hon member Sayed, what is your point of order?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: Chair, on a ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, order, please!

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: ... point of order. Can the interim Provincial Leader of the DA in the Western Cape stick to the topic? I do not think hon member Lili's attendance is relevant, hon Deputy Speaker. Stick to the topic, please.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think in terms of Rule 40, relevancy is there on 99,9% of the Minister's response. That 0,01%, Minister, but ...[Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Hon Deputy Speaker ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: ... thank you very much, you may proceed.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: ... tongue in cheek, I hope the ANC's ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

The HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: ... three valid branches just saw their future provincially speaking, so they can vote for him.

An HON MEMBER: Minister of Title Deeds! Minister of Title Deeds!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members! Okay, you may proceed.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Now I move to the EFF. Yes, the member touches on certain points, but, hon Deputy Speaker, how can you for three years get the same information wrong?

†Ek sidder om te dink, ek kan myself nie beantwoord hier nie. [I shudder to think that I cannot answer myself here.]

Every time I have to stand up and explain. For the last five years and more this Provincial Department has, it has not spent a hundred percent, it even exceeded its budget, but the hon member keeps on persisting, hon Deputy Speaker, that we give money back. †Dalk is hy op die verkeerde WhatsApp groep, ek weet nie. [Perhaps he is on the wrong WhatsApp, I do not know.] Because I think the hon member is confusing the HSDG Grant and the USDG Grant, which I have been explaining for the last three years. [Interjections.]

But, hon Deputy Speaker, through you, once again let us encourage the

member to actually attend a Human Settlements Standing Committee to understand what we deal with.

The hon member also makes, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, mention of certain individuals that have been evicted and once again last year, I am going to give the same response as I did last year. The first port of call is to get to the local government to deal with the matter. I am not the Super Minister, I am not Superman, I cannot fly in the blue cape in this case and rescue the people. I respect the rule of law, hon Deputy Speaker ...[Interjections.]

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Hon Deputy Speaker?

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: ... and I respect the Rules of this House.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Hon Deputy Speaker?

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Hon Deputy Speaker ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon member Makamba-Botya, what is your point of order?

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Hon Deputy Speaker, can the Minister be

constructive in his responses to our statements and stop being personal? This is not a personal attack; this is a matter of urgency because we are talking about the lives of people who are landless here. He must stop talking about being a Superman. He is not a Superman. We are not talking to him directly; we are talking about the services that he must render in the Western Cape Province.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, thank you very much. I doubt that that is a point of order, but I will watch if the Minister is breaching on one of the Rules around being personal, or a personal attack. I will listen carefully, but I do see that there is a hand up from hon member Sayed.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: Hon Deputy Speaker, can you maybe ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot hear?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: ... urge the DA leadership and the EFF to engage outside. As they engaged in Knysna, to come together there, they can speak offline ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Sayed.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: ... so they do not, ja, so they do not delay us.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Point of order.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC] ... because we want to start at 1:30 with the ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I would really like the Minister to be able to conclude his debate. I know there are a lot of guests in the House that have been sitting patiently as he continues to talk. Minister, over to you.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: No, indeed, thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I note the hon GOOD member, through you, hon member August, referring to spatial integration and so forth, but the last time I checked the hon member of Good was a City of Cape Town councillor. He was the Chief Whip of Council at some stage.

So let us talk about spatial integration when you had the time, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, to do it when you were a Local Government member. I really hope that you will now talk to members who are currently there in that Council, to assist you in that regard because I cannot.

Furthermore, and this is linked to what hon member Maseko also touched on, is the issue of invasion, and a specific area of Knoflokskraal which is a

burning point for TWK, I must say, hon Deputy Speaker. But there are news articles, video clips, Facebook postings, of the hon member's National Leader, with the member's National Secretary General, engaging the people of Knoflokskraal, and to put the cherry on top, one of the key drivers of those invasions, hon Deputy Speaker, is today a council member of Theewaterskloof Municipality.

I am not saying it, go to the newspapers, go to Facebook, see the clips. If the hon member disputes that, then we can gladly provide him with information, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, but these are the facts which hon member Maseko was touching on.

But in conclusion, hon Deputy Speaker, a lot of what my Department does, 60% is dependent on our partners at Local Government. If Local Government does not function well, if councils are not stable, key decisions cannot be made, and certain projects cannot be implemented, and councillors cannot exercise their oversight role.

You would have noticed, hon Deputy Speaker and members of the House, that I started aggressively focusing on the illegal sales of BNG units. As ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, you will have to take your seat for a second. Hon member August, what is your point of order?

Mr S N AUGUST: Hon Deputy Speaker, a point of clarity actually. Will the Minister take a question?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, there cannot be a point of clarity. So I cannot have you discuss the Minister's closing remarks, hon member August. Thank you. You can engage with the Minister afterwards; I am sure that he will engage with you. Thank you very much. Over to you, Minister.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Like I said, with aggressive focus on illegal sales of BNG units. Yes, my Department and I have a role to play, but the National Housing Act also prescribes the role of Local Government, and when a council is unstable and councillors fail to execute their oversight role, we are seeing a rapid increase of the illegal sale of BNG units, and I need to emphasize and I call on this House, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, to support me, to encourage people not to sell their BNG units.

Once you have a title deed, there is a pre-emptive clause, that even prohibits you then to sell a house, but when you are selling a house without having a title deed, you are actually committing a crime. It is a civil crime, and it is a commercial crime.

At the moment, hon Deputy Speaker, I am awaiting a legal opinion hopefully

by tomorrow from the State Attorney, because I now will seek to take back what belongs to the State, to teach those beneficiaries a lesson if they are even considering selling these houses.

What you are getting many people died for. Many people are not able to get that housing opportunity because you were afforded the opportunity. How dare you sell that house? How dare you? Today I invited a lot of our beneficiaries whose lives this Government has changed. How dare you prevent somebody else from taking an opportunity?

So, hon Deputy Speaker, in conclusion. I would love to leave you with a quote from Theodore Roosevelt, Teddy Roosevelt, because this actually amplifies the message I want to leave here to our hon members, and it is the "Man in the Arena":

"It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how strong men stumble, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs, who comes short again and again, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly. So that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

So let us stop pointing out what we are doing wrong, assist us and improve what we are doing right. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. [Applause.]

[Debate concluded.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. That concludes the debate on this Vote.

Hon members, I would like to suspend the House for lunch for 30 minutes. We will reconvene at 1:30, 13:30, with the Education Vote. The House is now suspended, thank you.

[Business of the House suspended at 13:00 and resumed at 13:30.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: You may be seated. Thank you very much. We are going to continue with the Orders of the Day. The Secretary will read the Third Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 5 – Education – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2 – 2022]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: I recognise the Minister.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you very much, House Chairperson. Premier, in absentia, members of the Provincial Cabinet, members, and

guests. For the last number of years, I have been in the unfortunate position of having to begin my Budget speech by outlining the harsh reality that the WCED faces, in terms of delivering quality education to an ever-increasing number of learners, with a decreasing amount of money in real terms. This House is well aware of the many challenges we face, and some have become rather disenchanted with my constant refrain about lack of money. So for them this year, they can relax, because I am very happy to be able to report that this year, we have been allocated additional funding that is significant enough to make a real difference, to help us come up for a bit of air, whilst we deal with the extreme pressures our Department faces, and that enables us to cautiously breathe a very but probably a temporary sigh of relief.

Our total budget for the 2022/23 financial year is R28,03 billion, a pleasing R2,2 billion more than that we received last year. Considering the backlogs we face and the increasing demands, it is clear why it is needed and whilst we are very pleased with it, we must not expect that this will solve all our problems that we face. A system with 1,1 million learners, nearly 42 000 staff members and a lot of infrastructure needs a lot of money to keep things running and we have been cutting into the bone for some time now. The bone needs to recover before it can grow again.

Our finance team has been working closely with the Provincial Treasury over the last few months, and I would like to thank both teams for the work that they have done, to get us to the point where an additional R7,91 billion has been allocated to our Department over the MTEF, with R2,65 billion of this

funding added in the 2022/23 financial year.

The Budget tabled here today allocates R2,55 billion to infrastructure in the 2022/23 financial year, which is a significant increase on the previous R1,72 billion target spend for 2021/22. Over the MTEF, spending on this priority will amount to R7,04 billion. This will allow us to put projects that had to be suspended by budget cuts back on the table, like the establishment of a high school in Darling.

It is going to take some doing to spend R2,55 billion, but as Mr Salie Abrahams, nodding happily in the box over there, our DDG Education Planning says: “It is a nice problem to have!” Planning has already started to ensure that we maximise this opportunity, but crucial to our ability to do this will be the scrapping of PTI 16b, which compels us to use DTPW as our sole implementing agent. We must have more control over smaller infrastructure works for schools, to avoid scenarios where we have a 46-week lead time for a mobile classroom that is urgently needed, for example. Minister Maynier mentioned this in his budget speech, and I would urge that this happen now with some speed, or there is very likely to be underspending at the end of this financial year, no matter how many reports are sent to the Standing Committee.

Minister Mitchell mentioned yesterday the issues that he has highlighted as risks of this move. I thank him for that, and we look forward to taking up the challenge. We are not saying that we can or want to take over all

infrastructure, Public Works will remain an important partner, but more flexibility is essential and long overdue.

Crucial to our operations are people. Whilst much is said about reducing the cost of CoE in Government, with which we agree in principle, this Department is not one which can, or should, contribute to that reduction. Without people – and no, computers cannot replace teachers – we cannot deliver education. So I am very pleased that some of our additional funding will enable us, firstly, to add an extra 329 public service posts, to reduce the administrative burdens that our schools face.

We are all very aware of the overcrowding we are facing in many of our schools as well. The additional budget will also allow us to make some progress in reducing the teacher–learner ratio, by the appointment of additional teachers. Whilst the actual number is subject to the consultation process with the unions later this year, we are very hopeful that we will be able to add over 1 000 extra posts to the basket. [Applause.]

Yes, thank you. We will also focus on the phasing in, of the appointment of fully qualified Grade R teachers, with increasing pressure on schools to provide for this grade. Full universalisation should have been achieved by 2019, and we expect the eventual inclusion of this grade in compulsory schooling after the passing of the BELA Bill.

Additional support for our schools will be the implementation of the third

phase of the Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI), which will be implemented from 1 April to 30 September this year. R533,91 million will be spent in the 2022/23 financial year to fund the employment of assistants in our schools, in support of our school staff, to deliver quality education. These assistants have been well-received in our schools, so the stop-start nature of the project as the result of delays in confirmation of National Treasury funding is frustrating, to say the least.

Speaker, the current state of the economy has hit our schools hard, including our fee-charging schools where parents have lost jobs and income, and are struggling to pay fees.

As announced during the mid-term budget debate last year, we made allocations to assist our schools with expenses such as COVID-19 prevention materials, municipal bills, and ICT infrastructure. But there is an underlying concern that we have consistently been highlighting since I was appointed in 2014, the Quintile System, which influences the funding of schools based on an outdated policy that is supposed to reflect the poverty of the learners but bears no resemblance to the reality on the ground.

Speaker, I am pleased that the members of this House, especially my Opposition colleagues, are in agreement that we need to relook at this system, because it is prejudicing our poor schools. I am therefore pleased to announce that because of our additional allocation, we shall be offering to 160 fee-paying schools catering for learners from disadvantaged

communities, the opportunity to become no-fee schools from 1 January 2023, in recognition of their true socio-economic status. This shows the commitment of the Western Cape Government and the WCED to our poorer communities.

Speaker, as I have recently publicised, we were all disappointed, but not surprised, to discover the full extent of the learning losses that the children of our province have experienced owing to the pandemic. The 2021 systemic tests revealed a substantial reversal of the gains we have made over many years. These losses were most evident in the Foundation Phase, where daily attendance is critical to ensure that concepts learned are reinforced over time. Redressing the learning losses is a crucial part of the Western Cape Recovery Plan, and it is vitally important that we ensure that the losses in these crucial years are addressed as urgently as possible.

We will thus be allocating an additional R68,72 million to this priority in the 2022/23 financial year, out of an additional R131,94 million over the MTEF. We will be able to track the impact of this investment through our ongoing annual systemic tests in the coming years and remain the only province to measure our progress in an independent and internationally benchmarked manner.

Another factor that we sincerely believe will assist in the longer-term improvement of the Foundation Phase outcomes is one that is happening this Friday, namely the transfer of the responsibility for Early Childhood

Development (ECD) from the Provincial Department of Social Development to the WCED.

As I outlined at the very successful ECD Summit we had last year in October, we are all aware of the positive effects of children attending quality ECDCs, in terms of intellectual development, nutrition, safety, social development, and general wellbeing of young children. It is for this reason that our Government has worked so hard to support ECD provision to date, and the rationale for the shift is to drive further improvement and better alignment with education.

Further developing the sector will, however, take time and, of course, additional funding, which we trust will be forthcoming from National Treasury in honour of their stated commitment to improving this critical sector. For the first two years, the operational aspects and service delivery model for ECD will not change. The WCED will be taking responsibility for registration, funding and programme implementation, and we will be working with NGOs, ECD fora and other entities to reach all registered and unregistered ECD sites, and to better understand the sector.

The DSD staff identified for the function shift will be transferring to the WCED with the same functions and portfolios they currently hold, and will fall under the same directorate as Grade R. The National Curriculum Framework: birth to four years will remain the National Curriculum supported by the DBE and curriculum officials in the WCED.

Equitable Share funding of R289,9 million and ECD Conditional Grant funding of R95,87 million, has been added to the WCED's baseline in support of this function for the 2022/23 financial year.

A lot of work has gone into the process of transferring this function, and I would like to thank Minister Fernandez, HOD Macdonald and the Social Development team, as well as the team from the WCED, especially Karen Dudley and Ruth Leukes, for all their efforts in ensuring what I believe will be a smooth transition. Kudos also to DSD for developing the current model of funding, which is now being adopted nationally.

Chairperson, the primary role of education is to teach people the skills they will need when they leave school, in order to live a dignified life and contribute to our economy. Aside from the vital Foundation Phase skills of reading, writing and calculating, we also need to ensure that, as our learners progress through school, they learn the 21st century skills and practical skills that are so desperately needed.

Our commitment to this goal preceded the pandemic, with an expanded focus on STEAMAC. It focuses on the specific skills our provincial and national economy needs now and will need in the future and we are committed to expanding learning opportunities in these fields. It is crucial for young people to participate meaningfully in the economy as young adults by getting and creating jobs. This is another important part of the Western Cape Recovery Plan: without this investment in skills development, we cannot

expect our economy to grow.

We have, unfortunately, been limited in achieving this vision due to the immediate pressures of placement. Notwithstanding this, I want to commend my Department on the progress that has been made, and their genuine commitment to providing quality education for every child in every classroom in every school in the province.

As regards the “T” in STEAMAC, namely Technology, while the pandemic has had a negative impact on our system, it has also highlighted opportunities that we must make use of to increase our ability to respond to these kinds of shocks. One area in which this is most evident is digital learning, which many relied on during school closures and disruptions. We will be making an additional investment in the blended-learning priority of R170 million in the coming financial year.

In addition, 1 290 of our schools are now connected to Broadband and 249 schools have subsidy alternatives to Broadband. 752 schools have Local Area Networks (LAN) installed, with a further 553 schools with partial access installed. It is really important, as, if the enabling environment is there, multiple appropriate resources can be used to improve teaching and learning.

Part of our focus on this priority is the recognition of the various online schooling options that are becoming available to learners at a rapid rate. At present, there is no legislation that deals with the creation of online schools

or their registration. Complicating factors are how to deal with things like norms and standards, for infrastructure not applying to these schools, and schools being registered in the Western Cape while enrolling learners living from other provinces and maybe even other countries. In the absence of national legislation, the WCED has begun development of a Draft Blended Learning and Online Schooling Policy, so we can have a clear position on roles and responsibilities in this innovative field.

In addition, we are about to publish regulations for comment that will allow independent virtual schools to register with the Department.

I look forward to inputs from interested parties so that we can move this forward and create extra opportunities for our learners.

The “C” in STEAMAC is Coding and Computational Skills and our Coding and Robotics Pilot Project is proceeding well, with 32 schools participating in the Foundation Phase, with 96 teachers currently in training. The first leg of training delivered by Unisa took place at the end of 2021, and the second leg is currently underway. Teachers will receive a certificate upon successful completion of the course. Initially, the focus will be the integration of coding and robotics into existing subjects, building up to implementing a standalone subject.

The WCED is collaborating with various partners to run competitions, clubs, and other initiatives. For example, the Robotics e-Education and Coding

Hubs or REACH project, in collaboration with the Cape Town Science Centre, will see at least 24 robotics clubs established in 2022.

Chairperson, one of the “A’s” in STEAMAC is, of course, Agriculture, and we are also making pleasing progress in expanding our offering in this field. Excuse the pun. We know that Agriculture is a critical sector in our province. The number of schools offering agricultural subjects has expanded significantly from just three in 2015 to 30 in 2022.

We have also added infrastructure to support this priority, with workshops having been completed at Charlie Hofmeyr Secondary, Groendal Secondary, and Skurweberg Secondary. The construction of further workshops is underway at Hexvallei High and Kraaifontein High. In addition, we have completed RFID and aquaponics facilities at Boland Landbouskool, greenhouses at Kylemore Secondary, Roodezandt Secondary, Skurweberg Secondary, Overberg High, and Pelican Park High, and horticultural tunnels and shaded netting at Augsburg Landbou Gimnasium. Providing these facilities to schools allows them to expand their skills-offering to learners, and represents a direct investment in our future provincial economy.

At the same time, the Department is partnering with various entities and organisations to offer learners’ specialised courses and certificates in this field, such as sheep shearing with the National Woolgrowers Association, irrigation with the South African Irrigation Institute, labour relations with

the South African Labour Relations Council, and drone flying with the Department of Agriculture, Elsenburg, amongst many others. These are practical skills that learners can readily apply.

In support of the Three Streams Model we also have eight technical schools in our province, with planning underway in the MTEF for another five, in Hermanus, Nomzamo, Silversands, Saldanha, and Mfuleni.

In addition to STEAMAC, we must expand opportunities for those learners who are not suited to the traditional academic subjects. Schools of Skills are an excellent mechanism to allow these learners to also participate in the economy ensuring they, too, can live a life of dignity. We currently have 22 such schools in our province, and the construction of a School of Skills in Manenberg is currently in the planning phase.

While we work to increase the number of Schools of Skills, we are also piloting the introduction of skills subjects in public ordinary schools. A pilot project offering Grade 8 and 9 skills subjects in 23 selected high schools was started in 2021.

We also recognise the value of collaboration schools in delivering skills education to our learners. Our miracle school – as I call it – Jakes Gerwel Technical School, is a prime example of a community that saw a need for skills education in the area. Other communities have seen this success and wish to see the same offering available to their local children.

One such area is Struisbaai, where the need for skills education has led to a partnership with the Struisbaai Funding Trust to create a School of Skills. The school will be constructed on the grounds of Struisbaai Primary School, and include classrooms, workshops, training kitchens, a civil maintenance area, a hall, and administrative areas. The total cost of the project is R32,7 million, of which the WCED is funding 40%. It is using technology that is very different and can be built off-site. This will allow us to create a technical occupational curriculum extension for Grades 8 and 9, so that learners who might have dropped out at the end of primary school can instead achieve a General Education Certificate (GEC), giving them access to further education and training phase options. The school is currently scheduled to open for the second term, and will initially cater for 30 learners, eventually increasing to 120 learners in total.

We can only undertake these innovative projects because the Western Cape Education Department recognised the potential for public-private partnerships to expand the available quality learning opportunities for the children of this province, and because we passed the relevant legislation required to make these partnerships a reality. Of course, it is being challenged in Court, but this will not deter us.

Speaker, it is a travesty that Special Needs Schools are not included in the calculation of the Provincial Equitable Share, which only takes into account public ordinary schools. It goes without saying that special needs learners need more funding than those in public ordinary schools, as they need more

attention and more equipment. In answer to a recent question in the National Assembly, Minister Motshekga confirmed this, the reason being “budget constraints”.

This is quite simply unacceptable – National Government can fund a bloated Cabinet, give multiple bailouts to failing SOEs, watch as billions have been lost to corruption, but not allocate funding for our special needs learners, some of the most vulnerable in society. This just shows where the ANC Government’s priorities lie.

We have 53 Special Needs Schools in this province – I have not been able to calculate how much funding we have lost out on as a result of the above travesty, but it makes the excellent work we have done in this field even more impressive, and I must pay tribute to our team.

We are also providing support for learners with low to moderate special needs in ordinary schools and have a new full-service school in Sunningdale in planning at present. All teachers are to be trained in Teaching for All, starting this year, with one school in every circuit which has been designated as a full-service or inclusive school. Teachers at these schools will be trained to increase their capacity to deal with learners with such support needs. An outreach team from a Special Schools Resource Centre will provide additional support.

There are also learning support teachers who provide support to learners with

learning difficulties in ordinary primary schools. The number of learning support teachers has been increased this year to 624. Any parent of a learner with learning difficulties who has concerns should approach their school principal to request a meeting with the school-based support team or learning support teacher.

The last thing I want to mention regarding skills is Entrepreneurship. We are working very closely with the DBE to implement the E-Cubed programme this year, which refers to Employability and Entrepreneurship Education. This programme uses project-based learning to develop the kind of thinking and skills that our learners will need to succeed in the economy. We are starting with 12 schools in the first cohort this year, which will expand to approximately 300 schools by the third cohort in 2024. This is very exciting, and I want to thank Mr Haroon Mahomed and his team for all the work they are putting into this.

It is clear that we are using every cent we receive to empower our young people and create the best possible opportunities for them. I regret not having more time to expound on the wonderful work that is happening every day in my Department and want to commend HOD Brent Walters and Exco for their leadership, commitment and sheer hard work in their quest to achieve this. I also want to thank every member of my Department for what they do, including, of course, our teachers and principals, who have to deal with challenging circumstances almost every day.

Thanks to CFO, Mr Leon Ely, and Chief Director: Finance, Erna Veldman, for all your efforts in regard to this budget process, engagements with PT and managing a budget the size of this one.

In closing, I would like to recognise the constructive engagements we have had with the Standing Committee for Education during this budget process. I welcome the new Chairperson of the Committee, honourable Deidre Baartman, to this role and thank her for guiding the Committee during her first budget process in the education sphere.

I also recognise the contribution of the former Chairperson, honourable Lorraine Botha, for her leadership of the Committee throughout the previous year, and her support for the education system in this province. We wish her well in her new portfolio.

I am also encouraged by what appears to be an increasing realisation by members of the Opposition that when we highlight funding challenges, we are not looking for excuses. We are simply stating the stark facts. I see a bit of a snigger from the Opposition.

Their recognition of the problems with the National Government's funding model, and their readiness to join our call for a relook at the quintile system, is refreshing and appreciated.

I also wish to thank my office, ably led by Lorika Elliott, who work so hard

behind the scenes to deal with myriad issues that come across our desks every day and I would like to thank the Premier for his leadership and support, as well as my Cabinet colleagues. I accordingly take pleasure in tabling this Budget and ask for the support of this House. Thank you, Chairperson.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, Minister Schäfer. I now recognise hon member Sayed.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you very much, Chairperson, and my greetings to the MEC and to the officials. I want to also extend a warm welcome to our special guests in the gallery. We include education activists, former educators, and student leaders. We are grateful to members of the public for their activism, towards realising a just education system in our province and country. I am thankful to them for actually driving our oversight as well. These are patriots, many of whom are not even members of the political party I represent, but with whom the ANC fights side by side to address many challenges at our schools, particularly in poor and working-class communities. The annual crisis of unplaced learners and overcrowded classrooms is but one of these issues.

The ANC is a people-centred movement. All service delivery interventions that we make as an Opposition are informed by constant engagement with our people on the ground. We made our opposition to this particular Budget Vote clear in the Committee deliberations. It is anti-poor and fails to address the systemic education inequalities in our province, notwithstanding some of the

positive aspects in the budget.

In light of the recently released World Bank Report, which found that South Africa is the most unequal society in the world, and that education inequalities contribute immensely to this, we cannot support a budget that actually widens this particular gap. We have constantly suggested the increase of class sizes in former Model C schools as a viable mechanism to address the overcrowding of classes in poor schools, and the crisis of unplaced learners. The hon MEC continues to be a stumbling block, as she believes that learners from the Eastern Cape are the problem in this province. This attitude explains why, every year, learners from poor backgrounds missed out on the entire first step of schooling in the province. Hundreds of black learners – when I say black, I include African, Indian and Coloured, remain unplaced. When we raised this in the Committee, the MEC with her nonchalant attitude said, and I quote:

“There are some schools which everyone wants to attend, and they cannot get in.”

