

## Elevated priorities do not equal better service delivery Premier Lesufi

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**Madam Speaker,  
Honourable Premier,  
Residents of Gauteng,**

I am reminded of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker. A story I am sure you are all familiar with. The moral of the story is that good will always triumph over evil. No matter how big the evil may seem.

A little girl is given a nutcracker doll for Christmas, at midnight when she goes to check on the doll, the Christmas tree has grown, the nutcracker has turned into a life size doll and mice begin to fill the room.

Suddenly a battle ensues between an army of ginger bread cookies led by the nutcracker and the mice led by their king. The little girl somehow manages to distract the mice and the nutcracker and his army win the battle.

Gauteng needs a budget that will win against the evil this province faces. The evil of unemployment, corruption, mismanagement of funds, poor service delivery and the lack of investor confidence.

We need a government that is not only committed to talking about improving the lives of our residents. We need a government that is truly committed to ensuring service delivery for all residents.

**Madam Speaker**, Premier Lesufi, has a budget that speaks to the elevated priorities that are meant to improve the lives of our residents. But as always, the devil is in the detail.

Premier Lesufi's so called "elevated priorities" are aimed at doing the following:

- Redirect budgets to townships, informal settlements and hostels to aid in economic recovery;
- Strengthen the fight against crime, lawlessness, corruption and vandalism;
- Improve the living conditions of residents living in townships, hostels and informal settlements;
- Prioritise the health and wellness of residents and;
- Strengthen the capacity of the state.

I doubt Gauteng residents can say have experienced any of the purported benefits of the above. The electoral results were an explicit expression of the disapproval by Gauteng residents of the removal of funds from key programmes to fund the Premier's attempt at building a personal legacy.

## Redirection of budgets

While Premier Lesufi may argue his intentions are noble, we cannot ignore the fact that many NGOs and NPOs who provide critical service to the most vulnerable in our communities were left with an uncertain future.

This was because their funding was suddenly cut and redirected elsewhere. Many could not pay and are still struggling to pay their bills and staff all while providing care to residents who have nowhere else to turn to.

Instead of redirecting funds, why not ensure that all departments meet their service delivery targets within budget and on time. It seems that reinventing the wheel is much easier than simply holding officials to account on why critical targets are not on a yearly basis. All you need to do is take a look at the annual reports and quarterly reports and you will see that targets are not met for various reasons. Many of which often point to an incompetent service provider being appointed.

This failure of leadership has led to infrastructure projects running behind schedule, destroying any chance of creating job opportunities. Furthermore, the initial cost of projects increases destroying the value for money tax payers expect from their government.

Contrary to popular believe the government purse is not endless pit of money and in order to fund the overruns of projects money has to *be* reallocated from another programme or department. The only ones who suffer are the Gauteng residents.

## Unemployment and Corruption

Madam Speaker,

With much fanfare, the Nasi Ispani programme was launched by the Premier when he took office. He boasted about the job opportunities that he has now created for our unemployed youth. Yet, for the first quarter of 2024, the unemployment rate has increased by 63 000. Job opportunities were meant to be created for 500 000 unemployed residents, **but the** unemployment figure of 2.6 million and 534 000 discouraged job seekers paints a picture of a programme that is failing to curb unemployment.

It also speaks to a government that is not able to create a conducive environment for the private sector to invest in the economy and in turn create sustainable job opportunities for all our unemployed residents.

As the Democratic Alliance (DA) we maintain that government's job is not create jobs but to rather create investor confidence. In so doing we are able to create long-term job opportunities that will allow our residents to put food on their table every day and not only for three months to a year.

Previously we had the Tsepho 1 Million programme, but to date we still do not how successful this project was.

We propose the following:

- Conduct and publish lifestyle audit results of all members of the executive and heads of departments
- sign and publish performance management contracts for each of the Members of the Executive Committee and Top Managers

- implement organisational functionality assessment framework as a mechanism to measure the level of productivity and functionality of departments in supporting service delivery objectives.
- Improve coordination between National, Provincial and Local Authorities and Public Entities
- Adopt a zero tolerance to corruption in government with measurable case resolution matrix that will show that we don't just talk, but truly act.

**Madam Speaker,**

Do not get me wrong, the employment opportunities created by the Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG) are a step in the right direction.

