



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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14 November 2017

Ms. B Mbete MP
Speaker of the National Assembly
Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

Dear Madam Speaker,

REQUEST FOR A DEBATE ON AN URGENT MATTER OF NATIONAL PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

I am writing to request the scheduling of a debate on an urgent matter of national public importance in the National Assembly, in terms of National Assembly Rule 130, to discuss the Fees Commission Report released by The Presidency yesterday, 13 November 2017.

We note that the Report does not endorse fully fee-free education for all, and indeed is explicit in its conclusion that free higher education for all is not required by the Constitution.

I am however concerned, as are many millions of South Africans, at bizarre rumours swirling that President Zuma is intending to bypass this multi-million rand report in favor of an amateur, populist funding model that entails the crude introduction of a R40 billion boost to student funding, to be financed through such drastic measures as the undermining of the role of Treasury, the cutting of social grants and an increase in VAT, with little consideration given to all the other issues at stake.

Furthermore, the delay in the release of the report has already caused millions of University and TVET students considerable distress, as they were left to wonder about financing the start of the 2018 academic year. It has meant that Universities have not been able to set fees for next year. It is time for this uncertainty to end. A discussion on this issue in the House as a matter of urgent public importance is required to provide a clear way forward for higher education in South Africa.

It is my view that funding for higher education is in itself a matter of national public importance and the release of the much anticipated fees commission report yesterday increases the urgency with which this matter should be discussed in the House. As required by NA Rule 130 (8) (d), this is a matter for which the government can be held responsible. It further relates to a specific matter of recent occurrence in terms of NA Rule 130 (8) (e).

I look forward to your favourable response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Belinda Bozzoli'.

B Bozzoli MP

Shadow Minister of Higher Education

Democratic Alliance