Her response clearly shows no urgency to address the persistent issue of insufficient placement spaces for disadvantaged mainly black learners because this seldom affects white learners in the main. We maintain that the challenge is not necessarily a lack of resources. Poor planning and lack of political will, tied to the DA’s inherent racism, especially the constant targeting of learners from the Eastern Cape, are the problems. The DA’s

fixation on the West's so called Liberal World Order, as MEC Maynier and the Premier speaks of, which in actual fact is an illiberal right-wing project grounded in their National Party and Progressive Federal Party traditions, as opposed to a Liberal Party tradition, which only some of them in the DA still adhere to, is one – and one which I also do not necessarily agree with – is one which informs the DA's political posture towards education in this province. The same posture informs the hypocritical stance to actually not support and oppose our Government's approach to a peaceful resolution of the Russia / Ukraine conflict, while refusing to condemn the continued Israeli apartheid aggression against the Palestinian people and actually stunting a debate on that matter in this House.

The DA's right-wing approach to education is thus not surprising. The WCED continues to blame its challenges on in-migration and so-called influx of learners from other provinces. The Western Cape is not a colonial outpost; it is part of South Africa, and learners are allowed to come here.

It is not surprising that the DA is a safe space for racists. We are not saying all members are racist, but it is a safe space for racists. A senior DA councillor recently in the City of Cape Town actually told a fellow DA councillor and former MP to go fetch her lunch from the Eastern Cape to the dominant right-wingers in the DA, Africans do not belong in this province...
[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, hon member...

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): They are a nuisance and must go eat in the Eastern Cape... [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Sayed, hon member Sayed, may you please take your seat? Can I see who is raising a hand? I see the hand.

Mr G BOSMAN: It is me, hon Speaker.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Is that a point of order?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): I hope my time is not being eaten into by member Bosman's frivolous point of order.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Is it a point of order, hon member?

Mr G BOSMAN: Yes, hon Speaker. I would like to know if the member is prepared to take a question.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): No, I am not prepared to take a question. You are always asking, and I always answer that.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: No, hon member, member Sayed is not going to take a question. You may continue, member.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Chairperson, schools like the Grootkraal UCC Primary, just outside Oudtshoorn, which is providing education to poor children on farms, are targeted and vilified by officials in this Department. The school continues to face attempts to force its closure, ever since it has won a court case against the WCED to keep the school open. The WCED, without consultation, changed the learner transport service (LTS) provider to someone based in Mossel Bay. Now this is not about the family members of the principal and they redirected the route so as to frustrate the principal and the parents. After two years of COVID-19 disruptions, our schools have returned to full capacity, albeit with challenges and yes, we have welcomed and supported the decision for that to take place, but the return to full capacity has also placed the spotlight again on overcrowded schools.

Our National Finance Minister, Enoch Godongwana, announced that R24,6 billion was added to the Provincial Education Departments like the Western Cape to address the shortfalls in the compensation of teachers and I will not go into the figures, the MEC has stated the figures. The ANC welcomes the budget increase from National and wants this budget to address our structural inequalities. Sadly, judging by the MEC's tirade in the House last week for the Second Reading Debate, there is little hope that this budget will bring any changes unless we exert maximum pressure. Her obsession with the usual blame and complain continues. Even when there is an over R2 billion additional budget for the province, she continues to attack National Government, because with the R2 billion increase there is no more room to hide behind insufficient budget, and we are not saying National

Government is free from blame. Chair, poor management has gone a long way in deepening the school infrastructure crisis.

The rebuilding of Sunray Primary School in Delft, for example, has been cancelled after the contractor was liquidated in February last year, over R71 million was spent on the project, of which over R57 million was paid to the contractor. We want the MEC to tell us, when will this project complete? Also, what engagements did she have with our friend, the hon Mitchell, on this matter?

At Easter Peak Primary in Manenberg, a no-fee school serving a gang-infested area, no repairs have been made to the three burnt classrooms, nor have asbestos roofs been replaced, despite promises from the Department and departmental approval for the work to go ahead years ago. When I followed up in the Committee with the MEC and her officials and in a question, the MEC confirmed that no planned preventative maintenance project has taken place at the school. We need to ensure that intervention is made immediately.

At Panorama Primary and Riversdale there are ailing asbestos structures. The Department has delayed since 2015 to build the replacement school with numerous excuses annually, despite funds being budgeted, and the DA Mayor of Hessequa has even been complaining about this matter.

Vanguard Primary – another example where shoddy workmanship took place,

the service provider sent by the Department even knocks into the gates of the school, having an unlicensed driver, and the school has not even yet been compensated for that. The 48,12% increase for infrastructure must prioritise these projects. We are concerned by the high number of asbestos schools in the Western Cape. There are no immediate plans to build replacement schools, thereby exposing our learners and educators to health hazards.

Premier Winde committed this Department of Education in his SOPA to build security fences at 30 schools each year during the Sixth Administration. The ANC, together with education activists, some of whom are in the gallery, fought vociferously for this, after noting that weak security fences have exposed schools, especially in gang-infested areas.

The MEC, however, does not seem to be happy with her Premier's decision and undertaking because every chance she gets, she does not forget to tell us that her Government "will not replace fences that communities keep on breaking for no reason", quote, unquote. On the contrary, I have personally visited a number of these schools with weak and broken fences that have not been fixed for many decades, not because they have been broken by the community. In fact, many fences in the province do not even adhere to the 1,80-metre requirement as stated in the norms and standards. The broken and weak fence at Welcome Estate near Athlone has not been replaced in 70 years.

A similar situation persists at Rylands Primary School in Athlone. We will

fight to ensure that the MEC does not undermine the Western Cape Premier's undertaking on school fences. In fact, we call on the Premier to consider increasing the number of school fences to be delivered per year from 30 to 60.

The Department's slow pace in investigating and dealing with alleged corruption and malfeasance at schools, has had devastating outcomes. Some principals and teachers have sadly even lost their lives. Scottsdene Secondary School in Kraaifontein is a ticking time bomb as well. Activists are continuing in a two-year fight against a senior official at the school who allegedly got his position through corrupt means. When activists question why the matter is dragging on and why there is a cover-up, they are then intimidated and threatened. We need to protect our whistleblowers at our schools.

We are concerned also with the slow implementation of the SIU recommendations following the finding against the WCED for irregular contracts awarded to Masiqhame Trading for PPEs. We demand that the Education Department, that the Education Committee be furnished with the final report that came from the Premier's office, and that the officials temporarily step aside, those officials that are implicated, while the Department is applying their mind as to how to implement that report.

Chair, the Department has identified the need for additional psychosocial support in schools, a matter that the ANC in this House has raised on

numerous occasions, and we welcome this change of position, but this budget does not say how much has been allocated for it and will certainly not come close to the demand for the psychologists in every circuit and a social worker at least in every vulnerable school. We therefore reiterate our call for the WCED to engage with the Department of Social Development in the province to have a partnership to place unemployed Social Work graduates in schools, and this budget must make allocation for that.

Hon Chairperson, the MEC and my colleagues in the Education Committee and those who served before with us know that I have been highly critical of the MEC and the Department over the years on a variety of issues, with regards to a failure to deal adequately with inequality in our education system. This is done in the spirit of robust oversight, nothing personal. It is there to drive improvement.

I am confident that this space for robust engagement, I echo the words of the MEC, which was provided by our Chairperson, the hon Botha and we wish her well in her new assignment, will continue to be provided by our new Chairperson, the hon Baartman. However, on the issue of Quintiles I cannot stand here and be critical of the MEC and her Department. Our critique has always been placed from the very onset at the doorstep of the National Department of Basic Education.

This is why, and I have raised this even in the fora of my own political party. This is why the ANC here in this House drove the resolution taken by the

Education Committee two weeks ago to have serious engagements with the National Department of Basic Education to urge them to change the current outdated criteria for determining the Quintile levels of schools, especially in our province. Currently, the Quintile level of a school is determined, as the MEC indicated, by the relative economic status of the area, as opposed to the economic backgrounds of the learners. The Quintile level in turn determines the financial assistance that certain schools get. This is seriously disadvantaging schools, which serve mainly poor and working-class learners in the Western Cape, and it is blatantly unfair.

In line with President Ramaphosa's call to us in his State of the Nation Address for a new consensus, a new consensus that is people-centred, we undertake to work as a focused collective and I think we should do that across party lines in this province with the Department on this particular matter to resolve this issue. I thank you, Chair.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon member Sayed. I now recognise the EFF, member Makamba-Botya.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the Western Cape... [Audio breaks up, poor connectivity]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Member, we cannot hear you.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Madam Chair, am I audible now?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Yes, you are better than before. You may continue.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Okay. The Western Cape Department of Education must drastically increase the number of no-fee schools, especially in townships and rural areas. Early this year learners and parents of Usasazo High School in Khayelitsha were up in arms when the principal asked them to each pay R400 before they can be issued with their matric statements.

Madam Chair, they are predominantly learners from disadvantaged backgrounds whose parents are unemployed. There is too much pressure on these learners and their families as they also face financial challenges of having to pay University application fees in their matric year. Oftentimes a learner will apply to more than one university as they do not know which university will accept them and now each application comes with its own application fee and on top of that, these learners and their parents are also expected to pay the fees at the end of the year, which is too much.

Moreover, Madam Chair, in the year 2022, the Western Cape Online School Application System remains a disaster. Some learners spent three months or more at home without being placed in a school following the formal opening of schools as a result of the poor placement system in the province. This also places unnecessary pressure and stress on these learners as they join the school system late and now they have to play catch-up, whereas some learners have started with preschool three months before. When schools close

for the first time these learners cannot even enjoy their holidays as they will have to catch up at home.

Madam Chair, the safety of schools in the Western Cape remains a huge concern as both learners and teachers operate in fear in unsafe environments. The corruption that continues to thrive in the Department of Education is despicable. This leads to a killing of innocent teachers at the school premises, who are whistle-blowers, so the Department needs to do something on this. Most of these schools do not even have any form of security. Another danger with the Department of Education comes from learners who are used by outside gang members to attack other learners or teachers. The Department must tackle such issues, Madam Chair, without fear and make sure that these spaces of learning remain safe. Madam Chair, the Department must be serious about tackling issues of racism in Western Cape schools.

Schools need to develop and foster codes of that [Inaudible – poor connectivity.] which do not promote or condone racism. Just last year, two black learners were racially abused by a white learner in Camps Bay High School. After the school found the learner guilty, they had then taken the punishment a secret and used the POPI Act as an excuse. This thing of protecting perpetrators of racism must come to end in this province.

On that note, Madam Chair, the EFF does not support this Vote. I thank you, Madam Chairperson.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon member, and you just finished on time. I am going now to recognise hon member from GOOD, hon August.

Mr S N AUGUST: Madam Chairperson, Tata Madiba famously said:

“Education is the most powerful weapon, which you can use to change the world.”

These words are a call to action for all South African citizens and the world to take up education to tap into their unexplored potential, but Chair, the Western Cape – often claimed to be the best-run province in the country – has a current education challenge, and in December 2021 more than 29 500 children have not been placed for the 2022 academic year.

In Mitchells Plain again there are 47 primary schools and 18 high schools – not nearly enough for the growing population of the area. Schools remain a vital part of the lifeline of communities, and it is important to ensure that young people are set up for their future and have the required skills set which the 21st century job opportunity demands.

Given the challenges that the Western Cape is experiencing, many children are losing out on education and already have a setback in life. We hope that the Western Cape Education Department would for the 2022 year prioritise the need for schools to ensure that we do not recreate the same problems of

not placing children who in turn are missing out on life-changing education and ultimately pushing these kids into a space of further being disenfranchised and challenged.

Chair, we have heard a lot of the reasoning that budget cuts are forcing departments into decreasing spending and impacting how these departments are operating. The problems we are experiencing are not new, so essentially this Government is asking us to allow them to correct their own mistakes of the past. The children cannot afford the repeat of the same mistakes without those in charge learning from their miscalculation. We demand that this Department does better. Thank you, Chairperson.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon member. I recognise the ACDP, member Christians.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS: Thank you, Chairperson. Thank you. Chairperson, the ACDP welcomes the increase of the teaching posts that will be increased according to the Minister, approximately a thousand of them. We always said that our classes are too full, and we need to reduce the teacher–learner ratio. So if the Minister can tell us how that will reduce the ratio, it will help a lot. We also welcome the ECDCs, the ECDCs that will now resort under the Education Department. The question is, will the ECDCs now become compulsory, because it is unacceptable for our learners that go to Grade 3 and 4 that cannot read, so we hope as the ACDP that the ECDCs now resorting under Education will prepare our learners more when they enter

Grade 1.

I also want to agree with one of the previous speakers, we spoke about it, the Quintile system is outdated, and action must be taken because it is the communities that suffer because we visited some schools and some schools do not receive any school fees because the parents do not have money to pay any school fees, and it means that our learners cannot receive a good and quality education, because they are penalised because they are on the wrong quintile. I also want to agree with the Minister when it is said special needs schools needs more funding from National, because those communities play an integral part in our society and I want our ANC members to ask, to influence the National Government that we get more money for our special-needs schools. I thank you, Chairperson.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much. Freedom Front Plus. I recognise you, hon member Marais.

Mr P J MARAIS: [No audible reply.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Okay, he is not online. I just saw him coming in and moving out. We are going to continue. Hon member Brinkhuis, I recognise you.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you, Speaker. †Bismillah hieragman nir rajeem. [In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious and The Most Merciful.]

The Al Jama-ah party commends the Western Cape Government for taking steps to make space for learners who could not be placed at schools. We further encourage the Department to place the remaining learners not yet placed at former Model C schools, where there will be enough space to accommodate them.

Al Jama-ah also welcomes the additional allocation from National Government to the Department. We now hope this will bring an end to the blaming game on National Government and the Province will put the full budget wisely to use, specifically in areas faced with challenges in their daily educational functions.

The challenges in education in the Western Cape are huge, and there is no need to hold back on spending. We want quality education for all learners. We want education to take place in a safe environment. We call on the Department to redeploy the Walking Bus members, who provided a sense of safety to learners and educators. Al Jama-ah calls on the Department to appoint adequate psychologists to schools and a social worker at every school.

Now that the ECD programme has been transferred to the Department, we hope to see no delays with the commencement of the 2022 ECD Levels 1 to 4, at the FET Colleges. Thank you very much, Speaker.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Member.

I now recognize the DA, hon member Baartman.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Presiding Officer. You know, Presiding Officer, when I did my maiden speech in 2019, I did not realise I am going to have to do another maiden speech in another portfolio. †Maar hier is ons! [But here we are!]

Presiding Officer, in the Western Cape, we share the vision of the Western Cape Education Department that quality education should be available to every child, in every classroom, in every school in our province. The vision is brought to light even within the constrained fiscal environment and this Department and the thousands of teachers, principals, administrators make it possible in our country, for every child to have quality learning opportunities in a functional and enabling environment to assist them in acquiring knowledge, competencies and skills to succeed, and this happens using value-based education to succeed in a changing world.

Presiding Officer, †as 'n juffrou se dogter, [as a teacher's daughter,] I grew up watching the hard work, dedication that goes into preparing for classes for teachers and then you come home still having to deal with marking and burning the midnight oil so I want to start this Budget Vote debate with saying thank you to all of the teachers who put in the hard work to make sure that quality education is made available to every learner in our province. We thank you.

Presiding Officer, the Equitable Share will increase from R23,2 billion in 2021/2022 to R24,8 billion in 2022/2023, and is expected to continue to increase over the 2022 MTEF to R25 billion in 2024/2025, but we know in an environment where learner numbers spike, there will never be enough money to ensure that we strengthen and expand learning opportunities for enhanced performance. In fact, this increase is due to the update in the Provincial Equitable Share Formula nationally, in the numbers of learners in the formula and not in a change of the formula. The additional conditional grants that enable this Department to function increased by just over 2% but unfortunately, it is still under inflation.

Some of the immediate areas focused on by this Department are blended learning, wellbeing and psychosocial support, and foundational-phased learning, which have a particular focus on language and mathematics.

Presiding Officer, I just want to remind this House that yes, the Department regulates education, but it does not include tertiary education so I just want to make sure that the member from the EFF is listening because tertiary education is a national mandate and as long as they are not burning any buildings down, we are happy to join them in lobbying Government for issues and concerns for our students regarding national tertiary education. I myself in my previous constituency in Laingsburg had lots of problems with admissions to the North Link College and applications in that regard. So if she is willing to assist me with fighting the good fight, I am here.
[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, you may sit down. Your point of order, hon member?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Yes, on a point of order, Chair, I think we welcome the input of working together but the implication that the EFF have burnt down buildings, I think if the hon, if she can just give some detail on that. I do not think that is correct.

An HON MEMBER: That is not a point of order. That is a frivolous point of order, Chair.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, is there another hand? No, there is no hand. Hon member, just continue with your debate.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Presiding Officer. Member, I never said anyone was burning down buildings. I said as long as anyone is not burning down buildings, we will join them in lobbying for some of these issues.

Presiding Officer, I think it would be a good opportunity to also remind people of the Western Cape and members of this House of the scale of the operation, which is education in the Western Cape. As of the 2020/2021 financial year there were 1 514 public schools. Of this, 1 080 651 learners were enrolled in Grade 1 to Grade 12 within the public ordinary school component, and 65 598 Grade R learners were registered, and 19 745 learners

in the public special schools component.

Presiding Officer, this is a R28 billion budget, the second biggest budget in the Provincial Government. The first is Health. In fact, it does give me great joy that the female Cabinet Ministers are in control of the bulk of the Western Cape Provincial Budget at 78%, unlike the National Government.

In the Western Cape, we put our money where our mouths are. The Department within this budget will be receiving an additional allocation also for extra education and school auxiliary posts, and concomitant additional infrastructure. This is because the sector is growing at an average of 18 000 learners per annum. Presiding Officer, a lot of allegations have been made of thousands of unplaced learners, but I also know members of this House get compensated for the data they use on WCPP laptops, so I am not sure if they saw this morning's email of the updated unplaced learners, which were 169 at 9 o'clock this morning, out of 70,000 late applications received.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, you may sit down. Hon member?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Chair, on a point of order, the member is not allowed to mislead the House, like what happened during the SOPA debate. Nobody spoke about a thousand unplaced learners. Nobody spoke about a thousand.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, I think the hon member is talking to her debate and will continue with her debate.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Presiding Officer. Presiding Officer, as at 9 March out of the 70 000 late applications the unplaced learner number was 344. That was 9 March at 9 o'clock. Today at 30 March it is 169. Further, Presiding Officer... [Interjection.] Can I be protected?

Presiding Officer, we welcome the transfer of the ECD Centres from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Education, which will be in effect from 1 April 2020, this coming Friday, and R1,2 billion has been shifted in order to ensure the ECD Programme success. The Department's aims to infuse educational content and methodologies over the next two years into the sector are going to be crucial, despite the decrease in the allocation of the ECD grant as received from the National Government and the extra money that we received, in terms of the overall budget.

The Department aims to do everything in its power to ensure a smooth transition of the programme. The grant will be split into two programmes, both towards the ECD function dealing with subsidies and maintenance, respectively. Further if Grade R is going to become compulsory and it likely will, it is also important for us to plan for it and in this regard, the Department has implemented additional allocations to ensure the progressive realisation of Grade R. We further welcome the announcement of the Department of the extra 216 fee-paying schools now becoming no-fee

schools. I know in the Budget Vote it mentioned a hundred and it brings me much delight to hear that that number itself has also increased.

In this regard also, Presiding Officer, despite the increase of 216 schools now becoming no-fee schools, during the midterm report, our no-fee school status in the Western Cape was already at 61% so this is above and beyond that percentage.

Speaker, in this regard in my previous constituency, I asked the members of the community actually: “What are the top two things you want us to focus on at a provincial level?” They told me the two things. They said: “Please can Laingsburg High School become a no-fee school and please can we scrape the Moordenaars-Karoo Road”, and there I am looking as if Minister Mitchell is online with us here. I then set up a meeting with Minister Schäfer to inquire regarding the criteria of the school and what would need to be complied with as the application was taking quite long, and it seemed that actually what was causing the delay was compliance and all the rules and legislation that apply to education and to schools in general. But after raising these concerns, the Minister acted swiftly, and even during COVID, Laingsburg High School became a no-fee school, and we thank you, Minister Schäfer, and this is, because Presiding Officer, in the Western Cape we listen. The school is now an official no-fee and quite honestly [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, please sit down. Hon member Sayed.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Chair, on a point of order. This is not an interruption, the Rules need to be followed. Can the hon Deputy Chief Whip speak through you, Chairperson, and not directly to the MEC.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon member.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Jo! Presiding Officer, I think maybe the young lions are out here to maul a person because... [Interjection.]

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

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): ...because I keep saying the words “Presiding Officer” at every paragraph that I read, so I am not sure where I did that, but I apologise if I did. Okay, and Presiding Officer, now Laingsburg High School is a no-fee school and I am happy to say that now the Moordenaars-Karoo Road is also being scraped, so thank you, Minister Mitchell for that as well.

†Hier in die Wes-Kaap, ons luister. Ons is nie hardhorend nie. [Here in the Western Cape, we listen. We are not deaf.]

And given the constraint of learners moving to the Western Cape Province, in addition to the 129 mobile classrooms delivered in the current financial year, 173 more are in the process of being delivered. A total of 28 replacement school projects had been listed over the next three years, another 97 vacant

classrooms had been identified for repairs which will continue to accommodate more than 4600 learners and a further 11 learner transport routes serving more than 6000 learners were approved for January 2022.

Presiding Officer, I think many people know that I am a big proponent of the digital economy, and I am excited about the Department's approach towards expanded e-learning over the next three years with an emphasis on senior and further education and training phases. The e-learning rollout will include the provision for the local area network curriculum delivery of Computer Applications Technology, Information Technology, Engineering and Graphic Design Refresh and Classroom Technology.

Further in the current financial year, the Department will ensure that the ICT equipment at schools is up to standard providing WCED with data for the central Education Management Information System, People Management Practice System as well as the Microsoft Schools agreement and we hope with the new information as well as the Census this year, that hopefully we will get some more money in the Provincial Equitable Share formula.

I welcome the announcement by the Minister regarding the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Maths, Agriculture and Coding and Cloud Computing (STEAMAC) focus regarding the registration of online schools and the drafting of the Provincial Government Regulations for comments for gazette soon. It seems that where National Government is sleeping here in the Western Cape we are wide awake to the legislative issues that plague our

industry.

Presiding Officer, as Chair of Budget I am always excited to read and to talk about procurement and in this Department's Vote it is indicated that this year's Procurement Plan will focus on the hiring of printing machines for Reprographic Services, Non-section 21 Schools stationery and cleaning; Non-section 21 School LTS and top-ups, CAPS Textbook Refresh, Foundation Phase graded readers and for the Learner Transport Schemes and National School Nutrition Programme. Procurement in South Africa makes up 22% of our GDP, 22%. It is almost half of our national economy.

Given that the State is funded by the taxpayers through various taxes, be it income tax, VAT or fuel levy, it is important for the State to procure according to the values of the Constitution. It must take into consideration that the beneficiaries of a procurement are the people of South Africa and part of procurement thus sets out the rules by which the State is allowed to use the people's money to buy goods, works and services in line with Section 217 (1) of the Constitution. I am thus proud of these focus areas identified by the Department as part of its Procurement Plan.

In terms of infrastructure, Presiding Officer, a once-off Education Infrastructure Grant Incentive allocation of R105 million was received for the 2022/2023 financial year. Infrastructure development allocations to public ordinary schools and special-needs schools have increased by 50,67% and

73,1% respectively.

Since 2016/2017 financial year this Department has built 72 new, replacement and mobile schools. 41 of these were replacement schools so as to address the backlog in the replacement of old structures built in the apartheid era. 10 schools were completed in 2021 and the Department is currently anticipating new schools for the completion this year in Bothasig, Fisantekraal, Nomzamo, Klapmuts and Silversands.

The reality is that between 18 000 and 20 000 extra learners join the Western Cape schools every year and have done so every year for the past five years. If the Department only had to rely on new schools, then the Province would have to build, furnish and staff 18 to 20 new schools every single year and that is before we even start to deal with the backlog from persistent under-funding as well as the National Norms and Standards for Infrastructure Regulations, which compel us to build in a certain way and certain facilities.