Many of these jobs provide much needed artisanal skills, which will allow our youth to either find gainful employment or become entrepreneurs. But we cannot have our youth overrun by overzealous officials who only ensure that a politically connected few are given job opportunities. We cannot continue to hear horror stories of how our women are forced to exchange sexual favours in order to get jobs, how bribes need to be paid before our unemployed youth are able to be employed.

Corruption remains one of the biggest challenges we face. For the last five years I have been constantly asking that lifestyle audits are conducted on all officials including members of this house. I've been assured by former Premier David Makhuru that this had been done and when Premier Lesufi took office, I was told the same thing.

Madam Speaker, we need these lifestyle audit outcomes made public. It cannot be that we have combating corruption as one of the key areas of focus for this administration but we still do not have any tangible actionable plan in place to root out this cancer.

### **Upgrading of Townships, Informal Settlements and Hostels (TISH)**

Last year we were told about this bold new plan to ensure that our residents in the townships, informal settlements and hostels are finally given their dignity back by ensuring that the environment they live is improved.

This same priority is reflected in your budget Premier. But again, this is not new for as long as I can remember we have been conducting oversight inspections across this province to assess the living conditions of our residents in the very areas you want to improve. Over the last five years and particularly the last few months nothing has change for our residents.

Residents living in the hostels are still subjected to the most appalling conditions that is not for anyone to live in. Residents living in informal settlements are forced to live in squalor, they are forced to share a limited amount of toilets. In 2024, this should not be the case.

We should be looking at innovative ways in which to ensure that all residents are providing with running water, flushing toilets and a proper housing structure that will protect them from elements of the weather.

Madam Speaker, if we can get this basic right, these places will become an area that investors would want to invest in. This will cut down on travel time for our residents and will also reduce their cost of travel, *finally dealing a death blow to the scourge of spatial apartheid*. In an ideal world residents should reside as close as possible to employment nodes.

## **Health Care**

Access to speedy health care is still something Gauteng is unable to get right. Long waiting times for operations, medication simply to be seen by a doctor is the order of the day in this province. The health and well-being of our residents can only be improved if we have a government that is committed to ensuring that only officials, particularly CEOs who are fit for duty are appointed. We cannot continue with the current status quo.

## **Crime**

Crime continues to rise unabated in this province. This despite the Premier's Crime Wardens who are meant to assist in keeping our residents safe. Residents of Riverlea, Westbury, Reiger Park and Eldorado Park live in fear on a daily basis. Many are not able to get to work when fighting breaks out between rival gangs. Where are these so-called crime wardens? What difference have they made in the lives of the resident who lives in constant fear of gang violence? Children are afraid to go to school for fear of intimidation by gangs trying to coerce them into joining.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Premier,

It is high time that we get the fundamentals right.

Start ensuring that your department meets all their targets set, which is meant to improve service delivery, alleviate unemployment and improve the overall quality of life in this province. Until this is done, we cannot support a budget that is not going to make any change to the lives of our residents. A budget that speaks about rebranding but in reality, was only a means to improving the image of the ANC in this province.

Our residents need a leader who is truly committed to effecting change and not reinventing the wheel by throwing more money at the problem. We cannot have a Premier in office who sees himself as a King and his residents as mere subjects or as in the Nutcracker the gingerbread cookie army.

Premier Lesufi, the time is now for you and your department to start assisting all government departments in receiving better audit outcomes and ensure that they deliver on their mandate.

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# Proposed Provincial State-Owned Bank and State-Owned Pharmaceutical company not something Gauteng can afford

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Madam Speaker,

Vote 14 of the provincial budget contains a number of so-called elevated priorities relating to the establishment of a state-owned bank, state-owned pharmaceutical company and the development of a funding model to pay off e-Toll debt.

Premier Panyaza Lesufi's proposal to establish a state-owned bank and pharmaceutical company, while seemingly ambitious, is fraught with risks that we simply cannot afford to overlook.

Let's begin with the proposed state-owned bank. The intention behind this bank, as articulated by the Gauteng government, is to invest in township SMMEs. Those that are often viewed as being too risky to invest in by private sector financial institutions.

While this may sound noble, we must remember that State-Owned Entities (SOEs) in South Africa have a dismal track record. From Eskom to Transnet to South African Airways, we have seen how mismanagement and corruption can lead to the brink of collapse.

