
FRIDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2024

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

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

[Hybrid Sitting held with some members present in the House and some in virtual attendance through Microsoft Teams.]

The House met at 10:00.

The Deputy Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may be seated. Hon members, before I remind you regarding the logistical arrangements for today, I must indicate, it has been a pleasure to walk behind Mr Dowman, who today officially carried the Mace for the very last time in this particular Chamber. Can we give him a round of applause for his dedication and his commitment? [Applause.]

As the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, we are very fortunate to have capable and dedicated officials. Two days ago we mentioned that there has been longstanding service, not only Mr Dowman and his family are in the

gallery today, and guests as well you are deeply welcomed, but also we spoke about Mr Naidoo. Then there was another person who actually exceeded Mr Naidoo, and he gave me permission to say this: that is 26 years for Ms Saayman who is seated in front of me to the left, 26 years of service to the WCPP. [Applause.]

Our officials are also very aware that all the members in this particular House is *au fait* with the Rules. So, I will once again indicate that members participating in the Chamber, but also online, are fully aware of the amended Rules to accommodate hybrid Sittings.

We will then proceed accordingly, and I will recognise the Table Staff to read the First Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 10 – Infrastructure – Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill [B2-2024]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Minister for Infrastructure, Minister Simmers.

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: Baie dankie, agb Deputy Speaker, ons Premier, my medekollegas in die Kabinet, alle lede van die Wetgewer, maar ook die gaste, maar ook mnr Dowman en sy gesin wat hier teenwoordig is in die galery – al die gaste wie aanlyn vandag vanoggend se sessie sal volg.

Ek wil begin deur ons Wes-Kaapse Minister van Finansies se Aansuiweringsbegroting 2024/25 te verwelkom, soos vroeër hierdie week op 3 Desember 2024 deur hierdie Huis aangeneem is. My kollega, Minister Baartman se Aansuiweringsbegroting word heel gepas genoem: *’n Begroting om die Storm te Weerstaan*, en dit is inderdaad akkuraat want Suid-Afrika staar inderdaad baie storms in die gesig, letterlik en figuurlik, maar hierdie Aansuiweringsbegroting laat die Wes-Kaapse Regering toe om in hierdie onstuimige tyd vas te staan en voort te gaan met die goeie werk waarvoor dit wêreldwyd bekend is, natuurlik onder die leierskap van ons agb Premier. Dit is vir my ’n besondere eer dus om vandag die Departement van Infrastruktuur 2024/25 Aansuiweringsbegroting voor die Wetgewer te plaas vir debat.

[The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, our Premier, my fellow colleagues in the Cabinet, all members of the Legislature, but also the guests, but also Mr. Dowman and his family present here in the gallery – all the guests who will follow this morning’s session online.

I will begin by welcoming our Western Cape Minister of Finance’s Adjustment Budget 2024/25, as was adopted earlier this week on 3 December 2024 by this House. My colleague, Minister Baartman’s Adjustment Budget is aptly named A Budget to weather the Storm, and it is indeed accurate because South Africa is facing many storms, literally and figuratively, but this Adjustment Budget allows the Western Cape Government to remain steady in this stormy time and continue with the good work for which it is known

worldwide, obviously under the leadership of our hon Premier. It is thus for me a special honour today to place the Department of Infrastructure's 2024/25 Adjustment Budget before the Legislature for debate.]

Deputy Speaker, of Department of Infrastructure's Adjustment Budget carries a robust increase of R519,9 million dedicated to infrastructure development. This adjustment increases the total budget for the 2024/25 financial year to a substantial R10,8 billion. Most notably, hon Deputy Speaker, it is our Transport Infrastructure Adjustment which sees a considerable boost of R571 million. This reflects this Government's priority of enhancing safety, promoting dignity and creating jobs through mobility and accessibility for all the citizens of our province. It is also important to note, Deputy Speaker, that between December 2022 and July of this year, our provincial road network sustained significant damage due to adverse weather conditions, and repair to our damage will require significant resources both in time but ultimately also funding.

The damage to our network is estimated at R1,8 billion and we have used internal resources through our Road Maintenance Budget to do in-house repairs, to implement temporary solutions and to build temporary bypasses, and despite the allocation finally from the National Government we are still well short of just putting back what was there, let alone building back better. We are also grateful for the R350 million which we received from Provincial Treasury towards our maintenance efforts earlier this year.

†Hulle het voet by stuk geplaas dat daar geen geld van Nasionaal af gekom het nie. [They insisted that no money had come from National.]

And while there are successes such as the bridge approach which we repaired in terms of McGregor within 21 days, the MR310 Access Road to Citrusdal, others are simply just too specialised for our internal resources to handle, such as Clarence Drive and the Seven Passes Road in George. But money is not the only challenge infrastructure faces, Deputy Speaker. I would love to take this time, and it takes time to rebuild a road and often this would have to be done over multiple years, as is the case with the Franschoek Pass, which between the Premier and myself we get a number of emails every week. The Seven Passes Road and the Hemel-en-Aarde Road, because our citizens need to understand how actually roads work.

I know that members of this House – just like I have observed – members of the Standing Committee actually at times want to hear. A specific number of kilometres that were damaged, and that the Department has prepared an x-percentage of those damaged kilometres, but it is not a linear calculation in roads. Where a two-metre section of road has been damaged, that section may have a damaged structure like a bridge or a culvert, which we saw in Citrusdal, which will take much longer to repair or replace than just resurfacing or repairing a five-kilometre of road in the same district.

Putting financial estimates on repairs is a very technical and difficult assignment because certain sections that were damaged are still under the

defect liability period, which means these would have to be replaced by the contractor, even though it is not their fault.

In other cases we have, however, also seen that we were able to conclude and include these roads into existing contracts to ensure that it remains in-house to lower the cost of the repairs.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the old adage goes that "one does not paint to clean but one cleans to paint," I think in our Department rings true. In a number of cases, designing, the engineering solutions also take time because we wanted to, as far as possible, future-proof our road network infrastructure or at least build back better. However, this takes time, and our main priority will always be to try to reinstate some form of access immediately and then work on a lasting solution. Again the Citrusdal Road comes to mind in this instance.

Hon Deputy Speaker, but my Department does not function and work in terms of avoiding the road network. These responses happen, while in terms of our Branch Transport Infrastructure, they are still expected to ensure between 40 to 50 active CE Contract Projects across our province remain on track and within budget, while our district road engineers must continue to ensure that we maintain our vast provincial road network and keep it at a standard, more so our gravel road network because it plays a massive role in terms of infrastructure, but this also continues while our Transport Infrastructure needs to ensure that the additional flood damage investment of R571 million that has been entrusted, is spent in the interest of the people of our province

and within time.

†In terme van Menslike Nedersettings, agb *Deputy Speaker*, trek hierdie tak ook voordeel uit 'n bykomende bedrag van R81 miljoen wat kom uit ons eie kapitale reserwes as Departement, wat 'n addisionele 3,79% opwaartse aanpassing verteenwoordig om broodnodige behuisingsprojekte regoor ons provinsie te ondersteun.

As deel van ons behuisingspyplyn het ek ook die oordrag van 32 woonstelle, alombekend as La Colline na die Stellenbosch Munisipaliteit, ingevolge Artikel 15 van die Behuisingswet, goedgekeur vir oordrag. As deel van hierdie oordrag, wat aan die einde van die dag ook eienaarskap gaan voorsien aan daai inwoners, gaan ons in hierdie Aansuiweringsbegroting 'n eenmalige bydrae van R6,4 miljoen vir die opgradering en instandhouding van hierdie eenhede ook beskikbaar maak, wat natuurlik binne 60 dae na die publikasie van hierdie bedrag in die *Staatskoerant* sal geskied.

[In terms of Human Settlements, hon Deputy Speaker, this branch also benefits from an additional amount of R81 million that comes from our own capital reserves as Department, which represents an additional 3,79% upward adjustment to support very necessary housing projects all over our province.

As part of our housing pipeline I also approved the transfer of 32 flats, generally known as La Colline, to the Stellenbosch Municipality, in terms of Section 15 of the Housing Act. As part of this transfer, which at the end of the day will also provide ownership to those citizens, we are going to make

available in this Adjustment Budget a once-off contribution of R6,4 million for the upgrading and maintenance of these units, which obviously will happen within 60 days after the publication of this amount in the *Government Gazette*.]

The Milkwood Project in the Hessequa Municipality has been developed as an Integrated Residential Development Programme Project, where we seek to provide not just BNG housing opportunities, but First Home Finance for those that earn between R3 501 to R22 000 as well as service sites focusing on incremental housing, an option which the community requested, and this proposed incremental concept will be to make use in a hybrid format, First Home Finance amounts to provide, not as a service site, but in order to enable that the beneficiaries themselves can build their own home, that they determine their level of dignity they want to restore, because at the end of the day that is our project and our focus in terms of Human Settlements but also that the local community takes ownership of these projects with us.

Deputy Speaker, the Department of Infrastructure also plays a significant role in assisting municipalities with electricity infrastructure as part of our contribution towards the acceleration of housing delivery, given the constraints within Eskom which this House – †dit is nou al holrug al gery [this has been done to death.]

We have therefore entered into a memorandum of agreement with Hessequa Municipality for the installation of 300 solar geysers at a cost of R10,6 million and I am very pleased that of the R4,5 million that was

gazetted earlier this year, the first 80 solar geysers were installed within the first 100 days of the current term of office.

Therefore, the additional R6,1 million which is earmarked in this Adjustment will also be now to ensure that we accelerate and deliver by the end of March the remaining 300 solar geysers in this specific project. But, in terms of electrification of our Railton Project, the biggest in the history of Swellendam, currently they do not have sufficient capacity to supply electricity to the houses, again because the benchmark is a minimum of 20 amps. So what we are doing to bridge and to ensure that our beneficiaries actually move into these houses, we have allocated R14,36 million to ensure that the bulk electricity upgrades in terms of Swellendam can happen while they wait for Eskom to hopefully one day ensure that it does happen and they are refunded. But there are also other municipalities which will have the same benefit as Swellendam and Hessequa.

In the West-Coast District, Deputy Speaker, we have made available for Matzikama R1,893 million for solar geysers, R4,517 million for the Municipality of Cederberg, R5,619 million for the Municipality of Bergrivier. In the Cape Winelands, again we are expanding our acceleration but also the provision of solar geysers. We have in terms of Witzenberg, R3,693 million has been provided in this Adjustment. R5,137 million for Drakenstein and R6,4 million for Stellenbosch, and in the Overberg area R1,742 million has also been made available for Theewaterskloof to accelerate a specific project within their jurisdiction.

†Agb Deputy Speaker, ons Aansuiweringsbegroting beklemtoon ook ons verbintenis tot werkskepping, 'n hoeksteen van die Premier se visie in hierdie termyn wat uitvloei uit die vorige termyn uit, maar ook Gemeenskapsopheffing deur die uitgebreide Openbare Werke Programme, EPWP soos ons alombekend ken, en daarom het ons 'n addisionele verhoging van R240 000 aangesuiwer vir verdere gemeenskapsgebaseerde programme in kern areas in die Wes-Kaap.

Verder gebruik ons ook die Aansuiweringsbegroting voorwaardelike toekennings, soos die Vennootskapstoelae vir die Opgradering van Informele Nedersettings, en ons Provinsiale Paaie Instandhoudingstoelae om kritieke befondsing vir geteikende infrastruktuurinisiatiewe te verseker en ons sal meer hieroor uitbrei in die nuwe jaar. Daarbenewens herbelê ons inkomste van meer as R38 miljoen uit die verkoop van ons eerste behuisingsfinansieringseiendomme vir ons versnellingsprojekte. Hierdie innoverende benadering, en ons is al Provinsie wat dit doen, bevorder 'n volhoubare siklus van ontwikkeling wat fondse in staat stel om terug te vloei na inisiatiewe wat ons gemeenskappe sal bevoordeel. Strategiese beleggings word ook gemaak in terme van Gesondheidsinfrastruktuur wat baie prominent is, met R4,7 miljoen wat aan die Verpleegkollege gerig is, en ook 'n verdere R3,2 miljoen aan die Brackengate fasiliteit onder die Departement van Gesondheid en Welstand, maar ons Landbousektor vind ook baat en ons moet ook ons rol met my kollega hier langsaan my speel. Daarom word daar R269 miljoen toegeken vir grootmaat Besproeiings Infrastruktuur wat

watersekerheid verseker en sodoende een van ons Provinsie se belangrikste ekonomiese dryfvere ondersteun.

Ons het ons Infrastruktuurbegroting verder in lyn gebring om die Provinsiale Inkomstefonds met R50 miljoen te versterk, tesame met 'n toekenning van R32,2 miljoen om energieverwante inisiatiewe te bevorder.

[Hon Deputy Speaker, our Adjustment Budget also emphasises our commitment to job creation, a cornerstone of the Premier's vision in this term flowing from the previous term, but also Community Upliftment through the Extended Public Works Programme, EPWP as we generally know it, and therefore we have adjusted an additional increase of R240 000 for further community based programs in key areas in the Western Cape.

Further we also use the Adjustment Budget conditional grants, such as the Partnership Allowance for the Upgrading of Informal Settlements, and our Provincial Roads Maintenance Grant to ensure critical funding for targeted infrastructure initiatives and we will expand more about this in the new year. Apart from this we reinvest our revenue of more than R38 million from the sale of our first housing financing properties for our acceleration projects. This innovative approach, and we are the only province to do it, promotes a sustainable cycle of development which enables funds to flow back to initiatives that will benefit our communities. Strategic investments are also made in terms of Health infrastructure that is very prominent, with R4,7 million that was directed to the Nurses College, and also a further R3,2 million to the Brackengate facility under the Department of Health and

Wellness, but our agricultural sector also benefits and we also have to play our role with my colleague here next to me. Therefore, R269 million is allocated for large scale irrigation infrastructure which ensures water security and thus supports one of our province's most important economic driving forces.

We have further brought our infrastructure budget in line to strengthen the Provincial Revenue Fund with R50 million, together with an allocation of R32,2 million to promote energy related initiatives.]

Agb Deputy Speaker, to conclude. I am extremely proud to highlight that in this inaugural financial year, the 2023/24 cycle, our Department achieved a clean audit on all levels and as we move forward I can assure the residents of our province, also the members of this House that my Department will also remain committed to fiscal discipline as its top priority moving forward into the future, and we will continue to carefully manage our resources, ensuring long-term sustainability while delivering exceptional services to all of our people in our province.

I therefore table with these details our Infrastructure Adjustment Budget for 2024/25 for debate and I look forward to engaging you. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. I now see the hon member Lekker.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

I rise today, on behalf of the African National Congress, to strongly oppose the Adjusted Budget presented by the Department of Infrastructure. This budget is not just numbers on a page; it is a reflection of failed priorities, misplaced commitments, and deliberate choices that continue to fail the poor and marginalised in our province.

The Budget for the Department increased by R519 million, largely owing to R571 million received from the National Government for the Provincial Roads Maintenance Grant (PRMG), for Infrastructure Reconstruction and Rehabilitation after disasters between December 2023 and July 2024. In addition, R38,479 million has been shifted from other Votes, including Health and Social Development. However, despite these funds, the Department has failed to spend R160,688 million this year, including R60 million from the Department of Social Development, which has been surrendered to the Revenue Fund or deferred to future years.

Deputy Speaker, this is not a mere oversight; it is a deliberate choice. Conditional Grants meant to transform lives, particularly in the Housing Sector, remain unspent. Funds earmarked for Affordable Housing and Upgrading Informal Settlements, or rather squatter camps, are returned to the National Government, unused. Over R3,8 million intended for Human Settlements was surrendered, failing to serve its intended purpose.

What is more troubling, Deputy Speaker, is the reallocation of funds meant for employee compensation to something termed “external capacity”. What does this “external capacity” mean? Why is the State’s capacity being systematically undermined to benefit the private sector? This reflects a broader agenda to weaken public institutions, depriving them of the resources they need to deliver essential services to the people who need them most.

Deputy Speaker, we must ask: how can this be justified? How can a Government remain indifferent while millions live in squalor? The truth is that the DA’s governance in the Western Cape is not built on commitment to serve all its people. It is a governance of exclusion, ensuring that the Black majority in the squatter camps remain trapped in substandard conditions. This is no longer an issue of inefficiency; it is a deliberate attack on the dignity of our people. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Tafelberg site controversy, where the Western Cape Government has spent millions on litigation to block the use of prime public land for affordable housing, even as it claims to prioritise spatial justice. The hypocrisy is staggering.

Deputy Speaker, the Premier, with much fanfare, announced in his State of the Province Address in February 2024:

“The Western Cape is well on its way to becoming the first loadshedding-free province in the country. Just under R7 billion in total is being spent over the next three years to make the Western Cape energy resilient.”

While the Premier celebrates these ambitions, millions of rands from the Energy Fund allocated to this Department have been quietly redirected to training and development. Is this an admission that the Western Cape has put the cart before the horse in its Energy Plans?

In contrast, Minister Ramokgopa, through his steadfast leadership and coordinated vision, has successfully delivered a loadshedding-free South Africa. The Western Cape could learn from this pragmatic approach rather than relying on hollow announcements and misplaced priorities.

Deputy Speaker, this budget epitomises a failure to prioritise the needs of the vulnerable, a failure to deliver on promises, and a failure to address entrenched inequalities. Housing as a basic human right has been severely neglected under the DA's leadership.

Stats South Africa reports that the delivery of dwelling houses below 80 square metres – a cornerstone of affordable housing – has declined dramatically. From an average of 50 000 units delivered annually in 2000, the figure has fallen to less than 10 000 in 2024. This failure is especially glaring in the Western Cape. Under the ANC's governance before 2009, the Province consistently delivered 30 000 housing units annually.

Since the DA took over, this number has plummeted to less than 10 000. What has changed? The DA has systematically shifted its priorities away

from the poor and marginalised, abandoning those who need Government support the most.

Deputy Speaker, the systemic failures in housing delivery are rather confronted and further compounded by the rampant extortion crisis in construction projects, causing delays and skyrocketing costs shockingly.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kindly conclude, member.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): This Budget continues the DA legacy of exclusion, neglect and misplaced priorities. The ANC can not and will not support this budget. It fails the poor, fails to address housing and fails to honour the promises of our Constitution. I thank you, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon member Lekker. I see the hon member Petrus.

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Goeiedag agb Adjunkspeaker en lede van die Wes-Kaapse Parlement, so ook almal wat ingeskakel is en wat die vergadering volg. Ek praat namens die Patriotic Alliance.

Adjunkspeaker, die PA ondersteun die uitrol van die Infrastruktuurprojekte. Dit speel 'n kardinale rol vir investering en ekonomiese groei. Ons doen egter 'n beroep op Minister Simmers om toe te sien dat munisipaliteite in die provinsie 'n bemagtigings- en ontwikkelingsrol vervul. Veral in kleiner

munisipaliteite kan ek op my een hand tel van firmas en kontrakteurs wat alleen hierdie groot projekte kry. Hierdie situasie kan nie so voortgaan nie, Adjunkspeaker. Geld word aan munisipaliteite bewillig maar 'n paar firmas kry die voordeel. Dit is onaanvaarbaar.

Ons sal verder vir Nasionale Tesourie vra dat DFI befondsingvoorwaardes aangepas word sodat bemagtiging van opkomende en spesialiskontrakteurs 'n prioriteit word.

Adjunkspeaker, die Premier het gister in sy toespraak daarop gesinspeel dat geen party gevra het vir die vordering van die George gebou-ineenstorting nie. Dit is totaal en al onwaar. Op 14 November het die Patriotiese Alliansie 'n mosie ter tafel gelê waar ons gevra het dat die tussentydse verslag tog bespreek moet word. Dit is nie deur u Regering as belangrik genoeg geag nie en dit is afgeskiet, Adjunkspeaker, so ons kon dit nie bespreek nie. Ons vra dat die Premier sy woorde terugtrek. Ons het gevra dat dit bespreek word, die gebou-ineenstorting in George.

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): Good day, hon Deputy Speaker, and members of the Western Cape Parliament, also all who are tuned in and following the meeting. I am speaking on behalf of the Patriotic Alliance.

Deputy Speaker, the PA supports the rollout of the infrastructure projects. It plays a cardinal role for investing and economic growth. We call on Minister Simmers, however, to see that municipalities in the province play an empowerment and development role. Especially in smaller municipalities I

can count on my one hand the companies and contractors who are getting these large projects. This situation cannot continue like this, Deputy Speaker. Money is allocated to municipalities but only a few companies get the benefit. That is unacceptable.

We will further ask National Treasury that DFI funding conditions be amended so that empowerment of emerging and specialist contractors becomes a priority.

Deputy Speaker, the Premier in his speech yesterday indicated that no party had asked about the progress of the George building collapse. It is totally untrue. On 14 November, the Patriotic Alliance tabled a motion where we asked that the interim report be discussed. It was not regarded by your Government as important enough and was shot down, Deputy Speaker, so we could not discuss it. We ask that the Premier withdraws his words. We have asked that it be discussed, the building collapse in George.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Petrus, you have concluded. Thank you so much.

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Ja.

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): Yes.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon member Lithakong.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Thank you so much, Deputy Speaker. Greetings to the House at large. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: I have not seen her in months.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Deputy Speaker, as we are nearing the end of 2024 financial year, it is not clear what happened to the R2 billion Main Appropriation allocated for Human Settlements. The DA is now asking for the approval of an increase amounting to more than R519 million, which also evaporates into thin air. This is so while the majority of our people continue to reside in the backyard dwellings due to lack of access to housing.

Deputy Speaker, the situation is so sad in that those who cannot afford to pay rent, which comes with the backyard dwelling due to poverty and unemployment are forced to occupy any vacant land they come across, which in turn lead to the establishment of informal settlements. Somlomo.

In this entire province, there is no individual who draws pleasure of staying in an informal settlement, yet, while the Government has failed to provide decent housing for these poor people instead of finding solutions for their situation, this Government will instead write to Court and spend more money on lawyers to try and evict these poor people on the land which they now occupy.

Deputy Speaker, this DA Government finds pleasure in seeing African Black

people suffering in this Province of the Western Cape, and for this above reason the Economic Freedom Fighters will not be supporting this Vote. I thank you, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, member. I see the hon member Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Deputy Speaker, the NCC notes the R1,198 billion in the 2024/25 Adjustment Budget, and the additional R251 million on the Rapid Schools Build Programme. We also note the rollover of the amount of R27,9 million as indicated in the Budget speech. The NCC therefore requests the Department of Infrastructure and the MEC to urgently allocate the needed funding to maintain the existing schools and the old apartheid infrastructure that is now starting to crumble, and it poses a massive threat to our learners.

Deputy Speaker, the NCC also notes that the Department of Education will embark on the Rapid School Build Programme which is a good idea because we need more schools, but how do you build more schools and retrench teachers? Therefore, the NCC requests the Department to work closely with the Education Department to avoid building schools and no teachers available due to teacher retrenchments. *!Aesa!*

An HON MEMBER: That is the wrong Vote.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Jacobs. I see the hon Wessels.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much. Deputy Speaker, Premier, Ministers and fellow members.

Deputy Speaker, it was Margaret Thatcher who said:

"You and I come by rail or road but economists travel on infrastructure."

It does however not seem that members of the Opposition benches are using the rails or the roads today. [Interjections.]

Deputy Speaker, it is this industry that created over 40 000 jobs between Quarter 2 and 3, which makes one wonder how any member of this House can vote against the proposed Adjustments of just over R519 million.

As we know, infrastructure forms the backbone of any economy. It encompasses the roads, the public transport, utilities, and telecommunications, all of which are crucial for the functioning of our communities and the enhancement of the quality of life. Infrastructure is more than just roads, bridges, and buildings. It is the lifeblood of our economy and the veins that connect societies. It fuels innovation, it drives economic growth. It shapes the very fabric of our communities.

In the Western Cape, a region known for its landscapes and cultures, the state of the infrastructure is pivotal for the future. It is the key to unlocking the opportunities, enhancing the quality of life and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Deputy Speaker, member Walters yesterday said the Adjustments in Police Oversight Department are breaking down the walls between communities.

Deputy Speaker, the Department of Infrastructure is building the roads, the bridges and the houses that these communities will use to create a dignified life with the boost of over R570 million, ensuring access to jobs.

As we stand at this crucial juncture, it is imperative that we recognise the powerful role of political leadership in shaping our infrastructure landscape. Infrastructure development is not merely an administrative task; it is a profound commitment to the people we serve. It is about investing in our communities; it is about fostering the economic growth, ensuring that every citizen has equal access to the opportunities that our province can provide.

But the Western Cape was very clear in its objective, creating an infrastructure-led based economy and a simple Google search is proving the DA difference.

An HON MEMBER: Just Google!

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Let us take a look:

"The Best part of SA to live in?" – Cape Town.

"Which Province is the fastest-growing province in South Africa?" – The Western Cape.

"Which province has the fastest growing economy in South Africa?" – The Western Cape. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: For whom?