The budget the Province gets, of which the full budget is more than 90% funded by National Government, because we do not get some of the national powers and it cannot accommodate the building at this rate. In fact, I hear that now after National Treasury already changed the Provincial Equitable Share formula criteria for Health in the risk component, which will mean that in the future Health will give you getting less money, the National Treasury is also now thinking of revising the criteria formula for Education starting this year; starting this year for revising and for future implementation.

Further, the current formula makes no provision for special-needs students.

To put it into context, there are 20 325 learners in the Western Cape, special-needs students last year. The cost on schools to make provision for these learners is naturally higher than ordinary public schools but the Province is left on its own to absorb the funding in this regard and in some of the conditional grants it even speaks to the learners with profound intellectual disabilities, but we have to ask ourselves, what about the students that are so smart they need to go to next grades, where is also the revision for these learners?

The Western Cape is the only province to achieve more than 600 points for both reading and mathematics according to the wide-ranging SACMEQ IV report. At the mid-term mark the Western Cape achieved 72,7% in advanced reading compared to the average of 36,1% nationally. This is well ahead of the second ranked province, which was Gauteng, at 54%. So far, I have already mentioned that the Western Cape schools had 61% of no-fee schools and we thus welcome the other 216 coming.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: 116.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): 116, sorry, apologies for that. The Western Cape budgets the most for any province for fee exemption for learners from disadvantaged communities to attend fee paying schools and this is in the country. We were also the only province to feed our learners at

schools during lockdown. The people of South Africa had to go to Court, Presiding Officer, to force ANC provinces to ensure that meals are provided.

Do you know, Presiding Officer, that not only do we have the highest mathematics and physical science pass rates in South Africa, in the trends in International Mathematics and Science Study in 2019 the Western Cape achieved between six and eight places higher on the international ranking than South Africa as a whole in mathematics and science.

Presiding Officer, I think I need to actually repeat that. As a country, where the Western Cape internationally was doing better than the country as a whole in mathematics and physical science, and since we are talking now about learners and where we come from, I am from the Eastern Cape and I was [Inaudible.] before I was from Gqeberha, and I came to study my tertiary education here, so I am not sure whether the members from the Opposition are essentially saying that me, Deidre Baartman, must go back to the Eastern Cape, so I am not sure, so I think what we need to clarify... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Who is saying that? [Inaudible.]

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): No, it is fine. †Ons het *membership* boeke in ons [onduidelik, praat gelyktydig.] [We have membership books in our [Inaudible, speaking simultaneously.]]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon members!

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): So it is fine, ons gaan. It is fine. †Die *young lions* kom, en ek hoor daar is 'n *election*, en hulle het net drie *branches* van waar hulle kan *elect*, maar in elk geval... [Tussenwerpsels.] [the young lions are coming, and I hear there is an election, and they have only three branches to elect from, but in any case... [Interjections.]]

Presiding Officer, no-one is saying people must not come to the Western Cape. No-one is saying: "learners, do not come to the Western Cape." In fact, Presiding Officer, the fact that people come to the Western Cape is testimony to the good governance happening in the Western Cape.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Hear-hear!

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): The only thing we are asking for...

An HON MEMBER: For the rich, for the rich and not the poor.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): ...the Equitable Share formula, is, can the money please follow the learners. †Ons vra vir die geld. Kom, ons het *good governance* hierso, maar ons vra vir die geld ook, asseblief. [We are asking for the money. Come, we have good governance here, but we are asking for the money as well, please.]

Presiding Officer, in terms of the Quintile System, I am very excited at

member Khalid Sayed's input to indicate that even in their own structures they are lobbying for the change in this regard. So, I look forward to the feedback from the member in terms of what you will receive from the National Minister of Education, but I am not sure if he is being blue ticked, because I am not sure how many votes he has gotten yet so far for the upcoming Conference. In terms of infrastructure, Presiding Officer... [Interjection.]

†Nee, dis *fine*, dis *fine*. Ons gaan sien of jy daai drie *branches* se *votes* gaan kry. [No, it's fine, it's fine. We will see if you are going to get those three branches' votes.]

Presiding Officer, this Department has prioritised infrastructure funding. It has reallocated R500 million from Preventative Maintenance to Capital Projects for new schools and repurposing facilities over two years, allocated R150 million this financial year to small *ad-hoc* projects to accelerate school repair work, and to make more classrooms and specialist learning facilities available; allocated R100 million to Corrective Maintenance Projects that help schools deal with vandalism, climate change, and some of the challenges and defer R290 million of their Preventative Maintenance for the next financial year as they re-plan their Maintenance Budget to ensure more contractor predictability and incentivise contractors not to renege on their commitments, and since we are now here on infrastructure, I know the member loves fences. Presiding Officer, the MEC – I was there. I was there. The MEC did not say that she will not fix fences, just as a blanket statement.

She said that where people are breaking them down, we must now look at, “okay, but what about another school that is respecting their property and looking after the property and the teachers and the learners and the community members that are looking after the property, what about them? Do we give them less money because some people are breaking down fences and now we must keep on replacing them?” So it was not a blanket statement, there were conditions attached.

In terms of the Tafelsig Primary School, I am not sure if the members from the ANC and I are reading the same reports, but the report I read indicated for the Tafelsig School specifically that it recommended some corrective actions and found no breach in terms of policy and law and I also read the report regarding the Walmer investigation which also found no substance to the allegation, but I am not too sure. Maybe the MEC must assist us with this particular information. Maybe we are reading different reports, Presiding Officer... [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Baartman, can you take your seat?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Hon Presiding Officer, I do not – I have looked at my speech again, I did not speak about Tafelsig. Thank you.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member. That is not a point of order. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Yes, Speaker.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, Sayed, you had your chance and I think all hon members were listening. Let us listen to the debate of hon member Baartman. [Interjection.] Hon member Baartman.

An HON MEMBER: Chairperson, Chairperson... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Member, maybe you did not speak about Tafelsig, maybe it was another member who spoke about it, but I remember just while the people were speaking, just writing down those concerns. [Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon members, I tend to believe you were in the Standing Committee. It will be great if we can engage in the Standing Committee, not in the House. Thank you very much, hon members. Hon member, you may continue.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Hon member, despite things that I disagree with the member on, if I could vote I probably would have given him my vote out of the three branches. [Laughter.]

Presiding Officer, in terms of corruption a few members – let me now not call them by their names because just in case I get it wrong. In terms of corruption that was mentioned, I just want to say, please report it. If you

know about corruption, because you are in a particular position in society, there are actual laws in our country that say if you are aware of corruption, you must report it. You have an actual obligation and duty to then report it, so if people know about corruption, please report it, so it can be dealt with.
[Interjection.]

Presiding Officer, can I be protected here. †Asseblief? [Please?]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Yes, you are protected, hon member.

An HON MEMBER: But also can you focus on your speech, man. *Jirre!*

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon members!

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Presiding Officer. Presiding Officer, we encourage parents and caregivers to apply for placement for prospective Grade 1 and Grade R learners in a timeous fashion, and they have up until 15 April this year for the 2023 School Admissions Process and which will be open.

The Department opens these applications quite in advance, in an effort to prevent unplaced learners. This is critical in order for learner placements to be confirmed before the start of the new academic year. However, every year we do see the continual problem of late applications and we have already mentioned that in this school year alone, the WCED received more than

70 000 late applications, and quite frankly, Presiding Officer, if you are a constituency head and you have the ability to use your laptop, use your data and help people to apply for these respective applications. We appeal to the parents and guardians to register their children via the website, but also, you are able to go to the district office and every district office also has its own place where they are able to assist the respective parents and learners. We realise that this is a daunting process for many, and there will also be further pop-up sites at the Parow Centre and N1 City Mall on 2 and 3 April. The online process is quick and should not take longer than 15 minutes to apply, but again, if you do not wish to apply online, they are district offices available to assist.

The website is zero-rated for those who are a bit worried about data, and thus it is free to use for everyone. Let us all work together in ensuring that every child is placed and receives quality education, which the Western Cape has to offer.

Presiding Officer, the Democratic Alliance supports this Vote. I thank you.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much. Thank you, hon member. I now recognise the Minister.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you to all the participants in the debate. I am going to start my responses back to front.

Firstly, well done, hon Baartman, on your first budget speech, I think you acquitted yourself excellently, given that you have only literally just been thrust into it. I would echo your thanks to all our teachers. I did that in my speech too, but I support that completely. Thank you for your comments on Laingsburg. If you are hoping that we are going to get more budget from the Census, I do not hold out too much hope, because my experience of the Census has not been particularly good. In fact, they did not even follow up with me when I tried to register my own family, so I have serious concerns about the accuracy of the data in the Census, which is another issue, but I do hope we get more money anyway.

As far as the PES Formula is concerned, I am very happy if National Treasury's is reconsidering it, it needs to be reconsidered and it has been for some time. So I just hope it is reconsidered in the right way. That is the real issue.

Yes, thank you for acknowledging SACMEQ. It is a hugely excellent performance. I mean, it really is. It is an independent assessment and it is international and I really congratulate all our teachers for having enabled us to achieve those excellent results, and yes, thank you too for reminding us that we were the only province to feed learners during lockdown. I actually was criminally charged for that, for doing that.

An HON MEMBER: Wow!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Ja, and also was quite – I do not even know, I think the performance of SASSA in this whole process was actually shocking. I do not often get shocked these days in politics, but I was actually shocked at how they literally just closed their doors and left people sitting on the streets with nothing and because of that we had to step in as a Government so it shows who really cares about the poor and who really does not, while Minister Lindiwe Sisulu was running around shopping with her handbag, or lamenting the fact that she could not shop. So thank you for that. I think it was it was the right thing to do. It was difficult, and our people also were scared, and again I want to commend every one of those people in their communities and our teachers who went the extra mile and put things in place to make sure that our children did not go hungry. Yes, thank you.

Late applications, I mean, I am not going to pretend that it is only late applications that do not get placed. There are sometimes people who do apply in time and do not get placed. We have had problems. I have been raising it for many years and that is why I am so happy we are now starting to address the issue of funding because that is the issue, and I will get to back to that just now.

Conditional grants, yes, the Learners with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability (LSPID) is only very specific for learners with very severe intellectual disabilities and that is a problem and that is exactly why I am so shocked as well that we have not been getting funding for the normal, special schools.

Al Jama-ah, let me see. You hoped that we will stop the blame game. Well, it is not a game, actually. Sometimes blame needs to be put where it actually resides and you cannot just keep on saying stop playing the blame game when actually that is the reason why we are in the situation we are in. So sometimes it is necessary to blame because that is actually the reality and I sincerely hope we also will not have to blame anybody, because we will actually get the required funding that we deserve and should have had long time ago. I agree with safety, but it is not for the WCED, we never had the Walking Bus in the WCED. It is for people outside the Education Department and there is no point in us getting another R2,2 billion to try and do what our mandate is, when we go and take on a whole lot of extra stuff, and then it is going to just dilute what we are trying to achieve, but I do agree that it was a good project.

Psychologists and social workers were raised by two members, and we have one psychologist and one therapist per circuit at the moment, I would be delighted to have more, absolutely delighted, but the reality we face do not seem to have sunk into members of the Opposition. They just do not seem to realise what a dire situation our country is in financially and we cannot just appoint people when there is no money to pay them. So if we could get more, I would be very happy to do so. We do engage with Social Development, but if you heard the Social Development Budget this morning, it was far worse than ours, so ja. We do the very best we can and we are fully aware of the need, but we can only do so much.

ACDP, thank you hon Christians for your welcoming comments on ECDCs and teaching posts; how it will reduce the teacher–learner ratio if there are more learners in the basket of posts, obviously we can split them across the number of learners. We do have a pro-poor ratio of allocating those teachers so it will go towards – more skewed towards poorer schools and help to reduce those class sizes.

Then we had the EFF – no, GOOD. GOOD, through you Chairperson, it will be useful if members came to prepare their speeches without finding a quick Google article in the morning of the debate because the 29 500 was a very, very long time ago, and if people kept up to speed with the Committee reports and the Committee briefings, they would know that it is now, as hon Baartman said, 160, and those were predominantly very late applications. So it is important to tell the truth to this House. I agree, and I think that we all need to just bear that in mind.

EFF, all schools in Khayelitsha are, in fact, no fee, and I am not sure where the member was when I was doing my Budget speech, because I did make the announcement that we are going to be making funding available for another 160 schools to become no-fee schools, so it really would help if members actually listen to our statement rather than come with pre-prepared speeches.

As far as pro–poor, we also have the following other initiatives: 60% of schools, as member Baartman has mentioned, are no-fee schools already. We have top-up funding for low-fee schools. We have compensation for fee

exemptions for schools. We have the National School Nutrition Programme for no-fee schools, learner transport, and we also assist with municipal support, municipal account support, which is putting a lot of extra stress on us. We know that people are suffering but Government is also suffering and we cannot just absorb more and more and more and more, but we really are doing a lot already as it is, and happily so, because we do know people are suffering.

The School Admissions System remains a disaster. That is what member hon Makamba-Botya said. I would respectfully disagree with that. It is not a disaster at all. There were certainly problems with the system in the beginning when we started with it not being able to cope with the admissions. It was unfortunately, as I mentioned in last week's debate, largely as a result of the State Information Technology Agency or SITA not being able to cope and not being able to provide the services that we desperately need in Education and that is yet another National Government entity that is failing us so that we cannot provide the services that we want to provide.

Gauteng also has a school admissions online system. No one seems to complain about that and it certainly is not a disaster. Previously parents would have to go literally personally to every single school they wanted to apply to. This system allows them to apply to up to 10 schools across the province. Well, preferably closer to where they stay, but anywhere they actually want to they can apply so they do not have to physically go and stand in queues at every single school and hand in documentation, so yes,

there have been issues but we have fortunately managed to find solutions to some of the service failures we were having to deal with from SITA and the site is running much more smoothly now.

We have already got 90 000 learners who have applied for next year on the online system and, as member Baartman also mentioned, there are a lot of places where people can go to, to make these applications. If they do not have data, it is zero-rated, there are many internet sites, there are hotspots all over communities and we also have the pop-up stores and selected schools and other venues where parents can come and apply. So I would urge members of the Opposition also to help in their constituencies, to let people help them to register.

Then the state of the schools, the safety of schools always remains a concern. As we all know school safety is affected by surrounding communities and there are a lot of safety issues that do concern me, including fences, which I will also get to later, but what really concerns me too, is that we have two people shot in the last two years and not one single person has been brought to book, not one single person has been convicted. One has been arrested, but they have not even started the trial yet two years later, and that is certainly not the fault of the Education Department. As far as schools not promoting racism, I completely agree with you. No school, in fact, no one should promote racism, I completely agree, but neither should people allege racism at the first opportunity without finding out facts like we have seen in the Brackenfell matter, where I was very happy that the Human Rights

Commission vindicated the Western Education Department's investigation and found that in that case, no racist practices had taken place.

Now let me get to hon Sayed. All I can say is, “Jo! Eish”, I am not sure whether hon Sayed listens to what I say.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Madam Chair, I have had my hand up.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Sorry.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Makamba-Botya?

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: I had my hand up, Chair, I am not sure if you are able to note all hands because I have had my hand up for like five minutes.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: I want to make a point of order to the Minister that she must not have an appetite of watering down our statements when we are speaking the truth on the issues that are happening in the Western Cape Department of Education. [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: So this thing of Ministers telling us that we are grandstanding on statements when we are speaking the truth of what is happening and a true reflection of what is happening, it is not acceptable.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member! You are aware that is not a point of order and that is a frivolous point of order just to... Really, we need to continue. It has been a long day. We still have to finish with the other Votes that are coming, so hon member, we are going to allow the Minister to continue.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you very much, Chairperson. I have a suspicion that member Sayed has a standard speech that he just brings every time because it is the same issues that come up, it is like a stuck record, the same points. He does not seem to listen to the responses. Maybe if people are insisting on other people complying with the Rules, Chairperson, it would be good if they did the same, but really, I know there is a Congress coming up but to keep on repeating the same, same, same things as if we have not responded, as if we are not responsive, I just do not accept.

I do also welcome the special guests, and thank you for joining us, and thank you also for raising issues of concern. We do know there is a crisis of unplaced learners, we have addressed that as well and fortunately we are going to be able to do something about it now that we are getting more money, but the ongoing narrative of “we must put people in Model C schools” has quite a number of issues, first of all. First of all, I find it really

patronising that the ANC seems to think that they know or should decide where parents should put their learners, but they are also a bit late to the party, because we have been engaging with Former Model C Schools, by the way for years with respect to admitting additional learners, and many of them have actually expanded their schools in order to do exactly that, but the assumption that people want to go only to these schools is also not correct.

We have schools in areas that are Cape Flats or township areas where there are overwhelming numbers of applications for people who also cannot get in so it is not correct to say that the problem is going to be solved by putting more people in former Model C schools. They might not want to go to those schools. We have had Mondale, 3024 applications for 273 spaces; Spine Road 3 182 applications for 253 spaces. We have got to Luhlaza in Khayelitsha, 1906 applications for 261 places; Manyana 1901 for 281; Manzomthombo 1 570 for 362; Zwelethemba 1506 for 172; Chris Hani Secondary in Khayelitsha, 1503 for 210 places.

So that is exactly why we put more effort into trying to build schools in poorer communities closer to where they live, and where they do not have to pay huge amounts of money to transport their children so let us just get real on these issues. Then poor planning and lack of political will targeting of Eastern Cape learners, I cannot really figure out where on earth that came from. I will strongly defend my Department on the issue of poor planning. They have not done poor planning. They have done everything possible to try and manage the situation that we find ourselves in with ever decreasing

budget in real terms.

If you have 100,000 learners over five years, it is going to impact the system, no matter how much you have done. If you are told, one year, suddenly we have a drought; you must spend R300 million on giving JoJo tanks to schools, fixing boreholes that have not been properly maintained so that we can try and limit a Day Zero situation at schools, then where does the money come from? Certainly not National Government because they have stolen all of it, there is nothing left. There is nothing in a reserve fund that should be available for emergency, the same with COVID, R450 million, in fact, more, R465 million. We had to divert from infrastructure, because there is no money at National to bail us out in the event of a National State of Disaster for 600-and-something days long.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon Minister, may you take your seat please. Hon member Sayed?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Chair, on a point of order, Chair. The MEC is misleading the House. We did not make a call. We actually made the call for increased class capacity for Model C Schools... [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Sayed!

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): ...and the HOD agreed with us, so she must not mislead the House.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Sayed, hon member, sit down! Hon member, you know, you can do a substantive motion. You do not have to really respond to the Minister now. There are avenues where you can do that so we are not going to go that route, hon member. Hon Chief Whip, I recognise you?

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, House Chairperson. You have already made a ruling several times on this very same supposed point of order that the hon Sayed has raised. It is just being used as a tactic to interrupt the Minister now and we would actually like to hear her response. Thank you.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, hon Chief Whip. Before you can stand up, I see there is a hand of hon Bosman. Hon member Bosman, I recognise you.

Mr G BOSMAN: Thank you, Presiding Officer. I am covered by the Chief Whip and I think the Deputy Chief Whip of the Opposition should be called for disrupting. He is acting in a dishonourable way and he is contravening Rule 4 in terms of abusing points of order.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Read the Rule out please.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: I did not recognise you, hon member Sayed, and you did not raise your hand. I recognise you now.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Chair, can the hon Bosman read out the specific Rule please? We all have a right to raise our points of order.

[Interjection.] [speaking simultaneously]

Mr G BOSMAN: Chair, unfortunately I cannot. He must read the Rules, Chairperson, he must read the Rules!

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon members! Hon members!

Ms R WINDVOGEL: Chair, Chair... [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon members, you are going to be recognised – one, before you talk; two, we are going to keep the decorum. I think since we started with the Budget Votes we have been doing well in debating and making sure that we talk to the budgets before us. We are not going to change that today. We need to make sure that we listen to each other as we debate this budget as we move forward so I am going to make sure that I plead with you. Keep the decorum of the House. You have been doing well.

I see the hand of hon member Windvogel and also hon member Nkondlo.

Ms R WINDVOGEL: Chairperson, my point was you made a ruling that you allowed the Chief Whip and member Bosman after your ruling to give an input, so that is not on... [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, there must be something wrong with your mic because I have not done a ruling at all. I just said the point of order that member Sayed was saying, it is a substantive motion. He knows what it is that he can do to make sure that we continue with the point of order that he was raising. Hon Nkondlo.

Ms N D NKONDLO: Thank you, Chair. Can I also move on the same Rule of member Bosman, that he does not want to read in the House, that the point of orders must not be abused to usurp the person who is chairing because there is a person who is chairing this session, as in yourself, so we do not want people who want to chair from their benches, so that we can proceed with the proceedings. Thanks.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon Chief Whip.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, House Chairperson, Rule 66(3)(d) states that:

“Points of order may not be considered if the Presiding Officer has already ruled on the matter in the same sitting...”

And that is in that spirit that I raise the Rule that the hon member on the opposite side of the benches keeps raising, the same point of order, which you have already ruled upon, and so therefore we ask if he would please refrain so that we can in fact hear the Minister's response.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, Chief Whip. I think, hon members, we really have to continue so that we can conclude with the Third Order of the Day, otherwise we are going to continue with raising the point of order that is just frivolous and they are going to lead us to continue with the Business of the Day, so keep the decorum and be as honourable as you are, hon members, and let us continue. Hon Minister?

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you very much, Chairperson. Yes, I am certainly not going to finish until I have answered all the issues so if members want to stay here all day, then so be it. The truth does seem to hurt sometimes.

As far as poor planning is concerned, as I was saying, my Department planned extremely well. We have figures, we have hotspot areas, we know what needs to be done, but we cannot employ people if we have not got money. We cannot build schools if we have not got money. We plan for 10 years and then have to have R300 million taken away in one year. Where does it come from? Infrastructure, because the only choices are, do not pay teachers, do not transport learners, do not feed learners or do not pay schools norms and standards. Those are the main issues in areas in our budget so those are the choices.

So it comes from infrastructure and obviously then, if it happens one year and the following year, a R465 million addition for COVID measures, COVID-relief measures, where does that come from? Our infrastructure

budget, because that is the only possible place it can come from, because others are too ghastly to contemplate. But this is also of extreme concern, which is why we are so glad to have an additional amount of this nature for infrastructure. So planning is not an issue. Our Department is excellent in planning. They have worked day-in-and-day-out, trying to ensure that we give the best possible opportunities to our learners, often at great cost to their own personal health and I really want to thank all my Exco, who has done excellently and I will not accept this constant refrain of poor planning, lack of political will. It is not that. It is lack of adequate funding, so now we suddenly have to go into the Ukraine crisis, but let us go there, if you want to go there.

I saw a lovely little video of member Sayed and his current Provincial Leader who he seems to be wanting to replace, making these wonderful little DVDs at a Russian cocktail party on the very night I think the Ukraine was being bombarded, one of the maternity hospitals were being bombed, and being very proudly associated with Russia so I hear yesterday, hon Dugmore trying to say that there are neutral. Well, if that is neutral, then I am I do not know what, but this is not neutral. So if you want to go and mediate in something where you have clearly taken sides, when you want to bring it to the House and make an issue of it here? I do not think so. I think quite frankly, Russia is disgusting and what they have done, they are targeting innocent civilians. [Interjection.] They are doing – they are doing...

Sorry, Chairperson, could you perhaps educate the members in the gallery?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: As a member or as a guest on the podium, you are not allowed to do that. [Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: And yes, so to bomb schools where people are hiding and sheltering, to bomb maternity hospitals is beyond anything I can comprehend and certainly not to be proud of. As far as the Eastern Cape targeting issue is concerned... [Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO: You are quiet when Israel bombed Palestinian children. You are quiet! [Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Can I continue? [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Nkondlo!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: May I continue?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, you may sit down. Chief Whip?

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, House Chair, I rise on Rule 40, the member may not interrupt another member who is speaking, except to call to a point of order which the hon member Nkondlo did not do, if you would kindly call her to order.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, Chief Whip.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, Chair. The targeting of Eastern Cape learners – that sounds really dramatic. We love Eastern Cape learners. They are really intelligent, and they want a really good education, and quite frankly I want to commend them for noticing the fact that they cannot get that in the Eastern Cape. They see for themselves at a young age that it is better to come to the Western Cape, because that is where they have a real chance of getting a good education, and exactly the point member Baartman made.