The proposed state-owned bank is no different. By transferring the risk of these investments to the taxpayer, we are setting ourselves up for another disaster, one that could have devastating consequences for our provincial finances.

Similarly, the idea of a state-owned pharmaceutical company is equally concerning. The government argues that such an entity would improve the supply of medicines to clinics and hospitals. However, experience has shown that state intervention in such sectors often leads to inefficiencies and corruption.

The private sector, with its expertise and resources, is far better equipped to handle the provision of medicines at scale. We should be fostering partnerships with private companies rather than creating yet another potentially mismanaged state entity.

What's perhaps more concerning is the forked tongue in which the pharmaceutical company's goal is communicated. MEC Maile told the media that it will focus on the production of vaccines. GIFA tells the portfolio committee that it will focus on the supply and storage of medicines. A glorified warehouse, if you will.

The lack of transparency in providing clear details for the planned entities is also concerning and does not inspire much confidence. Is the state pharmaceutical company an R&D

focused entity or a glorified warehouse? Do we realise how long R&D cycles for medicines are and the costs involved? This is not a business that short cuts can be taken in.

The aim of the state health system is to cure people, not kill them. The latter is far easier to achieve if this government carries on with its spend-first-plan-later modus operandi.

Then there is the elephant in the room: the e-Toll debt. Gauteng residents have been burdened with e-Tolls for years, and the lack of transparency surrounding this debt is unacceptable. How did we get saddled with this debt, and more importantly, how do we plan to pay it off?

These are questions that remain unanswered by the provincial government. As the Democratic Alliance, we demand full transparency on this issue. We need a clear explanation of the terms of the agreement reached between National Treasury and this provincial government, as well as a concrete plan for how it will be repaid without further burdening the taxpayers.

Let me reiterate. The establishment of a state-owned bank and pharmaceutical company in Gauteng is a bad idea. It exposes us to significant financial risks and potential – definite - corruption, while there are more viable alternatives available.

Instead of creating new state entities, we should focus on enabling the private sector to drive economic growth and job creation.

We must address the e-toll debt with transparency and accountability.

In conclusion, madam speaker, the DA remains committed to rescuing Gauteng. *However*, new yet-to-fail entities, funded by the taxpayer are not what we had in mind. The DA does not support this budget.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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Democratic Alliance member statement by  
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DA Gauteng Shadow Health MEC

# DA rejects health budget until proof that top management is untainted

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Madam Speaker,

This is the 31<sup>st</sup> Health Budget that I am speaking on in this House.

I have seen all the MECs and HODs come and go, with plenty of scandal in between.

The budget this year is a whopping R64.8 billion.

Thirty years ago, it was a mere R3 billion. That's right, only R3 billion.

In the year 2000, it was still less than R6 billion.

The population has more than doubled since 1994, but even adjusting for inflation, the health budget is significantly higher on a per capita basis.

The big question is whether this huge budget is spent properly. There are many good things being done by dedicated workers who really want to do the best for the health of our people. But they are let down by poor top management.

The Auditor-General reports have painted a picture for many years of terrible financial management and massive misspending.

The scandals never seem to stop. We saw the arrogance and moral corruption that led to the Life Esidimeni abuse of hundreds of mental patients.

Then there were the vultures who pounced on the R2 billion made available for the Covid medical emergency. This included the PPE scandal, the empty wards built at Kopanong and other hospitals, and the R500 million spent on the abandoned Anglo Ashanti hospital.

And then Babita Deokaran was assassinated when she tried to stop the grossly overpriced contracts from fake companies at the Tembisa Hospital.

Before her death, Babita asked for an investigation of suspicious contracts totalling R800 million. But it was all covered up until dedicated journalists forced it into the open, and we heard about skinny jeans and R5000 armchairs being bought while casualty patients slept on the floor.

There are the usual delays in disciplinary hearings for all this. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) has been suspended on full pay now for two years - how can this be justified?

I was viciously attacked by the department when I referred the fishy appointment of the Tembisa Hospital Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to the Public Protector. But guess what? The Public Protector found severe irregularities in his appointment.

It turns out that the department has not been doing proper pre-employment checks, and they have now been ordered to appoint a service provider within four months.