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): "Which City in SA is considered the most beautiful?" – Cape Town. [Interjections.]

Deputy Speaker, the list goes on, but the most profound one is most probably: "Which province is better in South Africa?" The answer is telling: "The Western Cape is by far the most thriving province in South Africa." I did not say that. That is a Google search. [Interjections.]

Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Finance summed it up, doing more with less, for more people. On Tuesday hon member Nkondlo mentioned: "This problem is manmade..." I echo that sentiment, because while this Department welcomes the increased allocation, it is really the breaking of the South African economy over the last 30 years that created this scenario.

Let us quickly unpack what the Official Opposition voted against thus far:

- Against the increased maintenance and facilities for Social

Development.

- Against the protection measured in Police Oversight.
- And against facilities or more facilities for our youth in Sport, Arts and Culture.

The irony is not lost upon me; it is almost identical to residents of the Western Cape that voted against the ANC Manifesto in May this year.
[Interjections.]

Deputy Speaker, in closing, as the curtain closes on this year, I would like to thank Minister Simmers and the Department for their unwavering commitment to the residents of the Western Cape, I would like to thank them for building on the journey where businesses thrive because they are connected to the markets they serve, where every community, no matter how remote, has access to the essential services they need to flourish.

I would like to thank the fellow members of my Standing Committee ensuring that we answer to the residents of the Western Cape and that the vision of the Western Cape, where infrastructure serves as the bridge of opportunity and prosperity for all, is not only policies, but actions.

Thank you very much. [Applause.]

†Die ADJUNKSPEAKER: Dankie, ek sien nou die Minister.

[The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you I now see the Minister.]

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: Agb *Deputy* Speaker, baie, baie dankie en dankie ook vir elke lid se insette.

[The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Hon Deputy Speaker, thank you very much and thank you for each member's input.]

I will first go to member Lekker, who says "failed commitments." I actually need to remind the hon member, the party that stands for failed commitments is not a party in Government in this Province the last time I checked. But what are failed commitments and why am I referring to your party, through you, Deputy Speaker, as a party of failed commitments?

In this budget year and the previous budget year, midway through both budget years, in terms of Human Settlements because you referred to Human Settlements specifically. The Human Settlements Development Grant and the Informal Settlement Upgrade Grant was cut and reduced without consultation with any province. That is the failing of your ANC National Government.

†So moenie vir my kom sê van "failed commitments" nie. [Tussenwerpsels.]

[So do not come and tell me about "failed commitments". [Interjections.]]

Deputy Speaker, again the hon member speaks of Informal Settlements, she speaks of failures of commitments to communities. Again a cornerstone of my Department's focused partnership, but the most crucial partner is the community themselves, the legitimate community – let me rephrase the word

"community for me." As the three spheres of government, we have a role to play. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes, certainly!

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: As the community, they have a very crucial role to play, but many a time the very community which we seek to empower and whose quality of life we seek to improve, are the very same community who actually allows roads in that very same community to stop Infrastructure Projects.

It is not us; it is those community members! Then you have another component of partnership, NPOs, NGOs, faith-based organisations who do actively want to play their part, but the criminal elements within those very same communities are overpowering these sectors. So who is failing and whose failed commitments are we talking about? It is the failure of your ANC National Government... [Interjections.]

Then we also have the business sector. Hon Deputy Speaker, partnerships need all of us and all of these that I have mentioned to actually work together.

The hon member Lekker focuses on energy. I wonder if the member actually reads the Annual Report. I wonder if the member is actually aware that Hessequa Municipality, Riversdale to be precise, the Energy Council

approved that site for development, that they have gone through the processes; that procurement has been concluded. That construction is commencing as we speak.

†Maar nee, die lid lees nie haar *Annual Report* nie, [But no, the member does not read her Annual Report,] because why, failed commitments makes you tone-deaf as well.

The hon member Petrus, †ek stem saam met u oor die behoefte van bemagtiging maar ons moet ook verstaan 'n graad 2 kontrakteur kan nie 'n graad 9 kontrakteur se werk doen nie, maar deur ons Departement is daar verskeie programme om opkomende individue in ons sektor nie net te bemagtig nie maar om hulle ook te bevorder.

[The hon member Petrus, I agree with you about the need for empowerment but we must also understand that a grade 2 contractor cannot do the work of a grade 9 contractor, but through our Department there are various programmes to not only empower emerging individuals, but also to promote them.]

And that is why we are the only province that has an Empowerment Impact Assessment Tool to measure the impact of our investment across all of our portfolios in terms of our projects.

†Dit sal help as die lid dalk vra deur die Staande Komitee, *Deputy Speaker*, dat ons meer daaroor kom verduidelik. Hierdie DA-beheerde Wes-Kaap doen

nie *bean counting* nie. [Tussenwerpsel.] Mense gaan deur prosesse. Ons bemagtig mense wettiglik. Ons is nie soos waar die PA 'n plaaslike vlak regeer waar hulle korrupsie en nepotisme toelaat nie. Ek sal dit nie toelaat nie, nog minder my Hoof van Departement en ons span. Dit is dalk 'n les wat die PA moet neerskryf vir die toekoms.

[It would help if the member perhaps asks through the Standing Committee, Deputy Speaker, that we come and explain more about it. This DA-governed Western Cape does not do bean counting. [Interjection.] People go through processes. We empower people lawfully. We are not like where the PA governs on a local level where they allow corruption and nepotism. I will not allow that, even less my Head of Department and our team. It is perhaps a lesson that th PA must write down for the future.]

An HON MEMBER: Matzikama.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: In terms of the EFF, member again, †ek weet nie hoe moet ek reageer nie, want daar is 'n Annual Report [I don't know how I should react, because there is an Annual Report.] It outlines everything we have done, so how could you not see how we have spent over R2 billion in terms of Human Settlements? Perhaps it would help instead of being virtual to actually stuff physically to read through those documents.

Hon member Jacobs, just for clarity, the Rapid School Build Programme is a WCED Programme. We do play a different role in terms of supporting our sister department, and we do wish them well and see the successes of their

programme as well.

To our Standing Committee Chairperson, indeed, infrastructure is a lot more than roads, brick and mortar. We bring communities together. We play an economic role. We bring different sectors together and I think your input has actually highlighted that and I do want to thank you.

Then in terms of housing delivery and the comparison between what the ANC did and what this Provincial Government did. When the DA took Government in 2009, Deputy Speaker, because the ANC were chasing beans, they were chasing numbers but not focusing on improving the quality of our people's lives actually, but numbers, the thousands of units that had to be rebuilt across this province since 2009, and I did say this in the previous term of office, Tokyo Sexwale, when he was the National Minister of Human Settlements, tabled the report at the National Parliament stating that the cost of repairing poorly constructed houses was in excess of almost R2 billion. That was just for our province.

†Wat meer kon ons nie gedoen het nie, so hou op maar nou vergelykings trek. Jy kan nie appels en pere vergelyk nie. Jy kan nie kwantiteit met kwaliteit vergelyk nie. [Tussenwerpsel.]

[What more could we not have done, so stop drawing comparisons. You cannot compare apples with pears. You cannot compare quantity with quality.

[Interjection.]]

Then in terms of the Tafelberg site. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Swellendam...

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Again let me tell you, hon members of this House, as the DA we fight for our people, our elderly, our persons with disabilities, those people who respect the rule of law, and we will not see to it that people who do not want to be law-abiding invade our infrastructure so that they can benefit themselves and not be willing to wait in the queue and we will fight the fight, but once these organisations lose the Court cases they must accept the outcome instead of appealing. [Interjections.] So do not blame this Provincial Department or this Provincial Government or our Premier. The ANC must stop using their proxies to fight these battles to prevent our poor from getting a better quality of life. [Interjections.]

Hon Deputy Chair, as I conclude... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order members! Order members! I am seeing members even pointing on my left-hand side.

An HON MEMBER: They are pointing.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I see members are even pointing. The running commentary and the shouting are disrupting.

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: Deputy Speaker, as die skoen jou pas dan trek jy dit aan en as die sout seermaak dan is die wonde werklikwaar werklike wonde en dis wat ons aan daai kant van die Huis sien. [Tussenwerpsel.]

[The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Deputy Speaker, if the shoe fits, wear it and if the salt hurts then the wounds are real wounds and that is what we see on that side of the House. [Interjections.]]

†Die HOOF SWEEP VAN DIE OPPOSISIE (ANC): Al die wonde! Julle het dit so gelos. [onduidelik].

[The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OPPOSITION (ANC): All the wounds! You left it like that. [Inaudible.]]

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: Ter afsluiting, Deputy Speaker, ek wil net vir die Staande Komitee Voorsitter en die Staande Komitee-lede baie, baie dankie sê vir hulle proaktiewe rol en oorsig. Ek weet hierdie is 'n dinamiese groot portefeulje en ek wil u baie, baie bedank vir u oorsig.

Ek wil my Hoof van Departement, ons DDG maar ook die hele Span van die Departement baie, baie dankie sê. Ons kom deur 'n baie moeilike jaar. Ons het aanpassings gemaak, maar ek glo ons het dit suksesvol gedoen en dit spreek deur die Aansuiweringsbegroting wat ek ter tafel gestel het. Maar dan wil ek ook vir my eie kantoor baie, baie dankie sê want daar was massiewe aanpassings van die Sesde Termyn tot die Sewende Termyn vir baie van hulle. Ek wil daarom my Hoof van die Departement, Carmen Hartnick baie,

baie geluk sê op haar aanstelling as Hoof van die Departement, maar ook baie sterkte want dit is 'n massiewe aanpassing. Ook die res van die Span by my Ministerie, want saam kan ons verseker dat ons vorentoe kan werk en elke Minister het 'n suksesvolle ondersteunende span wat agter hom staan en dus wil ek ook vir my kantoor onder leiding van Carmen Hartnick baie, baie dankie sê. [Tussenwerpsel.]

[The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: To conclude, Deputy Speaker, I just want to thank the Standing Committee Chairman and the Standing Committee members for their proactive role and oversight. I know this a dynamic large portfolio and I want to really thank you for your oversight.

I just want to thank my Head of Department, our DDG but also the whole team of the Department, very, very much. We're coming through a very difficult year. We have made adjustments, but I believe we did it successfully and it speaks through the Adjustment Budget that I have tabled. But then I also want to thank my own office because there have been massive adjustments of the Sixth Term to the Seventh Term for many of them. I therefore want to congratulate my Head of Department, Carmen Hartnick, on her appointment as Head of Department, but also say all the best because it is a massive adjustment. Also the rest of the team at my Ministry, because together we can ensure that we can work forward and every Minister has a successful supporting team standing behind him and thus I want to say thank you very much to my office under the leadership of Carmen Hartnick. [Interjection.]

But I do want to say, hon Deputy Speaker, to this House, my Department and I and my Ministry are committed, actually dedicated for the task which the Premier has set upon my path, but now it is upon members of this House to ensure that they actually support this Vote, because what we seek to do in this Adjustment will ultimately lead us towards the Main Budget next year.

†Moet nie teen ons wees nie. Wees saam met ons. Loop saam met ons die pad om saam vir ons mense 'n regering vir almal te wees. Hou op kniehalter en teen die enkels skop. Baie, baie dankie. [Applous.]

[Do not be against us. Be with us. Walk the road with us to be a government for all our people. Stop obstructing and kicking against the ankles. Thank you very, very much. [Applause.]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, Minister. Also thank you to the HOD and the Ministry officials for being in the box during this particular time. That concludes the First Order for the Day.

[Debate concluded.]

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Adjunkspeaker...

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): Deputy Speaker...]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon member Petrus?

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Ja, Adjunkspeaker, my hand is al 'n geruime tyd op.

Mag ek praat?

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): Yes, Deputy Speaker, my hand has been up for quite some time. May I speak?]

†Die ADJUNKSPEAKER: Sekerlik.

[The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Of course.]

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Ja, dankie Adjunkspeaker. Ek waardeer dit. Ja, ons vra vir samewerking. Die Minister noem die PA. Ons het nêrens van die DA gepraat nie. Laat ons hou by die debat, Adjunkspeaker.

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): Yes, thank you, Deputy Speaker. I appreciate that. Yes, we ask for cooperation. The Minister mentions the PA. We did not speak about the DA anywhere. Let us stay with the debate, Deputy Speaker.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Petrus, that is unfortunately...

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Ons is nie betrokke by enige ongerymdheid nie.

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): We are not involved in any irregularity.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Petrus, that is unfortunately not a point of order. The debate... [Interjection.]

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Nee, Adjunkspeaker, die Minister het aantygings gemaak dat ons betrokke was [Tussenwerpsel.]

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): No, Deputy Speaker, the Minister made allegations

that we were involved [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: As per the First Order has already concluded, we will promptly proceed. [Interjection.]

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): ...by ongerymdhede betrokke is en dit is heeltemal onwaar.

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): ...in irregularities and that is totally untrue.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order, member Petrus, and your point is noted. We now see... Before I see the Minister and the Secretary reads the Order, are there officials that will be joining us? So we will wait for one and a half minutes.

[Proceedings paused for clearing of the bays.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, we will proceed as we are awaiting officials from the Department of Health and Wellness, but they will be able to join us during the proceedings. I see the Secretary.

†UNOBHALA: INgxoxo-mpikiswano ngeVoti 6 – ezeMpilo neNtlalontle – yoMthetho oSayilwayo woHlengahlengiso loLwabiwo-mali weNtshona Koloni [B2–2024].

[The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 6 – Health and Wellness – Western Cape

Adjustments Appropriation Bill [B2–2024]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Minister.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. To members of the Provincial Parliament, esteemed guests and people of the Western Cape. It is an honour to present the 2024/25 Adjustment Budget for Vote 6, Health and Wellness. This budget is more than a financial document. It is a lifeline to a healthcare system and testament to unwavering commitment to delivering equitable quality healthcare and services to the people of this province.

The additional Appropriation of R197,7 million to the Department provides the fiscal space for urgent and strategic interventions to stabilise and protect a system under immense strain. The challenges before us are severe and demand immediate attention. For years, the demand for healthcare services in South Africa has exceeded the resources available.

This House is well apprised of the dire effects of the 2023/24 financial year, when the National Government failed to fully fund the Wage Agreement. This left the Western Cape Government with an unforeseen and significant budget shortfall across departments. Compounding this situation was the austerity measures implemented by National Government over the next three financial years and which has affected all provinces deeply.

This coupled with medical inflation, which outpaces ordinary inflation and without the requisite budget increases, has put significant pressure on our Goods and Services Budget and putting essential items such as medicine, medical supply and laboratory services at risk. Unlike previous years where cost containment measures could target nonessential areas, attempting to minimise the impact on service delivery, this year has been different. The financial strain is now directly affecting the services rendered by our staff and facilities, and by extension, our residents.

The reality on the ground presents significant challenges, longer queues and growing backlogs are becoming increasingly common, reflecting the immense pressure on Healthcare workers who are doing their best within limited resources.

Of particular concern is the closure of some operating theatres, which has extended waiting times for lifesaving and life-enhancing surgeries impacting on patients and their families. Despite these hurdles, the commitment to delivering quality care remains unwavering.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are at a critical juncture. The Healthcare system is being pushed to its limits, and while this Adjustment Budget offers much needed in-year relief, it is clear that more sustainable solutions are urgently needed.

Today we take a step toward weathering the storm, but we must also look

ahead, determined to advocate for full and fair funding for this Province's Healthcare needs. Hon Deputy Speaker, despite these immense challenges, the Department of Health and Wellness, alongside our dedicated health heroes, has valued innovation, which has been at the very heart of our work and our culture. We have fostered a mindset that encourages out-the-box thinking to develop practical and cost-effective solutions. This approach has been instrumental in helping us to adapt and to stretch our resources to meet the growing needs of communities.

Recently, I had the privilege of attending the ICON 2024, our Department's flagship Innovation Conference. This inspiring event brought together Healthcare professionals from across the spectrum, from HR and administration teams to stock controllers, doctors and nurses, all presenting their groundbreaking innovations. What began as a small initiative to nurture creative thinking has now evolved into an annual showcase of Healthcare ingenuity where both clinical and non-clinical ideas are celebrated.

The impact of these innovations is tangible. They have not only improved Healthcare outcomes, but also enhanced efficiency in our system, allowing us to better serve the people of the Western Cape. These solutions demonstrate how, even within tight financial constraints, we can find ways to deliver more with less.

Recently at the 2024 Batho Pele and Innovation Awards the Western Cape shone as a Government that not only encourages innovation but implements it

to the benefit of our residents. Nominees included the Mitchells Plain CHC (Community Health Centre) for its resuscitation boxes for primary Healthcare facilities, as well as the George Tele ICU.

What I am incredibly proud of is the fact that two of the nominees for Best Frontline Employee of the Year are from the Western Cape, Dr Roland Kroukamp and Mr Deon Terry. Dr Roland Kroukamp is a family physician at the Mitchells Plain CHC. He was recognised for his leadership and dedication. During COVID-19 he addressed vaccine hesitancy and reorganised community care. He supports staff training, wellness initiatives and departmental communication. In 2023 he also won the Western Cape Government's Gold Award for Best Frontline Service Delivery Employee, and Mr Deon Terry won this category. As a community leader, he has trained hundreds of Emergency First Aid responders and established a satellite ambulance station to serve residents in Ocean View and Masiphumelele. He founded the Community First Responder Programme, focusing on community organisations and improving emergency care. He also supports participants with academic tutoring and bursary opportunities for paramedic training.

We can all be incredibly proud of the men and women in our clinics and hospitals who consistently rise to the occasion, working collaboratively to find innovative solutions to complex challenges.

During my listening and learning visits, I have been visiting every corner of the province to gain a deeper understanding of the daily realities our health

hero's face and the struggles of the communities that they serve. What has stood out time and time again is the remarkable dedication, energy and ingenuity of our staff. However, even their extraordinary efforts have limits. It is clear that without sufficient financial resources, the demand for Healthcare cannot be sustainably met.

National Government must prioritise the health of the nation and allocate resources accordingly. In the Western Cape we have made that choice. This Adjustment Budget serves as a vital lifeline, enabling the Department of Health and Wellness to stabilise its finances and protect our Healthcare System.

However, let us be clear, the Adjustment is not about expanding services. It is a critical measure to address inflation in goods and services, to plug budget gaps and ensure financial sustainability. Our focus remains on doing more with less, safeguarding the core of our Healthcare System for the people who rely on it the most.

Hon Deputy Speaker, these adjustments represent a targeted response to our most pressing Healthcare priorities, ensuring optimal use of limited resources. The Budget Adjustment of an additional R197,7 million taking us to R30,6 billion for the financial year, will mean significant support in relieving the goods and services pressures that the Department faces. It will mean we will be able to open up surgical lists and a reinforced focus on population health outcomes.

We further welcome the earmarking of the infrastructure component of the budget by the Provincial Treasury, which will provide flexibility for the Department in the latter part of the financial year.

Deputy Speaker, Programme 1 will see a downward adjustment of R4,1 million. The shifted funds will be directed to other programmes where it will address critical administrative functions, including procuring essential IT equipment and replacing obsolete computers at district central and tertiary hospitals. These upgrades are vital to ensure Healthcare professionals have the tools they need to maintain high standards of care.

In District Health Services, this programme will receive an additional R59 million, bringing the total Adjusted Budget to R12 billion. These funds will support key projects, including providing laptops and office equipment for the chronic medication home delivery team, as well as system development initiatives in Rural Health Services.

Additionally, a R321 000 donation will fund the appointment of a professional nurse at Ceres Clinic to deliver community-oriented primary Healthcare. The reallocation also includes adjustments to the HIV/Aids Budget across service sectors.

An upward adjustment of R17,6 million will be made to the R1,39 billion Budget for Emergency Medical Services. This funding will cover the costs of

equipment carried over from the 2023/24 financial year due to supply delays and higher than expected purchase costs.

The Budget for Provincial Hospital Services will increase by R11,68 million to a total of R4,9 billion. This adjustment is aimed at realigning compensation of employees under the Human Resources and Training Grant for Rural and Metro Health Services, as well as partially funding in-year Service Delivery Pressures.

As the backbone of the tertiary Healthcare System, Central Hospital Services will receive a critical funding boost of R118,8 million. This funding will alleviate service delivery pressures and enable the procurement of essential medical equipment at Tygerberg, Groote Schuur and Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospitals.

Within Programme 6, Health Sciences and Training, shifts have been made to pay the skills levy to the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA). Additionally R3 million will be allocated to the Western Cape College of Nursing to support increased operational costs associated with new programmes and additional students.

However, an overall decrease of R1,7 million will result from shifting R4,7 million to Vote 10, Infrastructure, and this is to extend the lease for the student residents at the Southern Cape Karoo Nursing Campus.

Although overall funding for the Healthcare Support Services Programme remains unchanged, internal shifts within the programme will fund increased tariffs and replace old equipment and machinery in workshops and maintenance hubs.

In Programme 8, Health Facilities Management, we will realign R10 million earmarked for the installation of Solar PV Systems in Provincial Health buildings to the 2025/26 financial year, aligning it with procurement and installation timelines. Meanwhile, an additional R6,5 million from the Health Facility Revitalisation Grant will fund the reconstruction and rehabilitation of infrastructure that was damaged by floods and storm surges between December 2023 and July 2024.

These adjustments ensure that critical areas of the Healthcare system receive the resources needed to maintain and improve service delivery, even within a constrained fiscal environment. In this financial year, we will be commissioning numerous health technology projects such as new and much needed CT Scanners for Groote Schuur, Khayelitsha, Mitchells Plain and Karl Bremer Hospitals, and a Cardiology Imaging System for Tygerberg Hospital.

Hon Deputy Speaker, our ability to appoint staff has slowed due to new regulations from the Department of Public Service and Administration. DPSA Circular 49 of 2023 introduced stricter controls for filling of posts. This has increased administrative burdens and delays, which are impractical for large service delivery departments such as Health. This was coupled with an

unexpected spike in resignations between July and September, making the recruitment process cumbersome and the filling of posts slow. As we navigate the process of filling these posts as quickly as we can any additional resources have been allocated to priority areas to maintain uninterrupted service delivery.

We are in active discussions with the DPSA to advocate for practical solutions, looking at perhaps certain exemptions for large Service Delivery Departments such as Health.

This Adjustment Budget helps to weather the storm of this year. However, Deputy Speaker, over the medium term, the Department of Health and Wellness will need stability for its Budget baseline over the 2025 MTEF, if we are to meet growing Healthcare demands and deliver quality services. Stability and certainty in our baseline are essential for effective planning.

In conclusion, Deputy Speaker, I extend my gratitude to the Department under the excellent stewardship of Dr Keith Cloete. I would also like to thank Dr Kariem, Mr Kaye and Ms Nkosi, thank you very much for your steady leadership.

Hippocrates, to whom the Hippocratic Oath is attributed, and which is the foundational articulation of medical ethics, and which continues to inform and guide medical practice today, once said:

"Wherever the art of medicine is loved there is also a love of humanity."

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Deputy Speaker, in all my listening and learning visits criss-crossing this province, I have been struck by the dedication, compassion and love of humanity of the many men and women that make up this Department. I would also like to thank my own team for always giving each day their very best and their commitment to serving the people of the Western Cape.

Finally, Deputy Speaker, I would like to extend special recognition to our Healthcare workers and support staff. It has been an exceptionally challenging year and as we approach the Festive Season, which is traditionally a time of increased pressure especially in our Emergency Centres and on our Medical Service Teams, they will once again be on the frontlines. To all of them, I say thank you. Thank you for your resilience, your tenacity and compassion. You are the foundation of the Healthcare system, and your dedication does not go unnoticed.

Deputy Speaker, I look forward to the debate. Thank you. [Applause.]

HON MEMBERS: Hear-hear, hear-hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. I see the hon member

Windvogel. [Interjections.] The clock will only commence once hon member Windvogel is ready for action. You may proceed, member.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker, today I rise on behalf of the African National Congress to reject the proposed Adjustment Budget for the Department of Health and Wellness.

The anti-poor Budget fails the people of our province, especially the poor and the vulnerable who rely on public healthcare for their survival. It does nothing to address the systematic challenges in our Healthcare system and instead worsen the crisis. We welcome the fact that the MEC admits that there are a lot of challenges in her Department.

Deputy Speaker, allow me to illustrate the impact of this failing budget with the story of Aunt Sarah from the deep rural areas. Every week, Aunt Sarah walks for kilometres to the nearest clinic, only to find herself in an endless queue. Exhausted but hopeful she waits the entire day, only to be told there are no doctors or medication available and that she must come again. This heart-breaking reality is the life experience of many South Africans, and it is made worse by budgets like this one which neglects the most critical aspects of our public health system. [Interjections.] The DA Government is not realising that the game they are playing involves the lives of our people.

Deputy Speaker, let us examine the Budget. While the Department boasts of R197 million increase the details reveal a troubling picture. Compensation of

Employees has been slashed by over R104 million. How can we expect our Healthcare facility to function when positions for doctors, nurses and other essential personnel remain vacant, especially in the rural areas?

