**HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CALLS FOR RECONSIDERATION OF CLAUSE 14 AND 21 OF ELECTORAL LAWS AMENDMENT BILL**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 24 November 2020 –** The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs has recommended that the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) must consider amending clauses 14 and 21 of the Electoral Laws Amendment Bill (B22-2020) to further clarify the intentions of the amendments, especially as they relate to piloting of e-voting. Furthermore, the committee has emphasised the need for piloting of technology based voting system to ensure that fears around security of e-voting are allayed.

The committee agreed that it is generally in consent with the objects of the amendment bill, but believes that explicit clarity must be given to the effect that the amendments do not authorise e-voting upon signing of the bill into law. The committee also acknowledges the need, when financial resources are available, to conduct a pilot study to ensure the functionality of technology and systems to enable e-voting.

“The truth of the matter is that technology is upon us and preparation must be started to ensure that we have both the legal framework and the technical experience that will ensure that elections are secure if a decision to vote through e-voting is taken,” said Advocate Bongani Bongo, the Chairperson of the committee.

Despite this, the committee has requested the IEC to provide the committee with detailed case studies on countries that have implemented election technology as a mode of voting, including the implications, challenges and successes of the process. This will guide the committee when it deliberates on the amendment Bill.

The committee is also concerned about access to information, mainly to the poor, especially when it relates to the piloting of e-voting. The IEC thus been requested to consider implication of piloting e-voting especially to the poor.

The committee intends considering and adopting the Bill in February 2021 and will have received the requested report by then.

Meanwhile, the committee today adopted the Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report for the 2020/21 financial year and has resolved on implementing a monitoring tool to track progress in relation to the implementation of recommendations made in the report. The resolution is intended to heighten oversight and ensure that the department implements set targets to ensure quality services to the people.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS, ADV BONGANI BONGO.**

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