
TUESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2024

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

The sign † indicates the original language and [] directly thereafter indicates a translation.

The House met at 10:00.

The Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER: Please be seated. Order! Hon members, before we proceed, I would like to remind you about some of the logistical arrangements. As has been our practice to date, hon members are participating in the Sitting of the House both here from the Chamber with the Presiding Officer and the Table Staff and via Microsoft Teams, and our Standing Rules have accordingly been amended to accommodate such hybrid Sittings.

Hon members who are experiencing challenges in connecting to this Sitting are requested to contact the WCPP ICT colleagues who will assist to resolve connectivity issues.

Hon members, the quorum requirements for this Sitting of the House are provided for in the Constitution and the Standing Rules. Unless there is a unanimous concurrence, voting will be confined to members present in the House and on the hybrid system, who are entitled to cast their votes as per the ATC issued on 11 August 2020.

Members present in the Chamber and via Microsoft Teams have all the privileges and immunities imparted by law.

Hon members, if you are considered out of order by the Presiding Officer, you will have your microphones muted and I will call you to order.

Hon members, the Serjeant-at-Arms will record members' attendance, and hon members, I wish to remind you that if you wish to raise a point of order please use the hand-raise functionality for our colleagues on the hybrid system and for the members in the Chamber to please give me an indication by rising, if you so wish.

Hon members, the media have also been granted access to the MS Teams as guests of the WCPP. However, I wish to remind the members of the press that they may not use the chat room or speak or activate their cameras while the Sitting is in progress.

Hon members, for this Sitting Language Translation Services are provided and are available in the Chamber as usual and on Microsoft Teams via the

respective channels and hon members participating in the Sitting of the House must please access Language Translation Services via a second device if you are participating via the hybrid system.

Hon members, I wish to remind you that no interjections are permitted during these hybrid Sittings and to this end I wish to draw your attention to Rule 40 of our Standing Rules.

Hon members, that is the logistical arrangements for today, but before we start and before I recognise the Chief Whip it is indeed a great honour and a privilege for me to welcome the family of the Serjeant-at-Arms, Mr Dowman, who is in the Chamber today. I wish to acknowledge Ms Mariana Dowman, Cheslin Dowman, Samantha Dowman, Cathleen Botes, Cheryl Botes, Margaret Dowman, Justin Scholtz, John Cilliers, Debra Cilliers, and the children of Mr Dowman and his wife, and his mother that is here this morning, as it is Mr Dowman's last Sitting as the Serjeant-at-Arms for the WCPP after a 16-year career at the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. So welcome to the family! Mr Dowman, I will do my thank-yous at the end, but feel welcome, and it is a privilege for us, for you to be here today.

And then, hon members, it will be remiss of me not to acknowledge the 25-years of service by Mr Naidoo. Today is 25 years in WCPP. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Oh wow! [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: With that being said, hon members, I recognise the Chief Whip.

(Motion)

The CHIEF WHIP: Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I move without notice:

That, notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 18, the hours of Sitting on Tuesday, 3 December 2024, and Thursday, 5 December 2024, shall be from 10 a.m. until adjournment. I so move.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Chief Whip. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved? There is no objection. Motion agreed to.

Hon members, the Secretary will read the Order of the Day.

ORDER OF THE DAY

†UNOBHALA: Uqwalaselo lomgaqo woMthetho oSayilwayo woHlengahlengiso loLwabiwo-mali weNtshona Koloni [B2–2024]

[The SECRETARY: Consideration of the principle of the *Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill [B2–2024]*]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Secretary. I recognise the hon Minister of Finance, Minister Baartman.

†Die PREMIER: Hoor-hoor!

[The PREMIER: Hear-hear!]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES: Good morning hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, on Tuesday, 26 November, I tabled the Western Cape 2024/25 Adjustment Budget and for those in the audience, through you, Speaker, the adjustment is essentially an adjustment to the full Main Budget earlier this year.

This budget is tabled in the context of significant global and domestic economic challenges. However, room for cautious optimism in these turbulent waters remain. We find ourselves navigating stormy waters of economic uncertainty, escalating pressures on our frontline services and unprecedented increases in natural disasters as we continue to battle the adverse impact of Climate Change. We have to do more with less for more people, but the Western Cape Government remains steadfast in our commitment to deliver for the people we serve, because we are not a government that gives up when the going gets tough. We sail our own ship.

Globally, economic growth is projected to slow to 3,2% in 2024, while South Africa faces a more modest projected growth of just 0,9%. Constrained by an enduring energy crisis, logistical inefficiencies, and structural weaknesses, the

national economy remains under pressure. Compounding this, the national debt is expected to peak at 75,5% of GDP by 2025/26 because the National Government has also chosen to prioritise bailouts for failing State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) over protecting frontline services like education, health and police in the past. The implications on provinces, including the Western Cape, are severe.

At home in the Western Cape, we are charting a course towards 1% growth in 2024 and 2,2% in 2025. Our official unemployment rate in the Western Cape now stands at 19,6% for the third quarter of 2024. International tourist arrivals have surged by 53% since last year and our murder rate has decreased by 8,7 percentage points to 16,2% as a total contribution to South Africa. Children are remaining in school for longer. More people have access to healthcare, and we have set ourselves an ambitious target of a R1 trillion economy by 2035, creating over 600 000 new jobs.

Speaker, over the 2021 and 2024 MTEF years our province has absorbed an R8,4 billion cut to our Provincial Equitable Share (PES) due to the impact of the National Fiscal Consolidation. In addition to this, the fiscal envelopes of provinces will not be increased over the next three years, and this is essentially forcing down further budget cuts onto provinces.

The Equitable Share and Conditional Grants make up more than 95% of the Western Cape Government's revenue, which we use to anchor our spending priorities. An Equitable Share is thus a pivotal source of funding, and while

we welcome the updated data adjustments to the formula, which will bring in a phased-in increase of R674 million over the next three years, we are only receiving R65 million of this pot in the 2025 financial year. Additionally, this funding remains insufficient to meet the service delivery demands of our growing population.

The Western Cape Government will continue to advocate for a more equitable allocation formula within the PES that better reflects the realities of service delivery and demographic trends in our province but will also continue to lobby National Government to increase the provincial envelope for all provinces. To manage the in-year fiscal risk in the Province, R2,8 billion has been raised provincially this financial year. Of this R922 million will be reserved for unforeseen, unavoidable expenses, with a focus on Climate Change and disasters. These reserves have been crucial in buffering and protecting the Province against external shocks as well, and they will thus be maintained.

R678,9 million will be set aside for preparation for the 2025 MTEF, and R660 million will be used in-year in this Adjustment Budget for 2024. We are therefore allocating and adjusting R1,72 billion to address in-year fiscal risks and position the Western Cape to weather the storm.

Our applications for Disaster and Infrastructure Funding from National Government have been approved and therefore we will be receiving R1,198 billion through various conditional grants, including R947 million for disaster-related infrastructure: reconstruction and rehabilitation of

infrastructure damaged between the period of December 2023 and July 2024, as well as R251 million for the Western Cape's Rapid School Build Programme, which forms part of the R2,5 billion approval for school infrastructure over the 2024 MTEF. We will allocate R38 million to accelerate service delivery through human settlements acceleration projects, R12,6 million will be used for agricultural infrastructure and operations and R190 million will be added to the asset reserve in preparation for the 2025 MTEF.

Speaker, over and above the provision in our reserves, more than R21 million is allocated to Disaster Management, including R7 million for fire and water response, R5 million for clearing alien vegetation, R3 million for aerial fire support and R6,2 million for humanitarian emergency relief and nutritional support, which specifically will be administered through the Department of Social Development.

We will further adjust R10,4 million for expanding peace-officer training, youth resilience and Neighbourhood Watch programmes, R694,3 million will be invested in energy and water security over the MTEF with R4,7 million allocated for our Green Hydrogen Master Plan.

Speaker, of our provincial funding allocation, we have also made provision for the particular in-year fiscal risks, including R230,5 million for the Department of Health to address inflation on their goods and services and R250 million for the Western Cape Education Department for pressures on their CoE. We further, in order to allow for manoeuvrability within their votes, will

un earmark the Equitable Share in the infrastructure components amounting to R193 million and R600 million respectively to Health and Education should they wish to access and deploy these funds as a last resort..

We will further allocate R77 million for Microsoft Licensing due to the rand/dollar exchange rate, R68 million to enhance Public Transport Systems and R25 million for the Saldanha Freeport Operations. Speaker, this adjustment demonstrates our dedication to balancing service delivery demands with sustainable financial management, allowing us to remain resilient in the face of service delivery challenges, and empowering us to budget better for Climate Change and disasters.

I wish to reiterate that of the total additional provincial funding allocated from our Provincial Revenue Fund, R487 million or 75% of this provincial funding will contribute to Services and Health, Education and Social Development in this Adjustment Budget.

It is not just about weathering today's storm, but laying the foundation for a stronger, more resilient Western Cape, for storms, Speaker, make trees take deeper roots. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I recognise the hon member Nkondlo.

†Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): *Enkosi, Somlomo.* Ndizibulisele nam kogxa bam

abakhoyo apha namhlanje nakuzo – abo basivakasheleyo. [Thank you, speaker. I greet everyone who is here today, my colleagues and those who are our visitors today.]

Speaker, exactly a week ago the hon MEC for Finance, Deidré Baartman, former Chairperson of Finance, former Chairperson of the Standing Committee of Education, stood in this House and in her opening remarks gave us an imaginative climatology lesson. She spoke of blue skies, rising warm air, birth of storms, vexed poetic about clouds condensing while swelling and rain falling.

Hon Speaker, while the MEC took great care to describe the mechanics of the weather, she seemed oblivious to the storms raging in the daily lives of the people of the Western Cape.

Hon Speaker, the people of this province do not need an abstract depiction of storms. They live through them. These storms are not metaphors; they are brutal realities. For centuries, the storm of systemic poverty, racialised inequality, racialised unemployment and racialised violent crime have battered our people. These storms are relentless, and their damage is evident in every township, every informal settlement and every rural community where people struggle daily to survive.

MEC Baartman declared that meticulous planning, particularly in times of

crisis, forms the cornerstone of good governance, citing the PERO and the MERO as the bedrock of decision-making. The MEC attempted to assure us of the Province's competence. However, a closer examination of these reports reveals an alarming discord between the data they provide and the actions or inactions of the DA-led Administration.

Hon Speaker, let us ground our debate in facts. The Provincial Economic Review and Outlook and Municipal Economic Review and Outlook reveal stark realities. Food insecurities in the Western Cape affect a shocking 44,7% of residents in Saldanha Bay, 43,4% in Oudtshoorn and Prince Albert, and 42,2% in Beaufort West and George. These are not mere numbers. They represent the lived reality of thousands struggling to secure the most basic human need, which is food.

Amidst this crisis, the National Government has intervened with R6,2 million in emergency funding to sustain nutritional support and humanitarian relief efforts. This demonstrates a government that prioritises the welfare of its citizens. This is in line with the commitments we made in the ANC Manifesto for the 2024 Elections, in which we pledged to continue the war on poverty by providing comprehensive social security and basic services and addressing the impact of rising prices on households.

To achieve this, we promise to progressively implement the Basic Income Support Grant by extending and improving the value and coverage of the SRD Grant for the unemployed. Furthermore, we pledge to ensure that the national

minimum wage increases in line with inflation and ensure compliance and to protect the value of social grants for children and the elderly and persons with disability.

This includes the R1,2 billion to offset the damages and rehabilitation of infrastructure that were damaged by floods, and the Rapid Schools Build Programme. Instead of complementing these efforts, the Western Cape Government has chosen to slash the Department of Social Development's budget by R17 million. This includes over R8,5 million intended for compensation of essential staff, such as social workers who play a vital role in addressing social challenges.

Included in this is also the under-funding of the Children's Commission here in this province. Let us be unequivocal – this reckless decision was not imposed by the National Government; it was a choice made solely by the DA-led Provincial Administration, a choice that starkly contrasts with the MEC's lofty rhetoric about wellbeing and dignity.

For example, under Programme 1: Administration, R45,9 million was surrendered, including R3,6 million meant for Project Preparation Facilities, now idling in the Asset Finance Reserve. R10,5 million surrendered to the Provincial Revenue Fund for provincial pressures; R32,2 million realigned to 2026/27 for Energy Projects that remain far from implementation.

We await, Premier, you have told us some years ago here that you will be

putting the Western Cape off the Eskom grid. We are still waiting, and you continue now to move monies into future years. This is a new budget innovation from this Government.

Under Programme 2: Public Works Infrastructure, R75,3 million was either deferred or surrendered, including R35 million earmarked for Youth Centre capital projects now inexplicably languishing in the Asset Finance Reserves. R25 million redirected from Social Development for Youth Centre maintenance similarly realigned.

Hon Speaker, these actions reveal not just poor planning, but an outright betrayal of the people this Government claims to serve. In a time of escalating food poverty and economic restraint, the DA-led Administration has chosen bureaucracy over humanity.