In a deeply concerning move, funds for rural health services are being shifted to goods and services, instead of addressing staff shortages. This deprives rural clinics and hospitals of the staff they desperately need.

In addition millions of rands allocated for infrastructure projects remain unspent due to slow progress. Instead of addressing critical needs, such as rebuilding the GF Jooste Hospital, these funds are now redirected to cover unrelated cost, including R21 million shifted to the Premier's Department for Microsoft Azure Cloud Computing and Technical Service. How long must the people of Klipfontein wait for the hospital they were promised? This delay is not just negligence, it is a betrayal. The DA stole their hospital right before their eyes and now they make them wait endlessly for its return.

Even worse, the budget for building and other fixed structures has been slashed by nearly R30 million. This means fewer upgrades and expansions to Healthcare facilities already stretched beyond capacity. Instead of prioritising these pressing needs, the Department redirect funds to Government Motor Transport, a questionable allocation that raises serious concerns about the DA's priorities.

Deputy Speaker, Premier Winde's much-publicised Violence Prevention Unit

(VPU) which promises a whole-of-government approach to tackle violence is also faltering. Over R3 million earmarked for this flagship programme remains unspent and has now been realigned. How can this Government claim to care about our people's safety and wellness when even its flagship programme fails to deliver results?

The story of unspent and misallocated funds continues. Millions of rands initially allocated for Healthcare infrastructure and other critical services have been diverted, delaying progress and leaving the poorest communities in limbo. This includes R10 million for photovoltaic energy systems in health facilities, delayed until 2025/26. This Government is playing a dangerous game, prioritising fiscal manoeuvring over the service delivery.

Deputy Speaker, this Budget does not just fall short, it actively harms our public Healthcare system. The DA has shown time and again that it is willing to undermine public institutions, leaving the poor to bear the brunt of these failures. The reality on the ground is far removed from the Minister's perspective and unfortunately has severe consequences.

†Vir Antie Sarah en ander soos sy beteken hierdie begroting meer dae van lang afstande loop sonder diens. [Tussenwerpsel.]

Dit beteken meer uitgeputte gesondheidswerkers wat sukkel om aan die eise van onderbemande fasiliteite te voldoen. Dit beteken vertraagde infrastruktuurprojekte wat verligting kon bring aan oorlaaide hospitale en

klinieke, en dit beteken die voortbestaan van 'n tweeledige gesondheidstelsel waar die rykes private sorg kan bekostig, terwyl die armes aan hul lot oorgelaat word. [Tussenwerpsel.]

[For Antie Sarah and others like her, this budget means more days of walking long distances without service. [Interjection.]]

It means more exhausted health workers who struggle to meet the demands of understaffed facilities. It means delayed infrastructure projects which could have brought relief to overcrowded hospitals and clinics, and it means the continued existence of a twofold health system where the rich can afford private care while the poor are left to their fate. [Interjection.]]

Deputy Speaker, Black lives also matter. [Interjection.]

†Adjunkspeaker, hierdie begroting weerspieël 'n regering wat die belange van 'n bevoorregte minderheid bo die behoeftes van die meerderheid stel. Die ANC het 'n ander visie vir gesondheidsorg. [Tussenwerpsel.]

'n Visie gewortel in waardigheid, gelykheid en toeganklikheid, en ons glo daarin om hierdie Regering aanspreeklik te hou vir sy mislukking. Die mense van Klipfontein verdien hul hospitaal. Landelike gemeenskappe verdien klinieke wat ten volle beman is. Ons gesondheidswerkers verdien die ondersteuning wat hulle nodig het om hul werk te doen en Tannie Sarah verdien om by 'n gesondheidsfasiliteit in te stap en die versorging te kry wat sy benodig.

Adjunkspeaker, dit is die begroting van gebroke beloftes, verkeerde prioriteite en doelbewuste verwaarlosing. Die mense van hierdie provinsie verdien beter en dit begin met die verwerping van hierdie begroting en die eis van ware aanspreeklikheid en betekenisvolle veranderinge. Baie dankie, Adjunkspeaker. [Applous.]

[Deputy Speaker, this budget reflects a government that puts the interests of a privileged minority above the needs of the majority. The ANC has another vision for health care. [Interjection.]

A vision rooted in dignity, equality and accessibility, and we believe in holding this Government accountable for its failure. The people of Klipfontein deserve their hospital. Rural communities deserve clinics fully staffed. Our health care workers deserve the support they need to do their work and Tannie Sarah deserves to walk into a health facility and receive the care she needs.

Deputy Speaker, it is the budget of broken promises, wrong priorities and deliberate neglect. The people of this province deserve better and it starts with the rejection of this budget and the demand for true accountability and meaningful changes. Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Thank you, Deputy Speaker. [Applause.]]

†Die ADJUNKSPEAKER: Baie dankie, agb lid Windvogel. [The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Windvogel.] I see the hon member

Stephens. [Interjection]

An HON MEMBER: Ms Windvogel was listening during the Sixth Parliament.
[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order members, members! [Interjections.]
Members, questions and conversations across the floor are definitely not allowed. Dr Karim, Dr Cloete and Mr Kaye bring a calming presence to this particular Chamber, and I trust that that will be maintained. We now see the hon member Stephens. [Interjections.]

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The Budget Adjustment on Health was 100 and [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please take a seat hon member Stephens. Members, I would not want to stop the proceedings and especially considering that certain members are allocated x-amount of time. So on a two-minute input I would not want to ever stop hon member Stephens. Can we please respect the decorum of the House? Hon member Stephens.

†n AGBARE LID: Baie dankie, Adjunkspeaker.

[An HON MEMBER: Thank you, Deputy Speaker.]

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The Budget Adjustment on Health was R197 million, of which the biggest portion was for

Central Hospital Services. While this was given to Central Hospital Services, our Ambulance Service throughout the Western Cape is under severe pressure due to financial strain.

In the Garden Route during my oversight visits, only three ambulances were available, and patients have to wait up to two to three days for Ambulance Services. More funds should be made available to Day Hospitals in critical areas such as Mental Health Services, particularly in rural and under-serviced areas. While the Government claims to have integrated Mental Health Services, in reality many individuals still face barriers to accessing these services. There is a lack in Mobile Services to these rural areas. There are limited facilities and professionals are unavailable.

I also want to make an example of a young woman named Kashnee Alexander. She was in an accident a week ago, taken to the Kraaifontein Day Hospital, with no physical wounds, no x-rays or examinations took place due to no qualified staff on duty, or standby to do x-rays, and she was discharged. 48 hours later she was rushed to the Tygerberg Hospital and sadly succumbed to internal bleeding. She was only 21 years old. The same case also happened to a seven-year-old. This is merely a drop in the ocean. How do you intend to eradicate these crucial challenges, especially in the disadvantaged communities and treat patients with dignity and respect?

In conclusion, while the Western Cape Government has made commendable efforts in addressing our Health system, the critical assessment of current

initiatives reveals gaps in funding, accessibility, and stakeholder engagement. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Stephens. I see the hon member Lithakong.

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Once again, Deputy Speaker. Deputy Speaker, a Budget increase of more than R197 million means nothing to the people of Gugulethu and the Klipfontein region who remain without a hospital after the decommissioning of GF Jooste Hospital in 2013.

Deputy Speaker, 11 years later people in Klipfontein area still do not have a regional hospital while this Department promised by 2019 the hospital will be completed. So clearly we are dealing with a dishonest, untrustworthy Government which is not considerate to the plight of the poor people of the Western Cape. To this day it is not clear when the hospital will be built. The failure to build the regional hospital is also coupled with the failure to protect, to provide resources which will enable our clinics to operate 24/7. Our people are constantly subjected to long queues in these clinics because proper and specific medication for their need is just not available at the dispensary.

Deputy Speaker, the Economic Freedom Fighters also calls for the

capacitation of human resources in our public hospitals so far as the staff is concerned, for the purposes of efficiency.

The turnaround time for the patients to be attended to must be improved, as we cannot have patients passing away while sitting on the hospital benches, only because upon arrival at the hospital they did not deem their situation as too serious. *Somlomo*.

The Economic Freedom Fighters will not support this Vote. I thank you.

[Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Lithakong. I see the hon member Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, Deputy Speaker, thank you. [Speaking in vernacular – 01:15:01]

Deputy Speaker, the NCC takes note of the allocated Budget to the Department of Health and Wellness. We are aware that this Budget will largely be used in investment of infrastructure as in facilities.

Now one can just take a drive at Groote Schuur Hospital and witness first-hand the infrastructure development. Now this is a positive sign. But the NCC must demand that the Department also look at the staff retention and staff growth, as service delivery at most of these facilities is in shambles and

needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Deputy Speaker, it is no use we have beautiful facilities that is understaffed and under-resourced, so if the Budget does not speak in this direction, many of our people will continue to die at our hospitals. *Aesa!*

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Jacobs. I see the hon member Booysen. Colleagues and members would be fully aware that as per tradition for the last Sitting for the calendar year, members are allowed to don or wear their particular hats. Over to you, hon member Booysen. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, the Premier, members of the House, fellow Western Capers. Last week South Africa commemorated World AIDS Day, and we all stood together as a Rainbow Nation reflecting on lives lost and lives transformed, and our hope for the future.

Deputy Speaker, allow me to narrow this down to the Western Cape. On 4 December 2024 I was part of the Debate in the National Council of Provinces titled "Collective Action and Individual Responsibility in the Fight against HIV and AIDS."

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Deputy Speaker, every speaker during the Debate who referred to statistics, to prevalences had no choice but to acknowledge the achievements and efforts of the Department of Health and Wellness of the Western Cape. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): They referred to our innovations, to the tools used, to our awareness campaigns, to our world-class evidence-based research, to our dedicated Healthcare practitioners, etcetera, etcetera.

Deputy Speaker, and members of the House and people of the Western Cape, our efforts have not gone unnoticed to the rest of the world. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): At the 8th Global Symposium on Health Systems Research held in Nagasaki, Japan, Dr Keith Cloete received world recognition for his contributions in the medical fields. [Applause.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear! [Applause.]

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Deputy Speaker and members of the House, my personal interactions and engagements with Dr Cloete was during the brutal

days of COVID-19. Dr Cloete, I know that you know that that recognition is a team effort.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I also want to thank the Premier, I want to thank the predecessor of this Department of Health, Professor Mbombo, I want to thank Dr Cloete and his team and all frontline workers for their bravery and leadership during COVID-19 and to date.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I know that the members might ask why am I going back in time. [Interjection.] Let me tell them. Mr Deputy Speaker, whilst other provinces were planning on how to corrupt the PPE system and how to steal the funds... [Interjection.] [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): The Premier of this Province, Alan Winde, gathered all the District Mayors... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Sing for yourself!

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): ...under one roof regardless of political affiliation and stakeholders, when he set up extended Cabinet meetings.

An HON MEMBER: No he does not.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Dr Meyer took it a step further; he engaged all different religious fraternities in the province to not just pray but to assist in the rollout of whatever tools and whatever food during lockdowns. [Interjection.]

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Western Cape to this day is enjoying the fruits of the above efforts, while the rest of the country is still reeling under the brunt of the PPE corruption. [Interjection.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): We lost our family members! So do not come and tell us here.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Today, Mr Deputy Speaker, not even the NCOP can politicise the achievements of the Western Cape and this Department of Health and Wellness. [Interjection.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Health is a local budget. What is your budget?

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Minister Wenger, bravo to you, and your Ministry, continue to carry the flame of hope.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Health is a local budget.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): The innovation of this Department is not just a display of intelligence, but it is lifesaving. We are all aware of the robotics

at Tygerberg Hospital, and we are all aware of Georgie in George.

Deputy Speaker, this Province, this Department is not without challenges. These challenges include finances, the lack thereof. This Department is faced with infrastructural constraints, some of the buildings, some of the facilities do not belong to us and that limits our efforts in what we intend doing with those facilities.

There are human resources complexities, people resign for greener pastures, some people retire, and the challenge which generally the Opposition does not take into account, it takes six to nine months to replace any vacancy.
[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Why, why, why?

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): ...and the question is why? Let me tell the member why. [Interjection.] It is because, it is because DPSA needs to review their processes on how we replace staff. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: You firstly have to gain permission from your Premier.
[Interjections.]

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Mr Deputy Speaker, there will also be the brunt faced by communities. There will always be queues at the hospital. There will always be queues at the clinic. Our aim is to get patients through those

lines as quickly as possible knowing that every 10 minutes would feel like an hour to those who seek treatment. [Interjection.]

Deputy Speaker, let me come to the task at hand, which is to approve Vote 6 under very difficult circumstances.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Without appointing staff.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): I am not going to bore the members by going through this Blue Book page by page, because they have all received it [Interjections] But Deputy Speaker, what I will do, what I will do is to convey our gratitude as a Standing Committee of Health and Wellness, to Minister Baartman. [Interjections.]

Minister Baartman, thank you very much for the increase of R197 750 000. That is Greek to the Opposition. [Laughter.] [Interjection.] This will go a very long way in a department which is known for endless clean audits. Now I know even the AG is in awe of what is happening in this Department. It is not just in the Western Cape; it is not just in South Africa. It is not even in the African continent that other departments can achieve what this Department has achieved. But I now know what the next question is going to be. When you relate and when you refer to clean audits, the Opposition will always say people are not working and people are hungry, but Minister Bredell will always remind us that where there are clean audits, more people have food on the table. Where there is mismanagement, more people have no

food on the table and more people have no jobs. [Interjection.]

Mr Deputy Speaker, for the benefit of those who have never experienced being in an outright majority, let me tell them, it is easier to be in Opposition, because when you are in Opposition, you can criticise until the cows come home. When in Opposition you can shoot the messenger, as they are shooting us during these debates.

Mr Deputy Speaker, when you are in Opposition you can distort the facts, and you can create a negative narrative but let me tell you also what has happened here today. When you are in Opposition you can commit plagiarism. The Auntie Sarah issue belongs to nobody else but to Professor Mbombo. [Interjection.] [Applause.]

Minister Wenger, with all the achievements, with all the achievements of this Department I still have sleepless nights. [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Do not paint this narrative, the problem of Auntie Sarah. [Interjections.]

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Can we just once imagine; can we just once imagine for any or the slightest deviation that might be picked up in this Department that would affect any clean audit going forward. I know what the narrative is going to be and that gives me sleepless nights, Dr Cloete, because at times we are not seeing eye-to-eye with the AG, because their interpretation will

always differ especially if we deliver and then report. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: It differs when it fits them.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Ladies and gentlemen, let me also as the Standing Committee Chairperson say to this Department, that we as a committee, we acknowledge the blood, sweat and tears of the Healthcare workers in this Department, and to the Opposition, it is not too late, nor is it a crime to follow your hearts and do the right thing for the people of the Western Cape and approve this Budget with us. We as the Democratic Alliance, we approve this Budget. I thank you, Deputy Speaker. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Booysen. I see the Minister.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Thank you, Deputy Speaker, and thank you to the members for their contributions to the debate.

Unfortunately austerity measures disproportionately affect the poor, the working class and the marginalised because they rely on Government services the most. So when we say austerity and how it affects service delivery, unfortunately that is the reality and the reason why we have been so vocal in speaking out against the austerity measures and the way in which the National Fiscal Framework has been affecting provinces disproportionately, and it is in those provinces where frontline services are delivered. So those

actions have consequences, and it cannot be that the per capita spending in public Healthcare in 2023 is less than what it is in 2017 in South Africa. That shows a misalignment of priorities and if we really want to make sure that we can provide good quality services to the poor and the marginalised then we start with funding provinces accurately and correctly.

On the issue of the infrastructure, I am sure the hon member would have read in the Budget Book page 132 to 154, there are pages and pages and pages of infrastructure projects. I will not have the time to read through all of them to show the progress that we are making in respect of our infrastructure, but I will just highlight a few for the House. On Monday we will be officially opening the Clinic in Ladismith which is now completed.

We have projects in construction: the Philippi Weltevreden CDC new Clinic is currently being built. The Bothasig CDC upgrade and additions are underway and should be ready early next year. The Parow Ravensmead CDC Replacement Project is proceeding as planned and is currently under construction.

The Wellington Saron Clinic roof refurbishment is imminently going to be completed. The Mossel Bay, George Road Clinic replacement site handover occurred just last this month. We then also have multiple projects in design, so for example the Hanover Park CHC is in Stage 4 design documentation. Elsie's River CHC is currently in Stage 3 design. Paarl CDC New Clinic, architects have been appointed and briefed in June of this year. The Maitland

CDC replacement is in Stage 3 design development and on-going. The Diazville Clinic replacement, the tender was awarded in August. The Vredenburg CDC, a new facility is in Stage 2 concept design and is progressing. The Khayelitsha Nolungile CDC rehabilitation, Stage 4 is underway, and construction will continue in 2026.

So there are just a few of them, but there are many, many more, there are pages and pages and pages and pages in the Budget Book. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Tell us about... [Inaudible.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Then a few members raised the issue of the Regional Hospital. [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order members!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: On the Regional Hospital...
[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: ...we are moving ahead steadily with our planning for construction, of not one, but two massive

Regional Hospitals, Belhar and Klipfontein. These mega multibillion rand Hospital Projects are well in their cycle, and we did present this information to the Standing Committee not too long ago. [Interjection.]

The problem, as I mentioned earlier, with the underfunding of provinces is that it affects all provinces, and we are starting to see what that means elsewhere as well. So for example in Gauteng in a report released just last week, the Gauteng Provincial Health Department is staring down a R4,8 billion shortfall in-year. Medical Supplies are now refusing to supply the Department with equipment and essentials because of non-payment. In June of last year the Eastern Cape Government owed R4 billion rand to suppliers for medicine and oxygen and anaesthetic... [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Tell us about the Western Cape.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: And we see many stock-outs elsewhere. So it shows that this is a problem across the system... [Interjections.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): We have nothing to do with the Eastern Cape.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member! Member Windvogel, you are shouting. You are drowning out the Minister, and we would like to hear the inputs based on the debate.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: So public Healthcare funding is a problem across the system and that is the point I am trying to make. All provinces are affected by this, and austerity is not helping us. We need to have a serious conversation about Healthcare and being prioritised in the National Budget envelope. Then I have to say I am distressed that the hon member would accuse health heroes of being purposefully neglectful. I do not agree. I have crisscrossed the province. In fact I have seen the opposite. [Interjection.] I have seen people that do their very best. They go above and beyond every day under very, very trying circumstances. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: The Red Cross.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: If there is a bad – member, if there is a bad apple, I would encourage the hon member to please report it, but not to – when that happens not to make that a generality, because it is not a generality, and it does nothing to help with the motivation of staff who work very hard.

Then to hon member Stephens, thank you very much for your comments. I have noted them. In this Adjustment we will be prioritising R17,6 million to Emergency Medical Services. Of course we could do with much more, you are quite right. So we are looking at other ways of providing care, so just this week the EMS Services have put together a cohort of motorbikes with a trained medical professional, with lifesaving equipment on the motorbikes, so they are able to be that first point of contact quicker, because sometimes the

ambulances and especially when there is a lot of peak hour for example and they cannot get to the patient quick enough, we can now use motorbikes. So we are looking at various ways to be able to... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, are you able to take your seat?

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: No, I am mid-response.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a point of order.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Oh, a point of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you have a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (ANC): Deputy Speaker, the MEC cannot refuse the Deputy Speaker to say, "No, I cannot take my seat." I would like to ask a question. Is the MEC willing to take a question, Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, are you willing to take a question? The Minister replied she is not. You may proceed, Minister. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: It is not school.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Thank you. Then to the hon

member Jacobs, thank you also very much for your comments. We are prioritising filling posts as quickly as we can. [Interjection.]

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (ANC): She cannot say whether she can or cannot.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. I already said the Minister indicated no. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Education is after the class will stop. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Then finally to hon member Booyesen. Thank you very much for your comments and the notes you made in the Debate. Thank you very much for your leadership in the Standing Committee. I would also like to thank the members of the Standing Committee for the oversight role that they play, and for their constructive engagement with the Department.

Then in conclusion, I would also like to thank my predecessor, hon Mbombo for her hard work that she has put in over many years over the past in the Department of Health and Wellness, and finally I would like to wish members a very safe Festive Season. I ask you all to please be responsible and be vigilant, especially if you are with or celebrating with children, and especially if it is near any bodies of water. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, members. That concludes the Debate. Also thank you for the officials that attended and were seated in the box.

[Debate concluded.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I note the Secretary to read the next Order, during this particular debate a number of civil societies and visitors also entered the gallery, so please feel welcome as you attend today's Sitting. I now see the Secretary.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 5 – Education – Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill [B2–2024]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Minister.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. This has been a particularly challenging year for the Western Cape Education Department, and this has been an incredibly difficult time for our teachers, for our principals, for our schools, for our parents, and of course for our learners, but despite this we continue to draw inspiration and hope from our Education System.

At last week's National Education Excellence Awards, Hoër Meisieskool Bloemhof in Stellenbosch was announced as the Best Quintile 5 School in our

country. Rhenish Girls High School, also in Stellenbosch, was awarded third place in the same category and Isalathiso Primary School in Mossel Bay received an award as one of the schools with the Best Kept and Maintained School Grounds in our country, and at the National Batho Pele Innovation Awards, one of our Overberg Education District officials, Johan Clarke, received two awards for his Learner Transport Scheme App, and our Rapid School Build Team received the Bronze Award for the outstanding work that they have done building beautiful schools, serving poor communities faster than ever before here in our province.

The continued pursuit of excellence by these schools and officials brings hope and I think inspiration to the Western Cape. Hon members may also be aware that the 2023 trends in International Mathematics and Science Survey results were released this week, which indicated that the Western Cape achieved the top scores for Mathematics and Science in Grade 5 and in Grade 9. But of course there is still more work to be done so that we reach higher international benchmark scores. It is not merely a case of reversing the losses from the COVID-19 pandemic; it is also about improving scores beyond what there were before the pandemic started. Shifting the needle on these international assessments as well as our own annual systemic tests takes a substantial investment in quality education here in the Western Cape.

Deputy Speaker, we cannot say that a child is receiving quality education if there are too many learners in a class, if there are too few teachers in a school, and if there are too few schools in our province. That is why we set

out a bold new direction for education in our Budget Speech last year to improve learning outcomes, to expand access to education, and to support learners with special education needs.

We announced that the Education Budget had become the largest in the Provincial Government and the largest budget we had ever allocated to Education in the Western Cape. We announced the creation of the BackOnTrack programme to provide academic support to 18 000 learners and 6 200 teachers, to reverse the learning losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We announced that we would build 21 schools in one year through our innovative Rapid School Build Programme to rapidly expand access to education, and we announced that an additional allocation of R135 million would be made to build new special schools and classrooms as well as provide additional support for learners with autism and learners with profound intellectual disabilities. But by the middle of the year we began to hear that something was seriously wrong, and that National Government was in trouble. We heard rumours that National Government could not afford the 2023 Public Sector Wage Deal and that a full-blown fiscal emergency was looming, and once the National Minister of Finance announced the mid-term Budget on 1 November 2023, the sheer scale of the National Fiscal Emergency hit us.

Our Department received only 64% of the cost of the Wage Agreement, which

meant we were short-changed by National Government to the tune of about R537 million. At the same time the Department of Basic Education cut our Conditional Grants by R179,4 million, thus dealing our Department a massive R716,4 million budget blow... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Sjoe!

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: ...to our ability to build and maintain schools and to pay teachers. [Interjection.] We took action to deal with the in-year budget cuts and the deficit in the new financial year in order to fight for our teachers and avoid a reduction in the basket of posts. We froze Public Service posts in our head office and district offices, leaving these offices with a 21% vacancy rate. We made R2,5 billion in non-personnel budget cuts, including a R436 million cut to the BackOnTrack programme and a R1,2 billion cut to infrastructure spending. We sped up the conversion of contract appointments to permanent appointments. We stopped the provision of substitute teachers, except to cover teachers on maternity leave. We stopped the provision of post Level 1 contract teachers in place of those acting in vacant school management team promotion posts. We required any post level 1 vacancy to be advertised in a vacancy bulletin, and not to be filled with contract appointments, and we required any vacant public service post at schools to be advertised in a vacancy bulletin, and not to be filled with contract appointments.

We did all of this to try to avoid a basket of post reduction and to deliver on

a balanced budget for the 2024/25 year, and I remind members that we announced all of this in last year's Adjustment Budget, and of course this year's Main Budget.

Unfortunately, Deputy Speaker, it was not enough. The projected savings from these measures were not what we hoped, leaving us with a R3,8 billion Budget deficit over the next three years.

In essence the National Fiscal Emergency wiped out our bold new vision for Education. We were left with no choice other than to reduce the basket of posts by 2 407 posts. This has put tremendous pressure on our schools and on our teachers. It is not a decision that was made lightly, and it is not a position that we should ever have been put in.