We are sitting with 2 000 schools in the Eastern Cape that have been earmarked for closure for years that has not happened, 2000. Where is that money going? That should be coming here. That is the point we are making and that is what we will always continue to make and where I did see they were going to close 1 000 schools recently, where is the public outcry about that? If I close one school, I get taken to Court. Where is the outcry? I do not want there to be an outcry. I agree it should be closed, but there are another 305,000 schools in the Eastern Cape that are non-viable. They have been classified by their own Department as a non-viable school, but they stay open, they continue getting funding, and they are wasting money that should be used to provide a better education in the Western Cape.

As far as protocol is concerned, well, it does not surprise me that the ANC supports protocol. It is quite clear to me that this whole matter has been

political right from the start, including the application to stop the closure, because the principal and his family are running a little fiefdom at that school with learner transport, and they are now or have been now investigated for financial irregularities. His wife is now the Acting Principal at the school and there are more financial irregularities that have been uncovered at the school and disciplinary action is going to be taken. Instead of using the learner transport that we provided, he has persuaded them to use another company owned by his son, but the ANC supports this. Why?

As far as the specific schools that were mentioned, I am not giving that now. I think they might be subject to parliamentary questions, and if not, we can give details to the member. Another thing I need to just address is this ongoing refrain about asbestos schools. Asbestos schools, *per se*, are not dangerous to people in them. They are dangerous when they are damaged. That is all, and notwithstanding that we are still busy with replacing them, but we cannot do it all at once.

Security fences, that was a really strange comment that I heard about me opposing, undermining the Premier's announcement. We completely support the Premier's announcement. We have been working with him on it. In fact, we have actually done more than 30 schools. We have actually added. I think this year we have done 60 schools, which I have mentioned before so where that comes from, I do not know. Perhaps there is another Congress that is coming for you to score some points, but we are completely and utterly on board with it and supports it fully.

The slow pace of dealing with complaints in schools and corruption, I completely agree that it is not acceptable. We do take too long. It is not always our fault. There are just too many cases and the number of cases of schools do concern me of mismanagement and financial mismanagement. Often we have to send it to the Provincial Forensic Services, which also takes a huge amount of time because they have so many matters to deal with as well, and it is a source of concern. What is also a source of concern is that we do take action against people, and we dismiss them and they go to the LRC or the Labour Court, and they get reinstated, and then we have to deal with that. It makes life rather difficult.

The SIU report is the last one that I am going to deal with. There has been no slow implementation whatsoever of the SIU report. We got the SIU report, and we sent it, as you have been informed previously, to the Department of the Premier for advice on what to do because our people in our people management were conflicted so it was completely the right thing.

He has received the recommendations and acted on the recommendations and there is absolutely nothing else to be done and I think he has acted completely and utterly above board, and I commend him for it. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Thank you very much, Minister Schäfer. That concludes the debate of this Vote.

[Debate concluded.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon members, with your indulgence, I am going to allow about two minutes so that we can allow the officials to move out as the other officials from the next Vote of the Fourth Order of the Day move in.

Thank you very much, hon members. The Secretary will read the Fourth Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 11 – Agriculture – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2 – 2022]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I now recognise the hon Minister Meyer.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: Hon House Chair, hon Speaker, hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier, hon members of the Cabinet, hon Leader of the Official Opposition, members of different political parties, hon members of the Legislature, special guests, the media and members of the public and those who are joining us online and those who are in the gallery.

Hon House Chair, earlier this morning I was at Elsenburg, where a drone delivered the final draft of my Budget Address to me. This afternoon I arrived at the Western Cape Legislature, with the Budget Address, driving a

tractor. The drone and the tractor represent how agriculture has been revolutionised. However, farmers have had to adapt and display the resilience that sustains our sector to survive.

Hon House Speaker, Western Cape Premier Alan Winde argued in his State of the Province Address on 15 February 2022 in Velddrif that the Western Cape would not be returning to the way things were done before the pandemic. Instead, “we must push back against going back to normal and push forward to do even better. To do so, we must rethink, focus, and innovate”.

Hon House Chair, today I rise to table a budget of R969,218 million and to confirm that the Western Cape Department of Agriculture will indeed be pushing forward. The Budget of R969,218 million for the 2022/2023 financial year includes earmarked allocations for the Ecological Infrastructure of R37 million; River Protection Works, particularly in Keurboom, Jan du Toit River, Upper Hex River of R18,5 million; and Provincial Disaster Relief Grant, provision and distribution of livestock feed, R48,1 million.

Hon Chair, South Africa's seasonally adjusted GDP grew by 4,9% in 2021. Agriculture, which expanded by 8,3%, was the second-fastest-growing sector behind mining at 11,8%.

Chair, as highlighted by the Bureau for Agricultural Policy generally known as BFAP, this growth in Agriculture is more impressive because it follows a 13,4% growth expansion in 2020, making Agriculture the most robust

performing sector in South Africa since COVID-19. Agriculture is pushing forward.

†Agbare Voorsitter, een van die grootste onsekerhede wat die landbou-uitvoeremark in die gesig staar, is die uitgebreide konflik tussen Rusland en die Oekraïne. Albei lande is beduidende uitvoerders van koring, mielies en sonneblomprodukte. Rusland is 'n groot verskaffer, wat meer as 15% bydra tot wêreldwye koringuitvoere. Hy is die belangrikste verskaffer van chemiese kunsmisstowwe in die wêreld, en is 'n groot uitvoerder van petroleumprodukte. Gevolglik kan deurlopende sanksies die beskikbaarheid van koring, mielies, sonneblomolie en noodsaaklike landbou-insette soos kunsmis beperk. Vanuit 'n verbruikersperspektief impliseer die globale marksituasie, gekombineer met hoë energie- en vervaardigingskoste, dat voedsel-inflasie ongelukkig sal aanhou styg. Ten spyte van bogenoemde sal die landbousektor vorentoe beur.

Die Wes-Kaapse landbousektor is uitvoergerig en dra meer as 53% by tot Suid-Afrika se landbou-uitvoere. In 2020, Voorsitter, het die Wes-Kaap Provinsie R78,68 miljard se gekombineerde landbou- en agri-verwerkingsprodukte uitgevoer. Agbare Voorsitter, agt van die tien grootste uitvoerprodukte in die Wes-Kaap het ook 'n landbougrondslag. Landbou beur vorentoe.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Hon Chairman, one of the biggest uncertainties the agriculture export market is facing, is the extended conflict between Russia and the Ukraine. Both countries are significant exporters of wheat, maize and sunflower products. Russia is a big supplier, that contributes more than 15% to worldwide wheat exports. It is the most important exporter of chemical fertilisers in the world, and is a big exporter of petroleum products. Consequently continued sanctions can limit the availability of wheat, maize, sunflower oil and necessary agricultural input like fertiliser. From a consumer perspective, the global market situation, combined with high energy and production costs, imply that food inflation unfortunately will continue increasing. In spite of the above, the agricultural sector will go forward.]

The Western Cape agriculture sector is export orientated and contributes more than 53% to South Africa's agricultural exports. In 2020, Chairman, the Western Cape exported R78,68 billion combined agricultural and agri-processed products. Hon Chariman, eight of the ten largest export products in the Western Cape also have an agricultural basis. Agriculture is going forward.]

Hon Speaker, when I took office as the Minister of Agriculture in the Western Cape, I immediately set out five Ministerial Priorities for my term of office.

Priority 1 is Structured Education, Training and Research. It is geared towards providing the requisite skills, knowledge and experience to secure

the future of agriculture. My goal is to increase training opportunities for the youth, women and disabled to secure the agricultural sector's sustainability.

Hon Speaker, agricultural subjects have been introduced at 18 schools in the Western Cape over the last three years. Thank you to the Western Cape Department of Education as well as the Minister of Education. One such school is Pelican Park High School, which I visited recently. The school is located close to the Philippi Horticultural Area, often described as the “breadbasket” of the Cape Metropolitan area. By expanding the curriculum at schools such as Pelican Park, we have created more training opportunities in the agricultural sector and made the sector more accessible to the youth. I am very encouraged by the principal, Mr Carder Tregonning's leadership and the enthusiasm with which the educators and learners have embarked on their agricultural education journey.

The Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute offers Bachelor degrees of Agriculture (B Agric), a three-year Diploma in Agriculture and Learnership and short course skills.

Hon Speaker, on Saturday, 26 February this year, I joined my officials and colleagues, academics, parents and guardians; together we witnessed the graduation of the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute's class of 2021. Students graduated on the day with qualifications ranging from the National and Higher Certificate and a Diploma in Agriculture and the Degree Baccalaureus in Agriculture. 197 students became members of that illustrious

group of students who will now call themselves graduates of the oldest agricultural training institute on the African continent, and so, hon Chair, I am proud of the products of Elsenburg Agricultural College.

197 students who graduated that day are really making a big investment in the future of agriculture in this province but also in the rest of South Africa: Lara Barnard, Richard da Costa, Salomon de Jager, Karli du Toit, Barend Engelbrecht and Sara Lee all graduated this year *cum laude* at Elsenburg. The Dux Awards went to Engela Uithaler, Britteney Havenga and Karli du Toit. Nominqwene Nonjola received the best student award in viticulture NQF level 4, while Cameron Moodie was awarded the National Wool Growers Association Award in Wool Production.

Our own Director-General, Dr Harry Malila, said to students during his address:

"I would like to place my admiration for the graduation class on record. You have responded positively to setbacks. You have demonstrated exceptional resilience in overcoming many obstacles to reach this proud day. Resilience is a character trait that will stand you in good stead in the world of employment and the university of life. Resilience can be cultivated and can grow. Therefore, do not give up on anything you care about."

Hon Speaker, as part of the Department of Agriculture's Internship Programme, commercial farmers are increasingly partnering with the

Department to host interns, serve as mentors, and to make their workplaces and farms available for interns. The Department's research and development effort will more than ever focus on the increase in agricultural production and novel technologies to contribute to food security, job creation and economic development in a sustainable way, and so, against the challenges of climate change, agriculture, hon Chair, is pushing forward.

Hon Chair, Priority 2 is Producer Support and Development, which aims to increase the number of well-trained and equipped commercial and smallholder farmers through strengthening partnerships with the private sector to unlock market access and to create value-adding opportunities. Therefore, Madam Chair, my goal is to increase farming businesses' efficiency through diversification, partnerships, and more effective production systems, ultimately leading to an increase in the standard of living for the people of the Western Cape.

Hon Madam Chair, in 2021/22, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture identified land reform projects worth an estimated R104 million. Implementation of these projects, Madam Chair, is currently underway with the support of our project managers, our partners, strengthened by our partnership with commodity organisations. To the commodity organisations and those who are signing online, I want to thank you for the work that you are doing, through your work and support with advice, mentorship, training, inputs, market access, and mutual in-kind cooperation and contribution. Over the past few years, the Department has developed sound partnerships with ten

commodity organisations to support our new farmers. The Western Cape Department of Agriculture will renew these partnerships for another three years. Agriculture is pushing forward.

Hon Madam Chair, the Western Cape is blessed with several successful black farmers who, with the support of the Department of Agriculture, are making their mark in the sector. One such farmer is Warren Bam, who is but one of only fully certified organic grape producers in South Africa. Bam is the son of the late Herman Bam, an agri-worker from Saron, who now successfully owns the over 100-hectare conventional table grape farm Wesland with third-generation farmer, Wessel van Niekerk, the son of his late father's employer. Bam's organic grapes are supplied to his long-standing customer in the United Kingdom, Ethical Fruit Company and directly to a range of Europe's leading high-end supermarkets.

Likewise, Madam Chair, Stellenbosch University Viticulture graduate, Beverley Joseph, South Africa's first black female hops farmer and owner of the 50.8-hectare farm, Zelpy, has developed into a successful commercial hops farmer. I had the privilege and an honour to meet her.

Klein Goederust Franschhoek Boutique Winery, owned by the child of an agri-worker, Paul Siguqa, serves as another example. I had the honour to meet this young man. Located in Franschhoek, Klein Goederust has been transformed from its dilapidated state into a promising boutique farm in Franschhoek. Agriculture is pushing forward.

Hon Chair, there has been a drastic increase in the demand for food and nutrition security support over the last two years. Our One Home One Garden Programme continues to make the difference in communities towards achieving food and nutrition security at household level. For the financial year 2021/2022, we have so far established 2 396 household food gardens, 145 community gardens and 26 school food garden projects. Thank you, Doc, for your great team that is doing this great work. For the financial year we are particularly happy that the work of this unit will continue.

Hon Chair, I also had the privilege and honour to meet the Langebaan Urban Farmers at the Community Garden. It is an example of how projects of this nature can start as an introductory opportunity to meet daily food nutritional needs, to create entrepreneurial opportunities for local unemployed persons. An outcome of the Saldanha Municipality adopting an Urban Agricultural Policy, the Langebaan Urban Community Garden contributes to food security by improving the quality, affordability and accessibility of food intake of poor and middle-class households.

Participants do vegetable production under the shaded net. They produce good quality vegetables using minimum water. Remember South Africa is one of the 50th driest countries in the world, and so I salute the women and the men of the Langebaan Urban Agriculture. Produce is also sold to the local community and more importantly, Madam Chair, it is also sold to the local Spar owner and I have met him on site. Agriculture is pushing forward.

Hon Speaker, my third priority is Rural Safety which aims to facilitate a safe, protected and secure agricultural environment for the farming community, urban community as well as for agri-workers. The high level of crime perpetrated against rural communities threatens farm growth and jobs for rural people and requires urgent attention from all Government sectors through the whole-of-society approach. Hon Chair, that is why I hosted a Rural Safety Summit on 25 November 2021. The event was attended by Agri Western Cape, AFASA, the Prestige Agri-Workers Forum, the South African Police Services (SAPS), representatives from the Farm and Neighbourhood Watches, District Municipalities, and senior officials of the Departments of Agriculture and Community Safety.

On that day, Madam Chair, I launched the Western Cape Department of Agriculture's Rural Safety Desk, the Rural Safety Monitoring Digital Dashboard, the Rural Safety Brochure, the Rural Safety Pocket Guide during the summit. In addition, I also released the Rural Safety Baseline Study as this Government is committed to evidence-based and data-led governance.

Hon Chair, participants agreed that addressing the multiple contributors to crime and violence will only be achieved if we embrace a collaboration strategy for crime and violence, because that is what we are doing together with our stakeholders. For this reason, we are pursuing a whole-of-society approach, marked by critical and strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including public, private, and civil society. I want to express my deep thanks to our DDG, Darryl Jacobs, for leading this campaign in

driving the rural safety agenda together with our HOD in the Department of Community Safety. The Western Cape Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard is the first in the South African agricultural sector and was recently shortlisted for the Public Service Innovation Awards. Madam Chair, agriculture is pushing forward.

†Agbare Voorsitter, Marktoegang is my vierde belangrike strategiese prioriteit van hierdie Wes-Kaapse Regering. Die onlangse bekendstelling van die

Wes-Kaapse Departement van Landbou se innoverende mobiele Agri-Processing on Wheels Inisiatief by die Genesis Hub in Vredenburg het 'n eerste vir Suid-Afrika geword.

Hierdie innoverende mobiele landbouverwerkingsinisiatief brei die mandjie van landbouverwerkingsdienste uit om amptenare in staat te stel om die mandjie van landbouverwerkingsdienste verder uit te brei, die kapasiteit te verhoog hier in die Wes-Kaap, maar ook deur middel van werksinkels en belangstellende groepe regoor die Wes-Kaap. Die projek sal nou ook in ander distrikte regoor die Wes-Kaap herhaal word, aangesien ons die geleentheid van agri-verwerking nader aan ons mense wil bring. Landbou beur vorentoe.

Agbare Speaker, nog 'n vernuwing is die vennootskap met die Suid-Afrikaanse Wyn Transformasie Eenheid. In 2021 het ons 'n e-handelsplatform bekendgestel om Black-Owned-Brands besighede in staat te stel om hul eie produkte reg oor Suid-Afrika te kan bemark. Hierdie innovasie het ten doel

om die verkope van deelnemende besighede 'n hupstoot te gee en die afhanklikheid van hierdie ondernemings op die uitvoermark te versag deur volhoubaarheid te verseker.

Ook opmerklik is ons vennootskap met die Suid-Afrikaanse Tafeldruifvereniging om die China-mark te ontwikkel. Weereens, Voorsitter, beur landbou vorentoe.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Hon Chair, Market Access is my fourth important strategic priority of this Western Cape Government. The recent introduction of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture's innovative mobile Agri-Processing on Wheels Initiative at the Genesis Hub in Vredenburg has become a first for South Africa.

This innovative mobile agricultural processing initiative expands the basket of agricultural processing services to enable officials to further expand the basket of agricultural processing services, increase the capacity here in the Western Cape, but also through workshops and interest groups right across the Western Cape. The project will also now be repeated in other districts all over the Western Cape, as we want to bring the opportunity of agri-processing closer to the people. Agriculture is going forward.

Hon Speaker, another advancement is the partnership with the South African

Wine Transformation Unit. In 2021 we introduced an e-trade platform to enable Black-Owned-Brands businesses to market their own products all over South Africa. This innovation aims at promoting the sales of participating businesses and mitigate the dependence of these enterprises on the export market by ensuring sustainability.

Also prominent is our partnership with the South African Table Grapes Association to develop the China market. Again, Chairman, agriculture is going forward.]

Hon Chair, market access must be supported by infrastructure. The new extension at the Hexkoel Storage Facility in the Hex River Valley, which I officially opened on 26 February 2022, is a R95 million addition to a critical facility in the Cape Winelands and I want to thank those farmers for their massive contribution in the Hex Valley, almost a R100 million infrastructure investment from farmers. This investment is critical for job creation but also for foreign exchange. Additional cold storage space will significantly benefit the table grape industry, considering the current global shipping logistical challenges and the various challenges facing the exporters of the Port of Cape Town and other South African ports.

Another critical road infrastructure is planned for 2022/2023 and I am happy to announce that Project C1216 is the rehabilitation, renovation and refurbishment of the R303 north of Ceres. I am grateful to my Cabinet colleagues, both the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Transport and

Public Works, Minister Daylin Mitchell, for providing the necessary road infrastructure that will promote market access and grow the economy of the Western Cape. Agriculture is pushing forward.

Hon Chair, efforts to digitise the Veterinary Exports Certification process are bearing fruit, as the Export Certification Office System's (ECoS) initial phases are now operational and live. Reports reflect that ECoS facilitated an increase in exports, generating about R1,2 billion per annum for the provincial economy. We export meat. To export meat, you need a certification process, but you need the digital platform. That platform now exists and is live and is making a great impact here in the Western Cape, and so, Madam Chair and hon member Marais, agriculture is pushing forward. No more hand submissions for applications to export meat. It is all digital and it is live. Innovation is happening in this Government.

Hon Chair, South Africa is one of the driest countries in the world. Climate change predictions indicate that the Western Cape will become drier with high rainfall variability and warmer with an increase in the mean annual surface temperature. It is predicted that there will be an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, e.g. droughts, floods, fires, and heat-waves. It is for this reason that my fifth priority is Climate Change Response. Thank you, Dr Ilse for the great work you are doing in this respect.

Hon Chair, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture has established a

new Climate Change Unit in the Department of Agriculture, and we have appointed a climate change scientist to manage it. The implementation of the SmartAgri plan, the outcomes of its evaluation and new research will drive the Unit's scope. The 10th International Symposium on Irrigation of Horticultural Crops will occur in 2023 in Stellenbosch next year.

In addition, two other significant climate change events are planned for 2022, including the Youth and Young Researchers Climate Change and Agriculture Convention and the Multiple Stakeholder Drought and Disaster Dialogue. Agriculture is pushing forward.

Hon Chair, we are the leading province for Conservation Agriculture, with 51% of all crop-livestock farmers in the Western Cape fully adopting this farming method. Chair, the Department's head office at Elsenburg has been doing its bit. Our Resource Efficiency Project received a Gold Award in the Category Replication and Adaptation of Innovative Solutions at the 19th Public Sector Innovation Awards Ceremony, held in Johannesburg on 25 February 2022. The project entails installing a rooftop photovoltaic system, solar PV battery and inverter and implementing a new water management system that primarily uses groundwater for domestic use. As a result, it has reduced the Department's municipal water bill and significantly saved on the monthly electricity bill despite the steep Eskom tariff increases.

I also want to thank Minister Mitchell and the Department of Transport and Public Works for the support provided by the Western Cape Department of

Agriculture, because we have now, Madam Chair, solar panels on the building of the Headquarters at Elsenburg. We significantly are now less dependent on Eskom. Business will continue because agriculture is pushing forward. Significantly, as a result of the work of the colleagues here, they have significantly reduced the dependency of water from the Municipality of Stellenbosch, so agriculture is pushing forward.

Hon Chair, I also visited George. During my visit to a packhouse belonging to the Van Greunen Boerdery in George I was impressed by how conservation agriculture has become a key feature of their operations. Their solar project consists of 333 panels and can generate up to 100 kilowatts. The system supplies an estimated 20% of their packhouse's energy needs. They believe that conserving nature is all about the efficient use of resources. So, they use Weed Mat to lower herbicide use and place their irrigation system underneath it. This helps to reduce evaporation and conserve water. Quite an innovation! It also ensures that the fertilisers they apply through the irrigation system do not volatilise and pollute the atmosphere. They store up to 700 000 litres of rainwater harvested from the roofs of their facilities. This almost makes them self-sufficient in terms of domestic and packhouse water uses. They also allow other plant species to grow in the inter-row spaces in their orchards. These plants help build organic matter, prevent erosion, and help to keep dust under control. Van Greunen Boerdery in George has also found that some of these plants contribute to biodiversity in the orchards and attract insects so that they do not target the blueberries. Agriculture is pushing forward.

Speaker, in the current financial year, 22 219 hectares of agricultural land have been rehabilitated and improved due to working efficiently with farmers, Water User Associations and Irrigation Boards. At the same time, we created 850 jobs, and we are well on track because our target is 1000 jobs. Agriculture is pushing forward.

Hon Chair, in the 2021/22 financial year, the Department provided R11,7 million in fodder support to 1 115 farmers in prolonged drought-stricken areas of the Central Karoo and Matzikama. In addition, 29 farmers in areas where the drought conditions have improved have received seed vouchers totalling R133 thousand.

During the past year, I handed over three river protection works, Holsloot Weir near Rawsonville, Meerlustkloof near Genadendal and Meul Project near Genadendal, to the respective Water Use Associations. Built at the cost of R69 million, Holsloot Weir, for example, responded to the severe damage caused by the flooding a few years ago, alien vegetation plants, and the damaging of the ecological maintenance performed within the river.

In addition, Madam Chair, it links directly to the two priorities of the Western Cape Government's Smart Agriculture Implementation Plan. One is restoring the ecological infrastructure for increased productivity and socio-ecological resilience, and the other is collaborative, integrated catchment management to improve water security and job creation. The value-add is that these investments support the local economy during

construction. Agriculture is moving forward.

Hon Chair, following my recent visit to the Brandvlei Dam in the Cape Winelands District Municipality, I now can confirm that construction has finally begun after two years of inaction by the National Government.

Raising the wall of the feeder canal into the Brandvlei Dam by 30 centimetres or 300 millimetres, will increase the water flow into the dam, contributing to an increase in irrigation water and ultimately developing additional agricultural land of more than 4 400 hectares under irrigation. The construction is set to be completed in June this year.

Another critical infrastructure project that upon completion will have a significant impact on agriculture, but also food security in the Western Cape, is the raising of the dam wall in Clanwilliam. The increased capacity of the raised Clanwilliam Dam will result in 6 000 hectares of additional land being developed for irrigation agriculture of high-value crops. Agriculture, Madam Chair, is pushing forward.

Hon Speaker, our decision to embrace the new technology to improve service delivery and lead farmers has resulted in the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, in adopting, promoting, and stimulating drone use. 31 students, locals and interns were trained for a Remote Pilot Licence (RPL) as part of our Drone Pilot Programme. Hon Chair, I am incredibly proud of these candidates who have completed their Remote Pilot Licence. The use of digital

technologies such as drones provides a range of farming solutions. These include remote measurement of the soil conditions, better water management and livestock and crop monitoring on the farms. For example, our own Geographical Information Systems Technician – Liezl, can you please stand? Please stand, Liezl. She is one of those pilots that received a Drone Pilot Licence, and she can now use her skills to enhance her area of expertise and provide a better service to our producers. Again, she is sitting next to her colleague, Arrie, can you also please stand? He also received his Remote Drone Pilot Licence. Both of them are providing an outstanding service, not only to the Department of Agriculture, but to the sector agriculture as well and I want to thank both of them. [Applause.] The Remote Pilot Licence course for farmers, agri-workers and agri-businesses is currently now in its final practical flying part, and the successful candidates will receive their wings on 4 April 2022.