Speaker, I want to reiterate: this recklessness is not imposed by the National Government. The ANC-led Government of National Unity has increased provincial allocations to R730,7 billion for 2024/25, growing steadily to R794 billion by 2026/27. Claims of forced budget cuts are blatant distortions used to mask poor governance and misplaced priorities by this Government.

While safety remains a big issue in the province with the available data painting a harrowing picture, in just three months, July to September 2024, 1 063 murders, 1 546 sexual offences and 1 075 rapes were reported and these are daily experiences of people, not just numbers. The response of this DA-led

Government to the above crises is shocking. The LEAP Programme which is Premier Winde's brainchild to address Community Safety and halve the murder rate in 2029 had R12,7 million redirected to municipal projects, while communities like Nyanga, Delft and Gugulethu remain crime hotspots.

In addition to this, funds earmarked for Compensation of Employees under Sub-programme 4.1 Programme Support, were redirected and would be spent for Computer Services, Contractors, as well as Training and Development. Additional millions earmarked for Compensation of Employees in the Department of Police Oversight have not been spent and will now be used for Neighbourhood Watch resource materials.

Hon Speaker, like poverty and violent crime, unemployment in the Western Cape is brutally selective. It bears a colour-conscious bias, disproportionately targeting Black and Coloured communities in this province. This is not a sheer coincidence. It is the result of systemic apartheid infrastructure, also a systemic neglect and a governance strategy that is oblivious to this legacy and serves an agenda that perpetuates inequality and refuses to address the apartheid spatial disparities.

The Western Cape Government's so-called response to this unemployment pandemic is the Growth for Jobs strategy, a vague and overly ambitious plan, claiming it will deliver a R1 trillion economy by 2035 and create over 600 000 jobs.

We are still waiting, Premier, again, for the jobs that you promised for each and every household when you took office here in this particular province.

[Interjection.]

The PREMIER: They come from... [Inaudible]

Many promises, little results, more pet projects, but lofty rhetoric does not put bread on the table. [Interjections.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Die waarheid maak seer!

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): The truth hurts!]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Nor does it address the structural inequalities that continue to keep Black people marginalised from meaningful economic participation. [Interjection.]

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): A 19,6% unemployment rate.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): The G4J ignores the fact that unemployment in the Western Cape reflects systemic neglect, while the Province boasts a 19,6% unemployment rate, Africans and Coloured communities remain disproportionately affected, with youth unemployment at 31,2%.

Please inform the hon Chairperson of the Economic Development, hon Masipa, hon Speaker, to understand these debts.

The so-called Growth for Jobs strategy promising a R1 trillion economy by 2035 is long on rhetoric and short on actionable and directed intervention to this very reality in this province. Rather than actively intervening to address the crisis the Province hides behind the tired refrain that the role of Government is to create a conducive environment for the private sector to flourish ... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Nkondlo, please conclude your sentence. Your time has expired.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker. [Interjection.] This is not just mismanagement; it is a moral failure, a betrayal of the working class and the unemployed. It is governance of the privileged few at the expense of the many. I thank you. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Nkondlo. [Interjections.]
Order, member!

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Die waarheid maak seer.

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): The truth hurts.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

†n AGBARE LID: Dit is wat julle sê!

[An HON MEMBER: That is what you say!]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members! Thank you very much, hon Nkondlo. Hon members, please join me, before we continue hon Minister, with you. The senior citizens, all the way from Mitchells Plain that have also joined us in this Sitting today, to our guests in the gallery, welcome to the WCPP and I hope you enjoy the Sitting today. You are most welcome. [Applause.]

The hon Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety, Minister Marais.

†Die MINISTER VAN POLISIE-OORSIG EN GEMEENSKAPSVEILIGHEID: Mnr die Speaker, agb lede, dit is 'n voorreg om vandag deel te neem aan hierdie debat oor die Aansuiweringsbegroting. Ek wil die agb Minister van Finansies, Deidré Baartman, werklik gelukwens en komplimenteer met haar eerste Aansuiweringsbegroting. Dit bevestig dat die geldleisels in hierdie Provinsie stewig vasgehou word deur 'n hoogs intelligente en bekwame jong vrou op wie ons almal trots kan wees, veral in hierdie tydperk van besuiniging.

Die Departement van Polisie-oorsig en Gemeenskapsveiligheid se begroting word met 'n toename van R1,265 miljoen aangesuiwer en beloop nou R764,7 miljoen. Die toename sal grootliks aangewend word vir die belangrike werk van die Wes-Kaapse Drankowerheid.

[The MINISTER OF POLICE OVERSIGHT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY: Mr Speaker, hon members, it is a privilege to participate today in this debate on the Adjustment Budget. I want to congratulate and compliment the Minister

of Finance, Deidré Baartman, on her first Adjustment Budget. It confirms that the money reins in this Province is held firmly by a highly intelligent and capable young woman of whom we can all be proud, especially in this time of austerity.

The Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety's budget is adjusted by an increase of R1,265 million and now comes to R764,7 million. The increase will mostly be spent on the important work of the Western Cape Liquor Authority.]

The biggest item in the budget of the Western Cape Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety remains the Law Enforcement Advancement Plan (LEAP) at R362,3 million. I am so proud of our LEAP men and women.

Mr Speaker, I want the hon Herron to listen up at what I will be saying now.

There were nine Western Cape Stations in the Top 30 Murder Stations in South Africa, namely Philippi East, Delft, Nyanga, Mfuleni, Gugulethu, Kraaifontein, Khayelitsha, Harare and Mitchells Plain. Six of the nine, namely Mitchells Plain, Delft, Nyanga, Philippi East, Gugulethu and Khayelitsha are the areas in which LEAP members are permanently deployed. In addition to this, murder in the original 13 LEAP areas decreased overall by 8,3% from 649 cases in 2023 to 595 in 2024 when compared with the same period of last year. This is a difference of 50 lives. This means LEAP makes a difference. It is proved that the hard work of LEAP, SAPS and the Cape Town Metro Police

have saved the lives of our people and will continue to do so.

Indeed, Mr Speaker, the hon member Herron keeps attacking our LEAP officers. He does not give credit to their good work. The hon member Herron wants us to stop the LEAP Programme and fire the LEAP officers. The hon member Herron wants to remove the difference the LEAP officers make in our most vulnerable communities. [Interjections.]

He is so very uncaring and out of touch. No wonder his party is in the political intensive care unit, kicking and screaming as it turns every by-election into a game of how low can you go?

Mr Speaker, the hon Herron's party will disappear in the next provincial election. [Interjection.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Member Herron, *dink!*

The MINISTER OF POLICE OVERSIGHT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY: That would be a good thing indeed and a case of good riddance definitely. [Interjections.]

†Mnr die Speaker, deur die hertoewysing van fondse is daar voorts nou R1 miljoen meer vir kommunikasie, R1,4 miljoen meer vir toerusting vir ons Buurtwagte, R1 miljoen meer vir ons K9 Eenhede en R3,6 miljoen meer vir ons groeiende Vredesoffisier Projek in ons plattelandse munisipaliteite.

Mnr die Speaker, agb lede, ek sal verder uitbrei in my Departementele Begrotingstoespraak later vandeeweek. Ek dank u. [Applous.]

Mnr die Speaker, deur die hertoewysing van fondse is daar voorts nou R1 miljoen meer vir kommunikasie, R1,4 miljoen meer vir toerusting vir ons Buurtwagte, R1 miljoen meer vir ons K9 Eenhede en R3,6 miljoen meer vir ons groeiende Vredesoffisier Projek in ons plattelandse munisipaliteite.

Mnr die Speaker, agb lede, ek sal verder uitbrei in my Departementele Begrotingstoespraak later vandeeweek. Ek dank u. [Applous.]

[Mr Speaker, through the readjustment of funds there is now R1 million more for communication, R1,4 million more for equipment for our Neighbourhood Watches, R1 million more for our K9 Units and R3,6 million more for our growing Peace Officer Project in our rural municipalities.

Mr Speaker, hon members, I will expand further in my Departmental Budget Address later this week. I thank you.] [Applause.]

An HON MEMBER: That was sense!

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agb Minister. [Tussenwerpsels.]

[The SPEAKER: Thank you Minister.] [Interjections.]

†n AGBARE LID: Mooi!

[An HON MEMBER: Excellent!]

The SPEAKER: Order, members, order! I recognise the hon member Stephens.

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): Good morning, hon Speaker, Premier and members of Parliament. As the Patriotic Alliance, we firmly believe that all funds allocated for specific purposes must be utilised exclusively for those intended purposes. Furthermore, any interest accrued from these funds should be directed toward the same objectives.

Our rural communities are enduring immense hardship, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that their needs are prioritised. While the recently released Crime Statistics highlight an 8,7% reduction in murders, a welcome improvement, it is concerning that many of these incidents stem from road rage, interpersonal arguments in similar conflicts alarmingly. The Western Cape recorded the highest rate of gang-related crimes in the country. To address this crisis effectively, we urge the Democratic Alliance led Provincial Government to go beyond merely increasing the Gang Unit and reallocating budget from other departments. A comprehensive and proactive approach is needed to tackle both crime and the underlying poverty fuelling it. Our communities cannot wait. Decisive action is required now to restore safety, dignity and opportunity to every corner of this province. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much hon member Stephens. I recognise the hon member Lithakong.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Thank you Speaker and greetings to you and the House at large and to our guests.

Speaker, the DA Government in the Western Cape has failed the people of this province when it comes to the provision of housing and integrated spatial planning. Currently there is a backlog of approximately 600 000 people still on the housing waiting list, a figure which continues to grow with each year passing. Similarly, Speaker, the individual Housing Subsidy Programme, which is targeted to low-income applicants to afford or build their first homes, is also failing, as this Government allocates insufficient funds to the programme where the people are having to wait for more than 10 years in order for an individual to be allocated anything close to R261 000.

Speaker, the DA Government is refusing to address and implement an integrated spatial planning in areas close to economic opportunities, especially in Cape Town. Instead of developing and turning Tafelberg Place into an opportunity for affordable social housing, this Government elected to sell the place because the integration of people of the Western Cape from different classes, economic backgrounds and racial groups is not part of the agenda for the racist DA Government.

Somlomo. The decommissioning of G F Jooste Hospital in 2013, serving communities such as Manenberg, Gugulethu and Nyanga, has left these communities in despair and without any nearby health facilities in the place.

Their new and bigger alternative hospital was supposed to be completed back in 2019 already, and to this day that has not happened as the Department is now pretending as if there is no land to build the hospital, and which they themselves has promised to the people.

Enkosi kakhulu. Somlomo.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Lithakong. I now recognise the Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, Minister Bredell.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Speaker, the Adjustment Budget has been criticised by our colleagues from the Opposition benches with lots of energy. A difficult budget was adopted at the beginning of the year and the adjustments we had to make now, were also very difficult. Where cuts were made, service delivery will be affected.

†Speaker, ek stel dit weereens aan die Huis dat ons 'n nuwe finansiële model benodig in Suid Afrika. Ons Nasionale Regering het tans geen aansporing om geld te spaar nie want hulle skop eenvoudig die verantwoordelikheid na provinsies en munisipaliteite. Ons benodig 'n nasionale gesprek waar ons vir mekaar kan sê dat geld moet vloei na die vlak van regering op die plek waar die dienste gelewer moet word. Agb Speaker, deur u na die agb Stoffel, sy is 'n nuwe lid van die Wetgewer, en ek waardeer die gesdrif waarmee sy kritiseer

en ondersoekende vrae vra in haar oorsigrol. Sy verteenwoordig egter 'n party, die ANC, wat 'n lang en trotse tradisie het van begrotingbestudering. Die ANC het die afgelope 30 jaar elke staatsbegroting bestudeer om te kyk waar hulle hulself kan verryk ten koste van belastingbetalers en ten koste van die armstes van die armstes. [Tussenwerpsels.]

[Speaker, I put it again to the House that we need a new financial model in South Africa. Our National Government currently has no incentive to save money because they merely kick the responsibility to provinces and municipalities. We need a national discussion where we can say to each other that money must flow to the level of government in the place where the services should be delivered. Hon Speaker, through you to the hon Stoffel, she is a new member of the Legislature, and I appreciate the enthusiasm with which she criticises and asks investigative questions in her oversight role. However, she represents a party, the ANC, that has a long and proud tradition of budget study. The ANC has studied every budget over the past 30 years to see where they can enrich themselves at the expense of taxpayers and at the expense of the poorest of the poor.] [Interjections.]

†'n AGBARE LID: Hoor-hoor!

[An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!]

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Speaker, and let us be frank with one another here today, South Africa, our provinces and municipalities are having to make very difficult budget decisions on basic things, such as water provision

and waste management, because of 30 years of rampant theft and looting of State resources by the ANC, and by the way the people rejected their Manifesto in 2024.

