**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE WRAPS UP PUBLIC HEARINGS ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE AGENTS AMENDMENT BILL**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 4 May 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development today wrapped up day two of public hearings on the Agricultural Produce Agents Amendment Bill, which seeks to amend the Agricultural Produce Agents Act of 1992.

The Act seeks to apply to all categories of agents; clarify the appointment and responsibilities of the registrar; provide for financial statements of the council to be audited by the Auditor-General; provide for insurance of the Fidelity Fund; further clarify the conditions for acting as an agent; provide for trust accounts for export agents; and provide for insurance by export and fresh produce agents; amongst other things.

The committee heard the submissions from agents, industry stakeholders and organisations, as well as the Agricultural Produce Agents Council. Almost all the presenters informed the committee that the Bill will not be an improvement to the industry and would ensure that unnecessary red tape hinders its operations. Further, the burden of the insurance would create more financial challenges for the industry and this needs to be looked into whilst the Bill is being amended.

The committee today finalised the public hearings and will be scheduling a meeting to receive the responses to submissions from Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, INKOSI ZWELIVELILE MANDELA.**

For media enquiries or interviews with the Chairperson, please contact the committee’s Media Officer:
Name: Sureshinee Govender
Parliamentary Communication Services