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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 555**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 03/03/2023**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 6 OF 2023**

**Mrs N I Tarabella Marchesi (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation: [107] [Question submitted for oral reply now placed for written reply because it is in excess of quota (Rule 137(8))]:**

Whether he has been informed that the R45 000 cap on accommodation for National Student Financial Aid Scheme beneficiaries often results in such students not being able to afford suitable accommodation, or even end up living on the streets in some cases; if not, will he undertake to deal with the specified issue; if so, what are the relevant details of the steps he will take to deal with the matter?

**NW609E**

**REPLY:**

I have not been informed about the Cap leading to students not being able to afford suitable accommodation. Men my department presented on readiness for the academic year, we reported that universities made provision for emergency accommodation for students where possible. On 20 March 2023, USAF too confirmed that emergency accommodation has been offered to students. Following my meeting with USAF on 3 March 2023, where on concerns with the R45000 Cap were raised by some Vice Chancellors, I established a task team consisting of affected universities, officials from the Department and NSFAS. Relevant data from all 26 public universities is being collected to establish how many students are affected and which accommodation categories they are allocated within. Once all the data is collated a workshop will be held with relevant stakeholders. In the interim, internal analysis has been conducted by the Department to analyse which universities will not cope financially with the Cap, and what adjustments need to be made to ensure they are supported. Recommendations will be submitted to the Department. NSFAS has also informed me that it plans to redirect NSFAS students to the more affordable accredited accommodation identified by its team of accreditors.