†Agb Speaker, die ANC het ons land in die mees ongelyke samelewing in die wêreld omskep. Syfers jok nie, agb Speaker, die GINI koëffisiënt staan op punt .67, wat ons een van die mees ongelykste samelewings in die wêreld maak. [Hon Speaker, the ANC has turned our country into the most unequal society in the world. Figures don't lie, hon Speaker, the GINI coefficient stands on point .67, which makes us one of the most unequal societies in the world.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Dit is die waarheid.

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): That is the truth.]

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Die top 20% van die samelewing verdien 68% van die inkomste.

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: The top 20% of society earns 68% of the income.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): En wie is hulle?

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): And who are they?]

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN

ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Die onderste 40% verteenwoordig slegs 7% van Suid Afrika se inkomste. Volgens Stats Suid Afrika se nuutste syfers is werkloosheid in Suid Afrika 32,1%.

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: The bottom 40% represents only 7% of South Africa's income. According to Stats South Africa's latest figures unemployment in South Africa is 32,1%]

Speaker, if we look at labour market data for the Western Cape, the only province where the DA rules, we will see the Western Cape has by far the lowest unemployment rate in the country compared to other provinces. The third quarter data from Stats South Africa shows unemployment in the Western Cape at 19,6%. We also have the lowest provincial expanded unemployment rate, by 25,6%.

The Western Cape saw job opportunities increase by 75 000 from the Second Quarter 2024 to the Third Quarter 2024 and we want to do more, but 30 years of ANC rule on a national level has brought us to today, where in Stilfontein we do not even know how many illegal miners are still underground in the mine shaft. [Interjections.]

Speaker, let me caution people against being too quick to celebrate a crime busting operation in Stilfontein. [Interjection.]

The line between crime busting operations and humanitarian tragedy is a very

thin line. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Speaker, die situasie by Stilfontein is 'n direkte resultaat van die ANC-regering wat nie ons land se grense korrek bestuur nie.

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Speaker, the situation at Stilfontein is a direct result of ANC Government that cannot manage our borders correctly.]

Speaker, weak leadership, incompetent management – Government's results in cruel outcomes for people it must protect.

We are in our traditional fire season in the Western Cape now, hon Speaker. Last year, more than 135 000 hectares of land burned, and it took a huge effort from all the different fire-fighting entities to ensure minimal damage to infrastructure, and we were fortunate to not suffer any fatalities from the men and women who do this dangerous work to protect us all.

Working on Fire is a national programme that must protect people's property when we have wildfires in South Africa. It is an important and essential organisation in a country such as South Africa and given the impact of Climate Change it will only become more important in the future.

Recently we have learned cuts of up to R200 million are being considered for this budget. Without the support and funding of Working on Fire, the local Fire Protection Associations and various municipal fire-fighting units will be left to fend for themselves during this coming fire season.

I want to thank Minister Baartman for the additional R21 million for Disaster Prevention and Response, including money for Fire and Water Emergency Response. Included in the R21 million is R6,2 million which is allocated for Humanitarian Emergency Relief such as food which is also needed immediately after a disaster has struck.

Speaker, in the past years the Province used to manage Emergency Housing as a function of the Provincial Infrastructure, but since it was relocated to our National Government we are struggling to address people's need for shelter immediately after a disaster. I am pleased with the R947 million disaster relief we have been allocated for our recent winter storms and damages. Unfortunately, this is not enough as the damages are more than R6 billion.

People living in low-lying areas are at great risk of flooding because of Climate Change. I am repeating my concerns about the informal settlement that lives below the retention dam wall in Driftsands.

Speaker, the ANC wants to increase Eskom's tariffs by 40%. That is what they offered to the people, the poorest of the poor. The DA wants to give more free

electricity to the poorest of the poor. That is what our focus is on.

[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: But you do not care about them. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Speaker, ek wil vir Minister Baartman gelukwens met haar Aansuiweringsbegroting. Die Minister moes onder moeilike omstandighede 'n delikate balansering van behoeftes en prioriteite oorweeg. Dit sou baie makliker gewees het as ons nie nou die resultate van 30 jaar se ANC wanbestuur- en diefstal van ons fondse ervaar het nie. Maar ons is nou waar ons is en die enigste pad is vorentoe met die DA. Ek dank u.

[Tussenwerpsels.] [Applous.]

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Speaker, I want to congratulate Minister Baartman on her Adjustment Budget. The Minister had to consider a delicate balancing of needs and priorities under difficult circumstances. It would have been much easier if we did not have now the results of 30 years of ANC mismanagement and theft of our funds. But we are now where we are and the only path is the way forward with the DA. I thank you.]

[Interjections.] [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister.

Hon Members, before I recognise the next person, I wish to draw your attention to the Rules. Running commentary cannot happen. This is a political debate and for that reason I have given a lot of leeway and latitude, because interjections are allowed, but running commentary throughout the speech cannot and will not be tolerated. Can I please ask you to work with me and when you are on the floor you will be provided the same opportunity to make your submission to the House.

With that being said, I recognise the hon Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, Speaker. Greetings to all. I greet you all in the name of the Most High. Speaker, the NCC rises today to give its critical view on the midterm budget for the Province. Speaker, we always said that a budget that is not biased towards the poor will always struggle to address service delivery to the poor and the disadvantaged.

Now Speaker, the Economic Outlook indicated that the Western Cape has an official unemployment figure of 19,6%. However, youth unemployment sits at 31%, meaning a third of our people between 18 and 35 years old are unemployed.

Now, Minister, Speaker and Premier, if you have any appetite to address gang violence on the Cape Flats, here is your answer. Eradicate youth unemployment and the issue is 90% addressed. The Minister in her address indicated that due

to deliberate planning, she sees this province is one of the fastest growing provinces, even if you get rewarded for stealing land. Nevertheless, Speaker, for that reason the Province will spend R1 trillion for 600 000 jobs up to the year of 2035. 600 000 jobs and we are growing with more or less than a million people roughly in a year? Now this indicates that indeed this Department has lost touch with the people and their needs on the ground. To adequately address unemployment you would need 600 000 jobs for one year, for 10 years.

Speaker, the Minister in her speech mentioned, and it was met with handclaps in this very House, that the murder rate came down 8.7%, but members will remember that this House debated the mass killings and the crimes as tabled by the NCC, and the House acknowledged that the killings were out of control.

Speaker, the statistics makes a mockery of the lives of those who passed away, to hear a handclap for a statistic, while parents are standing at open graves, that really cuts to the core of what a life on the Cape Flats is really worth, because I personally went to more youth funerals this year than what I did in all the other years before.

Now the NCC notes that the Budget allocation for the Department of Mobility is used for the enhancement of Public Transport, and we hope that this will include areas on the Cape Flats. However, we are sceptic to hear that R11 million will be used to procure tasers for traffic law enforcement officers. The Act talks of using minimum force when affecting an arrest. Tasers do not fall in minimum force. It seems like the R11 million will be used to support a

DA individual building his own PCT army. I hope I am wrong, but the signs are there.

Speaker, Education is the cornerstone of the community. The Minister in her Budget Speech boldly declares that there is now enough funding in the Department's Budget to deal with the current project pressures. The NCC will closely monitor the 2025 school year to make sure that the ± 2 400 teachers are not retrenched, seeing that there is *mos* now enough money in the budget.

Speaker, there are so many more issues I would like to address but the time is not on my side, but in closing I want to say, the money budget is entrusted to the Minister. Minister, please make sure that all our people benefit from this budget. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Jacobs. I recognise the hon Marais.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, Speaker. Speaker, the formation of the Government of National Unity sparked a new sense of hope and optimism, but the loss of 2 407 teaching posts will have the exact opposite effect on the mood of our citizens, especially our teachers in the Western Cape. A gloomy Christmas awaits them.

The BELA Act that was signed into law by the South African President will also add immense pressure on our education system as Grade R becomes compulsory for school attendance.

The in-year budget cuts could not have come at a worse time. The fiscal sustainability of the Western Cape Government's future plans is threatened by rapid population growth and the DA's continued narrative that the Western Cape is the best run province is potentially adding to the momentum of in-migration and adding further pressure on our limited provincial resources. A reform of our education system with technical skills training, apprenticeship programmes will ensure that we create the pathway to inclusive growth, satisfying the Growth for Jobs priority, as set by the Minister. Therefore the R251 million allocated to the Rapid School Build Programme must serve this purpose.

The allocation of R2,5 million to the George Municipality to manage the George building collapse is unjustified.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Really, really?

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): As we are still awaiting the preliminary report findings to be presented to this House... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order members! Order!

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): ...increasing incidences of illegal land invasions, untreated sewage running into our oceans, coastal waters at the three marine outfalls, Camps Bay, Green Point and Hout Bay, deserve to be prioritised. The

political decision taken not to appoint a Commissioner for the Environment for many years by the DA is having devastating consequences on our natural environment. Our lack of readiness to respond to Climate Change challenges could have been averted with such appointment many years ago.

Now the DA has a National Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and Environmental Affairs. He is championing climate-related issues in our fight to mitigate the effects of Climate Change. I wonder what his opinion is regarding the decision not to appoint an Environmental Commissioner in the Western Cape.

The SPEAKER: Hon Marais, your time is expired. Please conclude.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): I thank you, Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Marais. I recognise the Minister of Social Development, Minister Londt.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Speaker, Premier, Cabinet, colleagues, colleagues across the floor as well, the media and members in the gallery. Minister Baartman has referred to the storms we have faced as a country and a province. In the Western Cape Department of Social Development we are not immune to the turbulent waters of financial and resource constraints, but we have taken the little we have to work with to ensure that we continue helping the most vulnerable in our society and fulfil the Department's... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, my apologies, may I please ask that you speak from your bench. [Interjection.] I was informed that that is not your allocated bench.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): He is allergic to his bench.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: I will move forward, because they put the podium for this, Minister.

The SPEAKER: No-no, it is Parliamentary convention and custom that you can only be recognised from your bench, hon Minister. My apologies, I should have alerted you previously. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: The staff should also make sure ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Make sure.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: ...that they give space for me to sit as well ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Do not argue with the Speaker.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: ...not alert it halfway, but we

have taken ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Arguing with the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

† 'n AGBARE LID: Skandelik!

[An HON MEMBER: Disgraceful!]

The MINISTER FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: But we have taken the little that we have to work with to ensure that we continue helping the most vulnerable in our society and fulfil the Department's statutory obligations.

In this province the Provincial Government has continually showed its commitment to social services and its care for those living in poverty. The Adjustment Budget is a testament to this.

Thank you for the disaster funding to the Provincial Treasury for seeing the urgent need to bolster food security for the most vulnerable and the impact of disasters on these individuals. We have seen the need and the humanitarian relief efforts that go on days after it has struck, and often the delay in getting money from SASSA has necessitated for us to step into this space. So thank you for that.

The organisations that we are going to fund with an extra R3 million will play

a critical role in assisting the Department to increase its service footprint, to make sure we get help to those where it is needed the most, as quickly as possible during and after a disaster, and one must remember that even when the disaster is over, as I said, the humanitarian relief efforts are still required while the communities rebuild their homes and their lives.

Hon member Nkondlo, you complained about the metaphor of the storm used by Minister Baartman, but that is nothing in comparison to the hurricane ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Why are you addressing [Inaudible.]

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: ...that the ANC has left ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Why are you addressing [Inaudible.]

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: ...in this country.

An HON MEMBER: Speak to the Speaker.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: The disaster left by 30 years of ANC mismanagement [Interjections.] has made sure that parties like the MK and the EFF have risen, and it seems like the hon member Marais, well-run, and I could not figure out why the Freedom Front would want to vote a

competent DA Mayor out, but now it makes sense.

An HON MEMBER: Which one? Which one?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: It seems like the Freedom Front wants to single-handedly ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Relevance? Relevance?

An HON MEMBER: Which one?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: ...take the Theewaterskloof Municipality down the drain to other provinces, because that is why the Freedom Front has taken hands with the EFF and the ANC ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: ...and the Patriotic Alliance to remove a DA Mayor, and now the Court has put a personal cost order against the Freedom Front Mayor. Good. [Interjections.] You must carry the consequences if you want to take the voters for granted. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

An HON MEMBER: What are you saying?

An HON MEMBER: What are you saying [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members! [Interjections.] Order! [Interjections.]
Order!

†n AGB LID: Die arme oumense van Mitchells Plain.

[An HON MEMBER: The poor old people of Mitchells Plain.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat.

Hon members, I have addressed this previously. Can I please ask that you do not engage the speaker on the floor and allow the speaker to make his or her contribution to the House. Running commentary is not allowed, and it is a political debate, hon members, so I am allowing latitude because it is a political debate.

So I heard “relevance, relevance”. The reality it is a political debate. So I will listen for the relevance, but I am not going to stifle freedom of speech in the House. Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Speaker.

The relevance, we need to thank the Courts for finally punishing politicians and not allowing them to abuse taxpayers’ resources, like the Freedom Front,

ANC, EFF and PA in Theewaterskloof.