Now after implementing, after implementing the basket of post reduction we brought the Budget deficit in the current financial year 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 close the gap, and we dealt with the remaining deficit by making even more severe non personnel budget cuts. This all had to be done just to break even at our current learner numbers and our current staff level after the post reduction.

The earmarking of the R600 million in infrastructure funding gives us some manoeuvrability in finding ways to deal with 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 of course be an absolute last resort.

Deputy Speaker, as I said during the Second Reading Debate earlier this week, the challenge going forward is now providing the infrastructure, the teachers, and the school resources needed for the 2025 school year, given the expected increase in learner numbers.

As of 4 December 2024, we have allocated places for 117 407 or 97% of the learners for whom applications were received for Grade 1 and 8 for the 2025 school year. Placement is in progress for 3 698, or 3%, of Grade 1 and 8 learners. We understand of course that this is a stressful and an anxious period for parents and we are asking parents to work with us as we try to accommodate their children as soon as possible. We are exploring all available options to find a place for these learners for the start of the school year.

In addition, from 1 January 2025, we expect to receive extremely late admission applications for about 4 000 Grade 1 and 8 learners. We will work to place every learner for whom an application was received going forward, but we want to be clear that Western Cape schools are full, and we appeal for patience from parents submitting new applications, as they may not be placed before the end of the first term in the 2025 school year.

To provide new school places for learners in the 2025 school year, we are building new schools and classrooms through our Rapid School Build Programme. We are scheduled to complete six new schools and 180 additional classrooms at existing schools in time for the start of the school year in January 2025, but that is not all.

We aim to complete a further three new schools and 85 additional classrooms for learners by the end of March 2025. This brings the total to nine new schools and 265 additional classrooms for learners in the 2025 school year. We will also have to make provision for new schools and for new classrooms to have teachers, and we are considering all the available options ahead of the 2025 school year.

Deputy Speaker, dealing with admissions pressure is always tough, but this year is likely to be exceptionally challenging, and must be upfront, and we must be honest about the risks that we face. We face the risk of delays in placing learners, especially those who arrive next year, several months after the application window closed. We do not know where they will seek placement or what their grades, languages, ages, or subject choices will be. This makes planning and resource allocation for extremely late applications very difficult, and their parents will have to wait some time before their child is placed and face the risk of course of declining Learning Outcomes. Teacher workloads are increasing, and class sizes are also increasing, so we know that this will affect teaching and learning.

As always we will manage these risks to the best of our ability, and in the best interests of our children. We are going to make some tough choices moving into the new school year because there are no simple solutions when dealing with a fiscal emergency, and so I ask everyone to work with us and not against us as we face these challenges. We understand that this has been an incredibly difficult time for teachers, for principals, for schools, for parents, and for learners, and I want to assure you all that we will continue to do everything we can to fight for our teachers, and to fight for quality education here in the Western Cape. Thank you, Deputy Speaker. [Applause.] [Interjection.]

The PREMIER: Hear-hear!

An HON MEMBER: Sorry, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members. Members, as per the Rules those in the gallery are not allowed to participate. [Interjections.] I will trust... [Interjections.] Members, I would not want to request the Serjeant-at-Arms to remove any person. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: The Minister must go to Witzenberg. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ma'am, under normal circumstances...

[Business of the House is resumed at 13:30.]

[The Speaker takes the Chair.]

The SPEAKER: Please be seated. Good afternoon, hon members, colleagues, guests in the gallery. Just give me one second. The Secretary will read the Fourth Order of the day.

†Die SEKRETARESE: Debat oor Begrotingspos 3 – Provinsiale Tesourie – Wes-Kaapse Aansuiwerings Begrotings Wetsontwerp [B 2-2024].

[The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 3 – Provincial Treasury – Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill [B 2-2024].]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie. Ek sien die Minister van Finansies, Minister Baartman.

[The SPEAKER: Thank you. I see the Minister of Finance, Minister Baartman.]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Good afternoon, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, last week I tabled “A Budget to Weather the Storm”. The Adjustment Budget highlighted the Western Cape’s resilience and recovery in the face of economic and fiscal upheaval.

Now today, hon Speaker, I take off my Treasury hat and I put my Finance

Executive Authority hat on in order to table the smallest Western Cape Government departmental Vote.

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: The current fiscal environment requires the Provincial Treasury to be proactive and responsive in its approach to managing public funds effectively and efficiently, not only within the general Western Cape Government ecosystem, but also within the Provincial Treasury.

In order to ensure that the Western Cape's financial position holds steady, the Provincial Treasury identified key values for the medium-term; fairness, trust, value for money, innovation, and we have made significant progress so far.

Today I wish to focus mostly on being a Provincial Treasury you can trust, because it is important that the people of the Western Cape can trust that we know how to sail our ship. In order to foster trust I have engaged with various MMCs of Finance across districts in the Western Cape prior to the MTBPS to gauge them on opportunities and risks facing our municipalities. As an enabling and reliable partner, we are hosting the Provincial Budget and Governance Forum this coming Monday with municipalities, to enhance governance and budget alignment.

We further established a Municipal Intelligence Team to enhance municipal support and collaboration and continue with our implementation of the Automated Internal Audit System to strengthen internal audit capacity.

We are prioritising support for municipal financial sustainability. This past financial year Provincial Treasury evaluated municipal budgets through the Strategic Integrated Municipal Budget Engagements to ensure cohesive planning, monitored budget implementation and performance through quarterly municipal performance assessments. We provided detailed feedback to municipalities on the Annual Reports. We reviewed service delivery and budget implementation plans for compliance with the MFMA, allocated financial assistance to improve governance through the Municipal Financial Recovery Services Grant, and fostered collaboration and knowledge sharing on fiscal challenges through the CFO Forum.

Hon Speaker, trust also means that it is important that what we are saying and what we are doing are correctly reflected in our financial statements. For the second consecutive year the Western Cape Government departments and entities achieved 100% unqualified audits, and the Provincial Treasury boasts its 11th clean audit this year. A testament to resilience despite a tough fiscal environment.

The 2024/25 Adjustment Budget for Vote 3 – Provincial Treasury, reflects R306,1 million and it reflects the strategic priorities of the Department. We have, however, had to revise our budget downwards and this reduction in the

Department's budget represents a net decrease adjusted from the original R339,7 million in the Main 2024/25 Budget, approximately R30,6 million in an adjustment.

The majority of the reductions is due to releasing Compensation of Employees funds back to the Provincial Revenue Fund as a result of a revised recruitment plan and a revised fiscal consolidation strategy.

In terms of accounting changes in the budget, you will see particular shifts between units in order to maximise efficiency within the Department. Additionally, funding has been reallocated for research to the outer financial years.

The adjustment presented us with a variety of challenges, but also opportunities, and has forced us to look closely at the Department's long-term viability, rethink our approach to internal operations and lay the groundwork for future sustainability.

We are therefore realigning R23,4 million in COE savings, a significant adjustment which is largely due to our revised recruitment plan due to the fiscal consolidation, as well as delays in filling vacant funded posts, internal promotions, attrition and deferment of graduate trainees.

Trust, therefore, hon Speaker, means indicating why we have COE savings, rollovers and realignments in our budget, and for this we will use the

savings:

- Reallocate R3,5 million to the 2026/27 and 2027/28 financial years for dedicated capacity to develop and implement institutional funding strategy for the Western Cape Government. This will also support our work on alternative and blended financing.
- Reallocate R4,3 million in 2025/26 for the purpose of economic analysis research and to appoint an infrastructure panel of experts to support our work on alternative and blended finance through the evaluation of infrastructure projects.
- Reallocate R3 million to 2025/26 to cover legal fees, expenses related to the Smart Procurement Conference, to support financial sustainability in municipalities, and the appointment of a business and data analyst.
- Reallocate R1 million to 2025/26 for the appointment of resources dedicated to advancing the SCOA strategy, which will further support municipalities.

Hon Speaker, for the 2025 financial year we will, however, reassess capacity constraints and funding requirements within Provincial Treasury, as well as update our talent strategy, because doing more with less for more people comes at a cost.

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: It risks adverse effect on our officials' mental and emotional well-being, and we need to address these risks in the upcoming financial year.

We will further, hon Speaker, rollover R432 000, of which R135 000 is for previously committed office furniture procured to replace obsolete furniture as part of the culture rebrand. We will rollover part of that R230 000 for research related to the 20th and 21st Gambling and Racing Amendment Bills, and R67 000 to cover legal fees related to the 2023 Wage Agreement dispute.

Hon Speaker, you will further see a notable reduction in consultancy services in terms of information and communication technology projects across programmes and identified savings as we have had fewer mobile devices and travel and subsistence claims. These funds will be allocated towards funding critical goods and services needs within the Department.

R122 000 in additional provisions have been made for training and development for the Chartered Accountant Academy trainees, and R157 000 in provisions have been made for audit fees, ensuring compliance and oversight.

However, necessary adjustments were made to the Western Cape Municipal Financial Recovery Services Grant, which has been reduced by R1,69 million, bringing the total allocation down to R310 000, which will be directed to support the Beaufort West Municipality.

We will be increasing the allocation for the Western Cape Financial Management Capability Grant by R2,663 million, raising the total to R20,423 million. These allocations are in line with our commitment to municipal financial sustainability.

Finally, we will shift R830 000 to the Department of the Premier to co-fund the shortfall of Microsoft licences which will be allocated to the Provincial Treasury due to the rand-dollar exchange rate increase.

Hon Speaker, we are having to do more with less for more people, but we are committed to remaining a Provincial Treasury that you can trust as part of a strong Western Cape Government team, to weather the storms we face.

Hon Speaker, as I conclude I want to take a moment to remember one of our dear colleagues within the Provincial Treasury, Ean Steenkamp-Cairns, who sadly passed away last month. Ean dedicated nine years to public service and was deeply admired and respected across the Western Government. Ean was also an incredible support during my first months in this role, and I am deeply grateful for the assistance he offered and the contributions he made, from drafting my ministerial online biography, to organising our very first Provincial Treasury Fintech event with the Fintech Association of South Africa, the Banking Association of South Africa, the Payments Associations of South Africa, and other key stakeholders within the finance sector. He was authentic and kind and cared deeply for his colleagues, who have had not

had time to mourn him while having to work against the clock to put an Adjustment Budget together, and may he rest in peace.

Hon Speaker ...[Incomplete.]

An HON MEMBER: Cheers!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: I would also like to pay tribute to my late friend, admiral finance-sparring colleague. He was stubborn, hon Speaker, Governor Tito Mboweni. I remember the day when I first got elected as a public representative. He was furious, exclaiming, “We did not want this for you,” referring to many of our parents’ conservative dreams for us to become doctors and lawyers and accountants and engineers. He was from a different generation. Well, I wonder what he would have said today as I stand here walking around in shoes that may never fit and I am hoping that up there he has found someone to vigorously debate art and history with, from the history of the South African Reserve Bank to the origins of money. Thank you, and I hope that you are resting in peace with many, many other trees growing around you.

To the colleagues in Cabinet and in my caucus, I thank you for your support. To Chairperson Johnson, the Committee members and the procedural officers of both the Finance and Budget Committees, your dedication and oversight assist us in refining and improving our work.

As we table this Vote today I do so with full appreciation of Team Finance, who have had to pull together during this very difficult period, while also having to manoeuvre and navigate a complex and challenging budget period. I want to thank our head of Treasury, Ms Julinda Gantana, and the rest of the senior management team in the Department; Analiese Pick, Taryn van de Rheede, Paul Pienaar, Michelle Nicholas, Ziyaad Majiet and Malcolm Booysen, for their steady leadership.

I also want to thank each and every staff member in the Provincial Treasury for the late nights and long hours that they have invested into getting us through this Budget period. Your sacrifices and contributions are truly appreciated.

The Provincial Treasury, under the leadership of Ms Gantana, is truly a shining example of excellence within the staff complement of the Western Cape Government.

I would also like to thank my team in the Finance Ministry, Dr Grant Caswell, Marshalle Frederiks, for your key technical insights and expertise, and to Christian Marnewick, Sandra Francisco, Igshaan Davids, Edwina Herman and Gaynor Lucas, for your hard work, efficient operations and logistical arrangements.

Thank you to Team Finance's unwavering commitment to fairness, trust, value for money and innovation.

Hon Speaker, as I mentioned earlier we are having to do more with less, and while difficult decisions have been made, they were taken with the future financial sustainability of the Western Cape Government and the people of our province in mind.

We continue to aim being a Provincial Treasury you can trust and I hereby table Vote 3 of the Adjustment Budget for Provincial Treasury for the 2024/25 financial year for deliberation. I thank you, †en ek lê ter tafel. [Applous.] [and I table. [Applause.]]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agb Minister. [The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister.] I recognise the hon member Nkondlo. [Interjections.]

†Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Enkosi Somlomo. Ndiyazibulisela emva kwalemini ngelixesha, nosukulwethu lokugqibela kulendlu yowiso mthetho. [Thank you Speaker. I greet you all this afternoon, as it is our last day today in this house of parliament.]

Hon Speaker, colleagues, everybody in the House, as the ANC we want to state upfront that we do not support this Budget Vote, considering this is a Budget Vote that has actually decreased from the Main Appropriation with R33,6 million.

Actually, hon Speaker, part of the conversation that the Minister gave, and I

feel her loss of the friend and may his soul continue to rest in peace, of Comrade Tito Mboweni.

One of the things, hon Minister, that you would have known that you have left unattended and unfinished business, is the Money Bill for this Western Cape, that actually renders this budgeting process ineffective, undermines the Legislature's ability to exercise meaningful oversight, and that was the responsibility we were given by this House before [Inaudible.] to the other side.

This Parliament has been stripped of its power by the DA's partisan approach to governance, financial governance included, leaving it unable to intervene in inappropriate budget allocations by the Executive.

So what we are, we become a toothless Parliament because indeed part of why the budget is brought to us is not only to just sing praises of the Executive, it is our responsibility to say indeed there were unforeseen things during the Main Allocation, and therefore, sitting on this side as the Legislature, we believe that this particular intervention, because these budgets are actually prepared by the very Executive, so they become the referees and the players at the same time.

So indeed an instrument that is supposed to enable us, especially in an exceptional province as we are always told, like the Western Cape, should be leading by example to demonstrate that you do what others are not doing.

This current budget fails to prioritise critical issues and we have been lamenting the issue of a claim that was made by MEC Wenger when she was with Finance and called this when it was appropriated, that this is a budget of the poor and when we are raising here in this House issues of the poor to be considered in an Adjustment Budget, those actually are left to deaf ears of a partisan budgeting process.

The issue of a Children's Commissioner, we are told by Provincial Treasury that, no, they have not been spending money. Where has been the Provincial Treasury if an entity is not spending money, where were you? An adequate support for the informal economy, I think we are growing old now and we are actually going to be getting into SASSA, [Interjections.] talking about the informal economy in this particular House, with none of you ever responding to a very critical sector of the economy, where people are standing on the sidelines wanting to participate. They do not want grants, all they want is to want to participate and the fiscal leakages of the fact that these informal traders must be subjected to challenges of crime and many other, including a red tape that you speak about, but it is never clear how it responds to the issues of informal economy.

What is the role of Provincial Treasuries? Provincial treasuries are supposed to play a vital role in ensuring responsible financial management, yet in this one you have fallen short on this mandate. Under the DA-led Government there is a persistent trend of financial mismanagement characterised by

rollovers, [Inaudible.] and unjustified deferrals of funds to future years.
[Interjections.]

Hon colleagues, we have gone past the stage of your clean audits. You can lament those all you want, that is a fact that is not going to be disputed by anybody, [Interjections.] but beyond that fact – hon Speaker, please speak to hon member Bredell. Beyond that particular fact of clean audits the responsibility of the legislative arm of the State is to actually do its work of oversight.

So we are not going to be told by you just because you receive clean audits, it means we must clap hands and we must keep quiet. That is not what the establishment is as per the Constitution of this particular Legislature.

Actually we have seen now a concerning trend of what one terms “prepaid budgeting”, which has emerged where departments request funds during the Main Appropriation, deliberately underspend or delay their use, and then request rollovers, or surrender unspent funds to the very Provincial Revenue Fund. What is going on here?

Actually if you go into the Blue Book, your book, it says what is a rollover? A rollover are funds appropriated in 2023/24, but not spent, to be reappropriated in 2024/2025.

What is the point of us engaging in this budgeting processes? Because

actually if you look, hon MEC of Finance, in the 14 departments, actually in the department here in this particular province, only three had no roll-overs, only three, with the Department of the Premier actually one of the ones that got the biggest roll-over of R20 million, Infrastructure R27,8 million, Agriculture R12 million.

So you have got your Main Appropriation Budget, you also have rollovers, *ne?* Then you come here, again you tell us that there is money ...[Interjections.]

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

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): You also tell us that there is money that you are going to place in future years.

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): This is financial mismanagement [Interjections.] that comes under very nice ...

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Nkondlo.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): ...financial accounting. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I recognise the hon member Constable.

Mr N CONSTABLE (PA): Good afternoon, hon Speaker, and good afternoon my colleagues in the House. Be greeted in the almighty name of Jesus Christ.

Hon Speaker, let me first thank the MEC for answering a lot of my questions so I do not have to speak the whole two minutes. However, hon Speaker, just three issues from me.

First of all, the funds surrendered to the Provincial Revenue Fund amount to R33,6 million. These funds have been surrendered due to slower than anticipated staff appointments and underutilised services.

Also, hon Speaker, the amount for goods and services, and the MEC also answered that one, because my question is, and I have three critical questions:

- What is the long-term plan to reduce consultant reliance and ensure public sector capacity?
- How will rural communities benefit equitably from this budget and what measures will address existing gaps?
- What mechanisms are in place to monitor the impact of surrendered funds on service delivery outcome?

Hon Speaker, three of my recommendations for the MEC for next year, and I know I am not a financial boffin, but, hon MEC, allow me to give it to you, and you have already mentioned it:

- Internal capacity building. Please prioritise investment in human capital within the Provincial Treasury to minimise consultant dependency, and you have already mentioned it.
- Rural development. Allocate specific measurable funds to rural transport and ensure equitable infrastructure investment.
- Proactive disaster planning. Please increase allocations towards climate resilience infrastructure to mitigate future disasters.

With this said, hon Speaker, the Patriotic Alliance supports the Budget Vote
3. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

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

An HON MEMBER: She is not here.

Ms A CASSIEM (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, the Adjusted Appropriation decrease of R33,6 million in Treasury, just shows that the Department does not have much work to do. It is now time for this Department to start pulling its weight and move around

to source funding from Provincial Government projects instead of always complaining about the reduction in Equitable Share to this province.

Hon Speaker, there is a lot that this province can achieve if the Provincial Treasury can start to work. The Provincial Government must find money to build shelters for homeless people, the elderly, abused women and children, and for the specific Department to administer those shelters instead of relying on NPOs to do the work of the Government, only because Government does not want to spend its money, but to push the buck to these NPOs.

Hon Speaker, the office of the Children's Commissioner must also be overseen by Provincial Treasury and budget allocation must come straight from Treasury to the Commission, because currently the Commission is abused under the Department of the Premier, and it is children who suffer the consequences of such abuse.

Hon Speaker, the R33,6 million not used by Treasury is the money which could be used on homeless people, by elderly, the office of the Children's Commission, to list a few.

So in conclusion, for these reasons, among others, the EFF will not be supporting this Vote. Thank you, hon Speaker.

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

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AJA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker, and good afternoon to you and good afternoon to all the members. [Speaking in vernacular 0:24:15]

Hon Speaker, gangsterism and violence in our townships on the Cape Flats are a historical problem and the province over the years have failed to deal with. Children are still forced to do their homework under tables to avoid being hit by stray bullets, schools are not safe places of learning and many children with learning disabilities, especially in rural areas, are forced to attend overcrowded classrooms and denied the education for special needs.

The education of the most vulnerable communities is not being prioritised. No efforts have been made to save the posts of the much needed educators, but despite no safe schools, the province took a decision to allocate more funding to Agriculture than Education and Health.

National Treasury has allocated funding to every province to fight HIV/AIDS, but the Western Cape Premier chose to underspend this budget meant to make the life of HIV/AIDS patients easier.

Al Jama-ah believes that public participation programmes should be [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Brinkhuis, please conclude, your time has

expired.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AJA): Should be revisited to allow more residents and especially people with disabilities, to have their say on the budget. I thank you very much, hon Speaker.

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

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, today we deliberate on a budget that reflects not just fiscal prudence, but a commitment to innovation, growth and resilience.

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Amidst a challenging economic climate the Provincial Treasury has embraced bold and forward-thinking measures to ensure that every rand is utilised with maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Through initiatives like the Fiscal Futures Project and a strategic focus on infrastructure spending, we are laying a strong foundation for sustainable development and economic opportunities in the

Western Cape.

Hon Speaker, Programme 2: The Sustainable Resource Management, exemplifies this innovative approach. Expenditure is projected to increase during the second half of the financial year, largely due to the continuation of consultancy services linked to the Fiscal Futures Project. This initiative is not merely a budgeting tool, it represents a paradigm shift in how we approach fiscal planning and management.

The Fiscal Futures Project is designed to provide a dynamic planning model tailored specifically for the Western Cape Government, enabling our fiscal strategy to adapt to changing economic conditions.

At the heart of this initiative is the Fiscal Futures Tool, a sophisticated financial forecasting mechanism that has already undergone successful live testing. This tool equips us to analyse critical economic trends, such as downward GDP growth or fluctuations in Provincial Revenue, and understand their potential and the impact on the province. By integrating these insights into our planning process, we can make data-driven decisions that are both proactive and strategic. This capability is particularly critical as it allows us to anticipate risks and opportunities, ensuring that the Western Cape is better prepared to navigate an increasingly uncertain global economic landscape.

The Fiscal Futures Project is not just a response to the immediate challenges, but it is a foundation for long-term sustainability. During the previous

financial year the Provincial Treasury faced considerable difficulties in adjusting budgets under fiscal consolidation, yet the Fiscal Futures Tools provide invaluable, enabling scenario-based planning that mitigated risks and improved responsiveness. Beyond its immediate utility, the project identifies and addresses key drivers of fiscal uncertainty at Local Government level. It presents innovative solutions to bolster resilience, ensuring that our fiscal strategies remain robust even in the face of adversity.

The insights gained from this initiatives are already driving critical reforms to our budgeting process, reinforcing our commitment to sustainable financial management.

Hon Speaker, turning to infrastructure spending. It is clear that investment in this area is a key lever for economic growth and job creation. As part of this commitment R2,38 million has been reallocated to the 2025/26 financial year to appoint a panel of experts. This panel will play a vital role in advancing infrastructure funding opportunities by providing technical assistance and evaluating project proposals, including those linked to the infrastructure pipeline. These experts, alongside an institutional fundraiser, will ensure oversight of spending and the development of innovative financing mechanisms.

Infrastructure is central to achieving the Western Cape's vision of a R1 trillion economy. Over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework the Provincial Treasury will continue to strengthen its capacity to select, plan,

appraise and monitor infrastructure delivery. This includes maintaining existing infrastructure and exploring alternative funding mechanisms to support project preparation and implementation.

Importantly, this approach goes beyond the immediate, focusing on institutionalising a governance and delivery management system for infrastructure. This system will ensure integration across departments, promote seamless delivery and holistically manage the lifecycle of immovable assets.

Hon Speaker, the Provincial Treasury is also committed to building the necessary internal capacity to fulfil its infrastructure mandate. As outlined in the DPSA Circular Number 45 of 2020, this involves establishing a credible infrastructure investment pipeline and leveraging alternative funding solutions. By doing so we are not only addressing immediate infrastructure needs, but also laying the groundwork for sustained economic growth and development.

These efforts are undertaken in close collaboration with the Department of Infrastructure to align with the province's broader focus on Growth for Jobs. By prioritising infrastructure as a driver of economic activity, we are unlocking opportunities for communities, businesses and individuals across the Western Cape.

Hon Speaker, together the Fiscal Futures Project and our strategic focus on

infrastructure spending, demonstrate the Provincial Treasury's unwavering commitment to innovation, resilience and growth. These initiatives reflect a government that is not only responsive to current challenges, but also forward-looking in its vision for the future.

Through careful planning, proactive management and a steadfast commitment to sustainable development, we are ensuring that the Western Cape continues to thrive, even in the face of adversity.

To this end I support this Vote. Thank you. [Applause.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Johnson. I now recognise the Minister, Minister Baartman. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, I actually want to tell you about something that happened in the previous term.

So there was a previous member of someone in the Opposition who actually said something really nasty about me in a Sitting once, and I did not know that Gov was watching. He used to randomly check in with what am I doing and what am I saying and why am I fighting, and after this person said

something horrible I did not actually realise that this person was called up from Pretoria to ask, “Why are you saying horrible things about women in different political parties? Why are you saying such mean...” – and what, the reason I am trying to speak about this particular story is because Gov was very passionate about teamwork and also about reading, because the thing apparently that he said to this person was, “If you are not going to read the documents that she is referring to and you are going to say mean things afterwards, then you should not be there in the first place,” and he was very adamant about reading, and I am also very adamant about reading.

