**MEMORANDUM**

(For consideration)

**PLACING OF ORAL QUESTIONS ON THE QUESTION PAPER AND ITS IMPACT ON MEMBERS’ OPPORTUNITIES**

1. **OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINORITY PARTIES IN THE SEQUENCE:**
2. Questions for oral reply first appear on the Internal Question Paper in the order they were received (Rule 134(4)) at least six working days prior to the question day.
3. One day after the oral questions to Ministers appear on the Internal Question Paper for the first time, political parties may give written notice before 12:00 pm on the designated day of the order of their priority questions (Rule 137(7)).
4. The prioritized questions of parties are then integrated into the sequence of party rotation where last interrupted, which sequence is determined by the Rules Committee (Rule 137(9)) (also see Annexure).
5. The sequence of party rotation was determined as follows:
	* 1. ANC
		2. DA
		3. EFF
		4. ANC
		5. IFP
		6. FF PLUS
		7. ANC
		8. DA
		9. GROUP 1 (ACDP, UDM)
		10. ANC
		11. GROUP 2 (ATM, GOOD, NFP)
		12. ANC
		13. DA
		14. EFF
		15. ANC
		16. GROUP 3 (AIC, COPE, PAC, AL JAMA-AH)
		17. ANC
6. Minority parties are especially impacted when question days to the President and Deputy President are scheduled.
7. In the determined sequence of party rotation, most minority parties who are second, third and fourth in their Groups may never have the opportunity to put an original question to the President or Deputy President as the questions are limited to six questions on a question day, unless these parties reach agreements among each other.
8. A further limitation on their opportunities is also that both the President and Deputy President appear at least once per quarter.
9. A consideration may be to reduce the number of supplementary questions to one for the original questioner only and put more original questions on the Question Paper. Currently we reach about 12 to 14 original questions on a question day while dealing with about 48 to 56 supplementary questions. It will permit more members to put their own questions instead of hitching on someone else’s original question.
10. The times provided to Minister’s to reply to the original and supplementary question may also be reduced to 120 and 90 seconds respectively.
11. **ROTATION FOR MINORITY PARTIES IN STATEMENTS:**
12. To enable minority parties who are clustered in Groups to enjoy participation in statements, consideration may be given to make the opportunity for statements transferable to the next party in the group.
13. It would mean that when the first party in the group does not have a statement that the next party in the group may take the opportunity to make the statement.
14. An alternative consideration may be to create an 18th opportunity in the sequence to permit for a regrouped clustering of minority parties as follow:
	* 1. ANC
		2. DA
		3. EFF
		4. ANC
		5. IFP
		6. FF PLUS
		7. ANC
		8. DA
		9. GROUP 1 (ACDP, UDM)
		10. ANC
		11. GROUP 2 (ATM, GOOD, NFP)
		12. ANC
		13. DA
		14. EFF
		15. ANC
		16. GROUP 3 (NFP, AIC, COPE)
		17. ANC
		18. GROUP 4 (PAC, AL JAMA-AH)
15. **FAIR SPREAD OF MINISTERS ON A QUESTION DAY:**
16. In terms of Rule 138(1) an attempt was made to obtain a fair spread of questions among Ministers by introducing a clustered system of government portfolios. At first there were three clusters of government portfolios that were introduced in March 2000. Later it was expanded to four and in 2019 the Rules Committee once again confirmed and decided on a previous determination of five clusters of government portfolios.
17. In so doing it intended for more Ministers to enjoy a fair spread of questions on a question day.
18. However, political parties make a determination of their priority questions.
19. A consideration may be to reduce the number of questions in terms of the current quota of 10 (Rule 138(7)) to three or four to achieve the desired effect of spreading questions among the Ministers.