To the Department of Infrastructure and to Minister Baartman, I want to say thank you for the extra funding that you gave us, R25 million. Hon member Nkondlo, through you, hon Speaker, this was communicated already, but maybe you missed that debate. R25 million that was shifted from the DSD Budget to the Infrastructure Department to fund the maintenance of child and youth care centres. This is welcome. Thank you to both the Minister of Infrastructure and the Minister of Finance. [Interjections.]

Hon Speaker, I mentioned earlier that this Department knows how to stretch its few rands far so we can continue helping the most vulnerable in society and fulfil the Department's statutory obligations. We have to do this because as a province we are still fighting for our fair share of the national budget pie. [Interjections.]

We have to do this because National does not know what we see [Interjections.] and experience on the ground daily. They simply need to go to any one of the DSD funded CNDCs or community kitchens to see the incredible need of our people and to see our efforts in alleviating their hunger. They simply need to tag along with our social workers as they juggle dozens of cases daily while trying to help as many clients as possible with not only social services, but advice about education, housing, health and SASSA.

SASSA, such a difficult thing that National must just sort out, but they cannot

do that. [Interjections.]

People look to DSD to do much more than what is in our mandate and we do not say no. As a Provincial Government we know the value of social workers, thus we are always looking at ways to make their lives better, which will in turn benefit the lives of our clients, the residents.

One example is the SWIMS app, which I have elaborated to in this House and I will speak to it more in my Budget Vote, but the SWIMS app has helped DSD staff tremendously as they traverse the wide expanses of the Central Karoo in the new DSD mobile office, and thank you, Premier, for that.

We have since launched a further two mobile offices in the West Coast and in the Cape Winelands area, that will take services to the residents so that people in the most remote parts of this province have access to a government that cares.

We have a unique service delivery model. It is different to any other in the country. We have local offices in the bigger towns and cities. We have service points in the smaller towns where we use existing buildings such as churches and town halls, and now we have mobile offices to serve the most vulnerable in the most remote parts of this province.

In this province we recognise the importance of NGOs and NPOs in working with Government to render services to the most vulnerable. We do this better

than any other province, that is a fact. You only have to look at the mess unfolding in Gauteng where they cannot get the money to the NGOs that service the most vulnerable.

We spend 40% of our budget in assisting NGOs and NPOs in expanding our footprints and watch the space, early next year we are announcing two very exciting initiatives that we are going to strengthen this industry even more.
[Interjections.]

My hope is that we can motivate more businesses and private citizens to work with us and to work with these organisations because they are doing such incredibly life-changing work.

Hon Speaker, we are not resting on our laurels, we will continue fighting for our fair share of the national budget. [Interjections.] The Department has been able to weather the storms due to the compassion and commitment of the staff as well as a responsible and a responsive management team. We will continue to build a society where all residents, regardless of their circumstances, can lead dignified lives, and we will continue to ensure that social services remain accessible, equitable and responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable citizens of the Western Cape. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I recognise the hon member Brinkhuis.

An HON MEMBER: Senior citizens of Beaconvale is also fighting for their fair share.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AJA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Good morning to you, hon Speaker, and good morning to the members. Good morning to all the citizens of the Western Cape.

I stand here today to call for urgent reallocation of funds in the Adjustments Appropriations Bill. While I acknowledge the importance of sectors like agriculture and infrastructure, I strongly believe that the Western Cape's current needs demand greater focus on education and healthcare.

The Department of Education has received an additional R547 million, yet this is insufficient to address the real challenges our schools face across the province. Across the province learners continue to suffer from overcrowded classrooms, under-resourced facilities and a lack of early learning opportunities.

Hon members, education is the foundation of economic growth. Without better equipped schools and adequate trained teachers, how will we prepare our youth to compete in a rapidly changing world? Redirecting funds to expand Early Childhood Development programmes and build more classrooms would ensure that every child in the Western Cape has a chance to succeed.

Our healthcare system is in a crisis. While the Department of Health and

Wellness received an addition of R197,75 million, it is simply not enough. Rural clinics are underfunded, hospitals are overcrowded and healthcare workers are leaving the system due to burnout and inadequate pay.

Hon members, health is not a luxury, it is a right. By increasing investment in the healthcare infrastructure and workforce retention, we can ensure that even the most vulnerable in our province have access to quality medical care.

The Agriculture Department received an addition of R300 million. While this sector is vital for food security, certain projects such as vineyard replacements, are not as urgent as classrooms without roofs or clinics without staff.

Similarly infrastructure which received R519,92 million includes projects that could be delayed without jeopardising the province's immediate needs. Hon members, the people of the Western Cape elected us to serve their best interests. Let us prioritise what truly matters.

Education to empower our youth and healthcare to protect our citizens by reallocating funds wisely, we can create a province that is healthier, more educated and prepared for the future. I urge this Legislature to act boldly and responsibly. I thank you very much, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Brinkhuis. I recognise the hon member Petrus.

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Dankie, agb Speaker. Ek groet almal teenwoordig en wat ingeskakel is by hierdie sitting. Ek praat namens die Patriotic Alliance.

Agb Speaker, ons moenie die geduld van die mense van die Wes-Kaap as vanselfsprekend aanvaar nie.

Van alle befondsing bewillig vir infrastruktuur, wat is die impak of die bemagtiging van opkomende hoofkontraakteurs en spesialiskontraakteurs? Hoeveel van die werksgeleenthede is permanent en hoeveel is nie? Hoeveel werksgeleenthede wat geskep is was van die Staat afkomstig en hoeveel was van die privaatsektor? Ons stel belang om daardie syfers te weet, agb Speaker, en dat dit openbaar gemaak word.

Ons mense sit met die planne om klein besighede te begin, maar loop hulle vas in burokratiese *red tape*. Die tweede ekonomie is 'n belangrike komponent vir ekonomiese groei vir hierdie provinsie en moet aangemoedig word.

Daar word na ons mening te min gedoen vir die bekamping van misdaad en geweld. Die Wes-Kaap het dringende en ernstige ingryping nodig om misdaad en geweld te bekamp. Die PA sal aanhou veg vir meer hulpbronne aan onderwys, die polisie, maatskaplike ontwikkeling en infrastrukture. Baie dankie, agb Speaker.

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): Thank you, hon Speaker. I greet everyone present and who are tuned in to this Sitting. I speak on behalf of the Patriotic Alliance.

Hon Speaker, we must not take the patience of the people of the Western Cape for granted.

Of all funding allocated for infrastructure, what is the impact or the empowerment of upcoming chief contractors and specialist contractors? How many of the work opportunities are permanent and how many are not? How many work opportunities that were created were from the State and how many were from the private sector? We are interested to know those figures hon Speaker, and that it should be made public.

Our people have plans ready to start small businesses, but are hindered by bureaucratic red tape. The second economy is an important component for economic growth for this province and should be encouraged.

In our opinion too little is being done to counter crime and violence. The Western Cape needs urgent and serious intervention to counter crime and violence. The PA will continue fighting for more resources to education, the police, social development and infrastructures. Thank you, hon Speaker.]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agb lid Petrus. [The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Petrus.] I recognise the hon member Van Minnen.

Ms B M VAN MINNEN (DA): Hon Speaker, the South African economy is under serious pressure. We see exceptionally high levels of debt, serious unemployment numbers and public services are being cut in all sectors.

In the Western Cape we defy the national trend. Despite significant economic challenges and the failures of the National Administration, we continue to demonstrate what is possible under DA governance.

The Western Cape Government recognises that as infrastructure and services across South Africa collapse under the weight of ANC corruption and mismanagement, it is critical to connect people with Government, essential services and with one another. This connectivity is not just a convenience, it is the foundation of resilience and progress.

A cornerstone of our success is Broadband 2.0, a transformative initiative reflected in the Adjusted Appropriations. High speed internet is a vital infrastructure that enables economic growth, education, healthcare and social inclusion. Around the world Broadband has proven essential for fostering resilience and prosperity, particularly in rural and underserved areas. By prioritising access to reliable internet, the Western Cape Government is equipping its people with the tools they need to overcome challenges and seize opportunities.

The Western Cape Government has built an extensive Broadband network that connects Government facilities, schools and hospitals. This network serves not only public institutions, but also acts as a backbone for private internet providers to extend their coverage into areas long neglected.

With over 1 600 free public Wi-Fi hotspots in libraries, community centres and transport hubs, such as those made available by E-Centres, it ensures that residents can access online services, education and communication tools without additional financial burdens.

Our partnerships with private companies has extended internet access to remote and rural areas where the challenges of infrastructure development are the greatest. These collaborations, which involve shared infrastructure, make it feasible to provide connectivity to even the most underserved communities.

We have also prioritised digital literacy programmes, ensuring that access to technology translates into meaningful real-world benefits. These programmes equip citizens, particularly youth and small businesses, with the skills to participate fully in the digital economy.

Schools have been prioritised for high speed internet access, providing learners and educators with the resources they need to succeed in a world increasingly driven by technology.

The shift towards E-governance represents a new era of service delivery where residents can access Government services online instead of enduring the inefficiency of outdated, cumbersome processes, from applying for documents to accessing healthcare information, we are ensuring that technology makes Government work for its citizens. In stark contrast, the ANC continues to cling to archaic methods which serve only to frustrate and delay, but connectivity is

only the beginning.

The Western Cape Government is at the forefront of leveraging artificial intelligence to drive innovation, enhance governance and support economic growth. This aligns with our broader vision of positioning the Province as a leader in technology and digital transformation.

AI-driven analytics are also enhancing public safety by identifying crime hotspots and predicting trends, while Disaster Management teams use predictive models to respond to challenges such as droughts and wildfires. Through initiatives like the Cape Innovation and Technology Initiative, we are supporting startups and fostering research in AI and related technology, creating a thriving ecosystem for innovation.

However, while we celebrate these advances we acknowledge the challenges that come with investing in cutting-edge technology. One significant issue is the cost of Microsoft licences, which are priced in US dollars and subject to exchange rate fluctuations. These costs compounded by Microsoft's transition to subscription-based services place a financial strain on our ICT budget, especially given the volatility of the South African rand.

To mitigate this we have allocated R77 million to help cover licensing costs for nearly 30 000 Government employees. While these expenses are unavoidable, they underscore the broader challenges posed by poor national governance and economic stability. Nevertheless we remain steadfast in our

commitment to using technology to improve lives and drive progress.

However, technology is more than a tool for service delivery. It is a catalyst for transformation. By investing in Broadband, artificial intelligence and digital literacy, we are creating a province that is not only resilient to today's challenges, but also preparing for the opportunities of tomorrow. These initiatives foster innovation, create jobs and build a foundation of a competitive and sustainable economy.

The Western Cape Government is proving that even in the face of a failing National Administration, progress is possible. By connecting people, empowering communities and driving digital transformation, we are building a brighter future, one where citizens not only survive, but also thrive. To this end I support this Budget. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Van Minnen. I recognise the hon member Christians.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, the ACDP is still concerned about the 2 407 teaching posts that will be lost in 2025. The Western Cape is not the only province affected. According to reports KZN has a shortfall of R4 billion in one year. Gauteng has indicated that they will reduce learner transport, which we cannot, and they will also not expand the Early Childhood Development coverage as planned.

Hon Speaker, the World Bank said:

“Existing evidence shows the investments in child development during the early years provide an exceptional rate of return, as well as higher returns and investments in human capital at later stages.”

So education plays a crucial role in a child's life, hon Speaker, but, hon Speaker, we are debating the Western Cape Adjustment Appropriation Bill, but we must get to the bottom of this and the bottom of this is that National Government has shortchanged the Western Cape with 36% of the nationally negotiated wage agreement, it is a major problem. [Interjections.]

That is the problem. The mismanagement and misappropriation of finances by the ANC Government is stealing from the most vulnerable, [Interjections.] because budget cuts affect all of the people in the Western Cape. [Interjections.] It affects all of the people in the Western Cape.

Hon Speaker, let me just say further, let me just say further, what is concerning is that the influx of learners next year, 18 to 22 000, is going to put more pressure on all our systems. Health, education and all our services in the Western Cape.

The Premier is on record to say that the Western Cape Government has declared an intergovernmental dispute with National Government and that is the right

thing to do, because you cannot give wages, and the ACDP supports the increase of wages, but if you give an increase you must foot the entire bill. You cannot foot 64% of a bill and that is why our people are suffering.

Hon Speaker, the problem is, the major problem is we are going to see this budget cuts affecting the most vulnerable. It is sad to see it, but unfortunately decisions must be made and we are asking the Premier to take National Government to task, because this cannot continue.

We are concerned that maybe there is some more budget cuts in the coming years and that is the major problem we are facing. Fighting for the people is the right thing to do. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Christians. I now recognise the Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Minister Mackenzie.

The MINISTER OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT: Thank you, hon Speaker, for allowing me to speak in this debate. I also want to welcome our seniors from Mitchells Plain who decided to spend the day with us. It is really appreciated, always great that when people visit our Western Cape Parliament.