Hon Chair, the first comprehensive Flyover Project was conducted in 2013. Due to the ever-increasing dynamic nature of agriculture, the data needs to be updated every four to five years for reliability. Therefore, the Department aims to mobilise resources to conduct a third flyover to gather updated data sets for reliability and accuracy. This is where we fly over all the agricultural lands, take photos and see everything, but, Madam Chair, I know you love travelling, and so all across the Western Cape you have seen all the nets, so you cannot now fly over and see what is happening under the net, and so the challenge now is to go farm by farm and do data collection, but we are up to the challenge and we will do what is necessary to grow the economy in the

Western Cape.

The Western Cape Department is the proud owner of the only Ostrich Research Facility globally, the Oudtshoorn Ostrich Research Farm. In 2021 a new novel innovative decision-making tool, the Ostrich Slaughter Planner, was developed.

This digital tool will assist ostrich producers with record-keeping and planning before receiving a permit to slaughter the ostriches before it goes to the abattoir. Therefore, an innovative farm-to-abattoir tool!

Hon Chair, I had my first visit to the Fellbridge Cannabis Farm outside Stellenbosch, and I know hon member Baartman is very pleased to hear that I did visit this research facility. She is online and I want to thank her for also speaking to us about these facilities and so, hon Marais, this facility is a world-class facility and has the potential in developing SMMEs attracting domestic and foreign investment and adding value to the processing and manufacturing of the various products for local and export markets. I am therefore glad, Madam Chair, that the Western Cape Department of Agriculture will now develop the Western Cape Cannabis Framework and Implementation Plan for 2022. This CanPlan, will:

- (a) position the Western Cape in terms of the regulatory framework;
- (b) identify focus areas where the Western Cape can develop an action framework similar to the focus areas of the SmartAgri;

(c) and identify opportunities for producers and exporters.

As we speak, Madam Chair, this facility is already exporting for the market in Switzerland and in the Netherlands.

Hon Speaker, among such great innovators are Brian Johnson and Rein van der Horst of the Alien Fuel Group. They offer an innovative way to eliminate alien vegetation, save scarce surface water and create jobs. Based outside Worcester on the road to Ceres, Alien Fuel is a company that has designed and developed an innovative system that adapts industrial boilers and burners to no longer be fed by fossil fuel but by briquettes made from alien vegetation. Alien Fuel, the company, was recently awarded the EU's Climate 360 Competition in the Sustainable Energy Category. Soon the team at Alien Fuel will be leaving to present their value proposition to the International Energy Agencies in Brussels in Belgium and in Paris in France. We extend our congratulations and our good wishes as they engage decision-makers and learn more about climate change projects in Europe. Things are happening with innovation in the Western Cape. This is also an opportunity to learn, make new connections, showcase proudly Western Cape innovation. Madam Chair, agriculture is pushing forward.

Madam Chair, let me conclude. We are passionate about agriculture, for the love of agriculture, but ultimately for the love of the people. Agriculture is a wealth creator and holds the promise for the Western Cape economic recovery and jobs. We have seen what happened in 2020 where all the sectors

of the economy had negative economic growth. The only sector that had positive economic growth was the agricultural sector, in the first quarter of 2020, 28%, in the second quarter, 13%, and so we are seeing massive agriculture, the anchor of the economic recovery.

Our strength lies in the strategic partnership with the industry, our commodity approach and many others in the research and training environment. Agriculture is ready to support the Western Cape's economy. Agriculture in the Western Cape is pushing forward.

Hon Speaker, my key announcements for 2022/2023 are: the Department is in the process of developing an African Agricultural Strategy. This strategy will guide the approach to the African Market anchored by the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement.

The Provincial Veterinary Laboratory is to be upgraded. Doing so will strengthen support for our clients and improve market access.

The Department will extend its MOU with commodity organisations. This will bolster the Department's Commodity Approach Strategy for farmer development in the Western Cape.

Madam Chair, the Western Cape Cannabis Plan (CanPlan), will be finalised in this new financial year and it will provide focused interventions and support to cannabis producers in the Western Cape.

Madam Chair, the third iteration of the Flyover Project to gather updated datasets for improved planning in the Western Cape will be undertaken this financial year.

Alien clearing, Madam Chair, 20 000 hectares will be cleared, leading to the creation of 800 green jobs.

The Department will host this year coming, the new financial year, the Youth and Young Research Climate Change and Agriculture Convention in June 2022, and a multi-stakeholder Drought and Disaster Dialogue in October this year.

We will continue to support our farmers in the province to contain the spread of locusts in the affected districts. Fodder support to the value of R48,1 million has already been approved.

Madam Chair, the Hybrid Teaching and Learning will continue at Elsenburg Training Institute as we internalise the lessons learnt during COVID-19. You are aware that we are using the SUA, Stellenbosch University Online Learning Platform as well as our own created Moodle Platform, an online learning platform, because our vision was when COVID is happening you shall continue to learn and we made the necessary e-platforms available to do so. Madam Chair, further rollout of Substance-abuse Awareness and Prevention Sessions focussing on the agri labour rights and rural youth.

Madam Chair, I now table the Budget of R969 218 million for the Western Cape Department of Agriculture. I thank you for the love of agriculture.

[Applause.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Minister Meyer. I now recognise the ANC, member Marran.

Mr P MARRAN: Thank you, Speaker. Am I audible, Acting Speaker?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Yes, you are, hon member.

Mr P MARRAN: Thanks, thank you. Thank you very much, Speaker. Speaker, driving a tractor without a licence should never be allowed in the agri-industry. It is dangerous and it is reckless, especially if you do not know how to put that vehicle in reverse when danger confronts from the front. It should never have been allowed. Many farmworkers have died at the hand of those who do not have a license or who do not know how to operate within the guidelines of a license so that should never be encouraged.

Speaker, I have not heard the hon MEC speak about the 50 small farmers who participated in the programme from small to commercial farmers, and how this Department will support them in this particular programme. I have not heard him speak about it. I have not heard him speak about farmworkers and the challenges that they are facing, especially when it comes to evictions and farm cuts, water cuts on farms. I have not heard him speak about that. I have

not heard the MEC speak about Lewies September, a small livestock farmer from Swellendam who is facing eviction from a municipality. I have not heard the MEC speak about a farmer in Tulbagh who have lost R6,5 million at the hand of a previous Mayor in the Witzenberg Area.

Speaker, as I rise to participate in today's Budget Vote, I wish to remind the House of the words of the hon Leader of the Opposition during his participation of the Second Reading Debate on the Appropriation Bill for 2022/23. The hon Dugmore was clear – budgets are about choices; budgets are about political choices. The ANC believes that the officials of this Department are doing a sterling job, but budgets are about political choices and the ANC cannot support this budget.

As the MEC pointed out in the Standing Committee I want to assure him that the members of the ANC caucus of this House also bleed for our farmers. But, as the MEC said, it bleeds even more for the consumer like the poor granny in Ashton who is using her pension to feed her grandchildren.

The MEC in this Department must know that this ANC caucus stands squarely behind our farmers, amidst [Inaudible.] drought, in the face of COVID-19, with the onslaught of the locusts and with the conflict in Ukraine. Just because we fight for farmworkers and small emerging Black farmers does not mean that we do not feel for the farmers who provide the food that we need in this province and country. There should be little doubt that we appreciate the work of our officials in this Department.

The ANC acknowledges the work of all officials in this Provincial Government, and appreciate the efforts in service delivery, despite the budget cuts implemented by the politicians in the Provincial Government.

Acting Speaker, we are a bit concerned about some misunderstandings that occurred yesterday in the House. On two occasions with two different Budget Votes, MECs in their responses misconstrued the words of the ANC to think that we are attacking departmental officials and even accusing some of them of politics. Nothing could be further from the truth. The vast majority of our people of our public servants, especially in the Department of Agriculture, works diligently within the strenuous budget cuts. It is one of the reasons why the ANC is against budget cuts, because our public servants are expected to do more with much less.

Instead, what we see is when the officials speak frankly and they are heard by members of the Opposition and are not necessarily heard by the political principals, the ANC speaks up on their behalf. This is twisted by failing MECs and made out to be ANC attacking officials. It is far from it. But public servants should also know, as their political principals should know, when you are paid by taxpayers, when you use or misuse taxpayers' monies, you must be prepared to be held accountable. In the case of the Department of Agriculture, we cannot blame officials for the lack of budget and for the lack of priorities.

On the morning of 9 March 2022 Provincial Cabinet met, in flouting the

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, they decided to adopt a position on the conflict in the Ukraine matter. Acting Speaker, we have not heard the Provincial Government speak out when it comes to the people of Palestine when they bombed hospitals killing innocent women and children. The DA was not neutral on that particular issue. They stand with Israel. While the international Swift situation may well have impacted on our provincial exports to Russia, the reality is that the DA-led Provincial Cabinet, forced by the National Leadership, insisted that they were to take a hostile stance towards Russia. Unlike our ANC-led National Government, the DA in this Provincial Cabinet took an ideological stance in the conflict, and this has direct consequences for agriculture and aquacultural sectors.

The MEC of Agriculture, who is also one of the DA's Deputy Federal Leaders, and the MEC was quoted as saying, and I quote:

“South Africa's agricultural exports to Ukraine in the Russian Federation were valued at R4,1 billion in 2020. Horticultural products, oranges, pears, apples, mandarins, lemons, fresh grapes, wines collectively contributed a share of R3,4 billion with around 88% of the value attributable to the Western Cape.”

Trade data tells a more telling tale. In 2020 the type of products described by the MEC accounted for R3,2 billion of South Africa's exports to Russia. Only R120 million worth of these products went to Ukraine. In other words, the Western Cape exports edible fruits to the Russian Federation are 28 times

more the amount it exports to Ukraine. Only the Western Cape farmers will be the losers in the DA's arrogance towards Russia. In fact, in general, South Africa exported goods and services to the value of R5,6 billion in 2020 to Russia and only R270 million to Ukraine. The DA's support for the people of Ukraine is only ideological and racist. For some time, Wesgro has been working hard on accessing the Russian market for mussels. Finally, they got it right. Under the Provincial Government's announcement and irrational boycott of Russia, those markets will be gone soon. Only the exporters of mussels from the Western Cape will suffer. It is therefore hard to believe that the agricultural and aquacultural sectors of the Western Cape support this Provincial Government's insistence on taking sides in the Ukraine conflict, but it seems that the DA, who have no experience in foreign policy and diplomacy, does not even understand this.

In fact, as an ANC MPL, let me be bold to say that yes, the ANC takes its stand in the conflict of Ukraine not only because of the past, but because of the present as well. It does not make economic sense to cut off your Russian nose because you will only be spiting the Western Cape farmer's face. However, as a member of the Standing Committee, I am looking forward to the briefing by the Department specifically on the efforts of the conflict on our agricultural and aquacultural sectors. We are particularly pleased that food prices have not been affected by the conflict and that we must, as leaders across the political divide, call for calm and rational approaches. Of course, we must not omit the possibilities and opportunities that this conflict presents.

The ANC welcomes the sentiments of the hon Van der Westhuizen that we should be looking into expanding our REITS to include especially the African markets. We welcome the sentiments because it is long overdue that South Africa and our Province in particular concentrate on African markets rather than Western and Ethiopian markets.

†Acting Speaker, ons is verontwaardig dat die munisipaliteit in Swellendam besluit het om 'n opkomende boer met amper 40 beeste van meentgrond af te sit. Die boer, Lewies September, het die grond vir byna 10 jaar gehuur. In die tydperk het hy sy kudde opgebou sodat dit die grootste onder Swellendam se kleinboere is. Toe hy aansoek doen om die hernuwing van sy huurkontrak vir 'n verdere periode van 9 jaar 11 maande, is dit geweier. Met die toekenning van kontrakte het die Swellendam Munisipaliteit roekeloos geraak. 'n Ander persoon wat nie eers 'n kontrak gehad het nie, se beeste is intussen op mnr September se grond losgelaat. Sy slotte by die hek is stukkend geknip.

Die DA beweer hulle is besig om voedselsekuriteit te besorg, voedselsekuriteit, maar hier in Swellendam is hulle besig om voedselsekuriteit te vernietig. Mnr September se regte is heeltemal geskend. Is dit die landboubeleid van die DA om bruin kleinboere in die Wes-Kaap heeltemal uit te roei deur mnr September te dwing om sy kudde te verkoop, want wat maak 'n persoon met 40 beeste as hy nie grond het nie?

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Acting Speaker, we are upset that the municipality in Swellendam had decided to evict an emerging farmer with almost 40 head of cattle from the common. The farmer, Lewies September, has leased the land for almost 10 years. In this period he had built up his herd so that it is the largest amongst Swellendam's small farmers. When he applied for the renewal of his contract for a further period of 9 years 11 months, it was refused. With the allocation of contracts, the Swellendam Municipality became reckless. The cattle of another person who did not even have a contract, were released on Mr September's land. His locks at the gate were cut.

The DA alleges they are ensuring food security, food security, but here in Swellendam they are busy destroying food security. Mr September's rights have been totally violated. Is it the agricultural policy of the DA to totally destroy coloured small farmers in the Western Cape by forcing Mr September to sell his herd, because what does a person do with 40 head of cattle when he does not have land?]

And so, Speaker, the name of Lewies September is added to the name of Ivan Cloete. Some farmers are helped more than others. Through you, Speaker, the hon Marais must know that it is not emerging farmers who are a failure as much as it is these old farmers, farmers who have been farming for generations in this country, who strangle out these emerging farmers out of business. There is a competition even in agriculture, but there are also monopolies and conglomerates in agriculture.

Yes, whilst we praise and are proud of our farmers, we will also speak the truth. We are proud that the Department reports that some emerging farmers have indeed become very successful commercial farmers. We are pleased to hear that the Department is working with the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and the National Government in the fight against the swarms of locusts. The ANC takes courage from the MEC who recognises that now is not to blame game, but that indeed we need to work across Government spheres and provinces.

Acting Speaker, the 2021 PERO says the following, and I quote:

“In 2020 agriculture and agri-processing together contributed 8% to the total economic activity and provided 10,4% of all employment opportunities in the province, in 50% of national agricultural exports. The Western Cape contributes more than 90% of national exports of blueberries, bulk wine, pears, bottled wine and apples. Between 2016 and 2020 average annual export growth in the Western Cape was 1,2%. In 2020 the export growth in the Western Cape contracted by 3,5%. The agricultural sector made the largest positive contribution to the export growth due to a blistering 42% growth rate in the same year.”

Despite the drought and despite COVID-19, agriculture makes a huge contribution to our provincial economy, and even the agricultural economy of this country. Yet, this budget makes no provision and does not give recognition to this contribution. The ANC supports the work done by the

Department, but budgets are about choices. You can make good choices, you can make bad choices and, Speaker, because of bad choices made by the political leadership, the ANC declines to support this Budget Vote. I thank you.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Marran. I now recognise the EFF, member Xego.

Mr M XEGO: [No audible response.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Okay, the hon member for the EFF is not connected online so we are going to move forward. I recognise GOOD, hon member August.

Mr S N AUGUST: [No audible response.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Member August is not online also for GOOD. I now recognise the Freedom Front Plus, hon member Marais.

†Mnr P J MARAIS: Baie dankie, Speaker. Ek gaan vir 'n verandering Engels praat dat die DA kan verstaan. [Mr P J MARAIS: Thank you, Speaker. For a change I'm going to speak English so that the DA can understand.]

Having personally witnessed the hon Minister Meyer this morning arriving on a tractor, and I awaited him there, and having personally been on an

oversight visit to Genadendal and seeing what Mr Cloete, an emerging farmer has successfully achieved with the help of the Department of Agriculture, and having read the report compiled by the Agri Committee after recent visits to the West Coast, I support this Vote. [Applause.]

I have come to the conclusion that a great success story of emerging previously disadvantaged farmers awaits this province with the Minister leading the onslaught against poverty, which is much needed, but also food security. But I also wish to ask the Minister, please ensure that sufficient bursaries are made available for students wishing to study at Elsenburg and other colleges like [Inaudible.] marine. Market agriculture as the preferred study direction at technikons and colleges so that previously disadvantaged students can stop just studying for BAs and IT and start studying agriculture.

Give future aspiring farmers land where water resources are not a scarce commodity. Do not give the descendants of the Khoi and Griqua barren semi-desert areas if you expect them to farm successfully. All the water in the Western Cape belonged to the Khoi in the past. So, give them land with water, Minister, so that places like Amalienstein and Waaikraal are not failures because there is no water. Engage commercial white farmers so that they do not employ cheap labour from Zimbabwe and other areas. Employ our people. I want you to take these farmers... [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, you will have to wrap up with the last sentence.

†Mnr P J MARAIS: Minister, ek wou jou nog gekomplimenteer het.

[Mr P J MARAIS: Minister, I still wanted to compliment you.] I often hear that Zimbabweans are better qualified and hard working. This is quite possibly true, but it also reflects negatively on our own quality of education here and our work ethic of our labour force.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, that was your last sentence.

Mr P J MARAIS: Was that a good ending, Speaker?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: It was a good ending. Thank you very much, hon member.

Mr P J MARAIS: [Laughter.] I thank you, Chair.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Marais. I now recognise hon member Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you very much, Speaker. †Bismillah hieragman nir rajeem. [In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious and The Most Merciful.]

The Al Jama-ah party remains concerned that a mere 1% of agricultural land in the Western Cape belongs to black farmers and the entire farming sector belongs to white farmers. Small farmers in the Western Cape have growing

ambitions but for many this can only be a pipe dream. As black farmers they battle with challenges of being excluded from the agri-business daily. Although 55% of South Africa's fresh produce exports are from the Western Cape, black farmers still do not see transformation in this sector. They are also ignored and denied access to financing in markets that the bigger farm producers have. The Province has failed the emerging black farmers. There is no oversight in the support that small farmers should be receiving from stakeholders in this sector.

The Province has shown hypocrisy in its decision to ban horticultural products like fruits to Russia because of its invasion of Ukraine. This even though the Western Cape attributes 88% of South Africa's exports to Russia, and the figure to Ukraine is much lower. This act of hypocrisy from the DA Provincial Government not only harms the Western Cape farmers, but the local economy too. In 2019 the research into the agricultural sector revealed a new wave of mass farm evictions in the province. Not all the evictions are labour-related matters, but a continuous drive by farmers to de-possess black people from owning land.

We call on the Government to take drastic action against farm owners who illegally evict farmworkers. In the Drakenstein Municipality an estimated 20,000 farmworkers face evictions.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member, your last sentence?

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Al Jama-ah further calls for the various departments and stakeholders to conduct an oversight visit on the living and working conditions of farmworkers and farm dwellers. Great hardships, conflict and social instability are caused by illegal evictions. [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member!

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Municipalities also failed to provide adequate alternative shelters as prescribed by legislation to evict farmworkers. [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member...

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Women who work as individual farmworkers are exploited... [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: ...and vulnerable to labour-related eviction. Thank you, Speaker.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Brinkhuis!

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you very much. [Time expired.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: That was not really on and it was very

much out of order, hon member. I am going to continue and recognise the DA. Hon member Van der Westhuizen.

Mr P MARRAN: Speaker, my hand is up.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Oh, hon member Marran, I recognise you. Sorry, hon member Van der Westhuizen.

Mr P MARRAN: Yes, Speaker. I am rising on a point of order, Speaker, because you said the “the last sentence” and a sentence might be a hundred words, so I am just saying... [Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Marran, I am hoping you are not doing the point of order against the Presiding Chair, are you? Thank you very much, hon member. Hon Van der Westhuizen, you may continue.

Mr A P VAN DER WESTHUIZEN: Hon House Chairperson, hon members, I rise to request your support for Vote 11 for the 2022/2023 financial year. I believe I can rely on the support of this House because of the excellent track record of this Department under Minister Meyer and its HOD Dr Mogale Sebopetsa. Elsenburg, as many fondly refer to this Department, is an entity that has been pushing agriculture forward. Agriculture is important because it produces food to feed the nation. It is also a major employer, particularly in the rural areas where unemployment is often rife.

Primary and secondary agriculture employs more than 330 000 people or more than 14% of employees in the Western Cape. In a country that has just seen the unemployment percentage exceed the feared 35% due to the range of job killing policies of the ANC, this is a significant figure that assists to push us forward.

Agriculture is also pushing us forward in applied science. The advances in agriculture mostly due to the clever application of knowledge and technology, are substantial.

It is needed in order for South African agri-producers to remain globally competitive. Unfortunately many, particularly in Government, wrongly believe that traditional farming methods can always compete with modern commercial farming practices. We have seen the South African Government taking a grim view of those outstanding and profitable commercial farmers that are able to push forward by buying additional land and service their debts from agricultural proceeds.

It may at first sight seem logical to limit the size of the land that an individual or entity can own and to spread land ownership amongst all South Africans, if possible. We should, however, keep two major realities in mind. Firstly, there is economics of scale, meaning in certain cases, bigger entities are more effective in pushing us forward. The second is that we should always try to produce quality food at the lowest possible price. We must never forget that there are millions of South Africans that benefit from the

lowest prices possible for food.

The priority should be on who can produce the best quality food at the lowest possible costs to South Africans. This approach does not exclude new entrants to farming. It does, however, mean that emerging farmers need a lot of support beyond just being handed a piece of land. No wonder a former Minister of Agriculture declared that only 10% of land reform cases at national level were successful. Keep in mind that this figure would have been much lower had it not been for the Western Cape's much greater success rate of 72%. The selection process is to identify the right beneficiaries of land reform to push us forward, is a science in itself. A science that should take into account various factors, but which should not include the political affiliation or connections of beneficiaries that are unable to push us forward.

The Provincial Department of Agriculture's budget cannot ignore or deny the potential effects of the war between Russia and Ukraine on the Western Cape agricultural sector. In general, this will be driving all costs and prices upwards to the detriment of our consumers. It will also require us to source items such as fertiliser from new suppliers, and to find new markets for our fruit exports. It will furthermore result in losses for our agri producers and others involved in the export trade.

I therefore find the ANC Government's response to this war shocking to say the least. If the ANC is not touched by the 1000s of innocent lives lost in the Ukraine. If the Opposition is not worried about the bombing of hospitals, at

least they should be worried about the negative effects of rising food prices on poor South Africans. It does not seem to be the case.

The Western Cape produces a variety of agricultural products. These range from various grains to livestock, citrus, deciduous fruit, nuts, leather and meat. The ostrich industry and particularly the export of ostrich meat have been under severe pressure due to what is generally known as the “bird flu.” I therefore applaud the tangible support of Premier Winde and Minister Meyer to the ostrich industry.

I believe that the recent showcasing and introduction of ostrich projects at Leeuwenhof to the international diplomatic corps will push this sector forward and open up new export markets for ostrich meat. This again illustrated the wide range of agricultural fields, often highly specialised fields that the Department of Agriculture is required to support. Minister Mayer confirmed in a written reply to a parliamentary question that the continuous training of staff in order to stay abreast of the fast-developing technologies and knowledge of food production is a major priority for the Department. Early signs are that the drought in some regions of the Western Cape had abated somewhat. I want to remind members that the expectation is that it would require some three consecutive normal rainfall seasons for the veld to recover. While being grateful for the rain in many areas, other regions are in the sixth year of drought.

Traditionally, drought relief was limited to fodder for livestock farmers. I

was therefore delighted to recently learn that the Department through HortGro donated young fruit trees to farmers in the Klein-Karoo that lost whole orchards due to the drought. This is again an example of a department in touch with the needs of the industry and pushing agriculture forward. I wish I was able to convey to this House just how grateful those farmers were for the assistance. Let me now turn from commercial farming to the growing demand for support for urban farming. While this Department is highly involved with the establishment of community food gardens, the keeping of livestock within urbanised areas is often problematic. These animals are often allowed to roam freely, causing damage to gardens, causing vehicle accidents etc.

Where kept in enclosures, the facilities are more often than not, not meeting the requirements set in Municipal Ordinances. It will therefore not come as a surprise that some of their highly contagious diseases, such as African swine fever, have emanated from these urban farming areas.