We need to ask how many other senior appointments have been done without the necessary checks.

The Health Ombudsman did a scathing report on the appointment of the completely unsuitable CEO of Rahima Moosa Hospital that led to so much trouble there. And now there is a dispute about the qualifications and experience of the new CEO of the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital.

You would think a department that is so mired in scandal would ensure there was no hint of impropriety with its new Head of Department.

It is very suspicious that Mr Arnold Malotana was appointed as HOD by the Honourable Premier two months ago after acting in this position since April last year, but no public announcement was made.

Why would this key appointment be kept secret for so long?

I am most concerned that Mr Malotana is reportedly being investigated by the Hawks and the SIU for a tender-rigging scheme at the Masakhane Cook-Freezer Factory along with two other officials. They allegedly shared a bribe of R8 million.

The Public Protector also criticised Malotana for ignoring "material discrepancies" in the irregular appointment of the Tembisa Hospital CEO.

Are these not red flags when you are appointing the top position in a department plagued by corruption and incompetence?

I am going to be very blunt about what I think is happening here.

The crooks are still in charge of this Department. They want to keep their multiple scams going, and to protect the looters. If there was another Babita Deokaran in the Department, they would silence her.

This is the prime reason why the DA is not supporting the health budget, and neither should anybody else in this House until fundamental changes are made in this Department.

Lives are being lost because of incapable and dishonest officials.

Former Health MEC Qedani Mahlangu has been found criminally negligent in the inquest into the deaths of the Life Esidimeni patients.

I wonder if something similar can be said of the unspent money that was set aside last year for the urgent treatment of cancer patients.

This is the subject of a court case brought by the Cancer Alliance, Section27 and the TAC.



These are worthy organisations that the department should be working with, but they are forced to go the legal route to get effective action to save the lives of cancer patients.

At one stage, there were 3000 cancer patients waiting for treatment. The number of those who could die, or have already died because of delays, could well be more than the 144 who died from Life Esidimeni.

And think of the suffering of cancer patients and their families as they wait for treatment.

I could go on about the manifold failings in this department, including poor emergency response times, high neonatal deaths, low childhood immunisation, and this statement in the budget book: "None of the capital projects were completed." It is also striking that there is no budgetary provision for the 18 private hospitals which Honourable Premier Lesufi claimed would be bought this year, and presumably staffed and equipped.

This is a department that needs to be rescued to save lives and provide the best possible public health service within the available budget.

It's an outcome of the minority coalition in Gauteng that has consciously chosen not to emulate the national unity model of government.

This budget vote should be rejected until there is evidence that top management is untainted by corruption and past failures, starting with an urgent review of Mr Malotana's appointment.

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# Department of Human Settlements plagued by failure due to poor leadership

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Madam Speaker,

The performance of the Department of Human Settlements continues to disappoint due to a lack of political leadership, uncertainty in operational accountability and misalignment of the budget with the intended goals set out in the Annual Performance Plan

The failure to effectively implement its targets and projects all contribute to a department being unable to achieve its constitutional mandate

This department's budget cannot be supported as Human Settlements is in perpetual decline due to its repetitive and consistent failures in the delivery of its mandate. The failures of the Department include the following:

1. Systemic underperformance in setting and reaching targets.
2. Consistent and repetitive understanding return of funding leading to funds being returned to the Treasury.
3. Failures of governance and leadership at the political and operational level, with no accountability, continue to hinder delivery within the intended timelines.
4. There is a lack of coordination between the compilation of the budget and its implementation in accordance with the APP.
5. There are inherent failures in maintaining and supplying bulk infrastructure in most projects

The substantial reasons for this inability are manifested in poor planning and lack of vision in both the departments of Human Settlements and Infrastructure.

The practice of handing over units to residents when such units do not have either electricity or water due to bulk failures is a cynical attempt to claim effective delivery when it is clearly not so. This must end.

The slow progress of the title deeds restoration program continues to prevent the restoration of dignity and ownership for many of our residents

The department's continued failure to use the Human Settlements Development Grant (HSDG) effectively in Hostel and Renewal projects demonstrates its continued inability to improve the lives of our residents.

The confusion created by the indecision about upgrading and formalising informal settlements creates uncertainty and frustration for our residents.