Hon Speaker, we have to do more with less for more people. That is a statement from hon member Baartman today as she opened the address on the Adjustment Budget process. It speaks volumes as to how we cope and ensure that we weather the storm as the Western Cape Government. I want to say well done,

Minister Baartman, on an excellent Adjustment Budget Vote, including my Cabinet colleagues for leading their departments during this horrible storm, ably led by Premier Alan Winde.

Hon Speaker, this Adjustment Budget Vote comes after voters has given a clear mandate that they do not want the ANC to govern the country. The ANC now co-governs with a great partner such as us as the Democratic Alliance, including in the great province of KwaZulu-Natal, with the Democratic Alliance. It is indeed sad that the people of Gauteng will not feel the same hope and optimism that the people of KwaZulu-Natal had.

Hon members, we are in a huge crisis, but we have to acknowledge not on our own making. We are working hard to get us out of this ANC created crisis. We know for decades now we have not been able to provide services because the ANC Government has stolen the money.

Minister Baartman is right. The Western Cape must get its fair share and the members of this House must work with us and fight for the people of the Western Cape and sadly the only member of the Opposition that understands it is hon member Christians. He is the only on who said during the Adjustment Vote over the last six speakers, that we must fight for the fair share of the budget. [Interjections.]

We have been the only ones fighting for the 7,5 million people in this province over many years, and the other members of this House have ignored this fight.

The reason we are in this crisis is because members of this side of the bench have been the only ones consistently fighting for people of this province. Other members of this House have not even sent a WhatsApp to their national colleagues over many years to say, “Fix the police.”

So two members of this House have raised it again. Hon member Nkondlo, via you, and the hon member online of the NCC. Interesting the hon member of the NCC leadership has welcomed former President Zuma in Parliament warmly in a video widely shared on social media. Not knowing or knowing and not doing anything about it, [Interjections.] that he was the one who single-handedly destroyed our Gang Unit, our State Security, our National Intelligence, our Crime Intelligence and that is why we are sitting in this mess as a country, and the members of that side of the House knowingly were participants by not doing anything about it. [Interjections.]

So it is very interesting that hon member Nkondlo again points the finger, via you, hon Speaker, to this side of the House, knowing the political criminal, Jacob Zuma, has been responsible for this and they said nothing over nine years ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat.

The MINISTER OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT: ...while people of this province ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT: ...were suffering.

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon Leader of the Opposition, is that a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: I want to know whether the ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon ...[Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...hon member Mackenzie is ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member, is it a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: No, I want to know whether the hon member Mackenzie is willing to take a question on his participation ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Okay, thank you very much.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ...in the Zuma [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Do not pose your question. Hon member Mackenzie, are you willing to take a question? [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT: No, thank you, during lunch. We can talk during the break. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order! Order, hon members! There was a valid point of order raised. [Interjections.] So please allow me to rule. [Interjections.]

Hon members, are you finished? [Interjections.] Hon member Sayed, the hon Minister is not prepared to take a question. [Interjections.] Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT: We will have a lovely lunch and have lots of time to talk. [Interjections.]

Hon members, so the issue of gang violence is a very serious matter. It is a matter that affects all of us in this province on a daily basis, but the only way you can fix a problem is that you acknowledge you have a problem and the members of that side of the House have not acknowledged the problem.

The problem sits at the Union Buildings where it has been sitting since 1994 and voters have realised it. That is why they are not governing directly at the moment, only through us and with our goodwill, because we love this country

more than them.

Hon members, the Adjustment Budget today is to discuss the Adjustment Budget process of our Department. The moment is not just an opportunity to account for the work we have done, but to reaffirm our commitment to the values of cultural enrichment, heritage preservation and the transformative power of sport.

We also love great events in the Western Cape and I want to single out two beautiful events that have taken place this year during this process. The national Springbok team beating the All Blacks at Cape Town Stadium and our national soccer team, Bafana Bafana. Between them they entertained 100 000 people at the DHL Cape Town Stadium, and as a department we are proud to have played a role in that. [Applause.]

You are welcome to give them a round of applause, hon members. Two beautiful wins at the Cape Town Stadium.

So we celebrate these achievements, but we acknowledge also challenges, but with this Adjustment Budget we are working to address these.

So we welcome the R500 000 for the Mossel Bay heritage site through the Cultural Centre and the R1 million for Elands Bay. These amounts are far-reaching. It is not merely just numbers on a spreadsheet, it represents investments in our shared future where this side of the House always had a

valuable role in playing and continue to play a valuable role because we want to empower our communities and foster cultural diversity in our province.

Hon member, we celebrate these commitments because this Department is not just about financial commitments, it is a testament to this Government's dedication to ensuring that every corner of this province is valued and supported.

Hon members, I want to again express my gratitude to Minister Baartman and her team for crafting a budget that enables development during this stormy period and hon member Nkondlo was right. She did use metaphors about clouds and storms. She did so to demonstrate on a clear basis where we are in and how we as the Western Cape Government seems to be the only one who understands the crisis that we are in, [Interjections.] and working to get ourselves out of the crisis.

We have to sing the same song because facts do not change. I cannot help if the hon member does not like the facts that they created that we are in. We are finding our way out of this challenge that they are facing. That is the challenge, hon member.

So the facts do not change. We are in an existential crisis created by members of the party of that side of the House, [Interjections.] that this side of the House are now swimming us out of, getting us out and weathering the incredible storm, but we are optimistic. [Interjections.] We are very optimistic. We stand

as a beacon of hope in this country. We continue to lead, innovate and champion not only this Department, but my colleagues as this Government.

[Interjections.]

So optimistic that the richest man in the world has now finally indicated that he is hopeful and wants to invest in this country, he is hopeful of this Government of National Unity, enabled by this Democratic Alliance ...[Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, your time has expired.

The MINISTER OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT: Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. [Interjections.] Order! I now recognise the hon member Cassiem.

An HON MEMBER: You forgot to clap for him. What is wrong with you?

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): Thank you, hon Speaker. [Interjections.]

Hon Speaker, the EFF calls upon President Cyril Ramaphosa to fully implement the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act and for the DA Minister of Basic Education to make sure that the law is administered across the board, despite the reservations the party might have against some of the provisions of this

piece of legislation.

Hon Speaker, the BELA Act was voted and passed by a majority of members in the National Assembly, whilst the DA opposed and voted against the passing of the Bill at the time. So it cannot be that the decision and wishes of the majority in National Parliament are now hamstrung by some minority White party which continues to hold the President to ransom.

Hon Speaker, with this the Western Cape School Admissions Policy remains highly segregated and racist at the hands of school governing bodies, especially in the former Afrikaans Model C schools where language is used as a tool for the purpose of not admitting majority of African children.

Hon Speaker, the recently released 2024/2025 second quarter crime statistics, paints a familiar picture which we all know, which is portraying the province as a hub of crime in the whole of the country. Mass murders continue unabated in the province despite the signing of cooperation agreements on policing and safety between this Provincial and this National Government.

Just this past Sunday, hon Speaker, five men were found dead with gunshot wounds in Mfuleni, hon Speaker. If the crime stats places Mfuleni at number 4 provincially and number 6 nationally when it comes to the murder rate, and we still continue to experience mass shootings immediately after the release of the new stats, then this means that the crime hotspot system used by the Province to tackle the murder rate as part of the Safety Plan, is not working.

Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I recognise the hon member Herron. [Interjections.]

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, it is a bit ironic that the Minister of Police Oversight chose to use half her speaking time addressing me and the GOOD party, while at the same time saying we are irrelevant, but let me say, for as long as we are represented here, we will point out your failings and you can say good riddance if your predictions come true.

The hon Minister has misrepresented my criticism of LEAP. When I criticise the LEAP programme it is because it is an expensive failure. The aim of the programme was to halve the murder rate, but the total number of murders has gone up since it was implemented.

Hon Speaker, we do not disrespect the LEAP officers, it is this Government that disrespects them. You place undertrained, unprepared human beings into dangerous police precincts, placing these young people's lives in danger. We do not want them fired, we want them properly trained and appointed to the police service. [Interjections.]

Hon Speaker, the GOOD party supports all the Adjustment Budgets, besides

Education. In March the Provincial Education Department tabled a fully-funded and balanced budget, only to change its mind or change something six months later when it declared a shortfall of R687 million.

At last week's Portfolio Committee meeting none of the MEC, HOD or CFO could provide an explanation.

†n AGB LID: Dit is die waarheid.

[An HON MEMBER: That is the truth.]

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): They wanted us to believe that the reason for their having to get rid of teachers is an unaffordable Public Service Wage Agreement, but ultimately conceded in the Committee that this was false. They were aware of the salary increases when they tabled their balance budget, which provided for hiring extra teachers, not firing them in their thousands.

So what is going on and why is it only going on here in the Western Cape? Did the Education Department table a deliberately misleading budget in March or was it an error?

Hon Speaker, parents of children at public schools for whom fewer teachers mean more crowded classrooms, require honest answers from this Government. To begin with, you need to tell them the truth about the Western Cape's shifting of R8 billion over the next three years it will receive from National for Education to spend on discretionary programmes like the Safety Plan. How

does this make terminating 2 400 teacher posts unavoidable?

The MEC for Finance announced a reallocation of department funding, plus Education will get an extra R250 million and the flexibility to use another R600 million that had been earmarked for infrastructure and is now unearmarked.

The Department would have manoeuvrability and there will be enough funding within the Department's budget to deal with the projected pressure, she said, but the MEC for Education continues to insist that culling teachers remains unavoidable. He says it is unavoidable in order to protect critical areas like learner transport, but bus services in areas like Ceres and Tulbagh have been withdrawn, leaving hundreds of children stranded.

Hon Speaker, the numbers do not lie. If the Education MEC declares a mysteriously R687 million shortfall to which the Finance MEC responds by freeing up R850 million to plug the gap, why does the Education MEC not want to grab the lifeline ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Herron, your time has expired. Please conclude.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Herron, please conclude.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, hon Speaker. Why does the Education MEC not want to grab the lifeline? Who and what really lies behind the Western Cape's determination to double down on what is patently a self-induced crisis which will have an inevitable negative affect ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): ...on education standards. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I recognise the Minister of Education, Minister Maynier.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, hon Speaker.

I would like to remind hon members that I was in the staff room at Crestway High School when the principal informed teachers that the school would unfortunately lose teaching posts for the 2025 school year. It was clear from that conversation that the impact of losing posts would be significant. I could see the teachers were concerned and I could see the teachers were uncertain about how all of this would affect their learners.

We must not forget that the decisions we take and the debates that we have in this House affect lives and affect livelihoods, and this is a very difficult time for our principals, for our teachers, for our learners and for our schools, and

there is never a good time for this kind of news, as the hon member Marais reminds us.

So it is especially important that we are clear on what steps we have taken to respond to the fiscal emergency which threatens teaching and learning, not just in our province, but as the hon member Christians reminds us, across our country.

So let us be absolutely clear. We are not losing 2 407 teachers. We are reducing the basket of posts by 2 407 posts, which means that some permanent teachers will be asked to move to another school where there is a suitable vacancy, and of course some contract teachers will not be reappointed after their contracts end.

An HON MEMBER: It is the same.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: We have, hon Speaker, we have reprioritised the budget to save teaching posts, which includes cutting the #BackOnTrack programme, infrastructure spending and indeed administrative costs, and the problem is not confined to the Western Cape. Every province is facing the same challenge and will have to find a way to fund the budget shortfall.

Now during my budget speech, my Adjustments Budget speech last year, not this year, I outlined the massive in-year budget blow, and most importantly the

steps that we would take to avoid overspending. I detailed the cuts that we would be making, including to the #BackOnTrack programme and infrastructure spending, to help close the gaps.

I explained that the head office and district office posts would be frozen and would remain so in the new financial year, and I also outlined that from 1 April 2024 to bring down our staff expenses in the 2024/25 financial year, we would need to stop the provision of substitute teachers, except to cover teachers on maternity leave, stop the provision of Post Level 1 contract teachers in place of those acting in vacant promotion posts, and restrict the use of contract appointments for level 1 posts and vacant public service posts.

That meant that teachers and office staff alike would take on extra work and that our schools would be put under tremendous pressure, and in my Main Budget speech this year I again highlighted the implementation of these steps in the 2024/25 financial year to allow us to try to close the gap and balance the budget, and extended time on the impact and response of the budget cuts.

Unfortunately, of course, these measures were not sufficient to achieve the savings we had hoped for and so after implementing a drastic R2,5 billion budget cut, including on administration, curriculum and infrastructure, we still faced a R3,8 billion budget shortfall, and we are left with no choice other than to reduce the basket of posts.

Now after implementing the basket of post reductions, we brought the in-year

deficit down to R405,8 million, meaning that we were still short on funds to break even and cover our expenses.

So an additional R250 million was provided to help us to close the gap and we dealt with the remaining deficit by making even more severe, non-personnel budget cuts.