So I am just going to quickly go through some of the items that are captured in the Blue Book specifically.

So after net decrease of R33 million, you see that the bulk of it is the R23,4 million for COE, okay. It is R33 million, bulk is R23,4 million, okay, and now we minus the R1,3 million for leave gratuity, injury-on-duty and pension penalty, gone.

Then you decrease the R830 000 for Microsoft licences, gone.

Then we have to plan for the fact that we need an economist to handle our gambling-related matters. So we take R542 000 off that COE, gone.

Now let us deal with the respective COE matters. Of the CEO savings that we have, that R23,4 million, we have to transfer one person from our

Infrastructure Unit, within PT, to another unit in the Finance Unit. So it is a movement in the department, that particular COE.

Then, for example, you see two transfers, two system controllers funders were shifted to the SCM Unit, because of our new structure we need two procurement specialists. So now we are saying, okay, we are going to have less of this, we need procurement specialists. So now you are seeing the COE movement within the Department.

Then, hon Speaker, I actually want to tell you about all of the internal promotions in the COE amount in this book that we have. Our asset management, procurement and contract management position has to be filled due to internal promotion.

The DD for Public-Private Partnership Unit needs to be filled. Why? Internal promotion. Procurement manager needs to be filled, internal promotion. System controller, chief accounting practitioner, LGAC Group 3, chief financial analyst: Legal And Policy Unit, chief financial analyst: financial compliance in the MFMA, the DDG Governance and Asset Management. You see her sitting there, she is HOD now, she must now refill her previous position. These are all internal promotions.

Then you have trainees and interns. We have four CAA trainees' contracts which we have extended from the previous cycle, and the new intake is only going to start on 1 March 2025.

Now when you have a difference between the previous intake and the new intake, and there are delays in these items, you are going to have savings. When you have internal promotions, while you are busy appointing the new people that have to now take your place because you have now entered maybe into senior management, you are going to have savings on COE, and you see, hon Speaker, I said in the beginning I took my Treasury hat off and I put my Finance hat on, because not even Finance is safe from Treasury.

If you have savings in your budget and you are not going to use it this year, you must give it back to the Provincial Revenue Fund, and that is the end of the story.

In terms of internal shifts. The pay interns are going to be paid against the management services and not the capacity building on the system. So you will see there a movement in that money within units.

Then you will see also early appointments which were projected to allow for transfers of skills and the rest of those are savings [Inaudible.] delays of appointments and where we needed to re-advertise specifically, but I did make a commitment previously, the Committee would also send this information to them previously, and we have nothing to hide in that regard.

In terms of future years' spending on COE. Hon Speaker, there are particular niche expert skills in the market that we do not currently have. Not everyone

has the skills to work on alternative and blended financing. Not everyone has the skills to work on alternative and blended financing for particular evaluation of infrastructure projects. It is not just something you are going to wake up and find in the market automatically.

So we need to go out into the market to procure those skills in terms of COE, and every month it takes in order for us to find people that apply for these jobs. It is savings on COE, but you cannot as a department want to keep that savings just for yourself, you must go defend why you must keep the savings, and if you are going to appoint it a month later, if the Premier appointed me on 13 July instead of 13 June, you would have seen one month of remuneration savings for the Minister's office in this budget. That is how it works, because you are not going to pay me back for that month that I did not work, you are going to pay me from the day that I start. That is how the working world works. [Interjections.]

In terms of just the other comments. I am going to try and deal with some of the Finance items, because majority of the questions which were asked are actually questions with the Treasury hat on and not necessarily for Finance.

Just on the Fiscal Futures. Thank you so much. We have already started using the Fiscal Futures tool and just its ability to forecast impacts on future budgets has really been very, very useful and reliable within the Department so that we are able to assess future possible shocks.

In terms of the Money Bill. So, hon Speaker, you would also know, when my term ended as Chair of Budget in the previous term, the Money Bill process was in its technical stages between WCBP and Provincial Treasury at the time.

When I became an Executive, I am no longer part of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament as a member of the Committee, or the Chair of the Budget Committee. That is unfortunately how it works. I cannot help that.

So I await engagement if the Committee wants to have engagement on the Bill, because it would be inappropriate for the Executive Authority to lead the work on the Money Bill. Whether I am passionate about the Money Bill process or not is now irrelevant, because I am no longer the Chair of the Budget Committee, and that just is what it is.

In terms of how much money did we budget for the poor. So even without going into [Interjections.] the line items of the Adjustment Budget specifically, if we only focus on the additional Provincial Revenue, [Interjections.] for example, more than 75% of the additional Provincial Revenue put into this Adjustment Budget was for Health, Education and Social Development.

That is even without going into, for example, the disaster money. That is without, for example, going into some of the infrastructure money that is going to be used in this particular Bill, and I am sure that if we had to even

analyse what that infrastructure had to go for, which the disaster money had to go for, then I think this number probably would be much, much higher.

Again in terms of why are other departments not sending savings back. Hon Speaker, people must send their savings back if they are not going to use it. We are in a very fiscally tough environment. Whatever department your name is, [Interjections.] you can have the fanciest name of department or entity, if you are going to not use your money, if you are going to only use it in the next year, then you must give it back to the Provincial Revenue Fund until you are able to show how you are going to spend your respective money. [Interjections.] None of us, we must be able to spend out money. It is what it is.

In terms of the formal economy. [Interjections.] I would like to refer the hon member to the Department of Economic Development, I know that they are doing some work in this regard, but they will also notice on pages 75 to 79 of the PERO that we have added extra information on informal employment and economy in this regard, [Interjections.] and there are some extra information in the MERO as well, but this does not fall under the Vote 3 mandate specifically.

Just for everyone who will always complain about, you know, you cannot eat a clean audit. [Interjections.] Hon Speaker, there is this thing called the Cash Management Policy in the Provincial Treasury, and the Cash Management Policy actually, by making sure the departments only get the

amount of money that they need per quarter, has actually created R517 million in interest within the Provincial Revenue Fund, and our Provincial Revenue Fund has again received a clean audit.

So if you are saying that you cannot eat a clean audit, then it also means that you are disagreeing with the fact that there is R517 million that we made in interest, that we actually put back into our 2024 Adjustment Budget, which we are putting back into the planning for the 2025 Budget, because the money must come from somewhere, because the money is not coming from National.

You cannot go steal R590 billion for SOEs, taking it from Health, taking it from Education, taking it from Police, but then you are upset about the fact that we cannot eat clean audits, when you actually can eat a clean audit because we made R517 million off an interest policy.

Now, hon Speaker, I did not hear everything that hon member Constable spoke about in terms of the rural areas, and I think he was asking me about the metrics of the rural areas, but I also would like to refer him to the MERO. I do not know if there is a particular area that he wishes to have information upon, but he is also welcome to forward us the particular questions if there is something specific that he would like to know, and we will do our best to get back to him on those items.

Rural development does fall under Agriculture. I do know that the National Treasury is wishing to do a review on all of the various conditional grants for

the new financial year, so there may be some improvements in the conditional grant process coming up in the new financial year, and I would advise the hon member to engage with Agriculture in this regard.

In terms of proactive disaster planning. Hon Speaker, I think majority the of my speech previously was about disaster planning. So separate to the money that we are getting for the infrastructure for disaster-related infrastructure, and that was the R948 million that we are getting from National.

Now hon member Brinkhuis also mentioned this particular disaster funding. The money that is going to Agriculture, you cannot move it, because it is infrastructure coming through an agriculture conditional grant for the condition of agriculture using it for disaster-related money in line with the disaster-related money that National Treasury gave us.

So you cannot move that now to something else, because if someone gives you R5 for apples and they say the condition is you must buy apples, then you cannot go buy bananas. You must buy apples with the R5 that they gave you.

So what National Treasury said with the Agriculture money is, “We are giving you R5 for apples. [Interjections.] You can only buy apples and if you do not use the R5 you must give the R5 back, because then we are not going to give you the money for something else.” It is a condition.

So Equitable Share is a bit different. Equitable Share you can do anything with. Conditional grants you can only spend on what you were told you can spend it on. It is the same as earmark. You can only spend it on what you were told you can spend it on.

So if the National Treasury says, hon member Brinkhuis, that I can use the R300 million for anything we wish, please know that the Provincial Revenue Fund will be in the highest of spirits by this afternoon.

Separate to the infrastructure money that we are getting, that R948 [Interjections.] we are also putting R922 million aside for unavoidable, unforeseeable and external shocks in our respective reserves, and the reason we do this is because, hon member Brinkhuis, disasters do not wait for a Provincial Treasury allocation letter.

When people are in trouble they do not wait for someone to sign off the books for whether or not we must help them. The money must be available and we need to make it as easy as possible for our departments to be able to access the money, to be more agile, to be more responsive, when it comes to disasters.

Separate to the R922 million that we are putting into the reserves for the unavoidable, the unforeseeable, the future shocks, we are also allocating in this Adjustment Budget over R21 million for fire aerial support, for integrated fire and water responses, for humanitarian relief, for nutritional

support, for clearing alien vegetation, because we need to be able to have that focus.

I was joking with Minister Bredell the other day. He did not even wait for the Budget to be adopted before the disaster started happening and you start getting on WhatsApp groups, “Here is a fire, here is a fire, here is a fire.” The fire season has started, hon Speaker. It is not going to wait for a budget to be tabled. We need to prepare for the unknown. We need to prepare for the unavoidable. We need to prepare for the unforeseeable. The disaster is not going to wait for an allocation letter, I am very sorry.

Then in terms of shelters and Social Development. I would like to refer the hon member to the Social Development Department, but since I am on the matter, since everyone is asking me about Treasury matters in the Finance Vote, let me quickly deal with the Social Development Vote.

The Social Development Vote is not decreasing. It is decreasing in accounting terms. They have to ask another department to do work for them. So it is as – if Minister Londt had to ask me, “Deidré, you know what, I want to give you some money to do some audit stuff for me,” then technically he would have moved his money to me so that I can help him with certain things.

Now the same thing is working with infrastructure. He is saying, Minister Londt is saying, “You know what, actually maybe Infrastructure can do this

better for me.” So he is going to his bank account and he is saying, “Minister Simmers, I am sending money to your bank account to do the same thing that I was going to say to the members of the Parliament that I was going to do in the Main Budget.”

So the money is not gone, another department is going to do the same work. The budget is actually increasing because of the humanitarian relief, because of the nutritional support. [Interjections.]

In terms of the Western Cape Children’s Commissioner. I am not sure whether it would be more effective moving to the Provincial Treasury in in this regard, but I take the comments from hon member Cassiem, and I think perhaps that is a conversation that needs to happen with the Western Cape Children's Commissioner, should they want.

In terms of ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, can you please take your seat? Hon Minister Meyer, is that a point of order?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Hon Speaker, I listen very attentively. I heard the Minister speak about apples in agriculture. I would like to know if the Minister is prepared to take a question?

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, I am not going to give the Minister an opportunity to answer that. I have made a ruling yesterday. We are dealing with Adjustment Budgets. So we will stick to the Order of the Day. Hon Minister, please continue.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Oh, okay. I was going to say yes, but if Minister Meyer does want to know more than apples, we did table the Provincial Economic Review and Outlook, as well as various different Municipal Economic Reviews and Outlook, and in the respective chapters, what we have also included in the PERO and the MERO is also the top fruit that are imported and exported from the Western Cape. We have indicated the respective contributions from the agricultural sector to the Western Cape economy and, for example, if you go to page 30 of the PERO specifically, and you go to the little – there is like this – hon Speaker, when I speak about apples, it is not just because I say so. There is an actual photo of the apples in the PERO on page 30, [Interjections.] and it speaks about the agricultural exports in the province which has grown by 190,7% between 2014 and 2023 in this province.

So when you go to Chapter 2 in the PERO you will see lots of nice graphs in terms of agriculture, [Interjections.] and you will also see lots of nice items on what exactly the fruit contribution is in this regard, and of the Minister wants more information, hon Speaker, he can also go to page 52 of the PERO, because page 52 of the PERO will speak to your top 10 fruit exported from the Western Cape between 2014-2023, and they are in the following order, in

terms of fruit products:

- Oranges ...[Interjections.]

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

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Given the detailed answer, I would like to withdraw my question.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon members. Just for Hansard, that is not a point of order. Hon Minister, you may continue. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Hon Speaker, just to conclude, because I do not want anyone to be thinking that we are not a Provincial Treasury you can trust, so let me at least finish the top 10 fruits of the province. So it is:

- Oranges
- Grapes
- Mandarins, which includes tangerines and satsumas [Interjections.]
- Apples
- Lemons and limes
- Pears
- Cranberries, bilberries and other fruit of the genus vaccinium.

[Interjections.] I have no idea what a “vaccinium” is, maybe the Minister of Agriculture might know.

- Plums ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE:

- ...and sloes
- Grapefruit, including [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

The MINISTER OF FINANCE:

- Peaches, including nectarines.

And these are not our numbers, these are Quantech’s own calculations for people who sometimes think that we come up with calculations out of the air.

[Interjections.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Hon Speaker?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: We are a government [Inaudible.] data and [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ...data and evidence from Quantech.

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon member Ngqentsu, is that a point of order?

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Yes, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): MEC Meyer is concerned that there is a beauty contest of being everywhere when you respond, because it is only him who can only be everywhere when he is supposed to respond. [Interjections.]

So that is why he is this chaotic. That was a point of order, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not a point of order. Hon members, we are reaching the end of the Budget Votes. [Interjections.] Can I please ask that you ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: It is a statement.

The SPEAKER: Order! Can I please ask that you work with us to get through the Budget Votes. So frivolous points of orders will also not be entertained. Hon Minister, you may continue. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Speaker.

I am not sure whether Minister Meyer might be threatened by his trophy in this House, [Interjections.] but challenge accepted.

So I will just end off with the last question from hon member Brinkhuis who spoke about education and special education needs, and I actually want to ask that hon member Brinkhuis please work with us to lobby for special needs education to be included in the Provincial Equitable Share formula.

Currently the amount of money that we get for public ordinary school and for learners, and we do not get more money for special needs learners, so special need learners can go up to almost six times the amount that you need for a learner in a public ordinary school for various reasons. It ranges between the respective special needs, but because it is not included as a category in the equitable share, it means that they are not actually budgeted for, and I also want to lobby the member that similar to special needs education, our *oumas* and our *oupas* at home in terms of home-based care, are also not counted in the Equitable Share, because if you do not physically go to the hospital, if you do not physically go to the clinic, they exclude you from the calculation for the PES, and it is not okay, because what has happened in the Western Cape since COVID is we have innovated.

Our departments innovated and said, “Actually you do not necessarily need to

come to the hospital in order for you to have quality services. You do not necessarily need to come to the clinic in order to have quality services,” but that innovation has resulted in us not getting the money for home-based care and it is not compensated enough through the various conditional grants in this regard.

So, please, if the hon member can assist us with fighting that home-based care needs to start being considered, because we are still servicing those particular members of the community, and that is not the only areas in the Provincial Equitable Share that need to be increased.

What we have seen is our GDP is increasing, our employment is increasing, our Gini coefficient is going down, our HDI is going up, but the problem is when you have 19,6% in migration into the province, it is outpacing every other metric. So you do not see the gains as clearly as you would have if the population in migration went toe-to-toe with the other metrics.

So the population growth, the population weighting in the PES, needs to increase. If you are the third largest province in terms of population, but you are getting the 5th largest portion of the PES, there is a problem, and when you look at, for example, the Constitution, when you look at Section 214 of the Constitution, we are not only talking about the horizontal part of the PES in terms of the provinces, which we cannot continue fighting amongst us as provinces, and the apples and the money are just moving around provinces in terms of how much of the PES we are getting. The provincial envelope in the

country needs to increase, and it is not impossible.

The National Minister of Finance increased the Local Government Equitable Share to 9,8%, so why can he not increase the provincial envelope as well? Because we cannot continue fighting with one another about the same piece of pie, the pie needs to increase, and as provinces we need to stand up, we need to stand together and lobby for a bigger part of the Equitable Share so that we are able to service more people coming into our provinces, particularly within the Social Services sector, within Health, within Education, within Social Development, and since hon member Brinkhuis is going to be lobbying with me on the PES, both vertically and horizontally, as a House we must call on the National Treasury and the Department of Social Development to confirm our social workers frontline services or not, because in the DORA responses from the National Treasury to the Budget Committee, they basically just said, “We refer it to Social Development,” when the answer could have just been yes or no, but there is clarity in the system at the moment.

Are they frontline workers or not? Does the National Government consider social workers frontline workers? Because the Western Cape Government does. Hon Speaker, I thank you. [Applause.]

[Debate concluded.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister.

Hon members, that concludes the debate on this Vote. [Interjections.] I am just going to allow for the colleagues from Mobility, they are here, to take the seat. That is the end of the Vote.

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, can I [Interjections.] – order, hon members! Hon Minister, are you happy that we proceed? [Interjections.]

†Die MINISTER VAN MOBILITEIT: Somlomo. Kom ons gaan voort.

[The MINISTER FOR MOBILITY: *Somlomo*. Let us proceed.]

Hon Speaker, you know, if I was sitting ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: No, no, hon Minister, I did not recognise you. I just asked you if you are ready to proceed. [Interjections.] We must first read the Order for the record. So you must please take your seat. [Interjections.]

Order, hon members! Order. The Secretary will read the Fifth Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 8 – Mobility – Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill [B 2–2024].

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon Minister, Minister Sileku.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: Thank you, hon Speaker.

As I was saying before I was not recognised. I was saying if I was seated where you are seated, I was going to say, you know, the House has been adjourned because what the Minister of Finance has said now, I do not think I can keep up with her in terms of what she has said, but nonetheless I will try to do my best. [Interjections.]

Hon Speaker, hon members of the House, Cabinet colleagues, esteemed guests, Team Mobility, good afternoon, goeie middag.

Today I rise to table the Adjustment Appropriation Allocation for the Department of Mobility of R80,7 million, which reflects our steadfast commitment to improving the lives of our people, fostering economic growth and ensuring safer and more efficient transport systems.

However, before I delve into the business of the day, I would like to request the indulgence of the Speaker in observing a moment of silence in solidarity of the lives lost this past weekend for the fatal and tragic bus accident that occurred in Worcester.

Additionally yesterday two young males lost their lives in yet another fatal accident in Moorreesburg area. Can I just ask for a moment of silence, please?

The SPEAKER: Colleagues, I will grant the request by the Minister. Can we have a moment of silence, and if you would not mind can we please stand?

[Moment of silence observed.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Please be seated.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: Thank you very much, *Somlomo*, and thank you to the hon members.

I am appreciative of the additional R80,7 million funding afforded to the Department of Mobility to support public transport, freight and road safety initiatives. This investment into our sector is a testament of our Government's resolve to address the mobility needs of our communities, and to ensure that no one is left behind.

†Om te verseker dat niemand agtergelaat word nie strek Mobiliteit se insette verby die konvensionele grense om die mense se lewens so maklik as moontlik te maak.

[To ensure that no one is left behind, Mobility's input stretches beyond the conventional boundaries to make people's lives as comfortable as possible.]

A significant portion of this adjustment would be directed towards the enhancement of public transport systems. Public transport remains the

backbone of our province's economy, connecting workers to economic opportunities, students to schools and families to one another.

The R32 million from revenue retention will be directed to the George Integrated Public Transport Network to continue with the expansion of the GoGeorge bus service to the Thembalethu community. To date we have seen an average increase in weekday passenger trips from 18 000 to 20 890. The remaining routes from Thembalethu to the Garden Route Mall and the George CBD, will ensure that we reach the target of 23 000 passenger trips.

In addition, *Somlomo*, this funding will be utilised to further enhance safety and security on the network by equipping the buses with 150 CCTV cameras with UPS devices. Mobility has a multiplier effect. Through the GoGeorge expansion 150 small businesses and entrepreneurs will benefit through the provision of top-up services for passengers.

Now, *Somlomo*, turning our focus to the minibus taxi industry. R29,7 million from the Provincial Asset Finance Reserve and rollovers will be utilised to provide scalable and flexible solutions for the minibus taxi industry.

Safety and security remains a concern and challenge in the industry. The incremental introduction of Shayela Smart Programme, thanks to my predecessor, hon Minister Ricardo Mackenzie, for starting the work, will further improve quality, safety and progressive transformation of the dynamic industry. Shayela Smart is a course championed and co-funded with the City

of Cape Town, and has been warmly welcomed by the industry.

The first phase of Shayela Smart will focus on the following key outcomes:

- Fitment of vehicle tracking and monitoring systems to enable live tracking of vehicles and enhanced driver behaviour.
- Driver registration and training will address a key gap in the regulatory framework. Drivers will need to formally register and will be provided with additional training focusing on professional driver behaviour and customer service.

In line with our [Inaudible.] efforts, hon Speaker, meaning encouraging users to shift from private vehicles to public transport. We will be investigating park and ride services for the Greater Cape Town and Stellenbosch areas.

By addressing congestion we are enhancing quality of life for our residents within the Western Cape, but this amount, R1,6 million, will be utilised to finalise the review of the Provincial Land Transport Framework and finalise the development of the Provincial Public Transport Strategy.

Our province is a beacon of hope for the rest of the country and therefore inward migration has grown at an alarming rate. People want to live and work in a thriving, functional and well-run province. An efficient public transport system is therefore key to support our communities and economy. Non-motorised transport, which entails walking and cycling, is another key

focus for the Department, specifically for our non-Metro areas like in Beaufort West, when you ride a bicycle it becomes your car. This is why we will be directing R1,1 million for non-motorised transport infrastructure in the Mount Pleasant in the Overstrand area.

The efficient movement of goods is essential to sustain economic growth and competitiveness. To this end R1,35 million will be utilised to strengthen the freight and logistic network by championing the following initiatives:

- The establishment of a WhatsApp communications channel to improve real-time and two-way communication between the container terminal and transporters.

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY:

- A fully feasibility study on the establishment of a transporter representative organisation
- Investigating a business plan for rail-based solution to efficiently and sustainably transport export fruits from key growing areas to the Port of Cape Town.
- Integrating infrastructure operations and stakeholders.

These initiatives will enable businesses to thrive and support local industries that rely on timely and reliable freight services.

†Agb Speaker, padveiligheid is steeds 'n bekommernis in ons provinsie. Te veel mense sterf in ongelukke en op ons paaie, soveel meer se lewens word verander en verwoes. Ons manne en vroue in blou, ons verkeersbeamptes, werk dikwels onder onhoubare strawwe omstandighede, en dit is krities belangrik dat hulle die regte toerusting ontvang om hulle funksies ten volle te vervul.

Om dit moontlik te maak het ons R16,4 miljoen [Hon Speaker, road safety is still a concern for our province. Too many people die in accidents on our roads, so many more lives are changed and destroyed. Our men and women in blue, our traffic officials, often work under unbearable hard conditions, and it is critically important that they receive the right equipment to fulfil their function to the full. To make that possible we have allocated R16,4 million] for the procurement of tasers, bulletproof vest and handheld devices. These are critical tools of trade for our officers. Our officers play a vital role in the curbing of road fatalities and injuries, with an audacious goal of halving road fatalities and injuries by 2030. Our officers need to be adequately equipped to deal decisively with road traffic enforcement.

As custodians of public funds, hon Speaker, we remain committed to the transparent and efficient use of this Budget Adjustment. We will monitor every project and programme to ensure the highest standards of delivery and measurable outcomes are achieved for our citizens within the Western Cape.

In conclusion, hon Speaker, this Adjustment represents more than just numbers on a page. It is an investment to the betterment of residents of our beloved province. By improving public transport, facilitating freight movement and prioritising road safety, we are building a province that moves together, grows together and thrives together.

This additional funding will allow us to continue to create a future where mobility is not a barrier, but a bridge for opportunities for all.

†Ons verantwoordelikheid teenoor die mense van die provinsie is om mobiliteit te laat werk. As ons daarin slaag sal ons die ekonomie met groeikrag bemagtig.

[Our responsibility to the people of the province is to make mobility work. If we can succeed in that we will empower the economy with power of growth.]

I would like to thank the following: The Premier, my Cabinet colleagues for their support during the past few months when I landed in this dynamic portfolio. The immense support from our Standing Committee chairperson, Professor Nomafrench Mbombo, and members †Enkosi Dabs we country neqembu lakho. [I give thanks to the aunt of the country and her team.] The hon Ngqentsu fondly refers to you as the shop steward of the Department. †Ukwazile ukundiquma nondikhusela ndingatyiswa ngamarhamncwa. [You were able to support me and you were able to protect me from the vultures.]

A special thank you to the former Head of Department, Ms Marissa Moore,

for holding my hand in my first 100 days in office. To Team Mobility under the leadership of the acting HOD, Darryl Jacobs, thank you very much for your continued support and leadership in making a difference in the lives of our residents, and especially to the senior manager. Since I have arrived in this Department, as complicated as it is with a lot of challenges, we are able to look forward and continue to look at the task at hand so that we can make a difference.