The substantial reduction in the amount provided for in the upgrading informal settlements grant will have a continued negative impact on this vital initiative

The Gauteng Partnership Fund (GPF) 's inability to carry out its mandate, while mired in controversy relating to its lending practices and underperformance, continues to prevent the GPF from achieving its outcomes. Special attention must be given to the slow progress regarding the rollout of the Mega City program and the role the GPF plays in such a process.

The Gauteng Human Settlements committee urgently requires an examination of the role and mandate of the GPF, whether it is in compliance with such role, and what steps, if any, are required to accelerate this mandate.

The failure to drive and accelerate the FLISP program has been a problem. This program has underperformed in the last few years, and the new initiative introduced is to be welcomed. Its progress will be carefully monitored.

The Rapid Land Release Program is an initiative which, if implemented effectively, can change the lives of many of our residents. Its inability to do so is another failed opportunity

The implementation and participation processes in this program need to be re-examined and changed where necessary

Without explanation, the amount of the Human Settlements budget has been and continues to be reduced. The department's targets remain way below the demand, and this practice places further unnecessary strain on the department to deliver.

Until there are effective mechanisms in place to coordinate the setting of the budget in line with realistic goals as envisioned in the APP under the direction of effectively capacitated officials and a hands-on MEC, the Gauteng Department of Human Settlements will be unable to fulfill its constitutional mandate

MEC Motara, as raised in the first Human Settlements meeting of the 7<sup>th</sup> administration, urgent steps need to be taken to ensure more effective implementation strategies

In this regard, the DA will insist that timelines are strictly set and adhered to in the monitoring and rollout of the various projects and programs

It cannot be business as usual for the activities of the committee going forward.

Excellence with prompt compliance of the annual performance priorities is imperative in order to change the work ethic and performance and improve the departments successes.

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# Mega Development Projects should be transforming Gauteng communities

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**Madam Speaker,**

As we all know there are critical issues faced by the Gauteng Department of Human Settlements for the 2024/2025 financial year, particularly Mega Development Projects.

While Mega Development Projects are one of the department's strategies for addressing housing shortages and the pressures of urbanisation, they are not without significant challenges.

These projects are designed to provide thousands of housing units, integrate various socioeconomic amenities, and create new urban spaces that are sustainable and inclusive.

They are not just about building houses; they are about creating communities and opportunities. However, their scale and complexity bring about several challenges.

One of the primary issues is the allocation and management of the budget.

The GDHS has allocated substantial funds towards these mega development projects. Still, there are concerns about whether these resources are being utilised efficiently and transparently.

In previous years, delays and budget overruns have plagued several projects.

These setbacks are often due to inadequate planning, red tape, and a lack of oversight. To ensure that taxpayers' money is spent wisely, we need stronger financial controls and accountability mechanisms.

Another challenge is the coordination between different stakeholders involved in these projects. Mega development projects require the collaboration of multiple governmental agencies, private developers, and community organisations. However, misalignment of priorities and communication gaps often lead to delays and conflicts.

For example, the provision of essential services like water, electricity, and sanitation has delayed the construction of housing units in some projects, leaving residents in incomplete and unsafe environments.

To address this, we must enhance inter-agency coordination and streamline processes to ensure that all aspects of development proceed in an organised fashion.

These projects also involve the relocation of existing communities. A process fraught with challenges, including inadequate compensation, loss of livelihoods, and cultural

disruption. It is crucial that we approach these situations with sensitivity, ensuring fair compensation and support for affected communities.

Madam Speaker, we must consider the long-term sustainability of these developments by ensuring that they are affordable, energy-efficient, and environmentally friendly. There have been instances where poor construction quality and lack of maintenance have resulted in rapid deterioration of housing stock. To prevent this, we need strict adherence to building standards and ongoing maintenance plans.

Coming from the Westrand, I have seen the many challenges facing Mega development projects with units being built while amenities such as schools, clinics and community centres are only built five to six years later.

It is worrisome that projects such as Elijah Baraji in Merafong and Afri Village in Randwest City are built miles away from work opportunities and amenities.

By improving financial oversight, enhancing coordination, ensuring fair and transparent land practices, and prioritising sustainability, we can make meaningful progress in creating vibrant, inclusive communities.