The unearmarking of the R600 million in infrastructure funding does give us manoeuvrability in finding ways to deal with the growth pressure in the 2025 school year, but the R600 million is allocated to infrastructure projects such as new schools, replacement schools and additional classrooms. These projects are already underway and it is vital that they be delivered. So using this facility will obviously be an absolute last resort.

Our challenge now, hon Speaker, going forward ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, your time has expired, please conclude.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Our challenge now going forward is of course providing the infrastructure, teaching posts and school resources needed for the 2025 school year, given the expected increase in learner numbers.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: And I look forward to briefing the House

on that plan in due course.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

Hon members – hon member Nkondlo, before I recognise you, I wish to inform the House in terms of Rule 54, that no member may address the House on the same topic before the House more than once.

Hon member Nkondlo, your name is on the Order List or the Speakers List more than once, which is in contravention of Rule 54. I am making that ruling or giving this background so that it is on the record. However, in the absence of hon member Nkondlo not being informed about it before the time, I am going to allow the hon member to make her submission as per the Speakers List.

Hon members, I am asking you to please acquaint yourself with the Rules. We are going to the end of the first session of the 7th Parliament. I am requesting that the Chief Whips of political parties please ensure that your members are acquainted with the Rules.

This will be an exception and this is by no means an indication of how or what will be allowed going forward. I recognise the hon member Nkondlo.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Thank you, thank you, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, interestingly also in this House, on the other side beneficiaries

of GNU speak a lot. Beneficiaries of the Zuma administration. They did not even send a WhatsApp when they were benefiting from the Zuma administration and here we are, we are told of everything wrong in the Zuma administration when they had jumped ship.

Before I was interrupted earlier, I was explaining how the G4J Strategy is detached from [Inaudible.] realities of our people, and as hon member Herron calls it, an expensive failure. Even the public sector, as a critical avenue for job creation, has not been spared.

Across nearly every department in this Budget Adjustment, the DA administration has chosen to slash spending on compensation of employees, leaving funded posts unfilled and critical services under-staffed. For instance:

- The Provincial Government has cut COE budgets by R360 million, affecting critical sectors.
- Health R104,6 million cut, leaving hospitals understaffed and overwhelmed.
- Infrastructure R117,3 million unspent, exacerbating housing and service delivery backlogs.
- Police Oversight R11,5 million cut, amid escalating crime.
- Social Development R8,8 million cut, undermining services for the vulnerable.

Hon Speaker, consequences of this reckless austerity are dire. Every unfilled

post represents a missed opportunity to reduce unemployment, improve public services, but also ensure State capacity and restore dignity to the people of the province.

The next time residents endure long queues at healthcare facilities or other Government offices, they must remember that this DA-led Administration deliberately chose not to fill vacancies despite having the funds to do so.

MEC Baartman, no amount of spin will change the fact that the National Government increased the Equitable Share for this province. Your Government had sufficient funds to fill all vacant posts, but instead chose to redirect these resources to future years, spend them on non-essential items, like buying computer equipment.

MEC Bredell spoke about supposed budget cuts here, but conveniently ignored the millions surrendered to the Revenue Fund and redirected to future years during this Adjustment process. The DA must stop misleading people.

An HON MEMBER: Ja!

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Speaker, as we observe the 16 Days of Activism Against Abuse of Women and Children, it is imperative that we must prioritise action over rhetoric in combating GBV and femicide. Sadly this Western Cape Government neglect in this area is deeply concerning. Despite the severity of GBV in the province, the Government allocated only

R72 million to the Victim Empowerment Programme, its flagship initiative, and then reduced this inadequate budget by an additional R1,04 million in this adjustment. This decision fails countless women and children who endure violence daily.

Moreover, the neglect extends beyond budgetary issues. Higher ranking officials, including Farrel Payne, the Provincial Traffic Chief, and Graham Paulse, the Head of the Department of Local Government, face serious sexual harassment allegations, yet remain in their roles.

MEC Bredell's refusal to intervene epitomises a toxic boys club culture that protects perpetrators and dismisses the dignity of survivors. [Interjections.] Premier Winde must act decisively to address this unacceptable inaction.

Hon Speaker, I extend my deepest condolences to the families affected by the tragic bus accident on the N1 Worcester, which claimed eight lives, including six children. This devastating incident underscores the importance of road safety during the holiday season.

Frédéric Bastiat once stated that:

“When plunder becomes a way of life, men create for themselves a legal system that authorises it and the moral code that glorifies it.”

While MEC Bredell speaks eloquently about looting elsewhere, he overlooks

the corruption within the Western Cape's Department of Mobility, where public funds earmarked for road safety are allegedly being misused by the so-called Mini Cooper Gang.

The ANC has raised these serious allegations in the House and called for action through a substantive motion. Instead of addressing the issue, the MEC Simmers responded with threats, further evading accountability. We urge Cabinet to initiate an independent investigation into these allegations of corruption and maladministration.

To ensure transparency, the ANC has requested a thorough SCOPA investigation, hon member Christians. You must stop acting as if you are a proxy of the DA. You must stop reducing yourself to be a DA lite and do your work and investigate DA corruption. That is why you are a SCOPA Chair. Not to sing praises of the DA.

The DA is talking about corruption and plunder, why is the DA not telling us about the reasons for not investigating the corruption and collusion with construction mafia in the City of Cape Town, which cost the Province over a billion rand.

We also welcome the elderly visitors from Mitchells Plain who are here for the second time in the recent weeks, seeking answers about challenges at the Beaconvale Frail Care Centre, to MEC Londt. He is always there trying to be a GPS of other members, looking at where they are and what they are doing.

Yesterday SASSA was here and he only connected for 10 minutes and he was gone, and he was not here for the four hours with the public where SASSA was, to raise all his issue that he laments here in this House.

So he must stop to be a GPS of other members and actually start doing his work. Go and attend to the stakeholders there in Mitchells Plain and the elderly. As you say you are calling for the fight for a fair share, hon MEC Londt, please also provide a fair share to this elderly, senior citizens in Beaconvale as they are waiting for you to deal with the crisis in that centre.

We also ensure that the claims of the R25 million budget allocation that have been made, this amount was merely shifted from unspent reserves with the Department's budget actually reduced by R17 million in the Department of Social Development.

It is disingenuous for MEC Bredell to discuss electricity affordability when the DA-led City of Cape Town imposes exorbitant illegal tariffs far exceeding NERSA approved rates, further burdening vulnerable communities and the very DA MECs, including the Premier, were silent when this happened here in the City of Cape Town.

When the City of Cape Town ensured that they are putting even more than NERSA tariffs over the electricity in the City of Cape Town that is very expensive, including putting debts of those that are owing the Municipality, so

that when you buy electricity for R100 in the City of Cape Town, it is very expensive because they even deduct the rates that you are owing the municipalities. You are mum on those questions, but you come here and try and posture and play to the gallery around the issue of NERSA.

So when you take NERSA to court, please ensure that you include the City of Cape Town, your Administration, as part of the litigation.

This Administration must stop misleading the public and take accountability for its failings, particularly in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and ensuring proper governance, and governance that ensures that it also responds to issues of the poor. The DA has no credibility in discussing electricity affordability. [Interjections.]

Whilst we welcome increased funding for the Western Cape Education Department, including the Rapid School Build programme, we need assurance that the teacher posts will not be cut next year. We hear, hon MEC, the spin that you are bringing here, speaking a lot of English.

The point is that the 2 407 teacher posts are still – the funding is missing. The ANC strongly opposes such cuts and will continue to fight for the rights of educators and learners. Minister Godongwana has already stated publicly that this crisis is manmade and it is the problem caused by provinces.

The Western Cape has money and has chosen to spend over R360-million on

computer equipment and other unimportant expenditures, and yet, they are cutting teaching posts.

Lastly, hon MEC Marais is misinformed about crime stats and the impact of the LEAP programme. Let us give credit where it is due. SAPS has achieved a national reduction in murder rates of over 5%, even in provinces without a Safety Plan. Instead of claiming easy victories, the DA should focus on why nine police precincts in the Western Cape remain among the top 30 murder hotspots. These are predominantly in poor working-class communities, burdened by unemployment, poverty and inequality.

Addressing the structural problem and the root causes of crime is one of the things that the DA refuses to do. We say you should not be buying computers with LEAP funds. You should be prioritising to deal with these problems in these communities that need to ensure that they participate meaningfully in the economy, hon Speaker. The last part, hon Speaker, is that the ANC, as we have registered in all the Votes, we do not support this Budget. I thank you.
[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Nkondlo. I recognise the hon Johnson.

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Hon Speaker, it is often said in the game of golf that success is not determined by the price tag of your clubs, but by the skill, the strategy and the determination of the player swinging them. The same principle

applies to governance. In the Western Cape, despite being handed a budget that could be likened to a starter set of clubs, rather than a champion arsenal, this Government led by the Democratic Alliance, has demonstrated that it is not the resource alone that matters, but how effectively they are used. ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): While we most certainly deserve our fair share of the budget, we continue to do the best that we can with what we have been given. Like the seasoned golfer who plays each shot with precision and purpose, we have prioritised efficiency, innovation and accountability to achieve outcomes that other provinces aspire to replicate. Let us now reflect on how, despite receiving less, we are achieving more for the people of this province.

Hon Speaker, let us turn our focus to unemployment, particularly the DA's Growth for Jobs strategy. According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey, the Western Cape has achieved the lowest unemployment rate in the country with 19,6%. For context, no other province comes close to this achievement with our rate being nearly half that of any other province. Furthermore, even our broad unemployment rate remains significantly lower than the narrow rates of other provinces. This is an incredible milestone for the Western Cape, but it is only the beginning.

Hon Speaker, I wish to highlight an encouraging development in the Province's

Agriculture Budget. This year, the Agricultural Support Programme Grant has been increased by an additional R300-million. These funds are earmarked for critical reconstruction and rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged by the devastating floods earlier in this year.

†Agb Speaker, die Wes-Kaap, ook bekend as die Kaap van Storms, is altyd gekonfronteer deur die onvoorspelbaarheid van die natuur, maar die mense van die Wes-Kaap se veerkrag is ook legendaries en landbou bly die lewensbloed van ons plattelandse gemeenskappe. Dit ondersteun die lewensbestaan van baie en bied ook werkskepping in areas waar werksgeleenthede wel skaars is. Die landbousektor is die hoeksteen van ons ekonomie en die nodige befondsing is krities vir herstel en die groei daarvan.

[Hon Speaker, the Western Cape, also known as the Cape of Storms, is always confronted by the unpredictability of nature, but the people of the Western Cape's resilience is legendary and agriculture remains the lifeblood of our rural communities. It supports the existence of many and also offers job creation in areas where job opportunities are indeed scarce. The agricultural sector is the cornerstone of our economy and the necessary funding is critical to its recovery and the growth.]

Building on our commitment to excellence, R3-million has been allocated for proactive surveillance and disease monitoring interventions across the province. These initiatives are a key component of our Growth for Jobs strategy, demonstrating our dedication to delivering export quality agricultural products that are sought after all over the world.

†Agb Speaker, innovasie is nie net 'n doel nie, dit is die dryfkrag agter bevordering van volhoubare groei. Toesigbesoeke aan die Elsenburg Landboukollege het die instansie se status as die hoeksteen van landbou-opvoeding- en kundigheid bevestig. Die rol wat Elsenburg speel in die ontwikkeling van talent en vermoëns is van onskatbare waarde. Die Wes-Kaapse Regering herbevestig graag ons volgehoue ondersteuning, soos gesien kan word aan die addisionele R4,61-miljoen wat as bydrae tot bedryfskoste toegestaan is.

[Hon Speaker, innovation is not just a goal, it is the driving force behind promoting sustainable growth. Oversight visits to the Elsenburg Agricultural College confirmed the institution's status as the cornerstone of agricultural education and expertise. The role that Elsenburg plays in the development of talent and capabilities is of immeasurable value. The Western Cape Government reconfirms its continued support, as can be seen with the additional R4,61 million that was allocated as contribution to operational costs.]

Hon Speaker, Special Economic Zones, SEZs, worldwide are celebrated as engines of economic growth and development. Here in the Western Cape, our SEZs are transformative, fostering innovation and delivering tangible benefits to local communities. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): One notable example is the Freeport Saldanha SEZ which has received an additional R24,7-million to support its Green Hydrogen development master plan and operational cashflow. This investment is not just about infrastructure, it is about building the future by fostering new industries and supporting emerging enterprises. We are laying the groundwork for firms that will become pillars of our communities, driving job creations and opportunities for generations to come.

Hon Speaker, in the critical domain of infrastructure, we are proud to announce an additional R507-million allocated to Transport Infrastructure. This investment is more than just an enhancement of road networks. It is a lifeline to opportunity. Access remains one of the most significant barriers to job creation and economic growth. By improving mobility, we are not only connecting communities, businesses and institutions, but we are also creating a bridge to opportunity, equity and empowerment.

