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Shereen Cassiem - 'Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill

From: Sandy Day <sdayza@yahoo.co.uk>
To: "nnobatana@parliament.gov.za" <nnobatana@parliament.gov.za>
Date: 1/29/2014 11:54 AM
Subject: 'Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill

Attention : Ms Neliswa Nobatana
Email : nnobatana@parliament.gov.za

29 January, 2014

Dear Ms Nobatana

RE: Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill

I have only just heard about this proposed Bill and find that hearings are due to start today. I wish that I had had more opportunity to learn about this Bill before hand and submit on time, but I hope you will please accept my submission today and pass it on to the committee for consideration.

As a woman I must agree that there needs to be gender equality and also that women should be empowered, however, I object to this Bill in its current form because:

1. It does not allow true equality. True equality implies equal opportunity with men to succeed in a given situation. As a woman I would not want to receive a position because the position I applied for had to be filled in order to meet Government criteria. The sense of unity and comradery in any situation is broken down if people feel some are there just as window dressing, and that affects performance and ultimately productivity and that rubs off on the country and its future. In an equal opportunity system I should be chosen based on my suitability and skill set.

Rather than legislate prescribed minimum quotas of women in the work place, for example, I feel it would be sufficient to legislate that, "Women may not be discriminated against based on Gender" and let the law courts deal with issues that may arise. I would like the dignity of knowing I succeeded due to my skills and my contribution to the common good, not because I was a statistic.

I feel the WEGE Bill can be likened to the BEE concept and I like what Sibusiso Nkosi is quoted as saying about his book titled "Forgotten Fundamentals: Why Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Does Not Work". *"The book provides an analysis based on factors and elements of why BBBEE has not made the impact it was intended to make. "The biggest problem is the BEE scorecard and how businesses chase the targets and points", said Sibusiso Nkosi. "This results in businesses implementing BEE compliance strategies that do not empower the previously disadvantaged individuals but they still score points on their scorecards."*

"The fundamentals of BBBEE are simple; equality, fairness and sustainability. That is what we should be seeking to achieve."

2. It does not empower. Legislation that is very prescriptive takes away freedom of choice and that affects how I am empowered. Choice is empowerment. I want the choice to work for a company based on who I am, I want the choice to be in a social group or church that can share the same choices as me concerning Women Empowerment and Gender issues. If they are prescribed to, they have no choice in how they conduct their affairs then,

ultimately ,neither do I in being able to choose a group with similar beliefs because we are all prescribed to.

Please set the stage to support women in gender issues of all forms but please don't prescribe or micromanage what can happen in our lives - there is no empowering or freedom in that.

Best wishes as the committee debates this Bill.

Mrs Sandy Day

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