This Department's budget does not address the challenges in mega development projects. Therefore, the Democratic Alliance cannot support this budget as it does not speak to the realities on the ground.

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# Lesufi's primary concerns exclude crime as top priority

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**Madame Speaker,**

Today, I invite this house to take a walk down memory lane. Let us go back to Tuesday, 18 October 2022 – almost two years ago when Premier Lesufi visited Eldorado Park after a series of gang-related killings and violence. The community cried out for help, and Premier Lesufi took the stage, passionately declaring, “Our number one priority is to fight crime. The department had a budget of R500 million, but it is now R8 billion. We will fight crime with technology. We will install CCTV in all townships and hostels, buy 300 new vehicles, and train 6000 safety wardens. We will buy 1800 drones and five helicopters. I will do everything to fight crime.”

These words filled the community with hope, believing that change was imminent.

During his State of the Province Address (SOPA) this year, the Honourable Premier Panyaza Lesufi reiterated that combating crime would be a top priority for his government. Yet, despite his commitments, the budget for Community Safety has been decreased. The Department received just over R2.3 billion, a decline of R374.6 million (13.9%) compared to the previous year's R2.7 billion.

Additionally, the Department confirmed the procurement of only 30 drones and two helicopters. The wage bill for the crime wardens increased by R600 million, yet the budget for goods and services decreased. This brings us to the giant invisible elephant within the Community Safety Department: The Integrated Provincial Command Centre. This command centre has been on the budget for five years, since I first joined this legislature, but remains a figment of our imagination, a pipe dream for the residents of Gauteng.

If we are serious about combating crime, we cannot be driven by emotion, Mr. Premier. We cannot stand on stages while families grieve their loved ones, while young children are brutally murdered in front of their parents during hijackings, or young women are raped and killed walking home alone in the dark, and still make empty promises. You should feel ashamed for playing with the lives and emotions of our people!

Yes, 30 drones were purchased, far fewer than the promised 1800. Two helicopters were acquired, but that is also insufficient compared to the promised five. Panic buttons have been distributed in limited areas, but how does this address crime without an integrated command centre to monitor, analyse data, and allocate resources effectively?

Two years later, the training of drone and helicopter pilots is still underway. This brings me to the following questions: How were we even able to leverage these resources without trained drone and helicopter pilots? Were these resources just gathering dust?

In the Western Cape, the Democratic Alliance (DA) employs cutting-edge technology integrated with municipalities and the LEAP officer program to strategically identify crime hotspots and allocate resources effectively.

By utilising evidence-based data and regular crime statistics, they can proactively address crime rather than waiting until the end of the quarter for the police minister to report on increases in criminal activity. This proactive approach involves collaborating with communities and the entire security cluster to combat crime.

During a recent committee meeting, I raised a crucial question regarding the data used to allocate crime prevention wardens. The response was simply the crime statistics. I also inquired about the impact these crime wardens have had on fighting crime in Gauteng, but unfortunately, there was no clear answer. Mr. Premier, you were present in that meeting and had to wait for your Head of Department (HOD) to respond. The answer provided was political in nature, lacking any substantive outcome. This prompted me to analyse the crime statistics myself, and it is disheartening to report the following:

From 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023, during the intake of crime wardens, Gauteng ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the country with the following crime categories:

- Community Reported Serious Crimes
- Contact Crime
- Sexual Offences
- Rape
- Sexual Assault
- Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm
- Common Robbery
- Robbery with aggravating circumstances
- Carjacking
- Robbery at residential places
- Kidnapping

The latest crime stats revealed that Gauteng remains 1<sup>st</sup> nationally in the same categories. Furthermore, 13 police stations consistently rank among the top 30 highest for reported contact crimes in the country, a statistic that has not changed year after year. We continue to rank among the highest for serious crimes such as murder, rape, and other violent offenses.

This clearly indicates that the promises made by Premier Lesufi in 2022 were nothing more than empty words. After two years, it is evident that crime is not a priority in Gauteng, and this budget is testament to that.

Why has the community safety budget been decreased, particularly in the core programs of the Department, given the high levels of crime in the province? Why are we not addressing the critical vacancies that remain unfilled? Surely crimes such as ransom and banking app-related kidnappings, human trafficking, illegal mining, gangsterism, violent hijackings, and infrastructure vandalism should alarm us.