I have been saying whenever we meet as a department that whatever we are doing is not about us, but it is about the residents. We can no longer live in a province where people still have to wake up at 03:00 for a meeting at 08:00. Those are challenges that we and myself as the Minister of Mobility are confronted with. It is indeed not acceptable, as the Premier would always say, that the City of Cape Town is one of the top 10 cities when it comes to congestion.

So our challenges are immense and we need to get the basics right so that we can be true to our residents of the Western Cape, and I am grateful to have a team that is willing to take the challenge head-on. Let us continue to raise the bar, cut out the noise and dismally disappoint the naysayers.

Last, but not least, I want to thank my colourful, dynamic and [Inaudible.] – I am saying “colourful” because if you go into the Ministry you will find there are different hairstyles, and probably next year I will have a blue hair hairstyle as well – Team for holding the fort under immense pressure. I do

not say thank you often to you for what you are doing, but I would truly be lost if I did not have you. I thank you very much, enkosi kakhulu], *baie dankie*.

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

[The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. [Interjections.]] Order, hon members. I recognise [Interjections.] – order, hon members. [Interjections.] Hon Minister, you can respond in your reply to hon member Bans, you do not have to do it now. Hon member Ngqentsu.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Hon Speaker, hon members of this House. It was in September 2006 when the South African Communist Party (SACP), an ally of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), launched a safe, affordable, integrated and accessible Public Transport and Road Safety for All as part of its Red October campaign. This campaign culminated in the launch of the Bus Rapid Transit project in August 2009, spearheaded by the ANC Minister, the then Minister Sibusiso Ndebele.

The campaign arose from the realisation that South Africa's public transport system, particularly in the Western Cape, was in a dire state due to multiple factors. One key issue, which remains relevant today, is the fact that the majority of South Africans are still confined to apartheid-era townships and rural areas far from employment centres and essential services. As a consequence of that, of CST, colonialism, apartheid, this lack of integration

between housing development and public transport planning continues to affect our communities, leaving workers and the poor stranded in distant locations. As a consequence of that, workers face high transport costs, worsening their already challenging living conditions.

The allocation, hon Speaker, of an additional R32-million to address service delivery pressures in the George Integrated Public Transport Network is a crucial step towards improving the system. However, it is worth noting that the people of Thembalethu in George have suffered severe traffic congestion due to the absence of proper planning for a bypass during the construction phase of the project. This oversight has resulted in unnecessary delays and inconvenience, and we call on the Government to address these concerns with urgency.

We cannot address the challenges in our public transport system without tackling the issue of the apartheid spatial planning that remains entrenched in apartheid-era development models. Thirty years into our democracy, housing and infrastructure developments are still situated far from economic hubs, with insufficient regard for public transport needs. The DA-led Government, continuing the legacy of apartheid ...[Interjections.] spatial planning, has left many workers and the poor stranded in isolated areas, forcing them to rely on costly and inefficient transport options. [Interjections.]

Minibus taxis have stepped in to fill the gap, even at the risk of fines and impoundments ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): ...but this is not a sustainable solution. The DA-led Government has shown its inability to adapt to the changing dynamics of residential and industrial zones, failing to provide transport solutions that align with new housing and commercial developments. I dare say, imagine operating licences ought to be provided in these instances.

At the core of a safe, affordable, reliable, integrated, and accessible Public Transport system lies the need for workers, regardless of their shifts, to have access to a state-sponsored transport system that is not only affordable but also safe and dependable. This system should guarantee dedicated public transport lanes, ensuring workers can reach their destinations on time and return home safely allowing them to fully participate in SGBs.

Hon Speaker, while we acknowledge that the DA continued to implement the BRT system after the ANC lost political power in 2009, we commend them for this. It is not only ANC leaders who inspire people like Badma, but ANC policies too because the BRT system is an ANC programme, is ANC policy. [Applause.] However, it is critical to expand these services to other parts of the City of Cape Town and the province, including areas like Bellville, Kraaifontein, Hermanus, and the Central Karoo, so that more residents can benefit from this essential service. ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Ngqentsu, please take your seat. Please take your seat.
Hon Minister Londt, is that a point of order?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Ja, I just want to check
...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: The translation services do not work because I cannot understand what the hon member is saying when he is speaking. [Interjections.] I listened online as well, and I do not think that they are getting the translation right either. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Alright. Okay, I will ...[Interjections.] Order, hon members. That is a valid point of order. If the Table Staff can please just make sure with the Translation Services. Hon Ngqentsu, you may continue. [Interjections.] Order, hon members.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Hon Speaker, every cent allocated to Government departments must be spent effectively, efficiently, and economically. Therefore, the practice of rolling over budgets must be addressed, hon Premier, demanding proper planning and resource management to enhance service delivery and improve the lives of our people. Almost all departments have roll-overs.

Hon Speaker ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member, please take your seat. Hon Premier, is that a point of order?

The PREMIER: Yes, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

The PREMIER: Hon Speaker, I would like to ask the hon member if he would allow me a question on whether the R2-billion in the Gauteng roll-over ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Honourable, hon Premier ...[Interjections.]

The PREMIER: ...he is addressing me on. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, that is out of order. So, you have asked if the hon member was prepared to take a question. I have ruled previously that I am not entertaining any questions across the floor, as I have ruled yesterday. So, hon member, you may continue.

An HON MEMBER: That is not the ...[Interjection.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Hon Speaker, the Budget shift of about R47-

million from the Compensation of Employees, despite the ongoing personnel crisis within this and other departments, must be rejected because it is a crisis which is going to haunt us. This shift occurs at a time when unemployment is a ticking time bomb, threatening social stability. This lukewarm approach to strengthening the State capacity is a direct manifestation of neoliberal austerity measures, which must be resisted. [Interjections.]

The Government's failure to properly address staffing shortages undermines the quality of service-delivery and exacerbates existing challenges. It is essential to acknowledge that a well-resourced public service is crucial for the development and wellbeing of our province. Thus, we must oppose any budgetary decisions that perpetuate industrial austerity and call for greater investment in the people who are central to public service delivery.

Hon Speaker, the shifting of funds at R4,8-million from Corporate Support, R2,9-million from Programme Support Operations, and R7,2-million from Transport Safety and Compliance, reflects the DA Government's skewed priorities. This redistribution demonstrates a focus on elite interests, rather than addressing the critical needs of the general public. The failure to invest in public safety, compliance, and essential services directly impacts on these lives where ...†Wena Sileku uzawumane ulila apha intoba abantu batshayiswa zimoto. [And you Sileku, you will cry foul play here to say that people are being hit by cars.] Yet, we do not invest on addressing that crisis.

Given the prominence of minibus taxis in our province, this budget fails to address the urgent need to build or upgrade taxi ranks or resolve the crisis of operating licenses for both e-hailing and minibus taxis. The budget's lack of attention to these pressing issues reveals its inadequacy in addressing the transport needs of the people. Hon Speaker, we must ensure that every cent allocated is spent to improve the lives of South Africans, especially those who depend on affordable, integrated, and safe public transport. †Elilizwe ungakumbi kweliphondo le city of Cape Town. [In our nation especially in the province of the city of Cape Town] ...[Interjection.]

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

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): ...must be resolved if we are to address the challenges we are facing. Thank you. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. Hon Minister, is that a point of order? Thank you very much, hon members. I recognise the hon Constable.

Mr N CONSTABLE (PA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, the Mobility Budget, as it stands, is on R3,1-billion. However, three things

when analysing this budget. Number one, this budget, hon Speaker, is urban-biased and neglects rural towns. Secondly, there is a lack of support to smaller municipalities through the public operations or the Public Transport Operations grant. Thirdly, hon Speaker, and this we already discussed in the Committee and on the Annual Report: the over-reliance of this Department on consultants. There is a massive spending on consultants, and we will deal with that again next year.

So, hon Speaker, the broader implication of this budget is expenditure misalignment. There is a misalignment in expenditure when it comes to the Mobility Budget. So, hon MEC, if you want us to support your budget from the Patriotic Alliance perspective, three things that you must please do for us. Redirect funding to address the transport infrastructure deficits in rural areas, ensuring connectivity and economic integration. Two, invest in internal departmental skills to reduce consultant dependency and force the sustainable expertise within your public sector. Three, on your integrated mobility strategy, develop a province-wide mobility masterplan that explicitly prioritises underserved communities.

For now, hon Speaker, for now, hon MEC, the Patriotic Alliance will support your budget and your adjustment, but please, if next year comes and you do not do that, we will not support you going forward. Thank you very much, hon Speaker. [Laughter.]

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

Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Speaker. Thank you. Hon Speaker, the NCC notes the amount of R27,8-million for Transport Infrastructure Development. The NCC will follow this closely as public transport is the heartbeat of getting the working class to work on time. Hon Speaker, we want to urge the Department of Mobility to make sure that the developments are earmarked for the Cape Flats.

Now, hon Speaker, the MyCiTi development happening in Mitchells Plain now and other areas, but this is ten years after it was implemented. So, let us be honest. It is only because the Opposition parties made a comparison on infrastructure between the upper-class areas and Mitchells Plain, for example, but this should not happen again.

In closing, we want to ask the hon MEC to make sure he follows the budget and puts measurements in place that will prevent the Mini Cooper gang from working a chunk of this budget to the family account. *Aesa*.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Jacobs. I now recognise the hon Prof Mbombo.

†Ms N MBOMBO (DA): Nkosi Somlomo obekekileyo, [Thank you, hon Speaker,] hon members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, †Nakubahlali baseKapa, ndiphinde kwakhona nam ndaleke kwintuthuzelo xa

umphathiswa ebethuthuzela abo balahlekelwe yimiphefumlo kwingozi zendlela. Singqwenelelela nabo basezibhedlele bakwazi intoba baphile, futhi si gxininisa kubantu abaqhubayo including us ukuba ukuhamba ngesantya, ukuqhuba unxilile, ukuqhuba ubhala kunomyayi speed always kill. Kubahambi ngenyawo sukugxadazelela endleleni, nxiba umbala wento ezakubonakala kumqhubi ebusuku, kumagosa endlela, kubongi, ogqirha.

[To the residency of Cape town, I would also like to add on words of comfort as the hon member has mentioned those who have lost their lives on car accidents. We would also like to send words of comfort also to those who are in hospitals due to car accidents we are sending prayers for their recoveries, we would also like to emphasise on the drivers including us that speed kills. Do not drink and drive, do not text on your phone and drive, to the pedestrians avoid walking by the road when under the influence of alcohol, wear bright and visible colours for the drivers to see you. To the traffics, to the nurses, to the doctors.]

The EMS staff and everyone will be working this festive season, trying to cap all these road accidents. I salute you, our prayers are with you, †Sithi enkosi... [we say thank you...] for sacrificing your family and your safety to serve the communities during this time.

Hon Speaker, mobility plays a critical role in the lives of the people, the economy and our future. Mobility is about more than just the movement of people. It also includes opportunity, accessibility and sustainability, and for that reason, it is an honour to take part in this Budget Vote. The Western

Cape Mobility Department plays a critical role in the economy of the province, focused on ensuring a safe, reliable and affordable transportation network. I advocate the Department's Road Safety programme which aims to promote safety in society by educating students, drivers, pedestrians, public transport operators, and in essence, the public on safe and responsible transport habits.

[Minister Baartman takes the Chair.]

Ms N MBOMBO (DA): This Adjusted Budget, hon Speaker or hon Temporary Chairperson, is a strong commitment to tackling the Mobility challenges and the significance of a well-run public transport system cannot be emphasised enough. Public transport in the Western Cape has always been the backbone of our communities, connecting people to jobs, education, healthcare and other critical services. As we move forward, we must continue to develop and strengthen our public transportation infrastructure.

The Adjusted Budget prioritises crucial areas for public transportation growth. We applaud the enhanced funding for the extension and maintenance for the MyCiTi bus network, as well as the R32-million commitment to meet service delivery pressures associated with the George Integrated Public Transport Network.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, we must recognise the critical importance of the rail infrastructure in the Western Cape. I encourage continuous coordination

amongst provincial and national stakeholders to ensure that our rail network continues to fulfil commuter needs. This Adjustment Budget prioritises closing the transportation gap between the affluent and the underserved communities by boosting the connectivity, unlocking economic opportunities and empowering individuals while reducing social injustices.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, as we face the global climate problem, it is critical for the Mobility Plan to place a significant emphasis on sustainability. This Adjusted Budget includes an additional focus on green transportation programmes, investing in cleaner, greener means of transportation that will help reduce our province's carbon footprint, while improving air quality for all residents.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, a portion of the funding will go towards the construction of the bicycle lanes, pedestrian walker-ways and other active transportation infrastructure. This commitment to developing a transportation network that will be able to accommodate all means of mobility. The more we spend in non-motorised transportation, the less we will rely on vehicles, plus lowering congestion and pollution.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, to maintain Commuter Safety, the Department is prioritising universal access to public transport services and non-motorised transport. The amenity system is particularly for the disabled and vulnerable groups. Special transportation services, such as Dial-A-Ride, are currently under consideration to better serve a greater number of persons with

disabilities. The Department is additionally investigating ways to favour the unemployed, children and the elderly for more affordable public transport access.

Another area of focus is transportation equity. While certain sections of the Western Cape have well developed transport networks, many communities face considerable barriers to safe, reliable and affordable travel options. It is our duty to ensure that transport development is inclusive and accessible to all areas, particularly the rural areas, leaving no Aunty Sara behind.

One of the objectives I advocate for this Department's efforts is to improve freight logistics to support the Growth For Jobs strategy. We note that the Department will work with other stakeholders to reduce inefficiencies, create models to stimulate private sector investment and manage growth. Getting citizens to work is part of the Western Cape Government's Growth For Jobs strategy that aims to boost the province's economy, creating jobs and reducing unemployment.

The unemployed research shows that the high cost of transportation is a key obstacle to finding work and recent rises in fuel, prices and public transportation first, has made this even more difficult. Providing free travel vouchers remove these barriers, allowing job seekers to find the work they greatly need. I will also, hon Temporary Chairperson, want to raise my concern also over recent taxi shootings that happened in Vrygrond without going deeper. I also want to again make sure that the Minibus Taxi Task

Team still continues.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, lastly, this Adjusted Budget represents a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to mobility in the province. It is an investment in the Western Cape's transportation infrastructure. The final thing of public transportation, sustainable mobility, job creation and skilled development will assist to keep the Western Cape at the forefront of South Africa's transport innovation. While we welcome the progress made, we need to be attentive and committed to ensure that the measures are implemented effectively and timeously. Transport challenges are enormous, but I saw the potential. Let us continue to move forward, united in a goal to be connected, sustainable and prosperous.

Having said that, hon Temporary Chairperson, I just want to thank the Standing Committee for always been vocal. †Sibulele naku Tutuse umphathiswa, [We would also like to thank hon Tutuse] and all other colleagues in the SC. Also reminding all of us hon colleagues that we are also using the roads. Please be safe out there and also please be kind. Everyone is dealing with their own issues. Let us show some kindness and also, no aggression on the road.

I want to thank the Department. I understand it is one year old, but next year you will no longer be one year old. So, the Standing Committee might have been doing the, inverted commas I am quoting, "the listening and learning on the Mobility". Come next year, you will not be able to do that, but we wish

you all the best. Thank you very much, the DA supports the Vote.
...[Applause.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes!

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Prof Mbombo. I now recognise the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: Thank you, hon Temporary Chairperson. Hon Temporary Chairperson, I think it is important that I start with hon member Jacobs. I want to question him and ask him nicely that we need to stop calling officials by names that are developed somewhere within my Department, by referring to the Mini Cooper gang. I do not have a Mini Cooper gang within my Department, and I do not entertain gossip.
...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Perfect!

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: If there is gossip and you entertain gossip, I do not entertain gossip.

I want to tell all the other hon members, as much as you are gossiping because there was a particular email sent to all of you without any proof or evidence in terms of the allegations and we have been asking for proof and no-one has been coming forth, but instead of trying to assist us as a

department, you are breaking this particular Department, you are breaking officials. Can you just imagine when I can make an allegation against you and your children are watching this particular Sitting, you know ...[Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Order, hon members.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: ...so, we must be very careful. [Interjections.] As much as we have freedom of speech, but to say things about people without proof is actually breaking people and I need to question the hon colleagues in terms of that.

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear! [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: Also, thank you very much to hon member Ngqentsu. On the issue of spatial planning and spatial transformation, it happens on a municipal level. You know, what is the difference between the Democratic Alliance when they are in government and the African National Congress when they are in government? We try to address spatial planning instead of when we are in government, we end up looting. The ANC loots. They do not deal with spatial transformation and spatial planning, and then when they come here and they try to act as if they know it all because your priorities when you are in government, are very skewed and then you come here and try to project yourself as if you are addressing the issues of the poorest of the poor. [Interjections.]

Also, let us go to the element of impoundments. I do not write any media statements about impoundments. I do not entertain issues on impoundments, but you will find some of their members whenever there is a leak somewhere or there is footage on social media about impoundments, they without understanding the reasons for that particular impoundment, they will go all out and try to make it a political baton.

I need to tell the hon colleagues as well. We deal with issues of impoundments amid our concerns, during our meetings of the Minibus Taxi Task Team, there, we deal with these issues. Our stakeholders that have a role to play in terms of mobility within our province, and there are issues of clarity that you want to know from a particular sphere of government like the City when it comes to empowerments, those issues are addressed there, and the issues of impoundment were addressed.

And when people impound, they impound based on what they have agreed on in the Minibus Taxi Task Team. Unfortunately, some of us are not there, but we just like to entertain gossip and we are not in the space of entertaining gossip because we are understanding our role ...[Interjection.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Point of order.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: ...in terms of making sure that Mobility works for everyone.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon Ngqentsu, are you rising on a point of order?

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Hon Temporary Chairperson, is the hon MEC prepared to take a question on this question of impoundment of minibus taxis?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Ngqentsu, the hon Speaker previously indicated in terms of questions. Can you please maintain order. Hon Minister, please proceed.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: Thank you. Hon Temporary Chairperson, before we had our first Standing Committee meeting, I invited all members of the Standing Committee of Mobility, and everybody has my cell number. So, if you want to engage with me, you are more than welcome to do that. We can engage. We can have coffee; we can have tea. ...[Laughter.] We do not have to use this platform ...[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Order, hon members.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: ...because it is going to take longer. So, and then we will deal with those questions. In terms of the roll-over budgets and the shifting of funds, I think the hon Minister of Finance adequately addressed those issues. I am not going to interfere in your space. You did a

great job in terms of that.

Now then, let us go to my *homza*, hon Constable. Hon Constable, I did actually mention the review of the Provincial Land Transport Framework ...[Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Order, hon members.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: ...and also the process of the Provincial Public Transport Strategy. I need to tell you also and say to you and assure you, as a person that was born and raised in Beaufort West, I am passionate about rural access. So, whenever we are busy with policies, we would make sure that there is provision made for rural access.

That is why you will find that when you launch our Safety Plan for the festive season, we shifted away from the City of Cape Town and went to Moorreesburg. There is a specific reason for that because we are a province, and we are a department for the whole province. So, you can rest assured we are looking at making sure that the rural areas also benefit, and they can identify within our Ministry. Also, in terms of capacity, I can assure you that the Department of the Premier and the Department actually are in the process of looking at the redesign of our organisational structure.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, thank you very much for your leadership. It shows because at times within our meetings there are members that will go

left and then, because of your capabilities, you will bring them to the centre so that they can focus on the work at hand. I would also want to appreciate your good wishes in terms of what we are doing and recognising that as much as we are a small department or a young department with all the challenges, but at least we are trying to deal with the issues that are faced, the majority of the people who are in this province.

Also, lastly, this narrative that there is bad blood between the Ministry and the Minibus Taxi Task Team: †Daardie is 'n leuen. ...[Tussenwerpsel.] [That is a lie... [Interjection.]]

An HON MEMBER: Yes.

†Die MINISTER VAN MOBILITEIT: Dit gaan nie gebeur nie.
[Tussenwerpsel.]

[The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: It's not going to happen. [Interjection.]]

An HON MEMBER: True!

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: There are great working relations. Then, if you want to see our commitment towards the minibus taxi industry, we have made provision during our Adjustment Budget to start with the first phase of Shayela Smart. As a Standing Committee of Mobility, we gave you an opportunity, a presentation was done on Shayela Smart so that you can grasp what Shayela Smart wants to achieve and where we are heading with Shayela

Smart. Bear with us, work with us and stop causing conflict between us the minibus taxi industry. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Minister Sileku. That concludes the debate on this Vote.

[Debate concluded.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon members, please bear with us. I will just give the Department an opportunity to vacate the box. [Interjections.] Order, hon members. The House is still in session, hon member Ngqentsu. Thank you very much, hon members. The hon Secretary will now read the Sixth Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 2 – Provincial Parliament – Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, I recognise the hon Speaker.

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Temporary Chairperson, hon Mr Deputy Speaker, hon Premier, hon Provincial Cabinet members, hon leaders of political parties, hon members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament,

Departmental officials and citizens of the Western Cape.

It is, indeed, a huge privilege for me as the Speaker, to present the Adjusted Budget for the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and I am looking forward to robust engagement from all our hon members to ensure clarity on the way we are governing our Institution with the assistance of key stakeholders such as the Parliamentary Oversight Committee, our senior management teams, as well as our internal and external sources.

The Adjustment Estimates pertaining to Vote 2 that I present today, are presented against the backdrop of a severely constrained fiscal environment. Hon Temporary Chairperson, the financial reality the country as a whole finds itself in is what this budget is based upon or against this backdrop. As a legislative institution with the smallest budget in the country, we are used to doing more with less. Even with the smallest budget, hon Temporary Chairperson, we are proud to be a leading institution in the legislative family in the country and indeed, the region.

In terms of the existing budgetary regime that we as the Western Cape Provincial Parliament are part of, we have to negotiate very robustly to receive our Fair Share of the cake, mindful that we are grouped and in a way, competing with the large service delivery departments in the Province for resources, to fulfil our mandate. First and foremost, the Western Cape Provincial Parliament remains committed to fulfilling its mandate to effectively and efficiently as a responsive, citizen centric institution with a

robust approach to lawmaking, oversight and involvement of the citizens of our province.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, the fact that we have our first ever State of the Province Address and the Debate thereon in the Central Karoo town of Beaufort West, is testament to our resolve to bringing Parliament closer to the people, hon Windvogel. Hon Temporary Chairperson, a new draft Strategic Plan has been tabled on Friday, setting out the pathway of our journey over the next four years, and is a product of serious internal reflection and comprehensive involvement of our members and key stakeholders to ensure that we do deepen democracy and ultimately, make a positive difference to the citizens we were elected to serve.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, the upcoming five-year planning period will be guided by a comprehensive set of policies and strategies ensuring that every aspect of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament's operation, aligned with its broader strategic direction and vision. With the resources at our disposal, the Western Cape Provincial Parliament shall continue to embrace innovation and modernisation in order to establish a credible, transparent and accountable Parliament underpinned by the values we adhere to as an institution and to remain at the forefront of being a leading Parliament in our region.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, furthermore, we shall continue to adapt and change to improve on the delivery of services to our members and to the

public at large. Hon Temporary Chairperson, I am confident that as the Executive Authority as well as the administrative body under the management of the Secretary, have the necessary internal structures in place to effectively deal with all aspects of our mandate, both from policy and an administrative perspective. As the Executive Authority supported by the Administration, we account to our respective structures with the realisation that the Provincial Parliament is the ultimate authority which will guide us on this journey.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, sometimes matters take longer than desired, but it is important that matters such as risks, legal compliance, financial implications and operational requirements are always considered thoroughly before decisions are made by those in power to make such decisions.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, I wish to thank the hon members for their support to me as the Speaker in my role as the Executive Authority and as the Chief Presiding Officer and custodian of our Rules and Orders. Then, as the employer of the staff of the Provincial Parliament, as well as being your representative in our relations with interested persons and bodies both internationally and nationally. Hon Mr Deputy Speaker, the Budget has been presented to the POC and I wish to take this point to thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for your continuous support throughout the beginning and the start of the Seventh Administration.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, let me move to the WCPP Budget that has been decreased by R63 000 from R258,133-million. That includes the direct

charge, leaving the WCPP with an Adjusted Appropriation of R258-million. Hon Temporary Chairperson, and amount of R5,745-million in respect of the underspending on voted funds and an amount of R747 000 in respect of over-collected own revenue that will be rolled over to the 2023/2024 financial year into the MTEF.