Unfortunately, it seems as if only a limited number of our local governments still have pounds and the ability to safely move roaming animals to the pounds. While we are justifiably proud of how the Western Cape's agricultural sector is being pushed forward, we need to acknowledge that there are some risks such as climate change that are beyond our immediate control.

The citrus and deciduous fruit industries have been blessed with good

weather conditions over the last few years. It allowed the farmers in the Western Cape to produce more than half the agricultural exports of the country. Some risks, however, are caused by poor governance and poor management at National level.

We have seen a collapse in our rail system. We have seen huge delays in our ports. Inappropriate COVID-19 Regulations lead to delays with repairs to essential equipment, problems with the availability of spares, etc. That our agricultural output was able to push forward despite this is a feather in the cap of the Department and those that it serves.

It was my privilege to recently attend the signing ceremony of a memorandum of understanding between the Agriculture Department of the Western Cape and the Department of Food and Agriculture of the State of California. What is of significance is what we have in common, such as our Mediterranean climates and the similarity in the agricultural products that we produce. We also share a dire need to manage droughts. California is also prone to wildfires and we both have a desire to share our knowledge gained also at tertiary level in terms of climate change and climate smart agricultural practices.

I trust that members of this House will be able to show our support and push forward this agreement in the not too distant future.

Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute has been training and preparing

students in a variety of fields linked to the needs of agriculture in the Western Cape. It is the oldest agricultural college in the country. The National Government has indicated that it wants to snatch this institution from the Western Cape. Unfortunately, the National Department of Higher Education and Training has a poor track record. The National Student Financial Aid Scheme has repeatedly been put under administration and NSFAS students are still waiting for this year's funding. The students owe the universities and colleges, they owe landlords. They are unable to buy textbooks or food. The late Minister Kader Asmal forced public TVET Colleges to merge in the year 2000.

The Department of Higher Education and Training is only now, 22 years later, implementing the staff establishment norms and standards required by this amalgamation. Who can trust a National Department with such a poor track record?

This Department has also accepted that it has a role to play in addressing the failures of the South African Police Services in terms of rural safety. What a shame that officials who should be concentrating on promoting and servicing agriculture must now be concerned about rural safety plans.

Turning to the upcoming financial year, the Agricultural Engineering Services Subprogramme is planning to complete 50 engineering support activities. The current construction work on the Brandvlei Feeder Canal is an example of the groundbreaking work that these staff members are doing.

Another project is a preparatory study on the Buffeljags Dam near Swellendam. It has the potential to turn extensive farming into intensive farming, pushing forward thousands of additional jobs and unlocking the full potential of the farms below the dam. It is also the staff of this sub-programme that annually supports the work of the Lower Olifants River Water Users Association with the much-needed maintenance work on their very old canal system. This unit is also expected to study and comment on some 400 applications for the rezoning and subdivision of agricultural land. The Land Care Sub-Programme is expected to render 720 technical services in promoting the sustainable use of our agricultural resources.

Minister Meyer referred to the 20 000 hectares of agricultural land that will be rehabilitated. It is this sub-programme that also managed disaster relief schemes, conduct awareness campaigns to reduce the risks of disasters, etcetera. This sub-programme can expect to receive an additional R63 million for this important work.

Another sub-programme that is fortunate to see an increase in its budget is the Agricultural Producers Support and Development. This sub-programme is pushing forward land reform farmers. The Department is busy with the revitalisation of extension and advisory services with an emphasis to capacitate agricultural advisers, particularly in the field of climate smart agricultural practices. The budget for Agricultural Producer Support and Development for this year will amount to R296,7 million.

There is a concern over the hygiene control measures in a growing number of abattoirs. The Programme for Veterinary Services is pushing forward by ensuring the safety of meat produced in the province. The staff of this programme is also mandated by the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to regulate the Performing Animals Protection Act. It is expected that they would be visiting and inspecting some 260 animal facilities all over the province. The budget allocation for Veterinary Services is R97,3 million.

Another programme that sets the Western Cape apart from other provinces, is the Research and Technology Development Services. No other provincial department has shared its recent findings on climate change, climate smart agricultural practices as effectively as this programme has. This included scientific publications, walks and talks, and even public radio stations. This Department is, without doubt, the leading entity pushing forward the various benefits that the use of commercial drone technology, combined with various accessories including cameras or heat sensitive sensors, hold. The work done to find new creative applications for drone technology, but also satellite images with various overlays provide farmers with essential information. This includes pivotal information on water, soil analysis and plant analysis.

Also in this regard, the Western Cape is recognised for pushing forward, farmers are full of praise for the Cape Farm Mapper initiative of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture. This service, which is open to all members of the public *inter alia* gives information on average minimum and maximum

temperatures throughout the year for various regions. This has allowed farmers to push forward and to make informed decisions regarding the establishment of orchards with new fruit varieties.

This Department will also be developing a provincial framework for the implementation of the National Cannabis Master Plan, as Minister Meyer has referred to. This is a highly controversial development with various lobby groups in support and opposing the cultivation of this product.

Fortunately, the quality of the research of this Department is recognised also by the private sector, which has been providing external funding for some of the research, and this programme has therefore been allocated R136,6 million for the upcoming year.

Casidra, the main implementing agent for various earmarked projects such as the management of the two provincially owned farms in the Klein-Karoo, can expect revenue amounting to R35 million in the upcoming year. The drought in the Klein-Karoo has illustrated just how challenging it can be to farm profitably in the face of adverse weather conditions. While the long-term prospect of transferring these farms to beneficiaries selected from the adjacent communities remains, we cannot expect the new owners to carry the kind of burden that the recent drought has caused. This Department, as other Provincial Agricultural Departments, is also the implementing agent for the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme generally known as CASP. 120 agricultural graduates were offered the opportunity to be part of a

two-year internship as part of this funding. It is a real pity that the transfers from the National Department are not keeping up with the increases in costs, or the increasing number of emerging farmers that are in need of support.

As Minister Didiza confirmed in her introductory statement in the Annual Performance Plan of the Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights, which was issued last week, the failure of land reform can *inter alia* be ascribed to a lack of support of beneficiaries. Fortunately, in the Western Cape, the Department has been pushing land reform beneficiaries forward.

Hon Speaker, again I am grateful to report – sorry, hon House Chair, again I am grateful to report that the proposed Budget for Vote 11 has enjoyed overwhelming support in the Standing Committee. Again, the ANC, as indicated previously in this debate, did not support the budget without forwarding any motivation or putting any alternatives on the table at that that stage.

I regret this negative response by the official Opposition, and I therefore ask the House to also support the Budget Vote for Vote 11 Agriculture. I thank you.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now recognise hon Minister Meyer.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: One minute, Minister, before you continue. Hon Sayed, what is your point of order?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Hon Chair, no-no, it is not a point of order. It is just to remind the members that the hon Deputy Speaker Schäfer is currently chairing the session. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I guess they are very engrossed in their speeches.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Sayed. Thank you. I now recognise Minister Meyer.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you to members who took part in this debate.

†Agbare lede, vandag vind 'n baie belangrike debat plaas in die Nasionale Vergadering. Daar is 'n mosie van wantroue in die Kabinet van President Ramaphosa terwyl ons hier praat. Die meeste van die probleme wat ons in die Wes-Kaap ervaar is as gevolg van die onbekwaamheid, onbevoegdheid van ANC Nasionale Ministers. Suid-Afrika staan voor 'n kruispad.

Suid-Afrika moet die ANC Nasionale Ministers afdank. Vandag is die kans om die Ministers van President Cyril Ramaphosa af te dank.

Agbare Adjunkspeaker, ons praat al hoe lank van die Nasionale Regering en hulle probleme met die hawe hier in Kaapstad. Vrugte en landbouprodukte vrot nou al by die hawe as gevolg van onbekwaamheid, onbevoegdheid van die ANC Nasionale Ministers. Tyd vir praat is nou verby, agb Speaker.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Hon members, today a very important debate is taking place in the National Assembly. There is a motion of no confidence in the Cabinet of President Ramaphosa while we are speaking here. Most of the problems we experience in the Western Cape is as a result of the incompetence, ineptness of the ANC National Ministers. South Africa is standing at a cross-roads. South Africa should fire the ANC National Ministers. Today is the chance to fire the Ministers of President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we have been speaking about the National Government and their problems with the Port here in Cape Town for how long. Fruit and agricultural products are already rotting at the Port as a result of the incompetence, ineptness of the ANC National Ministers. The time for talk is now past, hon Speaker.]

Deputy Speaker, I am now officially on the record of this House, and I am

now encouraging farmers all over South Africa, and producers, Mr Peter Marais, and I am now asking all exporters in South Africa to sue the National Government for loss of income due to the ANC's incompetence for managing the harbour. I do so, Madam Chair, out of a sheer desperation, as ANC Ministers simply failed our farmers, our producers, agri-workers and exporters. I am tired of talking. I am tired of visiting the harbour. I am tired of writing letters. I am now asking the farmers: sue the Government of South Africa, and I will support you.

But we can fix this problem today in South Africa, Madam Chair, we can vote them out in the National Assembly. There is currently a debate taking place in the National Assembly, a vote of no confidence in the Cabinet in terms of Section 102 of the Constitution. There is a motion of no confidence in the Cabinet, not in the President. We can fix the situation of agriculture by voting out the Government in the National Assembly... [Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO: Hon Deputy Speaker. [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister...

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: That debate is taking place right now and I want to... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister!

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: And I want to thank the support of Al Jama-ah in this regard.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, if you can just take your seat. Hon Nkondlo? Hon members, one minute, I have a point of order. Hon Nkondlo, what is your point of order?

Ms N D NKONDLO: My point of order, Deputy Speaker... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Just one minute.

Ms N D NKONDLO: My point of order, is it parliamentary for the Minister to really shout at us? We really have got sensitive eardrums. We can still hear him. He does not have to shout.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Nkondlo, that was not really shouting, honestly. That was not very loud. Hon Sayed, what is your point of order?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): No, mine is not a point of order, it is vote of thanks. I want to thank the hon Meyer for expressing his confidence and support in the President of the ANC, President Cyril Ramaphosa. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Sayed, that is not a point of order. Hon members, can we give the space for the Minister to do his concluding

remarks? You may proceed, Minister.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: I will speak softer, but the message is the same. South Africa has a crisis, and that crisis for agriculture means, I am asking farmers to produce. Farmers are producing. They get technical advice from Dr Sebopetsa and his able team. We have outstanding commodity organisations. We have Agri Western Cape. We have Vinpro. We have Hortgro. We have great farmers. We have commercial farmers. They are doing an outstanding job and it is my job to support the industry, Grain South Africa, Agri Western Cape, AFASA, all these commodity organisations and stakeholders. But today must go down in the history of South Africa as the day where we can fix the problems of agriculture in South Africa.

Al Jama-Ahmed, 80% of the problems that land on my desk are Eskom, National Department of Water Affairs, National Department responsible for the harbour. All the problems that I have on my desk come from the National Ministers' total incompetence. It is a miracle that you can still get your salary. The incompetence of this Government is completely, completely unacceptable, but that problem, sir, you can help us to fix today by voting out the ANC Ministers, the motion of no confidence in the Cabinet.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, please take your seat.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: When you do that, my problems are solved.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Thank you, hon Sayed.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Chair, on more than one occasion in one sentence, the hon MEC is referring directly to the hon Brinkhuis. He must speak through you. Maybe he will do that in the National Assembly if they win an election. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Sayed. Hon Minister, let me... [Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: My parents taught me never to be shy to apologise; to the hon member, my humble apologies.

†Agbare Adjunkspeaker, ek is uiters bekommerd soos u, as 'n vorige Minister van Landbou, oor die sprinkaanplaag in die Wes-Kaap, in die Oos-Kaap en in die Noord-Kaap. Die sprinkaanplaag is 'n ramp en ons boere het dringend hulp nodig. Die sprinkaanplaag is wyer as die Wes-Kaap. Daarom het my Departementshoof Dr Mogale Sebopetsa met sy twee eweknieë in die Oos-Kaap en in die Noord-Kaap vergader. Daarna het hy sy versoek gerig dat die nege Departementshoofde van Landbou met die Nasionale DG vergader ten einde die probleem oor die sprinkaanplaag te bespreek.

Na gesprek het ons onmiddellik R5 miljoen beskikbaar gestel vir die bestryding van die sprinkaanplaag in die Wes-Kaap saam met my kollega, die

Minister van Plaaslike Regering, Minister Bredell, ons het vergader en ons het onmiddellik 'n noodsentrum geopen om daaglik die sprinkaanplaag te monitor.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Hon Deputy Speaker, like yourself as a former Minister of Agriculture, I'm very concerned about the locust plague in the Western Cape, in the Eastern Cape and in the Northern Cape. The locust plague is a disaster and our farmers need help very urgently. The locust plague is wider than the Western Cape. Therefore my Head of Department, Dr Mogale Sebopetsa met his two counterparts in the Eastern Cape and in the Northern Cape. Afterwards he requested that the nine Heads of Department of Agriculture meet with the National DG in order to discuss the problem of the locust plague.

After discussion we immediately made R5 million available to fight the locust plague in the Western Cape with my colleague, the Minister of Local Government, Minister Bredell; we had a meeting and we immediately opened an emergency centre to monitor the locust plague daily.]

I want to thank Dr Sebopetsa for the leadership that he took because he came to my office, he unpacked the problem. He told me what the outcomes are, he presented the plan and the monitoring techniques, and I want to thank him for his leadership, but not for the Western Cape, for South Africa, because he saw the big picture is not only affecting the Western Cape.

†Agbare Adjunkspeaker, ek is baie trots op die Agri-werker van die Jaar en sy is die geleentheid gebied om volgende week Duitsland en Nederland te besoek saam met ons landbouers. Sy is 'n Agri-werker wat haar geleentheid aangryp om 'n sukses te maak in die landbousektor. Baie geluk aan Audrey September daar van Piketberg in die Weskus.

Agbare Adjunkspeaker, ek wil ook graag die Premier Alan Winde bedank wat in die vorige boekjaar landbouers, produsente en agri-werkers na sy ampswoning genooi het te Leeuwenhof om die Regering se dank en waardering te betoon en waardering uit te spreek oor hul bydrae tydens die pandemie.

Meer onlangs het die Regering die volstruisbedryf se produkte bemark onder buitelandse diplomate ook by Leeuwenhof. Dankie aan Dr Ilse Trautmann en haar span wat wonderlike werk gelewer het. Ek is ook dankbaar vir Dr Chris wat vandag ook hier in die Huis is. My oogmerk is om meer volstruisvleis en produkte vanuit die Wes-Kaap uit te voer. Ek wil meer werk skep vir ons burgers in die Wes-Kaap.

Agbare Adjunkspeaker, ek sien dat die Speaker het ook so pas hierdie Huis binnegekom. Hy is hier agter my.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Hon Deputy Speaker, I'm very proud of the Agri-worker of the Year and she

has been offered the opportunity to next year visit Germany and the Netherlands with our farmers. She is an Agri-worker who is seizing her opportunities to make a success in the agricultural sector. Congratulations to Audrey September there from Piketberg in the West Coast.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I also want to thank the Premier Alan Winde who in the previous financial year invited farmers, producers and agri-workers to his official residence at Leeuwenhof to show the Government's thanks and appreciation and express appreciation for their contribution during the pandemic.

More recently the Government marketed the ostrich industry's products amongst foreign diplomats also at Leeuwenhof. Thank you to Dr Ilse Trautmann and her team who did wonderful work. I'm also grateful to Dr Chris who is also here in the House today. My aim is to export more ostrich meat and products from the Western Cape. I want to create more work for our citizens in the Western Cape.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I see the Speaker has also just entered this House. He is here behind me.]

I am making an appeal that the next time when we have some lunch or dinner, that he will serve us some ostrich meat because it is healthy, and we want to live a healthy and long life, and it is delicious. I hear there is no budget. The industry will supply, and it is halal.

†Laastens, Adjunkspeaker, die oorlog in Oekraïne het groot implikasies vir Suid-Afrika. Rusland en Oekraïne is beide sleutelmarkte vir die Wes-Kaap vir beide invoere asook die uitvoere. In 2020 het die Wes-Kaap R3.3 miljard se landbouprodukte uitgevoer na Rusland. In 2020 het die Wes-Kaap R111 miljoen se landbouprodukte na Oekraïne uitgevoer. Die Wes-Kaap het in 2020 R657 miljoen se landbouprodukte vanaf Rusland ingevoer. Die Wes-Kaap het in 2020 R39 miljoen se produkte, veral sonneblomsaad en sonneblomolie, vanaf Oekraïne ingevoer.

Agbare lede, die oorlog in Oekraïne kom teen 'n prys vir alle Suid-Afrikaners. Kospryse gaan toenaam, voedsel-inflasie gaan toeneem. Dit is reeds onder druk. Ek het die implikasies van die oorlog, agbare lede, die implikasies van die oorlog het ek onder die aandag gebring van die Nasionale Minister van Landbou. Haar antwoord was teleurstellend, want hulle begryp nie die ernstige implikasies vir dit nie, maar agbare Adjunkspeaker, ek het niks anders verwag nie, want ek verstaan die geopolitiese landskap waarin die ANC tans verkeer.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Finally, Deputy Speaker, the war in Ukraine has big implications for South Africa. Russia and Ukraine are both key markets for the Western Cape for both imports as well as exports. In 2020 the Western Cape exported R3.3 billion worth of agricultural products to Russia. In 2020 the Western Cape exported R111 million worth of agricultural products to Ukraine. The

Western Cape in 2020 imported Die Wes-Kaap het in 202 R657 million worth of agricultural products from Russia. The Western Cape in 2020 imported R39 million worth of products, especially sunflower seeds and sunflower oil, from the Ukraine.

Hon members, the war in the Ukraine comes at a price for all South Africans. Food prices are going to increase, food inflation is going to increase. It is already under pressure. I have brought the implications of the war, hon members, the implications of the war to the attention of the National Minister of Agriculture. Her reply was disappointing, because they don't grasp the serious implications of it, but hon Deputy Speaker, I did not expect anything else, because I understand the geopolitical landscape in which the ANC finds itself.]

South Africa is again on the wrong side of the geopolitical landscape. The National Government is silent on matters that matter. The late Archbishop Tutu said, and I quote:

“If you are silent on matters of morality, then you are on the side of the oppressor.”

Putin is the oppressor and the ANC is supporting the oppressor. Putin is a war criminal and the ANC is supporting a war criminal. Today he is in a bunker in Russia. Why is he in a bunker? He is in a bunker; he sent his children and his family already to another place to be in a bunker.

[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order please, members. That is a little bit too loud. You may proceed.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Hon Deputy Speaker, war images of mothers, grandmothers, children fleeing their homes are a gross violation of International Law. We together as we sit here and those who are online, we must always be on the side of justice, on the side of peace and human rights. It is a shame that the South African Government is not on the side of justice, justice everywhere, peace everywhere, human rights everywhere and so this Government is silent and Archbishop Tutu said, “If you are silent on morality, you are on the side of the oppressor.” [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to conclude. The Ceres area is an important agricultural region, and I am pleased that the Government through the Department of Public Works has now prioritised the road between Ceres and Op-die-Berg to Citrusdal. This is a significant agricultural route to go through the N7 and so I am pleased that this Government has now prioritised the road between Ceres, Op-die-Berg to Citrusdal. Stage 1 initiation and pre-feasibility will start on 1 April 2023. The total cost of the project over a

longer period will be R160 million. I thank the Minister of Finance. I thank the Minister of Transport because I made a passionate plea at the MTEF Budget Process, and so I am pleased that this work will now continue starting from next year.

Hon member Marais, in the current financial year, we are now spending R24 million rand on bursaries, internships, as you requested, but hon member Marais, I do not think this is enough and so somebody phoned me during December one evening, and she said they see the work that this Government is doing; they want to make bursaries available. They found me during December, after Christmas, and I said: "Listen here, you cannot just give bursaries to us. Come and see us."

So I invited the lady to come to our graduation ceremony. I said, "First see the product, first see my staff. First see the capability, then you make money available", and she came and when they want to give their money, I said, "no, we do not work like this. I want to see your business operations", so a month ago I flew to Upington and I met the biggest farmer in the whole of Upington, commercial farmer, mega farmer, Oom Piet Karsten, the Karsten Group. They are having offices in 20 different countries in different companies. So I said to them: "Now you saw my business. I saw your business, let us do the deal."

So, they will now give us more bursaries to fund students studying agriculture, as you requested, and I want to thank the Karsten's farmers, and

I told the *boere* there, I want you to name this bursary fund after the founding family member Oom Piet Karsten Bursary Fund. It is going to happen, because they see what this Government and my staff are capable of doing, and I am thankful. I give them the honour for the work that they are doing.

Hon Marais, yes, I am also concerned about these issues, the conditions and Pat Marran also raised some of these issues and that is why I will take up this matter of the fights between Zimbabweans and people from Lesotho because it is of grave concern. I do not want any instability in this sector and so we will engage with them about this, but firstly, have proper engagement, understand what the problem is, develop the outcome, get the clear plan and solve the crisis, but I also want to express hon Chair, there were some other questions about foreign policy. I want to assure hon member Marran I read foreign policy every single day. I meet with diplomats every week so I know something about foreign policy, something that if he wants to come for some further information sharing, I am happy that we can do that and I will involve the Deputy Speaker and the Speaker in that regard, so that is one area I think I have some understanding – not the full picture.

Hon member Marran also spoke about land reform. He knows that land reform success in this province, 72%. Hon member Marran also referred to commercial farmers. In fact, tomorrow night we will be celebrating 50 commercial farmers who are successful with a project that started in 2016 so I think we are giving due recognition to the work of those commercial

farmers.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to express my thanks and appreciation to the staff and the board of Casidra. They are doing an outstanding job. I want to put on record my thanks to all the staff. Agriculture cannot happen without farmers, agri-workers and producers and I want to thank them for keeping the economy growing in the Western Cape.

I want to thank Anton Kruger as well, because they are doing outstanding work. I also want to thank Hortgro, hon member Marais, last month they invited me to a ceremony of a bursary fund, over the last 10 years Hortgro and the producers supporting Hortgro, for the last 10 years they made R43 million available for bursaries for students in this province and I attended that ceremony at Stellenbosch and many of those students who are recipients of that bursary fund are now studying at Elsenburg, so on an average R4,3 million (?) from Hortgro, I want to thank Anton and the Board of Hortgro for their great work, but I also want to thank all the farmers, the agri-workers and the producers. I want to thank all of them for keeping the economy growing in the Western Cape. I want to thank all the Mayors for supporting agriculture because agriculture happens in a geographical space under the leadership of Mayors.

To all my staff in the Ministry, a big thank you to all. You are all great, fit for purpose. A big thank you to Marietjie van Jaarsveld, the Head of my Ministry; my media officer, Daniel Johnson, and my private secretary

Charmaine de Vos and the rest of my staff.

Deputy Speaker, I have defended my budget recommendations in the Standing Committee under the leadership of the Chairperson, Andricus van der Westhuizen. I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to all the members of the Standing Committee and the Committee Clerk for keeping us accountable. The sharper your questions, the better we become; the poorer the quality of your questions, the poorer we become, so thank you for putting sharp questions to us during the Standing Committee under the leadership of Mr Van der Westhuizen.

Hon Chairperson, today the table grape industry distributed high-end quality grapes from our producers in the Cape Winelands. I want to thank the industry, and particularly Mr Jaco Du Toit. Thank you also to Andrew Patterson, who shared some top quality apples that were distributed outside in the street, also for people because the fruits of this labour must be enjoyed by the citizens on the street in this province.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it now gives me great pleasure to table in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, Vote 11, Agriculture for 2022/2023 financial year, a budget of R969,218 million. This budget will be pushing forward.

I thank you with our favourite hashtag For the Love of Agriculture. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. That concludes the debate on Vote 11.

[Debate concluded.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Right, I think we are ready. We are just waiting for one or two people to come through. Thank you very much, Ms Ndudeni, you will read the next Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 2 – Provincial Parliament – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2–2022]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I now recognise the hon Speaker Mnqasela.

