

SUBMISSION ON THE DIVISION OF REVENUE BILL (B3 – 2021)

To: Ms Z. Mitchwell

Mr. W.G. Louw

Having perused the said bill I want to make the following submission:

1. Changes to conditional grants

These grants are one of the best instruments to make real and definite inroads into the grave problem of poverty in our communities. Knowing that some communities are poorer than others, that the instruments used to measure poverty are not always fair and knowing that we will never be able to really eradicate all poverty it is of the utmost importance that government should strive for a much more equitable approach.

In the bill quite an emphasis is placed on “informal settlements”, which is correct. However, we should not forget that some “newer” developments have been given the green light without really putting money into developing such areas. One such area is a part of Steinkopf, where the go-ahead was given to build informal houses on an area where 500 plots were already carted. No development whatsoever has been seen in this area. There may be other areas in other parts, as well.

This allocation of funding to the “development of informal settlements” should be expanded to include areas which in the last five years were given the go-ahead to build on, but real development never really started there.

2. LGES

How best to ensure “fairness for all 257 municipalities”?

This will be a very difficult exercise and there will always be disgruntled people. But, still, there should be a strive towards more fairness.

My submission will advocate for something more than just population numbers. Distance should also come into the equation since it is one of the factors eating into money allocated. Further, reference is made to “poorer communities”. This term should be defined more precisely and all avenues explored to ensure that some poor communities don’t fall into the cracks of bureaucracy.

Allocation of grants to Settlements

A more equitable approach should be ushered in. The number of houses already allocated plus the time since the last allocations should be factored into the equation in order to come to a new fairer allocation.

Further, the process should include the latest spatial development plan. Where the latter is not in place an urgent process should be started to develop such plan ASAP.

3. Funding for ECD Programmes

One of the important factors in driving this is the quintile system used in schools. This is not a fair method to drive this, as the quintile system does not always reflect the real situation in schools. In

particular some Quintile 4 schools should actually be in lower categories.

A process should unfold whereby the real financial position of schools and the communities they are situated in is ascertained. The need to re-evaluate this system is of utmost importance. In particular a process should be started to ascertain whether the current quintiles reflect the real situation of communities.

In the meantime this allocation should not be limited to Quintiles 1 to 3, but should include schools in Quintile 4 where we know that they are situated in poor communities.

Yours

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