While people can have access to jobs, schools, healthcare and markets more easily, the entire communities thrive. This allocation reflects our unwavering commitment to the Department's vision of connecting people, goods and institutions. It underscores the essential role infrastructure plays in fostering inclusion, driving economic activity and building a province where opportunities truly reach every corner.

Hon Speaker, through strategic investment, innovation and a commitment to doing more with less, the Western Cape continues to demonstrate what

effective governance looks like. Whether it is rebuilding our agricultural sector, fostering new industries through SEZs, empowering rural communities through education and training, or connecting people to opportunities through enhanced infrastructure, every decision we make is focused at building a better future for all.

Let us rise above the storms and drive the growth and progress the people of this province deserve. Together, we are forging a Western Cape where opportunity, resilience and prosperity are not just aspirations, but they are realities. For these reasons, I whole heartedly support this Budget. Thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Johnson. Now, I recognise the hon Minister of Finance, hon Minister Baartman.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you so much, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I want to try and pair some of the responses together as some of them were across the board. Hon Speaker, in terms of the PERO food insecurity. It is true, food insecurity has increased in the province. We must read that in line with the fact that the cost of living in South Africa has increased. We must read that in line with the fact that Eskom is proposing a 36% electricity hike proposal on electricity tariffs. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: More!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: We must read that in line with the fact that we have a rapid increasing population growth of 19,6%.

So, when your Gini coefficient comes down, when your HDI goes up, when your employment goes up and when your GDP growth goes up. If it is not in line with the growth of population then it is outpacing your gains, which means that you are actually not able to meet the population growth that is coming into the province.

Specifically, if you make an example, hon Speaker, our employment grew by 7,1%. Our GDP grew by 9,5%. But if your population growth is 19,6%, which is almost double some of the statistics, then even with your employment, the employment is not even keeping up with the population growth figures coming into the province. We have even seen that the replacement level in the province, which is internationally recognised as the average amount of children people have, the Western Cape is actually dipping below the average replacement level which is 2,1%. We are below that now which means that our population growth, the 19,6%, 51% of that growth is in-migration into the Western Cape specifically.

Just on the Social Development budget cut, I know that the hon Minister Londt has specifically referred to it, but I am just going to deal with this quickly because it actually, hon Speaker, it is actually an accounting term that you are seeing in the Budget Book.

The Youth Maintenance Infrastructure money is being moved from the one Vote to Infrastructure. So, you are going to see a cut in the Social Development budget, but nothing is being cut because the hon Minister of Infrastructure must go to infrastructure stuff for Social Development. So, the money is being moved from one bank account to another. Nothing is being cut. We actually increased the Social Development budget with humanitarian relief money, nutritional money and so on. So, actually in real life, the budget is increasing. What you are seeing in the Budget Book is an accounting change because the hon Minister of Social Development is not doing his own infrastructure on that particular matter.

Then, in terms of just Social Development cuts and money for Social Development specifically. I actually want to refer the hon members to page 19 of the National Treasury responses to the Budget Committee's division of revenue questions, where the National Treasury is not confirming whether social workers nationally, are fully-fledged frontline services and workers, or not.

The National Treasury is essentially referring back to the Social Development Department and all that we need from the National Treasury is to say: are social workers considered by you as a frontline service? Yes, or no. That is it. Because if they are considered a frontline service, then what we will see in the budgets coming down from National is when they refer to frontline services, the money will then flow to the nine provinces. So, that is not my answer. The National Treasury response, the official response to the Budget

Committee in the documents, page 19, says actually: are Social Development rather?

In terms of the Western Cape's Children's Commissioner underfunding. I know the hon members use the word 'underfunding', but we did not actually cut their budget. There was underspending and we are actually giving the money back to the particular entity, the particular institution. In terms of budget cuts nationally and making the insinuation, that it is not true.

On page 17 of the responses to the Budget Committee by the National Treasury, they are acknowledging the budget cuts that they have implemented because of the 2021 and 2024 MTEF Budget, and this is in the responses. The official response of National Treasury says: yes, Western Cape, you are correct about the impact of the 2021 and 2024 Public Wages and the MTEF carry-through specifically, which was an R8,4-billion cut on the Provincial Equitable Share.

In terms of the racial employment that the one hon member referred to, I actually want to read straight from the Provincial Economic Review and Outlook and I am on page 72, hon Speaker, because I actually want to just quote the actual figures within our employment. So, between Quarter 2 of 2019 and Quarter 2 of 2024, not only did we see an increase of employment by 7,1% in the Western Cape, but in terms of the African component, we increased in that period 10,8% in terms of employment. In terms of Coloured, we increased 6,2% in terms of that period with employment. Females increased by 12,6%, youth increased by 3,6% and I agree, it is still too stubborn. Youth

unemployment, we need to do better in that regard.

But when you look at these figures and you compare that to the population growth of 19,6%, you are not going to see that it is equal in that regard because population growth is outpacing everything else. If the hon members read on that page, they will actually see that in the White component there are actually -0,3% less White persons employed in the Western Cape during that period. So, the hon member is going to argue racial employment and things like that. She must also please refer to the actual data and evidence within the province.

Hon member Stephens mentioned the interest accrued needs to go to Social Services. I actually want to brag about this one policy that the Provincial Treasury has. So, we actually have a Cash Management Policy in the Province and what this essentially means is we give the departments, based on their budget, what they have projected for every quarter and what they are planning. We actually give them enough money for what they have been planning per quarter. We keep the rest back. And because we have been keeping the rest back, in this past financial year, hon Speaker, we made on interest R570-million, which you will see as part of the R2,8-billion in this speech, which was raised, which we are putting back into the 2024 Budget, which we are putting back into the 2025 Budget.

So, part of the reason that we have the extra provincial revenue funding that we allocated in this budget is because of good governance. So, for those who say you cannot eat good governance, R570-million was created through

interest, and which is being put back into the budget, which is being given to Social Services and 75% of the provincial additional funding that we are putting into this budget, is going to Health, Education and Social Development. It is more than 75% of the particular money.

Just in terms of whether or not certain topics are a priority. I did mention in the MTBPS that despite the reduction of crime in the province, despite the reduction of the murder rate in the province, and these are statistics that are tabled by SAPS and they were tabled a day before our MTBPS which is why you will, for example, see in our books which went to the printers before SAPS's data, you will see a difference in the respective statistics.

But SAPS's own data shows the reduction of the murder rate. I also said, hon Speaker, that one murder is still one murder too many. So, despite the reduction in the murder rate, one murder is one murder too many and we must continue to work on reducing crime and particularly, the murder rate in this regard which is why violence prevention and community safety is a key budget policy priority within the Budget process at the moment.

Just in terms of the backlog on housing. The hon member did mention, I think it was hon member Lithakong that spoke about backlog and housing. And again, if you have a population growth of 19,6%, then we need to start lobbying National Government to make sure that what we are getting in terms of the provincial envelope is increasing at the same rate as the service delivery demands upon our province. Just because National is not increasing our budget

does not mean people are not asking us for more and more services in the province.

Just in terms of, it was mentioned that we are not focused on spatial planning, but in the MTBPS you will find that we are actually having a specific infrastructure development and spatial planning focus within the Budget process. It is violence prevention and community safety, it is the infrastructure and spatial planning, the youth development, climate change and disaster management. These all stem from the statistics that we also see in terms of our PERO and our MERO.

Just in terms of whether or not we are spending R1-trillion on jobs, I just want to correct that. That is that we want a R1-trillion economy in order for us to create over 600 000 jobs. That is why I just need to make sure that the hon member is on the same page in that. I have already addressed the murder rate in that regard.

Just in terms of, sorry, not hon Minister Marais, but hon member Marais. Sorry, I was getting a bit confused here because I only wrote down the surname. Just in terms of environmental matters. So, at the time when the Environmental Commissioner was written into the Constitution, we did not actually have as many environmental legislation as we have today, hon Speaker. So, what is occurring is you are now seeing that there is enough environmental legislation in our country in order to actually address some of these concerns that we have. Actually, what we need to ask is that the justice system needs to be bolstered.

We need to make sure that through the legislation that we have, let us do a national impact assessment to see is the legislation working or not? We also cannot have duplications across legislation and across the legal system.

In terms of the Grade R becoming compulsory in terms of the BELA Act. Hon Speaker, I need to just make sure everyone understands. National has currently not given us any money for making Grade R compulsory. At the time when I was still Chair of Education at the time, the estimate conservatively was approximately R2-billion on the Province: conservatively! That is without hidden costs. So, National would need to reprioritise nationally in order to give provinces money for Grade R because even if we took our reserves at this date today, what we are currently having in our reserves, you will bankrupt the Western Cape. There is only R922-million which I have mentioned in the MTBPS, that we put into the reserves for this financial year, hon Speaker. So literally, there is no money! Making Grade R compulsory, we agree in principle because we want children to have education, hon Speaker. However, it would bankrupt the Province currently and that is similar in terms of NHI provisions. [Interjections.]

In terms of hon Minister Bredell speaking about the fire season, and yes, I agree that we definitely need to better budget for disasters because, hon Speaker, the fire season and disasters do not wait for a budget allocation letter. So, we need to make sure that we are prepared, that we have enough in our reserves and that we are proactively budgeting for disasters, for floods, for the fire season. Even when you see the R1,198-billion that National gave us

through the Conditional Grants for disasters, it only relates to a particular period. It was not the full amount that we asked for and before and after that period, we did not get extra money for those items either.

So yes, we are thankful for this extra disaster-related money for infrastructure, however it is not the full amount, and it is not for the full period, but we are appreciative on this.

Just in terms of hon Minister Londt being upset about the space and bench, I am really sorry that I am shorter and that we are all of different sizes, but we will find a way for the next five years. [Laughter.]

In terms of the Infrastructure, it is correct that is an accounting change. Just in terms of the efforts of social workers, hon Speaker, it is important, and I want to call upon this House. National Treasury needs to confirm are social workers fully fledged frontline services or not. And if not, why not? Why are social workers then not considered if they are not? So, they need to answer that question.

Hon member Brinkhuis asked about the greater focus on Education and Health. So, actually part of the provincial allocation is the R230,5 for Health and the R250-million for Education. If you add the Social Development money that we are increasing, then it is actually more than 75% of the money from the Province that we are putting on the table in this budget that is going to those three departments.

The R300-million for agricultural finance. I just need to correct that what hon member Brinkhuis brought up. That is for the Disaster Infrastructure money. So, when it flows through the Conditional Grant that comes from National, you are only allowed to use Conditional Grant money for that which it was given. So, if it is for infrastructure, you are only allowed to use it for infrastructure. If it is in the Agricultural Conditional Grant, you are only allowed to use it in the Agricultural Department. You cannot then start moving that particular money around. So, even if we wanted to, we cannot move that money. It is from National; there are conditions attached.

Actually, what we should be asking is the 2021 to 2024 MTEFs have seen an R8,4-billion cut on the Provincial Equitable Share via National and as provinces, we all need to stand together to lobby that the Provincial Equitable Share envelope for all nine provinces must increase. Otherwise, we are not going to be able to allocate more money to frontline services.

†In terme van die infrastruktuurbemagtiging, net vir die agb member Petrus. [In terms of the infrastructure empowerment, just for the hon member Petrus.] We did do a presentation and sent information on the BBBEE on public procurement to the Committee. The Province, actually based on the national legislation and the criteria for BBBEE, 59,79% of the procurement in the Western Cape already goes to Black-owned companies in terms of National Legislation.

Hon Speaker, I want to make this point because in the Western Cape we were able to achieve it without set asides and without mandatory subcontracting, which is what the current Public Procurement Act aims to do. The National Treasury target that they give to every province is 30%. We have almost doubled that outcome and that is without the provisions currently in the Public Procurement Act. So, it can be done. Redress is possible, but you do not need to exclude anyone from the economy. Your systems need to be correct.

In terms of Police money, I completely agree that Police money needs to increase, just to the hon member, and we need to lobby National for that because the South African Police Service sits within the National mandate. If you also look at the impact that has been on Police, R590-billion was cut nationally from Health, from Education and from Police and this was specifically to bail out SOEs, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, as we are sitting here, there is an Appropriation Bill in the National Assembly to give Gauteng a bailout on e-tolls. [Interjections.] So previously, you saw that people were saying that the e-toll money should not be pushed down on the consumers in Gauteng. But now, essentially what is happening is, you are taking that bailout money from Gauteng, you are pushing it to the National Assembly, and now you are pushing down the cuts and the impact of e-tolls on all South Africans. Some of us do not even spend in Gauteng, but all the money is now being pushed down on the whole of South Africa in terms of a bailout for e-tolls for Gauteng specifically. [Interjections.]

In terms of ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: How much is the tax on ...[Interjection.]?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: In terms of the influx of learners and more pressure. This is true. We are already dealing with in-year fiscal risks currently and there is currently no room for growth across the different Votes, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, every single department is experiencing the pressures in terms of doing more with less, but also having to do it with less hands and not necessarily being able to increase the amount of people to assist in this regard.