There are significant concerns regarding the Department's failure to finalise the establishment of the Provincial Integrated Command Centre and the quality of training provided to Crime Prevention Wardens. Additionally, the constant rise in crime and the failure to reduce road fatalities calls for urgent intervention. This budget should inspire confidence that it intends to address these issues, but with reductions, this is not the case.

The Department has failed. For this reason, one can understand why Premier Lesufi has chosen to be the bride at every wedding and the corpse at every funeral. He has decided to take on the dual roles of Premier and MEC for Community Safety. It's so bad that he has even moved the responsibility for community safety to the office of the Premier.

Let me explain why this is significant. Premier Lesufi has realised that someone is undermining his legacy and dreams, and this situation has spiralled out of control. Gauteng is far from safe, and anyone who lives here can attest to that.

Premier Lesufi, it is time for you to acknowledge this failure. Moving Community Safety into your department and closer to you won't solve the problem. You must consider vacating your seat before more lives are lost.

Allow the Democratic Alliance to take the reins of this province. We have the knowledge and experience necessary to turn your dream of a Gauteng where all residents feel safe into a reality.

Until we achieve this vision, until fighting crime is prioritised with tangible results, and until we are no longer among the top 30 highest crime areas, the Democratic Alliance cannot support this budget. It is time for a change, and it is time for the DA to rescue this province from more Lie-sufis.

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Democratic Alliance speech by

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DA Gauteng Shadow MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation (SACR)

## DSACR's budget insufficient at best; and backward at worst

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The Gauteng Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation (SACR) continues to disappoint with its 2024/25 budget allocation. Year after year, we witness a lack of innovation and a failure to address the real challenges confronting Gauteng communities in sports, arts, and culture.

This budget is not just insufficient; it's a step backwards. The decrease in funding for Programme 1: Administration is particularly alarming. How can we expect to improve governance and service delivery when we're cutting the very resources needed to do so?

Yes, there are some positive steps, such as the allocation to support arts and culture organisations through Grant-in-aid and the focus on capacity building in school sports programs. But let's not fool ourselves - these are mere drops in an ocean of mismanagement and misallocation.

**Madam Speaker,**

The DA envisions a budget that prioritises service delivery outcomes and addresses the glaring lack of sporting facilities across our province. The envisaged budget takes the following into account:

Firstly, it invests in creativity and sports development by ruthlessly eliminating waste and enhancing financial oversight. Every rand spent is scrutinised to ensure it delivers optimal value for our citizens. No money is wasted on idle projects that go idle or events that leave no lasting impact.

Secondly, a there is significant investment made to job-creating programs. This includes establishing craft hubs across Gauteng to foster economic growth in our communities. This isn't just about preserving culture; it's about creating sustainable livelihoods.

Thirdly, the envisaged budget cut expenditures on inefficient sports events. Instead of focusing on photo opportunities and gala dinners, it redirects these funds to initiatives that genuinely support our athletes and artists.

Fourthly, Madam Speaker, our imagined budget promotes equal access to all sporting codes. It would transform the sports, arts, and culture sectors to encourage participation across communities. There would be no more lip service to transformation - we would put our money where our mouth is!

Fifth, we'd fast-track infrastructure projects. This includes developing modern, technologically advanced libraries - not just building them and leaving them non-operational like many current projects. We'd explore legislative changes to streamline capital grants, improving operational efficiency. It's time for action, not endless planning, and delays.

Lastly, we recognise the potential of our monuments for economic growth, especially in tourism. But, unlike the current administration, we would not pour millions into sites that remain closed to the public. We would only allocate funds once these monuments are fully operational and properly maintained, ensuring they provide real value to our province. Madam Speaker, this approach would create a budget that truly serves the people of Gauteng. It focuses on long-term development, community access, and efficient use of resources, not on flashy events and empty promises.

It's time for innovation, sustainability, and a clear plan with workable measures. The current budget, much like its predecessors, lacks structure and vision. It fails to address the socio-economic conditions faced by many of our constituents. It does not adequately tackle the lack of accessible sporting and cultural facilities in many communities, nor does it provide sufficient support for emerging artists and athletes.