The SPEAKER: Madam Deputy Speaker; his Excellency the Premier of the Western Cape Province; Judge President of the Western Cape High Court; members of the Judiciary; members of the Diplomatic Corps; Cabinet Ministers of the Western Cape Government; hon leaders of political parties; hon members of the Provincial Parliament in the Western Cape; Mayors of municipalities in the Western Cape; members of the Consulate Corps; Heads of Chapter 9 Institutions and Chapter 10 Institutions; the Provincial Police Commissioner; the Provincial Commissioner for Children in the Western Cape; the Provincial Police Ombudsman in the Western Cape; municipal speakers and councillors; members of the media and people of the Western

Cape; ladies and gentlemen:

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is my singular honour and privilege to present the Budget of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament for 2022/23 financial year. This budget is a product of a thorough budgetary planning process both internally, as well as with our very own Provincial Treasury. Although the outcome of the process is not always to our complete satisfaction, it has to be stated upfront that the Provincial Treasury understands and appreciates our mandate as the Provincial Parliament, and I wish to thank our hon Minister of Finance and Team Finance for their continued support in this regard. We had extensive negotiations and consultations in our bid to arrive at a final product for this Parliament and of course, a budget is always a question of balancing within the limited resources and myself and the Accounting Officer had this in mind, as we continued to do this work.

Our budget as Parliament has increased by just over R9 million from R217 708 million, including a direct charge, to a sum of R226 803 million. The WCPP baseline is supplemented with R4 376 million which relates to the funding for cyber security, which the Western Cape Provincial Parliament is committed to ensuring that we roll out new technologies, Madam Deputy Speaker, to standardise process, ensuring that our public participation and of course the work of the hon members is enabled in ensuring that the performance of their duties and the tools of trade are properly empowered to perform these tasks. R678 000 has been made available for this purpose in this additional budget.

We are also, as Parliament, part of the Commonwealth family and one of the responsibilities, Madam Deputy Speaker, is that at least once every ten years, we have the responsibility, as the Provincial Parliament, to host the Commonwealth Africa – in fact, all South African Parliaments have the responsibility, all nine legislatures.

So we will be hosting the Commonwealth Africa Region Conference as well as the SOCAP, which is the administration where they convene and sit and engage on matters that confront us as Parliaments. So this is something that we do at least once every ten years and we have been able to put aside an amount of over R3 million in this regard and Treasury has been able to come to the fore in this regard and also supplemented the budget for Committees by R170 000.

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament is committed to continue to provide procedural and related support to the House and our Committees to conduct our business of law-making, effective oversight and public participation.

As Provincial Parliament, Madam Deputy Speaker, hon members, we will also continue to ensure that not only do we do public participation, but it must be qualitative public participation. Enabling facilities for the hon members of Parliament and financial support to political parties. We will continue so that hon members and political parties have the appropriate resources and tools of the trade to perform their constitutional obligations. This will be continually reviewed and assessed on an annual basis and whenever the need arises given

the ever-changing world of work.

That means, Madam Deputy Speaker, we need agility, but we need leadership. To achieve the above, the strategic imperatives for the Western Cape Provincial Parliament are among others to ensure that we reposition the Western Cape Provincial Parliament as a leading regional Parliament, that is in touch with all its people and to position the ICT to be at the centre of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament's transformation to a modern Parliament of choice and to further strengthen the ability for this Parliament to make laws, effective laws, good laws, quality oversight over the affairs of the Executive and of course quality public participation.

So as the Executive Authority of this Parliament, last year I convened a two-day strategic review and planning session where the Deputy Speaker and I spoke with the senior management team with a view to reflecting on the progress made by the Western Cape Provincial Parliament in realising the vision of the Sixth Administration, and to identify priorities towards the end of the term.

Specific objectives of the session, Madam Deputy Speaker, included among others, to reflect on the key strategic issues impacting on the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, to review the performance in the executing of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament legislative mandate, review progress in relation to the key commitments since the start of the Sixth Parliament, and to identify emerging issues, including risks and to identify critical

imperatives towards the end of the term.

The strategic overview of the factors impacting on the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, which we have identified among others, include the salient matters: the impact of COVID-19 and the question therefore, on how we responded as this Parliament?

So the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the manner in which the Western Cape Provincial Parliament has been able to execute its mandate, and in the core areas of oversight, law-making and public participation in particular. It further necessitated adjustments to both the business and operating models including workplace policies, systems and practices. The profound disruptive effects of COVID-19, whilst introducing a significant amount of risk to business continuity, a risk which we successfully mitigated, Madam Deputy Speaker, it has also exacerbated the shift towards our ICT enabled environment in line with our objectives to transition to a modern Parliament, and of course this has further elevated seven areas in our ICT, in terms of risks, including the cyber security, data and personal information risks and of course there is even much more legislation in this particular area of work.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we know and of course the Chair of QOC, who also happens to be the Chief Whip of the majority party, chaired the COVID-19 Response Team. The Committee's mandate was simply to ensure that Government does not simply administer the budget, but there are also checks

and balances in that process. And I must say that it was this Parliament that led in this area, and we are proud of that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we live in the vuka world, with immense levels of volatility and uncertainty, where as decision-makers we have no time, but we have got to make decisions fast, and take tough decisions in an extremely complex environment, defined by heightened levels of ambiguity. And it has also hastened the need for a review of the extent to which existing capacity aligns to a modernisation agenda that which we seek to achieve, which requires specific skills to drive in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this has also brought into question the appropriateness of the supporting infrastructure and facilities in the future world of work. Accelerated technological response and advancement included among others a necessity to re-examine our response in how we use technology and look where we are now, we are all connected in this Parliament in a hybrid session and of course, we do so because there are competent enablers on our ICT environment based on the capacity to employ and reskill.

People are willing to do this work and are willing to put everything aside to support this Parliament, to do its work. Pursuant to this is the accelerated technological adoption and penetration in society. There is no way that we can work alone and think that us being us, it is enough.

We have got people out there who expect that members of Parliament must be able to engage and integrate with them on the real challenges that confront them. But how do we do this if it is not through interactive and effective public participation tools and instruments? Whilst technology has been widely available, Madam Deputy Speaker, the reality is the gap is quite huge. The gap is quite huge between citizens and Government institutions and politicians.

There remains a risk of marginalisation due to limited access to data and technology, a key challenge for Legislatures is thus to enable free public access to data and thereby increasing the levels of participation and engagement of citizens and the work that we do, as Parliament. So technological access has however increased access to information and awareness and that has fundamentally challenged traditional notions of citizen's engagement. Agility is the key. Continuously improving in the way of doing work is the only response in our area of public participation if you want to be taken seriously as Parliament.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the further constraint to the fiscal environment is that our global economy has seen a slowdown from 2019, with a further sharp contraction due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the future projections in this area. Despite some initial positivity due to the roll-out of vaccination programmes and more people taking up the vaccines, we still however are very worried. And of course, the continued resurgence due to new variants further creates this uncertainty and instability. And what is the nature, what

is the future world of work and what kind of society will this Parliament be able to function in? And the bleak economic outlook is the one that confronts us if we look at the numbers.

The pressure rises from, in particular, the changing technological landscape and how we are going to be employing these instruments also for our own members. Is the instrument that I am using still going to be fit for purpose for next year? Also how are we going to ensure that as we continue to do our work, we are able to say to our constituencies, yes, we will work from home if you work from home but as a member of Parliament can you really work from home? That is the reality, we as members, find ourselves in and obviously as the Head of Parliament I have a responsibility with the hon members here to make things work for this Parliament. And obviously, which has been a serious matter, a lack of confidence in public institutions which translates into a lack of confidence in Legislatures, and this Legislature is not in any way an exception, and a lack of appreciation for the unique role that Legislatures play within a democracy.

This I have picked up as I go around with hon members to talk about a new programme in this Parliament and public participation called Thetha Nathi. You hear what people say and some reservations that they have about those who govern and about those who claim to represent them and the extent to which they represent them, and that is a very serious defining moment for us as elected representatives. But this Parliament has a huge role to play and thanks to those hon members who continue to support this programme

because it enables Parliament to be closer to the people.

Madam Deputy Speaker, increasingly we have seen a greater impact where the WCPP is viewed as a key role-player in the promotion of good governance deepening democracy. Our audit outcomes show this case, clean audits after clean audits, at least they show something, that there is something that is happening that is very, very good here; the money that we are given by the public purse, that we use it on the expected outcomes. We are able to deliver on the deliverables that were promised in our strategic plans and APPs and of course in our Budget. We do not spend, of course what we do not have. I heard some Ministers mentioning that and that was quite impressive.

In light of the above, the following imperatives we identified to both respond to the changing landscape and address any possible shortcomings, the repositioning of the WCPP as a leading regional Parliament, in touch with all of its people, I have said this earlier, also to place ITC at the centre of the WCPPs transformative agenda, to offer more of Parliament that we want to see, strengthening law-making and oversight plus public participation.

Priorities to this end, Deputy Speaker, have been to also look at how we keep Parliament effective and also continue to deliver the services within the limited resources and how we prioritise all our programmes towards the MTEF and be able to complete the full cycle? This is obviously something that will require some serious reprioritisation to begin to respond to the

priorities with immediate effect. It will then again mean more substantial reprioritisation to address all the critical areas over the next two financial years towards the end of this term. This would need to take the current Western Cape constraints and fiscal conditions into account and whether budgetary funding is sufficient to cover strategic priorities as well as whether the Western Cape Provincial Parliament's ability to maintain its role of effective oversight within the province and public participation is indeed catered for.

I have a great sense of gratitude and appreciation for the work of this Parliament led by the Secretary and the Administration, and the entire staff complement of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, the sterling support rendered to our members of Parliament in doing their work and making this Parliament an employer of choice. I am proud to be an employer who has such a professional and a very competent team of individuals who are able to ensure that in their performance there is ongoing support and commitment, not only to members but to the people of this province in the work that we do.

We are nothing without our personnel through whom we are able to succeed in the work that we do, and this does not go unnoticed. I want to say to everyone who works for this Parliament: your work is appreciated not only within this institution but in the sector as a whole. We have become trendsetters, we have become a Parliament that others want to learn from and for that let us continue to be exemplary in our way of work. That does not

come cheap, it takes sweat and blood and sacrifice. I know the long hours that our staff members work and at times taking calls at night from the hon members just to get the job done and for that, I want to say thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker, and thank you hon members. Thank you, thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. I now recognise hon member Lekker.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you Deputy Speaker. The ANC cannot support this Vote. One hundred and ten years ago a group of African intellectuals gathered in Mangaung. Two years after the founding of the Union of the South Africa, the Reverend John Langalibalele Dube and Dr Pixley ka Izaka Seme, amongst others, gathered in order to advocate for, and fight for the rights of all peoples of this country, especially the African majority.

In founding the ANC in 1912, the organisation I am proud to represent here today, has existed for two years short of the centenary of the existence of South Africa as a country. The establishment of the ANC was a direct result of the establishment of South Africa, and therefore it is a legitimate question whether our country can survive without the ANC.

South Africa, as a country, has known no other political organisation that has lived as long as the ANC has, yet this is a debate for another day. In 1955,

forty-three years after the founding of the ANC, the ANC together with various other formations converged on Cape Town to declare among others, the people shall govern.

In the lead up to the Congress of the People, lawyers such as A P Mda Lembede, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Duma Nokwe, amongst many others played an integral role in the formation of the ANC's understanding of constitutional democracy. In fact, taking even a step back, Tembeka Ngcukaitobi, in his book *'The Land is Ours'*, South Africa's first black lawyers and the birth of constitutionalism, traces the work of South Africa's first black lawyers who operated in the 19th and early 20th century. In other words, long before CODESA and the writing of our Constitution, the ANC was steeped in the knowledge of a constitutional system that respected ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Lekker?

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): ... individual rights and freedoms.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Lekker?

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Yes, yes Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you could just take your seat, there is a point of order. Chief Whip, what is your point of order?

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I rise on the Rule of relevance, is this is a history lesson on the history of the ANC or Vote 2 Provincial Parliament?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, I was watching that. I am hoping hon Lekker that you are moving directly to the Vote, because relevance does play in terms of Rule 40. Are you going to be continuing to move towards the relevant topic of today?

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): I am definitely heading there, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, I will be carefully watching, thank you very much, you may proceed.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you, Deputy Speaker. In other words, long before CODESA and the writing of our Constitution, the ANC was steeped in the knowledge of a constitutional system that would respect the rule of law and that would hopefully use this rule of law as an instrument against injustice. One of the existential characteristics of the ANC was precisely its love of the law and how it found that the apartheid system had actually used the law unjustly instead of pursuing justice.

Deputy Speaker, I am saying all of this, and I provide this brief history lesson today precisely because there are among us, who do not understand what hon Baartman will turn the mandate of Balaleta. Indeed, we must

promote democracy, for sure we must not keep quiet in the face of injustice, but democracy is not a free for all. Democracy is simply not freedom to do what you like. A constitutional democracy is based on the rule of law and the principal of separation of powers. A rule of law and the Constitution where it clearly states that foreign policy shall be determined by the National sphere of Government. A rule of law and Constitution which clearly states that foreign policy and relations with State shall be the prerogative of the Executive at a National level.

It is extremely disturbing when the Speaker suggests that because of agreements with other countries, the Legislature can therefore not turn a blind eye to what is happening in Ukraine. The Speaker and this Legislature must hold the Executive of this Province to account and not join the Executive. The Speaker and this Legislature are not a wing of the Executive in this Province. It must not get involved with this Provincial Government when it breaks the law in violation of the Constitution of the Republic and the Constitution of this Province.

This Legislature should have called the Premier and his Cabinet to account for pursuing a DA foreign policy. Instead, he had to see our building, yes, this is a Legislature too, being lit up in the colours of the flag of a foreign country. Even worse still, we hear that this was not paid for by the Legislature. Then who paid for it? The debate on Palestine sponsored last year by Al-Jama-ah would also have cost this House nothing.

The public engagement programme of this Legislature explains to us that they will soon be rolling out a social media campaign to ensure involvement by the public in budget processes, law making processes and oversight, however, maybe they would first want to stop at the Speaker's office and teach him how to use WhatsApp.

The lighting up of the Legislature building could easily have been discussed in a WhatsApp group as urgent as it was, a WhatsApp group representing all the parties in this Legislature. The Speaker does not need to first call a Speaker's Consultative Forum. In that WhatsApp group the Speaker would have realised the majority of the parties represented in this House would not have agreed with him. Former Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng was taken to task by the Judicial Conduct Committee for engaging in political controversy. The former Justice had to learn about the separation of powers. It is simply not the constitutional prerogative of the judiciary nor the Legislature to get involved with foreign policy matters, let alone a Provincial Government.

This House and its leadership must learn about the separation of powers and the Rule of Law because our very democracy, a democracy advocated by the ANC in its 110-year history, depends on it.

Deputy Speaker, the leadership of this House does not understand the separation of powers, the budget for overseas trips by the Secretary, while the budget of communities is dire. The hon Baartman is correct, committees are the engine room of Parliament.

While the budget of the offices of the Speaker and Secretary increases by over a third each, we are told that is it because the Committees' budget is cut. The ANC has raised before, and will raise it again, it cannot be that a non-core function or programme is taking most of the money. Even worse still, it cannot be that most money goes to Programme 1, which is Leadership and Administration.

The core functions of this Legislature are Programmes 2, 3 and 4. How is it possible that we are struggling in these three programmes, but the leadership of the Legislature is getting most of the pie? In fact, even the increase of 6% for Programme 1, which is Administration, is more than the others. We read that the increase is largely due to increases in personnel and COE costs, so a bloated administration but staff members should support being stretched. Members' support, which is critical, is not even increased by 1%, it is less than 1%.

Again, the hon Wenger and hon Baartman, who hypocritically supported the budget today, pointed out in the Oversight Committee that budgeting is about priorities and the priorities in this budget are simply not right. Indeed, this budget sees a budget increase prioritising overseas trips, legal expertise and the Seventh Parliament, while our Committees and the co-functions of this Legislature are neglected.

The ANC will soon be writing to the Secretary's office, to enquire whether members are entitled to use legal services for Legislature work that is not

receiving an increase in budget. The ANC continues to lament the severe pressure that WCPP staff must work under. We criticise this budget being advertised the Friday before Monday, when the budget speech was made, and the deadline being that afternoon, on Monday afternoon. Staffing programmes 2, 3 and 4 are overworked in Legislature. The ANC must continuously do the dirty work of the DA by complaining about issues that some DA members of this House are too afraid to complain about.

We must complain about the slowness of Public Transport and Public Works and how they neglect the maintenance of this building, because the Speaker, and the Deputy Speaker or in fact DA Whippers, do not have the courage to speak against the MEC in this Department.

Deputy Speaker, the ANC up until now remains unconvinced that taking the SOPA to the people is worth the money that is being spent. SOPA outside of Wale Street is becoming a DA road show. Since Mitchells Plain when the first SOPA was held in our communities, the ANC has demanded that our communities are involved, that time is set aside for us, both in the Executive and in the Legislature to listen to our people.

Taking Parliament to the people rings hollow when the people cannot even access us. In Velddrif, where nearly half a million was spent on SOPA, the public gallery was filled with DA acolytes when the Premier spoke. The hall in Noordhoek was much larger and could have accommodated far more people, but Velddrif was chosen because the DA did not want to face the

reality of our people's living conditions.

Indeed, the library was opened in Noordhoek, but in typical apartheid style it was a message of look what we do for you, but you do not deserve to be listened to. We are told that at Velddrif itself R440 000 was spent, and conveniently R373 000 was spent in the district. This shows what a cheap show taking Parliament to small towns is. Why was the extra money not spent in Velddrif itself but instead we had to drive to the already economic hub of Saldanha Bay?

The ANC claims the victory of the digitisation of Hansard but says that more can be done. We therefore welcome the 8,1% budget increase made to these services. Deputy Speaker, this Parliament must come back to basics, leave these international associations or trips and budgets for Committees, respect the rule of law and the Constitution and leave foreign policy to National Government.

The ANC after its founding, and as a resolution of Mangaung in 1912, sent its first delegation to the then King of England. We have been doing foreign policy since our establishment. At one stage when hon Marais was serving in that apartheid tricameral system, the ANC had no foreign representation than the hon Marais Government did in foreign countries.

In fact, President O R Tambo was hosted as a Head of State and red carpets were rolled out for him at airports while the apartheid regime was the skunk

of this world. Leave foreign policy to the ANC National Government. We cannot support this Vote. I thank you,

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Lekker. I now recognise hon Marais. No, not here no. I will continue. I now recognise hon Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you, Speaker. We have no declaration.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I now move over to hon Wenger.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Deputy Speaker, the Western Cape Provincial Parliament receives an amount of R176,5 million, excluding the direct charge for members' salaries to be appropriated in the 2022/23 financial year. This represents a 4% increase from the previous financial year ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Wenger, can you just take a seat for a moment please. Hon Marais? If hon Wenger would be accommodating, if she is okay with that, then you may continue but I think you owe her on that matter. You may begin hon Marais. Thank you very much Chief Whip for just waiting for a second.

Mr P J MARAIS: Deputy Speaker, I listened to this ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, just make sure that your microphone is on for the record. You may begin.

Mr P J MARAIS: Will the time be added to me? Okay. Speaker, you strive towards quality public participation on issues like performance or of our mandate, identifying risks, discussing the impact of COVID-19, oversight functions, adjustments to policies, these are noble things to pursue.

You are like a beacon of hope, a lighthouse for sailors that are drowning, because we are drowning in this country. Parliament's image has been destroyed at national level and we are living in the shadow of big brother who has no image. You must pull us out of that identity that we are also just a Parliament that could possibly be corrupt and that has incompetent people. National Parliament is no example to follow.

I heard members here talking about their Ministers that are no example to follow. We must reposition the Western Cape Parliament and you have my full backing on that. We do not even get coverage on television. Anytime a Minister says anything, no matter how stupid, he gets a whole hour on TV to explain his stupid policies, if he is National. We do not get that coverage and it is time that we insist that we, in the Western Cape want coverage of our sessions too, not only on television but in the media. I have been with you to two Thata Nathi ... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Thetha Nathi.

Mr P J MARAIS: Okay, okay. [Laughter.] Theta Nathi, in Bellville South and Mitchells Plain and the people loved it. We introduced ourselves to them and said this is who we are and how we do things. No National Minister can go there and say this is who we are, and this is how we do things because then we will find out more secrets.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member, your time is up.

Mr P J MARAIS: I should never have gone out, Deputy Speaker. [Laughter.] [Time expired.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. Thank you very much for your time and Chief Whip, thank you for your indulgence. I recognise the hon Chief Whip Wenger.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Deputy Speaker, no problem whatsoever. Shall I start again? Alright I will just continue.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can for the record.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): I will start from the beginning. The Western Cape Provincial Parliament receives an amount of R176,5 excluding the direct charge for members' salaries to be appropriated in the 2022/23 financial year. This represents a 4% increase on the previous year and estimates rise to

R190 million in the MTEF. Deputy Speaker, this is an important budget because Parliament is important. The world over, Parliaments exist to represent the people of their nation or their region, they exist to give life to the concept of government by the people.

As public representatives, we bring the views of our constituents to this House and to decision-making. Parliament ensures representative democracy, and it rests between the Executive and the Judiciary. Making laws and overseeing the Executive and debates such as the ones that we have been engaged in over the last three days, battling out the budgets allocated in service of our citizens, debates on policy, debates on laws. These are the ways in which this House serves to be the platform to discuss relevant and important issues of the day in the Western Cape.

Deputy Speaker, we are also scrutineers by overseeing the policies and work of Government, we check that our citizens receive the very best service delivery, and that Government finances and spending are spent in a proper way and are not wasteful. And this includes the spending on Parliament itself which is the topic of this very debate. In order to perform these functions, House sittings, oversight, law-making for the WCPP is set to receive R23,8 million in the upcoming financial year in the Parliamentary Support Services Programme.

Another crucial pillar of Parliament is to facilitate public participation. Meaningful public participation in our draft laws, meaningful public

participation in the rights that are afforded by promulgated laws. And this also necessitates public education on our legal framework and public participation with the aim of helping us as representatives to understand how service delivery or lack of service delivery affects you, the resident.

With this aim the Public Engagement Programme is set to receive R59,5 million. Oversight, law-making, and public participation are the pillars of this institution and indeed of any Parliament. These three pillars rest on a firm foundation of Standing Committees. The Standing Committees perform all three of these functions. If this foundation is not dug deep enough, and does not get the best quality cement, it does not matter how tall or how modern the skyscraper is, it will begin to crack and crumble in high winds and when the earth starts to move.

These Committees do such important work, for example the world class workshop of the Budget Committee on Money Bill Amendment. Just in the last month, our Standing Committees have debated and adopted the report, through public participation on the Temporary Employer/Employee Relief Fund. The Social Development Committee had an unannounced visit to a school living with disabilities in the Stellenbosch District Municipality. The Environmental Affairs Committee delved into waste management, including the sorting of waste, energy from waste, recycling options as well as costs and future opportunities; or the Human Settlement's upcoming visit to the Langeberg Municipality to understand how structural rectification and the hand-over of title deeds and beneficiaries will be managed; or the Health

Committees commitment to TB; or the Community Safety Committee's visits to police stations where most of our crime occurs and where the vacancy rates are in excess of 12%; or the work of the Ad-hoc Committee; or the Committee on the Premier and Constitutional Development; Local Government; Agriculture; Cultural Affairs and Sports and so on.

This is the work that these engine rooms perform, across party lines where members of all parties represented in this House, work together to get the work done in the interests of Western Cape residents. While in the House our debates are the battle of ideas, where our ideological and policy differences clash and are robustly debated. But the Standing Committees are the centre of activity of much of Parliament's work and in these Committees, political party representatives cooperate, and they collaborate, and they travel to the furthest towns, cities and *dorpië*s of this magnificent province.

We understand that in tough economic times there are many competing priorities that need funding from this budget. There will always be some give and some take, but oversight, law-making, and public participation are not simple priorities. They are the very core, the profound foundation of everything that this Parliament is established to achieve. This is in part why the WCPP has reprioritised to ensure strategic partnerships that will allow it to achieve more, with limited resources.

At the same time, this Parliament has been hard at work to digitise and move our work and our papers online, and this is more than just a commitment to

modernisation, it is a commitment to using opportunities created by the Fourth Industrial Revolution to make our work more accessible and more transparent. Now a resident can make an oral submission using WhatsApp. Now anyone can use the YouTube link and see how we are representing them. Similarly, any resident can now access parliamentary questions and papers and replies, online.

Part for the R78 million in Programme 1 goes directly towards this aim. And finally, the structures to support members in their constitutional obligations in service of the people that we represent, are set to receive R5,3 million. The functions of Parliament are essential to the functioning of our democracy in the Western Cape. Without a democratic institution to fulfil these important functions and represent the people, the Government could not be held accountable, and democracy would be without a vital check and balance and there would not be proper public representation.