In terms of just the Western Cape as a hub of crime in the country. I just want to say that it is not true anymore. It was, but it is not true anymore as per SAPS's own data and evidence that they have tabled. In terms of the murders that came down, it was the day just before the MTBPS, they listed us as fourth in country in terms of our contribution to South Africa. And that was tabled by the SAPS a day before our MTBPS.

In terms of the 2 407 posts reduces, the hon Minister of Education did touch on this that it is not necessarily getting fired, it refers to the post and not necessarily the teacher. I am also aware that the Education Department is accelerating their matching and placing with teachers. So, what we are doing, hon Speaker, is we are allocating R250-million from the Revenue Fund in order to deal with the pressure. The Education Department has also reprioritised

R155,8-million, which you will see on page 70 of the Budget. Then further, should the Education Department require manoeuvrability within their Vote, we have unearmarked their infrastructure spending should they need to access and deploy it as a last resort.

In terms of the Education Budget being cut fully, it is not true. Even previous Ministers of Finance have confirmed that this is not true, and I am confirming it now again in the House. It came from the Provincial Revenue Fund and that will remain the answer because that is where the money comes from.

The Budget cuts: yes, all budget cuts across the departments. Hon Speaker, it is going to be a very difficult decision to make as to what to cut and those priorities are going to have to be decided by respective Government departments. If the provincial envelope for the 2025 MTEF does not increase, it is going to make the 2025 financial year an even more difficult conversation than what we are having here today, hon Speaker. But it will come at a cost, and we have to ask ourselves what that cost is. So, we need to make sure that we are able to keep up with service delivery demands in this regard.

Just in terms of being beneficiaries of the GNU and so on. Hon Speaker, we are an outright ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: No!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ...majority government in the Western Cape.

[Interjections.] We have received an outright mandate in the Western Cape. The GNU does not have an outright mandate by South Africa. [Interjections.] It is co-governing across political parties. So, the mandate given by voters in the Western Cape ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ...and the mandate given ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ...by notice to the National Government is different and we are going to have difficult conversations. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: We are not staying in Joburg, we are staying in the Western Cape.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Sometimes, we are going to disagree with another and sometimes, we are going to agree with other ...[Interjections.] but we have different mandates, hon Speaker. [Interjections.] We have different mandates. [Interjections.] In terms of ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon members, you have had an opportunity to make your submissions to the House. We have allowed each one of you on the floor. The same way I protect the hon Windvogel and

the hon Nkondlo and the hon Premier and hon Minister Simmers. The same way I protect you when I am on the floor, I need you to protect me, and I am on the floor. ...[Laughter.] So, when like you have a right to speak, so do I.

Hon members, the hon Minister is on the floor. She is responding to your inputs. There are guests in the gallery who would like to hear the responses. Can I please ask, and I do understand that it is a political debate, so I am allowing interjections, but please do not drown out the hon Minister while she is speaking. Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Speaker. I was also informed previously. Apparently, I have unlimited time. So, it depends on ...[Laughter.] I am happy to take longer to respond if the hon members are going to keep interjecting.

Just on the GNU, hon Speaker. I sometimes find it so ironic that I have this really good working relationship with the National Finance Minister, and he is agreeing with me in terms of the pressures that are on provinces currently. But then, we get to a situation where we do not have the same narrative from the African National Congress in the Western Cape.

I will now get to the critical posts that were argued as unfilled and cut and so on. So, the posts across departments are not necessarily being cut, it is, hon Speaker, you cannot appoint everyone in government on the same day. So, what happens is depending on when you are making the actual appointment,

that is when you start paying someone. So ...[Laughter.] sorry. Hon Speaker, you cannot pay someone for a whole financial year if they only started working on 1 February or 1 March or 1 April. So, the extra two months or three months or four months that the person was not appointed yet, that is what is called a saving.

So, when you see the saving, sometimes you are going to have to send the saving back to the Provincial Revenue Fund because for whatever reason, you could not necessarily put someone in a particular vacancy at a particular time. For example, a good example is in the Health system where they are really facing red tape in terms of DPSA requirements in terms of being able to fill vacancies.

On top of this, for example, the Health medical inflation on goods and services has skyrocketed and because the medical inflation has skyrocketed, sometimes on that day you must decide for yourself are you going to save someone's life or are you going to appoint someone on that day. When that happens, you see a saving in the budget. So, you are not taking that away, you are moving it to when the person is appointed and you need to reallocate it either for the projected date or the new 2025 MTEF, for example. That is the impact that that has had.

In terms of arguing that the Equitable Share increased. So, the Equitable Share actually increased because of the data update, not because of a review to the Equitable Share. Of the R674-million over the 2025 MTEF that is being

allocated to the Western Cape, only R65,2-million is being allocated in the 2025 financial year. The R252,4-million is allocated to the 2026 financial year and R356,3-million is allocated to the 2027 financial year.

That means, hon Speaker, the 2024 update that is currently implemented, of the full R678-million, we are only going to fully receive in the 2027/2028 financial year as a finality. By then, three financial years later, the 2024 updates to the PEZ are going to be outdated because of population growth, because of increased service delivery demand. R65-million in a provincial budget is pocket change in terms of what you need for actual service delivery in departments in this, and it is a data update. It is not a review to the PEZ.

So basically, what it does is you have this pie provincially across the nine provinces and we are all just moving money around, fighting over the same pie, but the pie is not increasing. So, this year it might be 10,4% for us in terms of the pie, next year it might be another province and the next year it might be another province, but we are all fighting over the exact same pie instead of National cutting and reprioritising their budget for provinces, especially for Health, Education and Social Development. In line with their own submissions, we do not even know at the moment whether social workers are considered a frontline service or not.

In terms of the Cape Town City matters and we have indicated this as a response to the Budget Committee previously. So, in terms of the law, hon Speaker ...[Interjections.] Hon Speaker, in terms of the law, the City of Cape Town is

a metropolitan. Metropolitans report directly to National Treasury. This will be metropolitans in Gauteng, metropolitans in KwaZulu-Natal, metropolitans in the Western Cape. They report directly to the National Treasury. If there is a problem with finances, I am sure that if you have the particular evidence, please submit it to the National Finance Minister and I am sure that given our good working relationship, he will let me know if he needs our help to deal with financial matters in this regard. [Interjections.]

Just in terms of the electricity tariffs. Hon Speaker, on top of the fact or separate actually, despite the fact that Eskom is proposing the 36% of electricity hike, it is also important to note that more than 50% of the areas in the City of Cape Town are Eskom and some of the areas, Eskom has not been wanting to give over to the City of Cape Town. I am not sure if it is because maybe they think that the City of Cape Town will be able to provide reliable electricity supply for people.

Also, when you look at all of the metros in the country collectively, the City of Cape Town actually has the cheapest electricity prices in comparison to all metros across the country. Also, I cannot remember which hon member is was who indicated that they were increasing the Energy budget. We are actually not increasing the Energy budget. We are decreasing it, and we have actually reprioritised some of that money for frontline services specifically.

In terms of manmade crises. You know, hon Speaker, I agree with the National Finance Minister that we have manmade crises in this country and part of the

manmade crises is the fact that we used previously, nationally, R590-billion to bail out SOEs which came from Health, Education and Police, which the National Treasury and National Government have admitted to. They have admitted it. So, now when we go looking for the money, we come looking for the money from provinces, but the National Government knows that more than 95% of the Western Cape budget revenue comes from National. 5% is our own revenue. So, when there is a National Budget cut being pushed down on provinces, we directly feel that impact and that is where that impact is felt when you see the 2021 and 2024 MTEF specifically.

Hon Speaker, I am just going to end with computer equipment quickly. So, the hon member of this House that is upset by computer equipment, especially also like I am going to include here the Microsoft licences also, just to explain it all in context. The hon members of this House collectively are beneficiaries of Microsoft licences. Hon members of this House collectively across whether it is WCPP or Western Cape Government, are beneficiaries of tools of trade that include computers for their work as members.

So, if the hon member is upset that we are buying computers, then I would like to challenge hon member Nkondlo to please return her laptop to WCPP to the hon Speaker's Office. Please delete all of your Microsoft apps from all of ...[Interjections.] please. Yes, it is not to me. I am not the hon Speaker of the House. Please delete all of your ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ...Microsoft apps from your laptop, from your cellphone that you are using that you are logging in with your WCPP ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ...email address because someone has to pay for the licence, hon Speaker. Someone has to pay for the licence and when the rand/dollar exchange rate changes, it changes how much that Microsoft licence costs. When the economy changes, it changes how much the laptops cost. So, the ANC does not want us to buy computers. If the ANC does not want us to pay for Microsoft licences, please return all of your electronic tools of trade to the WCPP in this regard. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Please do so and then ...[Interjections.] No, please return all of them and I will support you because FICA, everything, is in the best interest of the fiscus. [Interjections.] I will support ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ...the African National Congress if they want

to return their laptops because it is in the best interest of the fiscus. I am always worried about the revenue in this province.

Hon Speaker, I want to end off. Hon Minister Mackenzie spoke about the Fair Share in the Province specifically. It is important, hon Speaker, that Fair Share went into separate ...[Interjections.] into two particular ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Your first Fair Share that we are referring to is the horizontal. That is the money where provinces are fighting about in terms of the Fair Share. The reason we have our points on the Fair Share horizontally by provinces is because the population weighting is not big enough in the Provincial Equitable Share. Currently, special education learners are not included in the Provincial Equitable Share. Current home-based care is not included in the Provincial Equitable Share.

So, what that means, hon Speaker, is especially during COVID-19 when COVID-19 happened, the Western Cape Government innovated. So, it started seeing more people at home so that people do not necessarily have to come to the hospital. But in terms of the technical wording of the National Treasury in the Provincial Equitable Share, the fewer people you get to the hospital in terms of the feet and to the clinic, the less money you get because according to them, they are not part of the feet to the hospital and to the clinic.

So, we are losing money because we have innovated as the Western Cape Government, and we are sending people to people's homes for home-based care and we are losing money. So, those people are not catered for in the same manner for home-based care.

Special education learners are the same. Some of these special needs are almost six times more than what you need for normal ordinary schooling, but you do not see that factored into the Equitable Share. What you seeing is everyone is getting the same amount of money from National essentially, whether you are a special needs learner or not. So, horizontally when you look at the population growth specifically, we are the third largest population now, but we are getting the fifth largest or smallest Equitable Share, depending on your view on whether the glass is half empty or the glass is half full.

In terms of the Fair Share vertically in terms of the Constitution, the provincial envelopes need to increase and not just for the Western Cape, for all main provinces so that we are able to keep up with the service delivery demands on our provinces.

In terms of Social Development, I call on this House to please help lobby for National Government to confirm whether or not social workers are frontline services or not. It is a yes or no. That is it!

Then, in terms of the share for our budget, mentioned innovation, hon Speaker, part of what we need to do is I mentioned that 95% of our budget is from

National, 5% is from our own Provincial Revenue Fund. This is why you will see in the MTBPS that we need to explore alternative and blended financing options because we cannot continue to rely on the money that we are receiving nationally, we need to diversify our revenue. You will also see, even in the National MTBPS where reference is being made to alternative and blended financing in order to support the economy.

Also, hon Speaker, we need to make sure that any above CPI increases on public wages must be fully funded by National. We have reiterated this in various different committees to the National Treasury, but we cannot have a situation where if public wages are centrally agreed to by the National Government, then they turn around and they actually say: you now need to budget for above CPI increases. Hon Speaker, I mentioned the R922-million that we have put into the reserve, but that is actually for disasters. We actually cannot afford it if the National Treasury increase the public wages and does not fully fund it in this regard.

So, I ask of this House, hon Speaker, we have seen natural disasters in this province, we have seen manmade disasters in South Africa, especially with the R590-billion that was cut, please help us lobby the National Government for an increase of provincial budgets nationally. Hon Speaker, the National Government increased the Local Government Equitable Share to 9,8% which we applaud, but that means also similarly, that there is no reason why you cannot increase provincial budget similarly as well. Hon Speaker, I thank you and I want this House to please adopt the Budget.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister Baartman. Hon members, that concludes the debate on the Consideration of the Principle of the Bill. Are there any objections to the approval of the Principle of the Bill? There is an objection. Because there is an objection, all those in favour of the question being adopted, please say 'yes'.

Hon MEMBERS: Yes.

The SPEAKER: Those not in favour of the question being approved, please say 'no'.

Hon MEMBERS: No.

The SPEAKER: I think the ayes have it, hon Chief Whip of the Opposition. The Secretary will now read the Bill.

The SECRETARY: Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon members, the House will now deal with the separate Votes from now onwards. That concludes the business for the day. The Secretary will now end the meeting, and all the hon members will be exited from the Sitting. Hon members, and hon guests, the House is adjourned.

The House adjourned at 12:22.