

# Jobs Saves Lives, Minister

By Hlanganani Gumbi – DA Shadow Deputy Minister of Tourism

Honourable Speaker

The global Coronavirus pandemic and lockdown has crushed the tourism sector, both internationally and in South Africa. Domestic and international travel came to a stop. Hotels, guest houses, bed and breakfasts and homestays went empty. Restaurants shut down as chefs, waiters and cleaners went home. Tour guides in game reserves and sailors on big and small boats along our coasts sacrificed their livelihoods. Shuttle drivers and conference facility workers came together in the monumental effort to help the Government, in a common purpose to try to save lives.

More than 100 days later people are trying to safely return to their livelihoods in a new health and safety work environment. They are trying to protect themselves and others, while still getting on with the business of creating jobs in South Africa.

But instead, of showing solidarity with patriotic South Africans, this ANC government continues to let them down.

The Charter Boat Association, operating as small businesses of boat rides along the South African coast, gave the minister a list of 7 new proposed safety protocols to reopen safely. To date, they have received no help from this government. This leaves more tourism businesses at risk of being permanently shut down due to the extended Covid-19 lockdown and its irrational regulations.

You see, the ANC will have you believe that the choices today are about temporarily shutting down “white” business to save “black” lives. Rubbish. This lockdown is about power to the ANC.

From his reply to DA parliamentary questions, Minister Zweli Mkhize alluded to the fact that the ANC government is unable to build the necessary health facilities to fight Covid-19.

In one of the strangest bids to try and save face, Government seems to have decided that killing livelihoods will somehow save lives.

If you are unable to recognize that all jobs save lives with your R2 million guaranteed salary Minister, then it is time for the stakeholders in the tourism sector to fight back against your government, to take you to court, to push back against regulations and publicly challenge your authority.

No Government and no Minister has the right to unfairly push people out of jobs because they failed to build health facilities.