I would just like to respond to hon Lekker. I would like to say that the Western Cape is not a regional office of the National Government. It is elected by the people of the Western Cape, with its own policies and its own manifesto and that is vastly different from the National Government. If engaging in international relations is illegal, according to her, I have no doubt she will then report the Premier of Gauteng Province, who in his strategic objectives has stated, fostering strong international relationships as one of their key priorities. Also, if she was so opposed to the budget, yet she could not be bothered to attend the Parliamentary Oversight Committee to

come and note the ANC's objections to this budget.

So, in conclusion, I would like to thank the very able members of the WCPP staff under the leadership of the Secretary and the Speakership. It is thanks to you that this institution works, and it works well. Thank you very much. I would also like to thank the Procedural Officers of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee which oversees this Executive Authority of the WCPP. For the reasons that I have stated, the DA supports Vote 2 Provincial Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Chief Whip Wenger. I now call on hon Speaker Mnqasela.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I always try to be circumspect in what I engage on and of course how I engage and that is primarily because I want to keep my office as an office that is impartial, as an office that supports all political parties, in this Parliament, but of course as an office that is responsible for the decorum of the institution.

But I will not be silent, Madam Deputy Speaker, when a member in this House relegates the senior office of the Speaker which is a political one, and secondly, who is the Executive Authority of an institution like this Parliament. It is good to be nice, Deputy Speaker, but in being nice it does not mean you must be naïve and be useless.

So what I have done over the past three years is to ensure that we work together as a collective. But I do not want to be useless, I want to be useful to this institution and everybody who sees this place as a place of hope. Having listened to hon Lekker, Madam Deputy Speaker, I cannot help but feel embarrassed that a Chief Whip of this Parliament, it does not matter which side you sit on, but you lead members of Parliament – she is a member of this Committee of the POC led by hon Wenger. Yes, you may have differences of opinions on matters but not to relegate an institution that – she knows the role of the office of the Speaker and compares it to some Chief Justice somewhere.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: One minute hon Speaker, if you can just take your seat, hon Sayed what is your point of order.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker, is it in order for the hon Speaker to describe another member as useless?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Speaker, did you use the word useless?

The SPEAKER: Madam Deputy Speaker, not only will I never utter such words, but what I would like to say is that I did not say that ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thought not.

The SPEAKER: ... unless the member was sitting somewhere, because he is

here with us.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Alright thank you, hon Speaker. So hon Sayed what I will do is I will check. The Speaker said he did not. I did not hear it, but I will double check in the Hansard, and we can always revert to the next sitting. Thank you very much, hon Sayed. Over to you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I respect all members of this House as disagreeable as I may be on some issues, but I will not be disagreeable to the individual and the dignity and the decorum of a member. So to the Deputy Chief Whip of the ANC, he will come and say sorry to the Deputy Speaker and to the Speaker ultimately, for having misheard me. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

What I am saying is that I felt embarrassed sitting here as the Speaker, and of course what embarrasses me is that the hon member that spoke is the Chief Whip of the Majority Party, and I consult them on many issues that affect this Parliament. I consulted nobody on this one, I took an executive decision, but I invited everybody. There was no secrecy.

Let me tell you why I did what I did on Ukraine and on this war, in particular. We are a constitutional democracy, and this Parliament is founded on the basis of a constitution, under Act 108 of 1996. We even have our own Provincial Constitution that supplements that which is not distinct in feature, but it complements that responsibility. So there is no way, that as the

Speaker, I will keep quiet in the wake of adversity, in the wake of human rights abuses and in the wake of injustice and non-democratic and anti-democratic behaviour and especially when it affects women and children.

We have seen what has happened in Ukraine and my responsibility in 2022, I was not here in 2020 something or other. I am here now as the Speaker. A war starts in the not-so-distant future from where we are. Any war that starts will affect you and if you choose to be neutral and be a coward, which I am not, then the responsibility will then be shame on you because your grandchildren and their grandchildren will never forgive you for having been quiet, given such responsibility to lead them, in this age and time.

So this says we cannot create moral ambivalence and say why did you not do this there, why did you not do that there? Why do you not act decisively as an authority right now? That is what I did, I acted.

Now again, on the issue of SOPA, Madam Deputy Speaker. I heard it for the first time. I have never heard before that the ANC does not want SOPA to be out in communities anymore. The ANC says we do not want Parliament to go to the people. It is embarrassing, again another embarrassment and I hope, and I pray that she was not speaking for the ANC. If she was, that would be a huge indictment on what we are trying to build at this institution because we have been working together and trying – in every SOPA to work together, Madam Deputy Speaker and the Deputy Chief Whip sitting over there that side, you will agree, and the members who are connected virtually.

Whenever there is a SOPA programme, every year we come together, even when we started this programme. And I must say that we will never not go to the communities because somebody objects to it because we are here because people have elected us to represent them. In fact, they are our employers, we owe it to them, at least that much, to go to them.

We should not be scared to go to our people, because this Parliament is not for those who are elected, it is for those who cannot have their voices heard in this institution. But how do we do that? That is why there is Theta Nati, there is SOPA out to communities, and it is not a panacea by any means. It is not a silver bullet, but it does go a long way to addressing some of the shortcomings and I do hope that I heard her incorrectly, the Chief Whip of the Opposition, Madam Deputy Speaker. I hope she did not mean what she said but I do not think she spoke for all the ANC members in this Parliament. Furthermore, on the issue of international relations ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Speaker, will you just take your seat please. Hon Lekker what is your point of order?

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): The point of order, am I audible Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are audible.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you. My point of order is on the Speaker

misleading the House by not correctly outlining what I said, but rather his own analysis because I never said the ANC does not support taking Parliament out of ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Lekker. That is not a point of order. The Speaker may continue.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): But he is misleading the House, Deputy Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Then maybe you can, in a future motion, correct him. That would be alright but, in the reply, here we cannot have a debate on the substance of the Speaker's comments in his final remarks. So unfortunately, I cannot allow that to be debated because I would not be able to verify or referee that comment.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): May I ask you to listen to Hansard, Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Lekker, I can listen to the Hansard, but I would not be able to judge on misleading the House. Okay, I tell you what, I will listen to the Hansard, and I will revert back to you in the next sitting. Thank you.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may proceed, Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. As I proceed, I would like to further reiterate our commitment to work with the diplomatic corps and the consular core. We have a responsibility to build a much better world than the one we found. It has never been so desperate and more pressing and more urgent that we do so and that is why our commitment continues to be that of building a Western Cape that is part of the global community.

In 2019, when I was elected here as the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, we took a decision to put together a strategic approach on international relations and how this Parliament should position itself in this area of work. We have always been part of the community, but we said we will actually take it a step further by even refining our policy position on international relations and how we should work. So to be sitting here, Madam Deputy Speaker ...
[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Speaker, I apologise for interrupting you in the middle of your sentence but there is a point of order, apologies. Hon Marran, what is your point of order?

Mr P MARRAN: Hon Deputy Speaker, thank you very much. Deputy Speaker, is it parliamentary for the Speaker to say that those who have taken a neutral stance in the Ukraine conflict with Russia, those who have taken a neutral stance, are cowards? Is it parliamentary for the Speaker to say that, that we

are cowards because we have taken a neutral stance?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Marran, I am very careful to limit freedom of speech. When things get a bit derogatory, I fully understand but I do not want to, because one day you may want to use that word and then we are in a situation where we cannot even open up our mouths because everything, we say is unparliamentary. Can I apply my mind on this matter, please, hon member Marran? I tell you what, again, for the sake of the smoothness of this Vote, I will apply my mind and come back to you but for now, I would like the Speaker to continue.

Mr P MARRAN: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I really do not want a big debate breaking out at the end of a very long budget session, over three days, so I am going to be accommodating and allow the Speaker to continue. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will not expand on that question, I will continue with what I was talking about.

So, our responsibility, as this Parliament, is that we will work closely with the international community. Yourself, Madam Deputy Speaker, have been very active in this space, and you know what it means for our Parliament. Our members of Parliament do not have all the skills set they need to function efficiently and to function effectively. So as, is our staff. So, we

continue to improve in this area, because you want to have the best machinery, both on the political front, and also on the administration part. And we tap into the resource that is available there. That is why we continue to send members to conferences, but also to attend trainings, training opportunities that are available in the space. This South African Government, nationally, as part of the legislative sector, we have taken a decision to go and renegotiate with the European Union.

The former Speaker will tell you we have been trained by Europeans; they have been paying for us to go to school. I am one of those who has studied, I am doing my Master's Programme, paid for by the European Union in South Africa, through the legislative sector. That means we cannot divorce ourselves from the global community. Yes, you must be able to condemn and call each other when we are wrong. And that is why it is important, if you love me so much, tell me when I am wrong. You cannot use the brother/sister and say, because we are brothers, even if you are wrong, it is okay. It is like standing and watching someone kicking his wife, and her teeth out, and you say, no, he is my friend. That is not a friend. That is not a friend. So, our responsibility is to be genuine friends, honourable friends, good friends, who believe in justice and human rights. And that is why we do what we do.

Let me move on quickly, Madam Deputy Speaker, and say that hon Marais, †agb Marais, ek is baie dankbaar, meneer. Ek is baie dankbaar. [hon Marais, I am very grateful, sir. I am very grateful.] You have said everything that I

would otherwise have said about a number of things, but, in particular, this Parliament, that it is a beacon of hope. You have said it. It is a frontier for those who cannot speak for themselves, but also it is a place where people are beginning to see what Parliament should do. And thank you for your words of wisdom and support in this regard. And, obviously, for supporting Thetha Nathi as you have yourself, hon Deputy Speaker, hon Marais indicated he has been to many. You saw him when you attended the Thetha Nathi Programme.

Finally, to the Chief Whip and the Chair of this Committee, I want to say that we have had a number of extensive engagements on the issues of budget, and the Chair of the Committee is correct, we need, really, to put much more resources into this area. I mean, now it is sitting at R1,9 million; if you take the rollover that we are putting into this, because currently it is R1,25 million, and we want to top up, we are sitting at about R1,9 million. And that is because of some of the spending patterns over the years, some of which happened during COVID-19, in some cases 20% was being sent back, Chair through you, Madam Deputy Speaker. In some cases, 30% was being sent back to the fiscus. But all of these are the mechanics of COVID-19, among others.

But because when we work in the environment of budgeting, we get monitored if we do not spend. We get asked why they should give us more money, as Parliament, forgetting that a sub-programme that does not spend all of its money does have, in some cases, reasons that are substantive as to

why. Like, in this case, it was COVID-19, but to Treasury it would mean something else, in terms of budgeting and how they allocate resources to the institutions, which affects our baseline and increases.

So, we then had to, as this Parliament, myself as an executive authority, I take full responsibility for that. And the accounting officer has to take that same responsibility to ask do we continue putting in more money, and then there is, again, under-expenditure, but then Treasury says we cannot give you money.

So, what I then said to the Secretary is that, no, we cannot rely on just the rollover, but let us look in total, how do we involve the Chairpersons of Committees, Madam Deputy Speaker, in the draft budget processes, because this is the scientific way of doing things. Budget is not just, you know, me wanting more money, then I go, you know. I mean, the Minister of Social Development, I heard her speak earlier, as a banker, saying you cannot spend what you do not have. But, also, you budget based on how you are going to spend.

COVID-19 has affected the budget of Committees, and how that budget gets to be appropriated. So, that is the elephant in the room, and we should not be bickering about this, but accept that it is the elephant in the room, and to resolve that very issue, Madam Deputy Speaker, my responsibility was to say that Madam Deputy Speaker is the Chair of Chairs, and the Chairperson's of Committee must continuously engage, and advise the administration of the key priority areas, the planning going forward, so that you say in this year

this is what we want to do, in this month, and this is what we intend to do as we plan. But there is no excuse. Committees can only function optimally if there is enough budget towards it. It will never be enough, but we need to keep supporting, and putting in more and more oil, so that we are able to start the engine.

I think the Chair of the Committee made mention here that the Standing Committee is the engine of Parliament. It is a fact. I was a Chair myself, and Madam Deputy Speaker was also the Chairperson of a Committee, so we know what this means. But we need to work better together and plan the road ahead in how we can, at least now we are still in the COVID years, we do not know what the future holds but we do know where we are.

I mentioned the Vuka world, I mentioned some tough decisions that we have to make within the limited resources, but that includes taking the Committees with us. We do not want them to feel like a stepchild. They can never be a stepchild. They are, in fact, a very important partner in what we do.

Also budgeting for international relations trips, Madam Deputy Speaker; we need to, because the budget as it stands includes that as well. So, we do not have something else that is somewhere to take care of the international relations trips. It is part of this budget. So, when one reads the budget, you must know if you spend R20 to buy milk, instead of buying one for R10, then that is the reality, you are going to have a situation where you cannot spend on bread.

So, those are the technicalities that we need to work with, notwithstanding the fact that what has been appropriated is not enough, and we will continue to augment that, through you, Madam Deputy Speaker, in response to the Chairperson of the Committee. And, again, to appreciate the support of the Committee, led by the hon member Wenger, as the Chairperson, and all the other work that she does for this Parliament.

She successfully led the COVID-19 Committee, which has made this Parliament one of the best, and a shining example in the world, not only here. I was asked to go to Tanzania, through you Madam Deputy Speaker, Deputy Chief Whip of the ANC, I was supposed to be there now to represent this Parliament, not myself, not the DA, this Parliament, all of us, on how we have done what we have done during this crisis and this pandemic. And that is because of the co-operation that we have seen in this Parliament, where we can sit here, and I am speaking, and members are connected virtually, but they are quiet, listening and participating, following the Rules.

You have not seen the chaos in some other Parliaments, so the world wants to hear how we do what we do. Despite the disagreements from time-to-time, we have seen some of them during the debates, but we continue to do our work, and respect the processes, and respect the decorum of this House. So, for that I thank the Chairperson of the Committee, and I thank all the hon members of the Standing Committee for their support.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank you for your wise counsel and ongoing

support. Yes, as a Deputy Speaker there may be areas where you say I want to prioritise that, I want that, but the reality is we are able to pull through, and work as a collective in representing this institution. And I have seen it, and I want to thank you very much for that, Madam Deputy Speaker, and say to the Secretary, Mr Romeo Adams, †baie dankie, meneer [thank you, sir.]

Mr R ADAMS: Pleasure!

The SPEAKER: †Baie dankie. [Thank you.] It is not easy to lead in an environment where you have got seven political parties that all have different interests at times. But when you lead as an administration, and you lead professionally, and you are impartial, following our values, with the senior management team, the CFO, and all the other Directors, you are able to see a ship that is stable, and this Parliament has been. So, thank you very much for your support and leadership.

†Gcwanini Sibewu, Miya, †to the head of my office, †enkosi yihlo, ndiyabulela [I thank you my brother, for your support] and leading the office of the Speaker †ingeyeli ukhona [not to sink] while you are there. Thank you very much. We appreciate the support, myself and the Deputy Speaker.

This is where I come to an end, Madam Deputy Speaker, to say that this Budget Vote 2 of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament is a budget that will not only be able to make just and good laws, but it will ensure that we involve our people in how we make decisions and ensure that we have a very

strong Parliament that is able to do quality oversight over the affairs of the executive. A strong parliament is a strong government. If we are weak as Parliament, the executive led by the Premier, will be very weak, and you will see the collapse in our democratic structures.

Thank you very much. May God bless you.

[Debate concluded.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. That concludes the debate on Vote 2. Thank you. The officials I will just give some time to leave the area.

I will just start, and then you can. Thank you very much. Ms Nduneni, would you please read the Sixth Order of the day?

The SECRETARY: Consideration of Votes and Schedule – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B 2–2022].

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I have been informed by the Chief Whip that the Programming Authority resolved that there would be no list of speakers, but that parties who wish to do a declaration on all votes and the schedule now, be afforded an opportunity to make such a declaration for a maximum of three minutes. I will now afford the parties an opportunity to make their declarations. I recognise the ANC.

Ms N D NKONDLO: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. The ANC declines to support this Appropriation Bill. The double standards of this DA Government, grandstanding by MEC Fernandez, then listening to the vitriol of blue spiderman, MEC Simmers; DA MPLS who do not know their Legislature or Executive, to a point of responding directly, as Deputy MECs. We need a workshop on the separation of powers here, or surely DA voters and the public are getting a raw deal. Budget debates are fraught with playing the person more than the ball, with the stinking blue mentality of supremacy, which is highly unparliamentary, but also a sign of weakness in arguments. “Words start to lose value when actions do not match.” – Anonymous

Outbursts on Russia and the Ukraine; where have you been, and what is driving this sudden wake up from the Blue Train, whilst global atrocities have been muted against many children, and citizens of the world, and this DA has been mum, and cut the Russian nose to spite Western Cape wine producers, as hon Marran has raised here.

What is your stance then, as this DA Government? Imply to Mr Malcolm Green, a black company, La RicMal Wines, Lerato wine brands, who, through DTIC in the 2020 Trade Show, was excited about the market opportunity to expand their footprint; Rydal Jeftha of Koopmanskloof Wines in Stellenbosch, from 2016, through DTIC, signed a multi-million Rand deal to ship about 60 000 bottles of their wine, just to name a few.

So, the DA must not throw ideological jabs using this budget debate, and this Parliament, but must open a debate in this House on the Ukraine and Russia, and ensure that when MEC Maynier quotes the late Bishop Tutu, he must not quote him out of context, about us being on the side of justice, peace and human rights. This he said ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

Ms N D NKONDLO: ... when he was returning from Palestine, and after his observation there, something that the DA is refusing as a discussion in this particular House. †Anikwazi ukuthetha ke kuba nisondele enxebeni. [you cannot speak because you are close to the pain of what is happening.]

We must, once again, register our serious concerns about how this budget was, firstly, delayed, and then rushed through. We cannot be doing to the people of the Western Cape justice, and we cannot be exhausting our constitutional mandate as this Provincial ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

Ms N D NKONDLO: Legislature by budgeting ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members. You may proceed hon member.

Ms N D NKONDLO: We cannot be doing the people of the Western Cape justice, and we cannot be exhausting our constitutional mandate as this Provincial Legislature by budgeting comprehensively if this budget process is as rushed as it is.

Secondly, the ANC cannot support this Appropriation Bill, because budgets are about choices. The DA, through this Provincial Government, is making budget choices based on ideology. We have seen consistently over the last few days no targeted provisions or interventions as a direct response to inequality and poverty, never mind selective mapping.

Once again, as we were told, we received this inactive morality that was preached by hon Meyer here, Deputy Speaker. Constantly we saw throughout each budget vote, a reinforcement of the old, and the maintenance of the *status quo*. Fighting the second pandemic for this Provincial Government is about ensuring those who had access to past privilege and resources, re-establish themselves as they were before COVID-19. That, once again, demonstrates inactive ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms N D NKONDLO: ... morality.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member.

Ms N D NKONDLO: As the ANC, once again, we do not support this budget. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now recognise the EFF. Anybody here? The EFF? No. GOOD? No. Do I have hon August on here to make a declaration? No. I know the ACDP is not on.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS: The ACDP is on, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: ACDP. There we go, hon Christians. My apologies. Hon Christians, you may proceed.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, the ACDP supports the budget. Although there is a lot of room for improvement, we, at least, must agree that the Western Cape is doing a better job than the ANC National Government, and that is why we support the Bill. Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Christians. I recognise the Freedom Front Plus.

Mr P J MARAIS: Deputy Speaker, you do not reject a building, excellent positioning, lovely building, but there is a blocked drain, and there are a few broken windows here and there, and now you say I reject the building. That is the Western Cape. If there are a few broken windows, it is still the best

investment in this country, and I support it, from the Freedom Front's side, or position, wholeheartedly, because it is still the best property in the country. Thank you. [Applause.]

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

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, Al Jama-ah does not support this budget and the DA can learn a lot from the ANC. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Al Jama-ah. I now recognise the DA, the Democratic Alliance.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, on a procedural note, I just want to make a few procedural points, but it can come into my three minutes, asseblief.

Firstly, the National Treasury was delayed in sending the Western Cape allocation letters. You cannot consider your Provincial Budget if you have not received your allocation letters. So, the Provincial Budget was delayed, and the letters and the information was sent to members to say the allocation letters were not received, and this is why the budget is delayed. So, I do not know where those members were. In fact, I do not know where member Mvimbi is today, because someone else was speaking on the budget. He is

actually the member on the Budget Committee, because these days opposition members want to know where everyone is. And, quite frankly, Deputy Speaker, member Mvimbi was also not in the Budget Committee, so the ANC actually did not indicate on this Bill what his position was, and no alternate was sent. And I am very surprised at what Al Jama-ah is saying, because he was in the Committee, and when I was waiting for his objection, he did not register that he is objecting to the Bill. So, in terms of procedure of the Budget Committee on this Bill, Al Jama-ah, in Committee, supported this particular Bill.

But anyway, Deputy Speaker, this budget will capacitate the Provincial Government in pushing forward to see true recovery and growth for residents. R19,6 billion will be allocated over the next three years on various programmes and initiatives, aimed at creating an economic ecosystem, which will see support to all sectors.

More than this, the R30,3 billion set aside for infrastructure development is an investment in the economic and social wellbeing of all residents in the Western Cape. So, Deputy Speaker, while members Dugmore and Sayed are busy lobbying against each other for the votes of those three ANC branches, and I hear member Nkondlo is also apparently running for Secretary, or something-something, the Western Cape will perform robotic surgery ... [Interjection.] in our hospitals. We had the first robotics in a public hospital in Africa.

The Western Cape will invest in broadband to address the digital gap; we will provide legal support assistance, and advice, and forensics to municipalities without capacity; we will clear alien vegetation, and train drone pilots for agriculture and environment; we will fund the Digital Library Archives, so that our heritage and culture can live forever; continue to provide integrated human settlements; deliver first class education for every child in every classroom; create an environment that creates jobs; and continue to support the wellbeing of our citizens, and fight for their safety.

R1,2 billion has been allocated over the medium term to upgrade even and build new health care facilities and schools in our province. So, while we are seeing great innovation, responsible fiscal management by the Provincial Government, in real terms, provincial budgets will not be increasing. In real terms, Deputy Speaker. And every cent will need to be stretched to continue to deliver the best possible services to residents. And despite corruption at a national level, as we have seen in the Zondo Commission reports, the Western Cape will be focused on jobs, safety and wellbeing. Deputy Speaker, the Democratic Alliance supports this budget.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Member. That concludes the declarations on the Consideration of Votes and Schedule of the Bill. If the Table staff could just confirm how many members are present. 33. Thank you very much. I have to announce that there are currently 33 hon members present, and entitled to vote, and the House is therefore quorate. Are there any objections to Votes 1 to 14, and the schedule of the

Western Cape Appropriation Bill?

HON MEMBERS: No.

HON MEMBERS: Yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Alright. That is fine, thank you. I recognise those that are saying there are objections to the Votes and Schedule of the Appropriation Bill. The objections will be noted. The votes and the schedule of the Western Cape Appropriation Bill have, therefore, been approved. The Secretary will then read the Seventh Order of the day.

The SECRETARY: Finalisation of the Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B 2–2022].

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, I recognise the hon Minister of Finance.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I move that the Western Cape Appropriation Bill, Bill 2 of 2022, including the clauses and the short title be finalised.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, the hon minister. There being no list of speakers, are there any objections to the Bill, the clauses, and the short title being finalised? No objections?

HON MEMBERS: Yes.

HON MEMBERS: No.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are objections, and they will be noted. I have to announce that there are currently 33 hon members present, and entitled to vote, and the House is, therefore, quorate. Those in favour of the Bill, clauses, and short titles, who have said yes, so can I just hear again, for those that have said yes?

HON MEMBERS: Yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those not in favour of the Bill?

HON MEMBERS: Yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: For titles, please say no.

HON MEMBERS: No!

An HON MEMBER: No.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I believe that the ayes have it. The finalisation, including the clauses and short title of the Western Cape Appropriation Bill,

[B2-2022] are therefore approved. Ms Nduneni will you please read the Bill.

The SECRETARY: The Western Cape Appropriation Bill.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The Bill will be sent to the Premier for assent. Hon members, that concludes the business for the day but before we log off, just a big thank you to everybody who participated, and we know this was a lot of work over the last three days. Thank you to everyone who put in a huge effort. Thank you for your collegiality. It was very important to pass these budgets, and we appreciate the support of all members and of the Executive of this House. We will now end the meeting, and all members will be exited from the sitting.

The House is hereby adjourned.

The House adjourned at 18:25.