To alleviate funding pressures, WCPP has revoted underspending from the 2024/2025 financial year to the 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 financial year, to partially cover the additional funding need. The Western Cape Provincial Parliament therefore made provision in this Adjusted Budget for R1,864-million underspent that is broken up into R1,52-million for the 2025/2026 financial year and R344 000 for the 2026/2027 financial year from the current budget to mitigate for the additional funding shortages.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, the rollover of the 2023/2024 financial year was mainly allocated as follows. In Programme 1 under Governance and Administration, R1,659-million, Programme 2 under Parliamentary Support Services, R65 000 that was rolled over, Programme 3 under Public Engagement, R77 000 that was rolled over. And with that being said, hon Temporary Chairperson, as I highlighted, the Western Cape Provincial Parliament tables this Budget today or I table this Budget on behalf of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, knowing that there are still many challenges, many things that we are in the process of changing, but at the cornerstone of our decision making, the credibility of this Institution being the cornerstone. Thank you very much. ...[Applause.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. I now recognise the hon Bans. [Interjections.] Order, hon members. Just bear with hon member Bans. [Interjections.] Order, hon members. [Interjections.] Order hon member. Hon member Bans, you may proceed.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): †Kulenyanga yomama mandibulele wena njengomama ohlepha, ndithathe nethuba lokubulela uMr Downman for iminyaka azinikezele usebenza kulendlu yowiso mthetho. [I wish to take an opportunity to greet and thank you all on this womans month, I would also wish to take this opportunity and thank Mr Dowman for the years you have dedicated yourself to this House of Parliament.] Mr Dowman, on behalf of the African National Congress we are very grateful for the dedication of years that you have spent servicing this House. I think when we look back, you have covered so many years, I do not know how to thank you. We are grateful to you; we are grateful from this side of the benches. We have nothing to offer, but our appreciation that is very genuine. You have been the best carrier of the Mace. We have been watching you. Thank you. ...[Laughter.] ...[Applause.]

Hon Temporary Chairperson, on behalf of the ANC, we categorically reject the proposed Budget. It undermines the Legislature's ability to serve the people of the Western Cape by weakening our constitutional mandate of oversight, law-making, and public participation.

This debate occurs over the 16 Days of Activism against the abuse of women and children, a campaign that highlights the pressing need for accountability in combating Gender-based Violence. Tragically, our Legislature mirrors society's failures. Despite numerous cases of GBV and sexual harassment raised within the walls of this Chamber, in the presence of Government leaders, meaningful action has been absent. Hon Premier Winde and hon MEC Bredell have consistently failed to hold perpetrators such as Farrel Payne and Graham Paulse accountable. By cutting oversight capacity, this budget perpetuates a culture of impunity. [Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Order, hon members.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Oversight is enshrined in the Constitution and central to this Institution. Yet, the Western Cape Provincial Legislature has become increasingly ineffective in this. Municipalities, especially the City of Cape Town, routinely ignore questions from hon members of this House. Even worse, committees have been reluctant to subpoena municipalities to appear before them, allowing them to evade accountability.

We, as the elected representatives of the people, have a constitutional duty to ensure that these bodies are held accountable, especially when they fail to address critical issues such as raw sewage being dumped on our beaches, leaving them unsafe for the public. Instead, we are told that the sewage is travelling from KZN down the Eastern Cape and comes and parks here in Cape Town. How can we be reduced to that? [Interjections.]

The DA continues to shield municipalities from this responsibility, refusing to take action or even compel them to appear before our committees. The City of Cape Town also faces serious allegations of corruption and collusion with the construction mafia yet, WCPP has not investigated. Concerns about the Department of Mobility's capture by the so-called Mini Cooper gang have been ignored. Instead, today, they are being represented by the hon MEC on their behalf.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, instead of pursuing accountability, the hon MEC Simmers wrote to me seeking information as if I were the whistleblower. I have written to SCOPA, hon Temporary Chairperson, where it belongs. If hon MEC Simmers seeks further details, he should consult the whistleblower directly and not make me the spokesperson of the whistleblower.

Attempts to silence us will fail. We are a revolutionary movement where we have been taught to resist suppression. [Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Order, hon members.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): ...when it is intimidation. [Interjections.] It will not happen ...[Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: My apologies, hon member.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): We will name and we will shame ...[Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Bans ...[Interjections.]

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): ...without fear or favour.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Bans, my apologies. Can you please take your seat. Hon members on my right, can I please ask for discipline and for the sake of progress, give the speaker the opportunity to engage on the Vote, please. Can I ask the very same discipline from the hon colleagues of hon member Bans as well. Thank you, hon member. Please proceed.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Attempts, hon Temporary Chairperson, to silence us will fail. Our revolutionary movement has taught us to resist suppression. We will name and shame wrongdoers without fear or favour, fulfilling our duty as an effective Opposition. [Interjections.] The DA should prepare for five years of hard truths. †Hulle moet luister! [They must listen!]

The ANC has urged SCOPA's Chairperson to investigate these allegations, yet we await action. I am not sure whether after this morning when the SCOPA Chairperson becomes the spokesperson also of the DA, if our request is in good hands. We hope that the DA Lite member hon Christians, will stop using his position to defend the interests of the DA and instead, fulfil his constitutional duty as an oversight body. He must investigate these

allegations.

These failures are compounded by the fact that this budget continues to undermine our ability to fulfil our oversight function. Despite a shortfall in staff, with only 105 employees instead of the approved 118 as reported in the Annual Report, this budget proposes a cut of R3,876-million in compensation of employees' allocation. This is not a prudent financial decision; it is a deliberate weakening of our oversight capacity. How can we hold the Executive accountable when we are stripped of the resources necessary to perform our duties?

Instead of addressing the staffing shortfall, the savings from vacant posts are being used to fund non-essential expenses, such as strategic planning sessions and unbudgeted subscriptions. These are not priorities for the WCPP. Our priority should be strengthening our oversight function.

Moreover, the budget slashes over R2-million from critical programmes like Parliamentary Support Services, hon Temporary Chairperson, the Public Engagement, and Members' Support. How can we justify these reductions when they directly impact our constituents?

The wasteful expenditure on the unconstitutional Powers Bill also demands scrutiny. Despite legal advice deeming the Bill unconstitutional, the hon Speaker permitted costly public hearings. This reckless decision squandered funds better allocated ...[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Can you please conclude, hon member Bans. Can you please conclude. Your time has expired.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): We cannot support and endorse a budget that undermines our democratic function. Adequate resourcing of the WCPP is vital to uphold our constitutional mandate. ...[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, hon member Bans. [Interjections.] ...[Applause.] I recognise the hon Petrus.

Mr B PETRUS (PA): Thank you, hon Temporary Chairperson. ...[Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Order, hon members.

Mr B PETRUS (PA): ...we understand that this funding is far from enough to solve the problems of the Western Cape. †Die PA sal egter voortgaan om hom te beywer vir meer befondsing en hulpbronne vir kritiese areas in die administrasie van die Wes-Kaapse Regering. Die mense van die Wes-Kaap het ons almal hier 'n mandaat gegee om probleme aan te spreek. Ons moet egter ophou om ander te blameer as ons nie kan voorsien in dit wat ons aan die kiesers belowe het nie.

Agb Voorsitter, vir die PA moet alle befondsing wat ons gee 'n positiewe

uitkoms wees vir bemagtiging en ontwikkeling van alle gemeenskappe in die Wes-Kaap.

Die PA wens alle mense van die Wes-Kaap 'n vreedsame en voorspoedige vakansie toe en ek wil hiermee ook mnr Dowman voorspoed toewens met sy tyd en sy toekoms. Baie dankie.

[The PA will however continue to strive for more funding and resources for critical areas in the administration of the Western Cape Government. The people of the Western Cape gave all of us here a mandate to address problems. We must however stop to blame others when we cannot provide for that which we had promised our voters.

Hon Chairman, for the PA all funding that we give must be a positive outcome for empowerment and development of all communities in the Western Cape.

The PA wishes all the people of the Western Cape a peaceful and prosperous holiday and I also want to wish Mr Dowman all the best with his time and his future. Thank you.]

†Die WAARNEMENDE VOORSITTER: Baie dankie, agb lid Petrus.
[The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, hon member Petrus.] I recognise the hon Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you. Thank you, hon Temporary Chairperson.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, noting that the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, amongst other tasks, develops legislation and public participation, the NCC would like to see a greater shift towards taking Parliament to the people. Hon Temporary Chairperson, the demographic of this province is a unique one and we owe it to the people to allow communities to experience at least an opportunity to engage directly with hon members from the Provincial Parliament and get a better understanding as to what the role of Provincial Parliament is.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, many of our people are still confused and continue to blame National Government for the failure of Provincial Government. For example, †die kinders kry nie plekke in die skool nie. Jy, dit is die ANC, [the children do not find places in the school. You, that is the ANC,] but it is not like that. Hon Temporary Chairperson, let us allow the budget to bring Parliament and the greater community together.

And then last but not least, we also want to see the budget make provision for the biggest ...[Audio distorted – 1:53:19.] from Parliament ...[Interjections.]
Aesa.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Jacobs. I recognise the hon Bosman.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Temporary Chairperson. Hon Temporary Chairperson, the Western Cape Provincial Parliament is a vehicle of good governance, the good governance of the Western Cape

through the Provincial Government's ...[Audio distorted.] This ...[Audio distorted.] and it is meant by the DA, which is why ...[Audio distorted.] ...[Interjections.]

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): The responsibility of this Legislature is first and foremost, to ensure the needs of the people of the Western Cape are represented in everything we do.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, the looting of State funds by the African National Congress could only happen because Parliament at National level, ...[Interjections.] with its ANC majority, failed to fulfil its mandate as it is writing in the Zondo Commission.

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Oversight is the core of good governance and Government activities must come under scrutiny by honest public representatives who are elected through the mechanisms provided for in parliaments and legislatures. [Interjections.]

It is rich that the hon Bans, through you, hon Temporary Chairperson, speaks on the cost of employees and masquerades as a representative of the workers when the ANC in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament's employees are

currently challenging them at the CCMA. [Interjections.] Poor workers! In this House, we do not allow Government free rein, and we have the systems and the administrative capacity in place to enable us as public representatives to fulfil our role ...[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon Minister, can you please take your seat. Hon Minister Mackenzie, is that a point of order?

The MINISTER OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT: I do apologise, hon Temporary Chairperson. I did not hear the last part properly. If the honourable can repeat himself.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): I am very happy to repeat. What I said was it is rich, through you, hon Temporary Chairperson, that hon Bans speaks of the cost of employees and masquerades as a representative of the workers when the African National Congress in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament's employees are currently squaring off against them in the CCMA. [Interjections.] We understand ...[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Order, hon members. Hon Bosman, can I please ask you to take your seat. Hon Minister Mackenzie, that was not a point of order. Please do not rise on frivolous points. Can I please ask both sides of the House to give the speaker on the floor an opportunity to engage on the Vote, please. [Interjections.] Hon members. [Interjections.]

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Hon Temporary Chairperson, we understand the separation between party and state, and when we conduct oversight, our responsibility is not to our respective political parties, but to the people of this province. Everything the Western Cape Government does is subject to the oversight by this Provincial Parliament and its respective Standing Committees.

I am astounded that an hon member of this Parliament can say that we are ineffective, but that is perhaps only because the ANC is ineffective in their diminished role as an Opposition party. It is only through asking tough questions and analysing the answers that we are able to identify when something is not right, but in order to ask questions, you have to show up and you have to read, and you have to prepare.

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament has spent years refining and improving its capacity to enable the hon members to hold Government to account. ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Yebo!

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): We do this every day in the smooth running of Sittings, Committee meetings and the oversight visits that we embark on, as well as the regular submission of parliamentary questions to the Executives and those hon Executive members answering those questions to hon members.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, the Western Cape's record of clean governance is built on an effective Legislature. Every piece of legislation that passes through this House, is subject to the same level of scrutiny. The Provincial Parliament provides support ...[Interjections.] it provides the support that the House requires to ensure meaningful public participation takes place across this province that will affect the people of this province. Everything runs on a tight schedule ...[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Order, hon members.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): ...and the professional staff in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament ensure that due process is followed. The Western Cape advertises its activities and ensures that members of the public have access to the proceedings of the House to the live streaming of Sittings and Committee meetings on YouTube. And we now know that these live streams are available free of charge.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, I want to say this Parliament runs on a tight schedule and it is perhaps why hon members of the Opposition miss things regularly because they are never on time ...[Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Bosman, please take your seat. [Interjections.] Can I please ask the hon members on my left: can you please stop with the ongoing commentary. [Interjections.] It is hon member Windvogel. It is a bit late in the day to be naming hon members.

...[Interjection.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): You must also speak on the other side.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: I did do so previously, hon member. Can I please ask for your cooperation. Thank you very much. Please proceed, hon Bosman.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Through you, hon Temporary Chairperson, my dear friend hon Windvogel misses me dearly as well. [Interjections.]

An accessible Parliament creates an opportunity for the public to be informed about what their government is doing and to build trust in our public institutions. Something that has perhaps been eviscerated at a National level through the years of ANC-led corruption, we saw it today when members of the Witzenberg community was here to listen to Ministers respond through their own words.

But hon Temporary Chairperson, in these tough fiscal conditions, the WCPP has seen a small reduction in its budget. I am, however, confident that the Administration will ensure that this does not affect the smooth running of operations. The adjusted allocation of R16,5-million for Public Engagement will help ensure that more of our residents and young people have the opportunity to learn about the inner workings of Parliament. Knowledge is power and by educating our people on how their Government functions, we

can ensure the power that they hold when casting their vote. This is one of the keys to a well-functioning democracy and I am glad that the WCPP is working so hard through the Public Engagement Department to make sure that we are educating our voters.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, I want to thank the members of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee for their collaboration in the Committee. I would also like to extend a thanks to the professional staff in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament for their brilliant work to ensure members can fulfil their duties effectively and on time. A special thank you to Ms Kamish-Achmat, our Procedural Officer, for her support. She plays a key role in upholding democracy in the Western Cape.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, I would like to conclude by calling on all hon members of this House to support this Vote as it is in the best interest of the people of the Western Cape. We must ensure that our Legislature has the resources it needs to maintain the level of excellence that we have, and we must continue to innovate and improve going forward. The Western Cape Provincial Parliament serves as an example to other Provincial Legislatures around the country. Let us make sure that that continues.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, on behalf of the Democratic Alliance, I support this Vote. ...[Applause.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Bosman. I

now recognise the hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Temporary Chairperson. Hon Temporary Chairperson, I am going to respond in the following manner because it is always very difficult to respond to political statements as the Speaker because when I go back to that Chair, all hon members expect me to be fair and impartial. So, I am not going to respond to the political statements that were made.

But what I do want to respond to are three things. Hon Temporary Chairperson, I want to start with hon Jacobs when he speaks about public engagement and the importance of the citizens of this province knowing what the role of Parliament is, the inner workings of Parliament, who the members of Parliament are and what we do here and why they have elected us. I know that the public education and outreach with the limited resources and staff that they have, roll out continuously, roll out programmes across this province. Hon Temporary Chairperson, every single engagement that is undertaken by that unit, all hon members of this Parliament get invited to.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, I want to say it on record today that if there are two or three hon members that actually participate in that programme, it is a lot. I want to take this opportunity to encourage the hon members to take part in those public education and outreach programmes. It is our constitutional mandate to facilitate public engagement, to ensure that we ultimately strengthen democracy in this province. So, I want to once again

appeal that the hon members please participate and support that unit. There is a small team that is absolutely committed to ensuring that the citizens of this province are educated or empowered with what the role of Parliament is.

With regards to, hon Temporary Chairperson, I think it would be remiss of me not to respond to one or two things that hon Bans has mentioned, and I want to start with the oversight, the functionality of the oversight mechanism in Parliament and how oversight is being conducted over the hon members of the Executive. Now, hon Temporary Chairperson, I mean, hon Bans has been here previously, so we are all clear on the mandates and constitutional roles and responsibilities of hon members of Parliament over the Executive.

I think it is important to refer the hon member to the Rules and the Constitution. Oversight over municipalities is not the role of an hon member of the Provincial Parliament. We have oversight over the hon Minister of Local Government, and I am using municipalities because municipalities were mentioned. The Parliament has a duty to hold the hon Minister in his ministerial capacity accountable and his Department, but this is continuous and I think I have answered, or I have communicated this on numerous occasions.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, the same with the Powers Bill that has been mentioned Sitting after Sitting and then, as the Speaker, you cannot respond to it. It is the duty of Parliament and as Parliament to process any Bill that is referred to Parliament. Parliament as an institution does not adjudicate on

the content of the Bill before it gets to decide what gets referred or not. So, whatever the content is and whether you agree or disagree, it will be processed by Parliament. You cannot put a financial amount to democracy in this country. There are people that have died for the privilege that we have today for participatory democracy and that is one mechanism that we, in this Institution, for as long as I am here, will ensure that that is enhanced, and hon members will be empowered to submit Bills, and we will process them.

The same with and I think I have answered this in the Parliamentary Oversight Committee. The same with oversight in the province. There is no amount of money that can justify public participation and democracy or deepening democracy in this province. So, when it comes to oversight and taking Parliament to the people, that is something that I am absolutely passionate about and that I will defend regardless of the cost associated to it. People have fought and died for this privilege to participate in the democracy that we have today, hon Temporary Chairperson.

Then, hon Temporary Chairperson, I hear the request, or the comments made by hon Petrus from the Patriotic Alliance, and I just want to touch on the cost of employment. Because there is this perception or this notion that when there is a post that is funded that is not filled it is because we do not fund or do not fill the post because we want to reallocate the funds somewhere else. No, that is not the case because then we would have done it in the Main Budget.

When a post is funded, we fund the post for the entire financial year and sometimes, it takes longer than one or two or three months, depending on the skillset, to fill the vacancy. So, in those three or four months that the post is not filled, that money becomes a saving and then it gets reallocated in this process that we are engaging today in the Adjustment Budget to enhance the work of the Institution.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, then before I get to the ‘thank you’s’. I think it would again be remiss of me not to remind the hon members that this is our Parliament. Each hon member, regardless of the political party that you represent, when we come to Parliament it is all nine political parties that make up the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. When we engage and we communicate with one another, may we never, ever forget that.
[Interjections.]

It can never be that this Institution or this House degenerates into a gossip shop, a talk shop and a session where people say random things about random people. [Interjections.] Where people are saying things about officials and that you hear on the street or politicians are being used to drive certain narratives. It can never be that we use this House, this House, that people are watching, the 7,4-million citizens ...[Interjections.] that empower us. [Interjections.] With freedom of speech comes great responsibility, hon Nkondlo. And we must never, ever, ever allow Parliament or the Western Cape Provincial Parliament to degenerate to that point where it becomes no longer about our constitutional mandates ...[Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon members!

The SPEAKER: ...of lawmaking because that is why we are elected, oversight of the Executive and public participation. We need to ensure that we strengthen those constitutional mandates and responsibilities. The same way I am not using this platform today, to politicise because I respect the House, and I respect the work of this House.

So, hon Temporary Chairperson, with that being said, I want to take this opportunity to thank the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee and even hon Bans as a Committee member and the entire Committee. Thank you very much for the robust, robust engagements ...[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Order, hon members!

The SPEAKER: ...robust ...[Interjections.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon member Nkondlo and hon member Bans, can we please maintain order.

The SPEAKER: Hon Temporary Chairperson ...[Interjection.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Hon members! Please take your seat,

hon Speaker. [Interjections.] †Waar het hy uitgepraat? [Where did he speak out?] Thank you very much. Please proceed, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Temporary Chairperson. And then to the Parliamentary Oversight Committee, thank you very, very much for the robust engagements that we have or the tough questions that we are asked, and for the manner in which we can engage. Again, the oversight mechanism and the oversight capacity are there, and it is strengthened, and I welcome that.

Hon Temporary Chairperson, it will be remiss of me not to thank in his absence, the hon Secretary and the team of WCPP. Thank you very much for the work that you do on a daily basis. Thank you very much for the sacrifices to the citizens of this beautiful province. I really do appreciate it, and I think I can speak on behalf of all hon members when I say thank you for the work that goes on into the workings of Parliament, and thank you for strengthening, especially after an election year where there are brand new members trying to find their feet. So, thank you for that.

And then last but not least, to my office. Thank you very much to Lorica and the team for the work that you do on a daily basis to strengthen my hand in order to be the best Speaker that I can possibly be. Thank you very much.
...[Applause.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

And that concludes the debate on this Vote.

[Debate concluded.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON: I will give an opportunity to vacate, unless you want to stay. Thank you very much. Order, hon members. I will now ask the hon Secretary to read the Seventh Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Consideration of Votes and Schedules – Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill.

[The Speaker takes the Chair.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon members. Hon members, I have to announce that there are currently 41 hon members present and entitled to vote, and the House is therefore quorate. Parties have an option to make a declaration now to cover all the Votes, or to make a declaration on each Vote individually. Can I just get an indication from the Chief Whips if they are going to be all the Votes? All the Votes. All the Votes, okay. Are there any objections to Votes 1 to 14 and the Schedules of the Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill?

An HON MEMBER: Yes.

An HON MEMBER: No.

Hon MEMBERS: Yes, yes.

The SPEAKER: There is an objection. All those in favour of the Votes and Schedules of the Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill being adopted, please say 'yes.

Hon MEMBERS: Yes!

The SPEAKER: Those not in favour of the Votes and Schedules of the Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill being adopted, please say 'no'.

Hon MEMBERS: No!

The SPEAKER: I think the 'ayes' have it. Votes and Schedules of the Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill has therefore been adopted. Hon Petrus, I recognise your hand. I think it is a legacy hand. We will continue. The hon Secretary will read the Eighth Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Finalisation of the Western Cape Adjustments ...[Interjection.]

† 'n AGBARE LID: Die Speaker is heeltemal reg. U het dit klaar afgehandel. Dit is reg so.

[An HON MEMBER: The Speaker is totally correct. You have completed that

already. It is right like that.]

The SPEAKER: Alright, thank you.

The SECRETARY: Finalisation of the Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill including the clauses and short title.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise the hon Minister of Finance.

†Die MINISTER VAN FINANSIES: Dankie Agb Speaker, ek vra dat hierdie eerbare Huis asseblief die Wes-Kaapse Aansuiweringsbegrotingswetsontwerp vir 2024 asseblief finaliseer. Baie dankie.

[The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Speaker, I ask that this hon House finalises the Adjustment Budget for 2024, please. Thank you.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. There being no list of speakers, are there any objections to the Bill, Clauses and Short Title being finalised?

An HON MEMBER: Yes.

Hon MEMBERS: No!

An HON MEMBER: Object!

The SPEAKER: There is an objection. ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Really?

The SPEAKER: I have to announce that there are currently 41 hon members present and entitled to vote, and the House is therefore quorate. Now there are 40.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Now there are 40. ...[Laughter.]

The SPEAKER: There are now 41. Hon members, this is important because this is very, very important, so I ask you that you please do not leave the Chamber while the voting process is underway.

Hon members, I have to announce that there are currently 41 hon members present and entitled to vote, and the House is therefore quorate. Those in favour of the Bill, the clauses and the short title being finalised, please say yes.

Hon MEMBERS: Yes!

The SPEAKER: Those not in favour of the Bill, the clauses and the short title being finalised, please say no.

Hon MEMBERS: No!

The SPEAKER: I think the 'ayes' have it. The Finalisation including Clauses and the Short Title of the Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill B2–2024 is therefore approved. The names of the individual hon members present and their support or otherwise for the question before the House will be recorded in the Minutes of the Proceedings to ensure a full record of the voting on this Bill. The hon Secretary will read the Bill.

The SECRETARY: Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation Bill.

The SPEAKER: The Bill will be sent to the hon Premier for assent. The hon Secretary will read the Eighth Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Consideration of the report of the Budget Committee on the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill B13–2024 NCOP.

The SPEAKER: The House received the Report of the Budget Committee on the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill conferring authority on the Western Cape delegation in the NCOP, not to support this Bill. The mandate has been sent to the NCOP. I will now afford parties an opportunity to make a declaration if they so wish. I recognise the ANC.

†Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): †Nkosi Somlomo. [Thank you Speaker] The ANC supports the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill, and we do so despite our reservations of the observed budgeting practices of the DA-led Provincial

Government, which remains out of step with the economic challenges of its poorest citizens, as explained by the Municipal Economic Review Outlook.

While the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill seeks to make the most of constrained fiscal resources, the Western Cape Province which often complains about insufficient funding from the fiscus, is showing signs of spending that require scrutiny. The failure to utilise the funds allocated within the fiscal year returning them and calling them savings or rolling them over for future years. This pattern of spending and inefficacy undermines the credibility of budgeting in running public affairs in this Province.

However, the ANC welcomes the Conditional Grants allocated to the Western Cape Government, especially the R1,2-billion in Disaster and Infrastructure funding. This includes R947-million for infrastructure reconstruction related to disasters between December 2023 and July 2024, and R251-million for the Western Cape Rapid Schools Build Programme. Part of the broader R2,5-billion for school infrastructure over the 2024 MTEF.

These grants will support key projects such as the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme Grant, Education Infrastructure Grant, Health Facility Revitalisation Grant and the Provincial Roads Maintenance Grant. We hope these funds will be managed effectively to address urgent infrastructure needs in the province.

