

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

HON. VICKY KNOETZE MPL



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Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature
Bhisho
Eastern Cape



25 March 2019

Honourable MEC Fikile Xasa

RE: URGENT REQUEST TO INTERVENE – BULK ELECTRICITY SUPPLY INTERRUPTIONS PLANNED FOR DR BEYERS NAUDE MUNICIPALITY – WILLOWMORE, STEYTLERVILLE & JANSENVILLE.

Notice was received that bulk electricity supply interruptions will be taking place from 11 April 2019 in Dr Beyer's Naude Municipality – Willowmore, Steytlerville & Jansenville, due to an alleged breach of the suspension notices issued on 29 October 2018.

This matter is of great concern to residents, local businesses, the tourism industry and societies most vulnerable. It will have a negative effect on the economy in this already severely cash-strapped municipality. It is fundamentally unfair to punish the residents of this municipality for the failures of the administration to pay ESKOM and allowing the debt owed to ESKOM to run into millions.

It is further of concern that in terms of amalgamated municipalities such as Dr Beyer's Naude Municipality, which was amalgamated from Camdeboo and Baviaans Municipalities (both of which have settled their ESKOM debt) and Ikwezi Municipality (who is responsible for the bulk of the R90 million debt). Towns in the former Camdeboo and Baviaans Municipalities will be punished severely for this historical debt.

I therefore urge you to consider:

- a) Whether ESKOM has engaged in sufficient stakeholder engagement in these municipalities in terms implementing bulk electricity supply interruptions.
- b) I request a copy of the above-mention suspension agreement between Dr Beyer's Naude Municipality and Eskom.
- c) Submissions the municipality in terms of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000.
- d) Information elicited in terms of the Minister of Cooperative Governance Zweli Mkhize's Inter-ministerial committee on electricity distribution with regards to managing debts between ESKOM and municipalities and payment agreements.
- e) The basis upon which towns were selected for interruption.
- f) The overcharging of tariffs in Jansenville, Steytlerville and Willowmore which resulted in cost – saving.
- g) Non-payment of ESKOM credits to the municipality.
- h) The effect of high-electricity losses in the vicinity of 23% on the outstanding debt.
- i) The position of affected areas prior to and after amalgamations in 2016.

My request is that you intervene in this instance as a matter of urgency to prevent that our economy, our people and businesses in this municipality will be severely negatively affected due to carrying the unfair burden of failures by their municipalities and impractical amalgamations that was fundamentally detrimental to municipalities and their residents..

Your assistance in this regard is appreciated.

HON. VICKY KNOETZE MPL
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