We further welcome the commitment of National Treasury to come back early

next year to explain the reforms National Government is undertaking to respond to the constructive engagements about the Equitable Share within the frame of growth and balancing redress in as far as equitable distribution of the resources of the country.

Therefore, the ANC supports the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill and does so within the call for greater scrutiny, transparency and responsibility in how the Provincial Government manages these funds. We will continue to fight for better, more effective use of resources to ensure that no community is left behind. I thank you, hon Speaker.

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

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Agb Speaker, dankie. Die PA se posisie is op rekord tydens die Komiteevergadering. Ons het dit so op skrif ook gesit, agb Speaker, dat ons ondersteun die *Bill*. Ons redes is daar en ek vra dat ons redes so op rekord geplaas word, agb Speaker.

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): Hon Speaker, thank you. The PA's position is on record during the Committee meeting. We have also put that in writing, hon Speaker, that we support the Bill. Our reasons are there and I ask that it be also placed on record like that, hon Speaker.]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agb Petrus. [The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Petrus.] I recognise the Economic Freedom Fighters. The EFF?

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill is not a proper way to allocate the R2,1-trillion of which R1,4-trillion goes to National Government, R600,4-billion to provinces and R101-billion to municipalities across the country. Hon Speaker, in an era of extreme budget cuts there is nothing that the Division of Revenue does in order to address service delivery concerns and tackle poverty which our people are subjected to. As things stand under the current Division of Revenue, much of the diversified ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Cassiem, we have ...[Interjections.] Order! Hon Cassiem, we cannot hear you. ...[Laughter.]

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): Sorry, hon Speaker ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Cassiem?

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): Sorry, my sound muted. Apologies. As things stand under the current Division of Revenue, much of the diversified economic activity only takes place in three Metros based in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape, which provinces such as the North West, Mpumalanga and Limpopo mostly rely primarily on agriculture and mining without more. This Division of Revenue does nothing to address this problem.

Hon Speaker, despite receiving the least budget allocation compared to

National Government and Provincial Governments, the municipalities which constitute Local Government are currently buckling under pressure as they are failing to service their indigent households due to lack of adequate funds.

Hon Speaker, the current Division of Revenue Framework is based on bases operating models and a misconception which assume that municipalities will sell water, provision of sanitation and electricity to people and thereby, collecting the much-needed revenue in the process in order to administer the service delivery in their respective jurisdictions. However, the reality is that this model is not due to the fact that the majority of our people are unemployed, poor and cannot afford municipal services despite needing them. Only eight metropolitan municipalities account for more than 70% of collected revenue out of the 257 municipalities which are tasked with providing for the bulk of key services to our local communities.

In conclusion, hon Speaker, it is just a matter of time before the majority of municipalities in South Africa collapse and are not able to operate again due to some flawed Division of Revenue which is administered at the National level. For these reasons, the EFF will not be supporting this Bill. Thank you, hon Speaker. ...[Applause.]

Hon MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Cassiem. I recognise the NCC.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, throughout history it has been the inaction of those that could have acted, ones of those that should have known better and the silence of the voice of justice when it mattered the most. Please let this Budget speak to the poor. We support. ...[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The Freedom Front Plus.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Hon Speaker, on behalf of the Freedom Front Plus we support the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill, and we want the Western Cape always to receive that which is fair towards the people of the Western Cape. So, with that being said, we support. Thank you. ...[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise Al Jama-ah. [Interjections.] Order, hon members. Al Jama-ah. [Interjections.] Order, hon members. In the absence, I cannot see if hon Brinkhuis is online. If not, I am going to continue. The ACDP.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Hon Speaker, the ACDP do not support the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill. I thank you. ...[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Order! Thank you very much. I recognise GOOD. I have received an apology from hon Herron. The Democratic Alliance.

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Hon Speaker, hon members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. I rise to oppose the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill which fails to address the unique needs of the Western Cape and risk harming the citizens that we serve.

Hon Speaker, firstly, the fiscal constraints imposed by this Bill ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Johnson, please take your seat. Hon Sayed, is that a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: No. Is the hon Johnson willing to take a question? [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: There are no questions ...[Interjection.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Now that we are ending and wrapping up now.

The SPEAKER: No. There is ...[Interjections.] Hon members, there is ...[Interjections.] There is no question time during declaration time. There are different mechanisms. You can use another Parliamentary Rules' mechanism. We just finished that discussion. [Interjections.] Alright, I think we are. We still have a few more orders on the agenda, hon colleagues, so I please ask that you work with me. I recognise you, hon Johnson.

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, the fiscal constraints imposed by the Bill are unsustainable. The Western Cape faces severe Budget cuts including an R8,4-billion carry-through reduction effect in 2021 and 2024 of our Provincial Equitable Share while experiencing rapid population growth. This underfunding threatens essential services like Health, Education and Social Development while National Government still refuses to classify social workers as fully fledged frontline services.

The Equitable Share formula does not account for population growth or increasing service delivery demands, leaving critical gaps in funding. Additionally, the Bill does little to reduce social grant dependency or foster sustainable economic growth, neglecting the province's most vulnerable communities. Education funding under this Bill is also inadequate. The allocation failed to ensure schools are equipped with the necessary resources to improve outcomes. Infrastructure funding such as the Provincial Road Maintenance Grant is insufficient to address the state of disrepair in rural transport networks vital to economic activity.

Climate Change remains a pressing challenge. The allocation for resilience and bulk water infrastructures are insufficient, leaving municipalities vulnerable to water shortages and extreme weather events.

Finally, hon Speaker, Regional Infrastructure Grants fail to address disparities across the province, leaving smaller municipalities struggling to

meet the basic needs. This Bill exacerbates inequalities, imposes unsustainable fiscal constraints and fails to provide adequate resources for critical services and infrastructure. This is why the Democratic Alliance does not support the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill and demands a more equitable allocation of resources to meet the needs of the Western Cape. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Thank you very much, hon Johnson. Hon members, I have to announce that there are currently 40 hon members present and entitled to vote, and the House is therefore quorate. The question put before the House that the Report of the Budget Committee on the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill conferring authority on the Western Cape Delegation in the NCOP not to support this Bill, be ratified and adopted. Are there any objections?

Hon MEMBERS: Yes! Yes!

An HON MEMBER: No!

An HON MEMBER: Object!

The SPEAKER: There is an objection. All those in favour of the report being ratified and adopted, please say 'aye'.

Hon MEMBERS: Aye!

The SPEAKER: Those not in favour of the report being ratified and adopted, please say 'no'.

Hon MEMBERS: No!

The SPEAKER: I think the 'ayes' have it, and the question is therefore approved. The Report of the Budget Committee on the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill has therefore been adopted. The hon Secretary will read the Tenth Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Consideration of Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development on the Older Persons Amendment Bill B 11D–D2022 dated 3 December (Ratification of final mandate). [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order! The House received the Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development on the Older Persons Amendment Bill conferring authority on the Western Cape delegation in the NCOP to support this Bill. This mandate has been sent to the NCOP. I will now afford parties an opportunity to make a declaration if they so wish, and I recognise the ANC.

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker, hon members in the House, for the opportunity, hon Speaker. †Vandag staan ek hier namens die ANC om ons steun vir die Wysigingswet op die Older Persons Amendment Bill B 11D-

2022 uit te spreek - 'n deurslaggewende wetgewingstuk wat gemik is op die verbetering van die lewens van ouer persone in ons nasie. Hierdie Wetsontwerp weerspieël die stemme van ons gemeenskappe, aangesien die wysiging insluit die publieke voorlegging en die provinsie ondersteuningsmandaat versprei.

Hierdie wetgewing verkloen die korrektiewe verbintenis om die vaardigheid, veiligheid en regte van ons bejaarde burgers te beskerm. Die Wetsontwerp poog om die onsettende werklikheid, wat baie ouer persone in die gesig staar, aan te spreek, insluitende verwaarlosing, mishandeling en uitbuiting. Dit is nou in sorgfasiliteite soos die Beacon Valley in Mitchells Plein of binne eie huise of familie. Dit vestig streng toesig oor die ouetehuse, beskerm finansiële sekuriteit, verseker vinnige aksie in alle gevalle van mishandeling, en verplig die wetlike rapportering van sulke voorvalle in die kultuur.

Agb Speaker, om samespreking te skep doen ons 'n beroep op die Regering dat 'n gesponserde gesondheidstoetsing en opgeleide persone vir die versorging verskaf kan word om die verouderde persone en bevolking te ondersteun. Die ANC steun sterk hierdie doelwit en erken die belangrikheid daarvan om die lewens van ons ouer persone in ons gemeenskap te verbeter. Dit is egter met diep kommer dat ek die afwesigheid van die agb MEC van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling en die agb MEC van Gesondheid en Welstand tydens die besoek, tydens die *Select* Raad van die Komitee van Maatskaplike Dienste aanspreek, agb Speaker. Hier hul versuim om 'n kritieke sessie by te woon is onrespekvol en verwaarlosing van hulle pligte as rekenhoudiges, agb Speaker.

Dit ondermyn die geloofwaardigheid van hulle departemente en verminder die doeltreffendheid van die samewerking, agb Speaker.

Ten slotte, die ANC het hartlike verwysings op die ouer persone en sy doelwitte, ons bly by ons verbintenis om die regte en die welsyn van ouer persone in die Wes-Kaap daaruit te bevorder. Laat ons almal as verteenwoordigers van die mense ons toesigligte ernstig opneem en verseker dat die belofte in betekenisvolle aksie omgeskakel word van wat ons doen, agb Speaker. Ek dank u daarvoor.

[Today I stand here on behalf of the ANC to express our support for the Older Persons Amendment Bill B 11D-2022 – a crucial piece of legislation aimed at the improvement of the lives of older people in our nation. This Bill reflects the voices of our communities, as the amendment includes the public participation and the distribution of the provincial support mandate.

This legislation clones the corrective commitment to protect the skill, safety and rights of our aged citizens. The Bill attempts to address the awful reality staring many older persons in the face, including neglect, abuse and exploitation. That is now in care facilities such as the Beacon Valley in Mitchells Plain or in own houses or with family. It established strict oversight over the old age homes, protects financial security, ensures fast action in all cases of abuse, and obliges the legal reporting of such incidents in the culture.

Hon Speaker, to create discussion we ask the Government that a sponsored

health oversight and trained persons be provided to support the aged persons and population. The ANC strongly supports this goal and acknowledges the importance thereof to improve the lives of our older persons in our community. It is, however, with deep concern that I address the absence of the hon MEC of Social Development and the hon MEC of Health and Wellness during the visit of the Select Council of the Committee of Social Services, hon Speaker. Here their neglect to attend a critical session is disrespectful and neglect of their duties as accountable, hon Speaker. It undermines the credibility of their departments and reduces the efficiency of their cooperation, hon Speaker.

To conclude, the ANC has references on the older persons and its goals, we stand by our commitment to promote the rights and wellbeing of older persons in the Western Cape. Let us all as representatives of the people take our oversight role seriously and ensure that the promise is converted into meaningful action in what we are doing, hon Speaker. I thank you for that.]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agbare lid. [The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member.] I recognise the Patriotic Alliance.

†Mnr B PETRUS (PA): Agb Speaker, names die PA, ons ouer persone en bejaardes verdien baie beter, agb Speaker. Ons ondersteun die Wet. Hulle stem moet gehoor word. Dus ondersteun ons die Wet, agb Speaker.

[Mr B PETRUS (PA): Hon Speaker, on behalf of the PA, our older persons and aged deserve much better, hon Speaker. We support the Act. Their voice

should be heard. Therefore we support the Act, hon Speaker.]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie. [The SPEAKER: Thank you.] I recognise the EFF.

†Me T LITHAKONG (EFF): Baie dankie, agb Speaker. [Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Thank you, hon Speaker.] †*Somlomo*. [Speaker.] The research per STAT SA shows that people aged 60 and older account for 9,2% of South Africa's total population. It is also proven that as people age, the more vulnerable they ...[Audio distorted – 2:32:47.] it is all the care they can get. Almost ...[Audio distorted.] in South Africa live in households where there is no single person employed which necessitates these pensioners to share their old age grants with their children, grandchildren and extended family members, which is often not enough to sustain everyone.

The EFF will not stand in the way of Legislative ...[Audio distorted.] care for the wellbeing of the older person which is very much needed. Some of the positives stemming from this Bill is that it makes provisions ...[Audio distorted.] people from places of abuse to places of safety, without requiring a court order. All that is need is ...[Audio distorted.] suspicion that there are instances of abuse. We also hope that this humanity will be extended to homeless elderly people, and they will not be ...[Audio distorted.] that they reside in the streets or they are mentally incapacitated. ...[Audio distorted.] ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Lithakong, you are breaking up, so we are not able to hear your submission in the House.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): ...very long time, Government has been failing to offer elderly people – I hope I am audible, hon Speaker?

The SPEAKER: You are audible now.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Thank you very much. For a very long time, Government has been failing to offer our elderly people ...[Audio distorted.] such as access to proper healthcare, food security and affordable accommodation. ...[Audio distorted.] ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Lithakong, we are not able to hear your full submission and for that reason, I am going to continue with the rest of the Speakers' list. If you can please make sure that you have your connectivity enhanced, and then I will give you an opportunity at the end ...[Interjection.]

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): It is ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: ...to make your submission.

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): ...Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Hon Lithakong? I am ...[Interjection.]

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): Yes, can you hear me?

The SPEAKER: I am going to provide you an opportunity at the end ...[Interjection.]

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): I am concluding, hon Speaker. I am concluding.

The SPEAKER: Oh, you are concluding. Can I ...[Interjection.]

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): So, hon Speaker, the Economic Freedom Fighters supports this Bill. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I do not know what will be reflected in Hansard, but we will see what we have received. I recognise the NCC.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I want to start off by saying: let the hungry be fed, let the naked be clothed, let the sick be nourished, the aged protected and the infants cared for. These are my daily prayers. This is a vote of the elderly people. We support.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I recognise the Freedom Front Plus.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Hon Speaker, the Freedom Front Plus supports the

Older Persons Amendment Bill. We would like to emphasise a quote that says:

“How a society treats its most vulnerable is always a measure of its humanity.”

I believe that this is a positive change that will serve in the best interests of the elderly. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise Al Jama-ah. The ACDP.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): No declaration, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: I have received an apology from hon Herron for GOOD, just for the record, and I recognise the DA.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Hon members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, the Democratic Alliance reaffirms its commitment to the dignity and welfare of older persons in this province. The Older Persons Amendment Bill seeks to address critical gaps in the 2006 Act, introducing measures to enhance compliance, accountability and the quality of care provided to the elderly.

The Bill introduces several vital amendments including the strengthening of monitoring frameworks, provisions for temporary safe care and clarifications

to ensure consistency in legal applications. These improvements are essential to protecting one of our most vulnerable groups. However, we recognise the challenges that come with these Amendments, especially for facilities already operating under severe financial constraints.

For the provisions of this Bill to translate into tangible improvements, it is imperative that its implementation is supported by adequate resources, training and funding. The Democratic Alliance has actively engaged with stakeholders and communities across the province. Through public hearings in George, Beaufort West, Worcester and other regions, we have ensured that the voices of our citizens are at the forefront of this legislative process. We remain committed to advocating for their concerns, ensuring that the Bill aligns with the realities on the ground.

Hon Speaker, while we support the intent and provisions of this Bill, we emphasise the need for its implementation to be accompanied by a comprehensive financial plan. The unintended consequence of overburdening service providers must be avoided. This legislation should uplift the sector, not drive it into further challenges.

Hon Speaker, the Democratic Alliance supports the Older Persons Amendment Bill overarching objectives, but we as the House, must advocate for the National Government to allocate sufficient funding for this critical legislation to ensure its successful implementation. I thank you, hon Speaker. ...[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Kaizer-Philander. Hon members, I have to announce that there are currently 39. Can I just check with the Table Staff. Is that 39 or 40 hon members? And hon Christians? Forty.

I have to announce that there are currently 40 hon members present and entitled to vote, and the House is therefore quorate. The question put before the House that the Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development on the Older Person Amendment Bill conferring authority on the Western Cape Delegation in the NCOP to support this Bill be ratified and adopted. Are there any objections?

Hon MEMBERS: No!

The SPEAKER: No objections, agreed to. The Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development on the Older Persons Amendment Bill has therefore been adopted.

Hon members, as is our tradition, I will now afford representatives of parties an opportunity to address the House on the occasion of the end of the year and the end of this session. I recognise the African National Congress.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Speaker, hon members, as we stand at the close of another year in the Western Cape Provincial Legislature, it is time for reflection, celebration and an acknowledgement of

both the challenges and the achievements that have shaped this House.

This past year we have continued to navigate the complexities of governance and political discourse, always striving to serve the people of this province with dedication and integrity. We pause, hon Speaker, to remember our colleagues whom we have lost during the Sixth Administration. Their contributions to this Legislature and to the people of this province, will not be forgotten.

Looking back at the Elections of 2024, we recall the collective efforts that ensure that South Africans could once again exercise their democratic right to vote. The election was a reminder of the power of democracy and the importance of each citizen's voice in shaping the future of our nation. But democracy is more than just casting a ballot every five years, it is about active citizenship, accountability and ensuring that Government at all levels, is responsive to the needs of our people.

Service delivery remains the cornerstone of democracy. It is what connects us as public representatives for the communities we serve. Regardless of our political affiliations, our shared goal must always be to improve the lives of all South Africans and to address the inequalities that persist in our society.

Moving forward, we must ensure that the integrity of our democratic processes remains intact, particularly in informal settlements and rural areas where infrastructure and access to services need urgent attention. Here in the

Western Cape, our time in this Legislature has seen spirited debates, robust oversights and moments of collaboration across party lines. While we have faced our fair share of disagreements, these interactions have strengthened our democratic institutions and deepened our commitment to this province.

As we move into the next phase of our democratic journey, let us do so with optimism and purpose. Our shared values of a better Western Cape and a united South Africa must guide us as we continue to serve with integrity and diligence.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has assisted the African National Congress caucus and to the broader Legislature staff for their support and dedication. You are the backbone of our work and have been indispensable in helping us fulfil our duties. Let us go forward not as adversities divided by party lines, but as servants of the people, united by our love for this province and our commitment to the principles of democracy. Thank you and may you all have a restful and blessed festive season. ...[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much to the hon Leader of the Opposition. The Patriotic Alliance.

Mr N CONSTABLE (PA): Hon Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity. Hon Speaker, allow me to give a few words from the Patriotic Alliance. Hon Speaker, the words citizen centric Parliament echoes in

Parliament and in the Sittings when we speak. I hope, hon Speaker, and the Patriotic Alliance hopes that these are not only words, but the citizens of this Western Cape will feel the Parliament and will feel whatever this Parliament wants to do for them.

Secondly, hon Speaker, we as the Patriotic Alliance also call on this Parliament to continue enhancing service delivery for all municipalities, making sure that we give support to smaller municipalities, rural municipalities wherever support is needed.

We also want to call on this Government to make sure that when we budget, we go into this festive season as where we come back, when we budget that we make sure that the budget of this Parliament is equally distributed. And as the hon Premier always said, †‘dat ons onse *stake* moet gaan soek en al die munisipaliteite hulle *stake* moet kry, sodat dit *distribute* word *equally*.’ [‘that we have to go and look for our stake and all the municipalities must get their stake so that it can be distributed equally.’]

Hon Speaker, let me thank all of you, all of you in Parliament, all the hon members from both sides, whatever political party or affiliation you are from. We are in Parliament not to represent specific political parties, but we are in Parliament to represent the people of the Western Cape. The people of the Western Cape are not only in the City of Cape Town, but as you always said it is also to the people of Murraysburg in the Central Karoo because this is the border of the Western Cape. Thank you very much to everyone.

Thank you to the staff of Parliament for your support to the Patriotic Alliance and hon Speaker, when we go into this festive season, please enjoy it with your family. Some of us endured trials and tribulations because of sickness of our children and our mothers, but God, He looked upon us. His hand was always upon us, and we pray that all of us, when we go into this festive season, keep safe, we enjoy it with our families and please, please do not drink and drive, otherwise the hon Mobility MEC will be on your case. [Interjections.] †Geniet die vakansie. Mag die Here met u almal wees. Mag die groot en almagtige God u seën, u beskerm en u toemaak. Kom ons sien mekaar volgende jaar en ek sien darem maar uit om julle te huisves in die Sentrale Karoo, Beaufort-Wes, waneer u kom vir die SOPA. Geseënde Kersseisoen, agb Speaker. Die Here seën u. ...[Applous.]

[Enjoy the holdiday. May the Lord be with you all. May the great and mighty God bless you, protect you and embrace you. Let us see each other again next year and I look forward to accommodate you in the Central Karoo, Beaufort West, when you come for the SOPA. Blessed Christmas season, hon Speaker. The Lord blesses you. ...[Applause.]]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agb Constable. [The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Constable.] I recognise the NCC.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Hon Jacobs? Hon Jacobs? [Interjections.] I am going to

come back to hon Jacobs. The Freedom Front Plus.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, the Freedom Front Plus wishes everybody well over this festive season. As we come to the end of 2024, we will probably reflect on the past and then, also, I want to remind everybody to reflect and also appreciate this gift of life that we have been given.

We, as a political parties and hon members of this House, do from time to time differ, but we have a huge responsibility of representing our constituencies well and with honesty. The Government of National Unity called for greater cooperation at national level, but this same spirit of cooperation must be extended to provinces and municipalities. After all, everything that we are doing now is to serve the people of this province and the Western Cape and South Africa. We need each other. As we follow party rules, we cannot do so without each other. Everything that we do now is in the best interest of our people, and we are not enemies. We may be opponents, but obviously, we are doing to serve our people.

So, I just want to take this opportunity to say thank you to you, hon Speaker, for tolerating me, tolerating my moods and the House, of course, and I want to thank all the staff for their support during the course of the past few months that I have been in the House for the very first time. And I want to wish everybody well and have a blessed Christmas. To the hon Premier of the Western Cape, our first citizen in the province, I want to wish him all the

best, to him and his family and everyone else. Thank you so much.
...[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Marais. Can I just check. Is hon Jacobs, are you back online? Okay, I am going to move on to the ACDP.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Hon Speaker, it is my singular honour to bring salutations to the hon colleagues in this House today. As the year draws to a close, it presents an opportunity to express my gratefulness to all hon colleagues in the Chamber both present and virtually. During this year we have engaged in national and provincial elections, and our people have mandated us to serve them in this House. I pray to God that we will honour them by doing that.

As always, it has been a joy to participate in robust debates. We have done much, but there is more to be done. Now, we must spend some precious time with our families and friends. The ACDP wishes all the blessings of God upon all of us, and we pray that we will have a safe festive season.

I want to bring just a portion of Scripture that says the following. 1 Samuel 7:12.

“Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen and called its name Ebenezer: ‘Thus far the LORD has helped us.’”

I thank you. ...[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Thank you very much, hon Christians. Can I just for the final opportunity, hon Jacobs, are you online? If not, I recognise the Democratic Alliance.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you very much, hon Speaker and listening to the speakers before me, a lot of us are actually starting to reflect on what will go down as a very historic 2024. But ultimately, and now I always like to look for quotes that reflect and can sum up what the year actually means and should mean to some of us. I am thinking of the play Julius Caesar in Act 4, a famous quote by Brutus which said:

“There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood leads on to fortune. On such a full sea are we now afloat and we must take the current when it serves.”

On 29 May, the voters of this country made a choice. They have set us on a course where they asked that we actually ultimately serve them. So, 2024 can be called the year of tides. In politics, we have seen some that were big grow small. We have seen even in our personal lives that we mature, and we grow. We have seen growth and decline, again in the political space, but also in each of our personal lives. Many of our families have been blessed. Welcome newborns! But we also observed the true essence of our own morality and also, our humanity when we also had to part with loved and dear

ones over this entire year.

While we reflect on what Brutus said, it ultimately speaks to the entire year, the fate which we all are destined to pursue, but we also speak to the free will which all of us have a choice to exercise, and the voters have ultimately expressed that free will. Each one of us who is elected to serve, hon Speaker, has a responsibility to ensure that we live as far as possible, a noble life and a life that is honourable that speaks to the ambition of those voters on whose behalf we speak here.

So, I do want to wish all our hon members on both sides of the House and our staff in all of our departments, and again, in the Provincial Parliament, really a blessed festive break. Please rest well; spend time with your loved ones and family but let us never forget what the true meaning of the festive season is, irrespective of what religions we all hail from. It is to serve and give back to our communities because at the end of the day, we all share a common fate, a common fate which is expressed with a free will which the voters have entrusted in all of us. So again, have a blessed festive break, rest well and I hope to see you all in the new year. Thank you very much. ...[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon members. And then, on behalf of myself and the Administration, we wish you a blessed festive season. Please be safe on the roads. Please come back rejuvenated and enjoy the quality time with your loved ones and your families. With that being said, hon

members, that concludes the business for the day. The Secretary will now end the meeting, and all hon members will be exited from the Sitting, and the House is adjourned.

The House adjourned at 16:24.