In that context, the DA does not support this budget aimed at wasting taxpayers' money. We urge this department to reconsider and present a budget that truly serves the people of Gauteng. A budget that prioritises long-term development and community access over short-term events and inefficient spending. The people of this province deserve nothing less.

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Democratic Alliance speech by

**Leanne De Jager MPL**

DA Gauteng Spokesperson for the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation

# DSACR's budget fails to address the urgent needs of Gauteng communities

Release: Immediate

31 July 2024

**Madam Speaker,**

I rise today to address Budget Vote 12 of the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation.

In recognising the significance of sports, arts, and culture in our Gauteng communities, we have serious concerns about the financial management and priorities reflected in this budget.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) is greatly concerned about the insignificant increase in the department's overall budget from R1.089 billion in 2023/24 to R1.090 billion in 2024/25. That essentially represents a decrease in real terms when considering inflation. At a time when artists and athletes are struggling due to the lack of meaningful investment, this budget is insufficient.

Inevitably, the minimal budget increase will affect strategic priorities and the implementation of programs such as Sport and Recreation and Library and Archives Services. How can we expect to develop sports and the arts in our townships when we are not adequately investing in programs designed for that purpose? The impact of a reduced budget on a department that failed to build any sporting facilities in the 2022/2023 financial year and struggled to maintain and refurbish existing ones will be devastating for the residents of Gauteng, especially in the townships. Additionally, cuts to the department's budget will continue to hamper its efforts to build and transform libraries into information, knowledge, and cultural hubs in our communities.

The DA is also concerned by the cuts to critical conditional grants. The Mass Participation and Sport Development Grant, crucial for grassroots sports development, has been slashed from R124.7 million to R111.2 million. This short-sighted cut will directly impact township youth who rely on these programs for skills development and positive engagement.

Madam Speaker, the DA believes in the power of sports, arts, and culture to transform lives and communities. But this requires real investment, not empty promises. In this regard, the DA proposes the following solutions:

1. Redirect funds from non-essential administrative costs to bolster the Mass Participation and Sport Development Grant. This will ensure township youth have access to quality sports programs.
2. Implement a "Township Cultural Hubs" initiative, creating dedicated spaces in each major township for arts and cultural activities. This will not only nurture talent but create jobs in the creative sector.

3. Partner with the private sector to establish a "Sports and Arts Entrepreneurship Program" specifically targeting township youth. This will create pathways from participation to profession.

4. Increase, not decrease, the budget for community libraries. These are vital knowledge hubs that support education and skills development in our townships.

5. Establish a transparent "Cultural Events Fund" that prioritizes township-based events and festivals, creating jobs and stimulating local economies.

Honourable Speaker, we cannot overlook the R1 million "reprioritized" in this budget. The DA is demanding complete transparency regarding the reallocation of these funds. We need to know if these funds are genuinely meeting the needs of our most underserved communities.

In short, Madam Speaker, this budget falls short of addressing the critical needs of township development and job creation in the sports, arts, and cultural sectors.

As a result, I cannot, in good conscience, endorse the 2024/2025 financial year budget because it represents missed opportunities and misplaced priorities.

### **Media Enquiries**

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# COGTA's constitutional failure: Why we can't support a budget that betrays Gauteng's municipalities

Release: Immediate

31 July 2024

**Madam Speaker,**

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) in Gauteng has consistently failed to fulfill its constitutional mandate to guide and monitor municipalities effectively. This failure is particularly evident in the department's inability to successfully implement turnaround strategies in municipalities placed under administration.

Section 154 of the Constitution obliges COGTA to support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their affairs. However, the department's track record in this regard is dismal. Take, for example, the case of Emfuleni Local Municipality, which has been under administration since 2018. Despite COGTA's intervention, the municipality continues to face severe service delivery challenges, financial mismanagement, and governance issues. This failure raises serious questions about COGTA's ability to execute its constitutional responsibilities effectively.

Furthermore, COGTA has a constitutional obligation to set minimum standards for municipalities and monitor their performance. Yet, we see little evidence of this in practice. Many municipalities in Gauteng continue to struggle with basic service delivery, financial management, and good governance. The department's inability to establish and enforce clear, measurable standards has contributed to the ongoing decline in municipal performance across the province.

In the context of coalition governments, which have become increasingly common in Gauteng's municipalities, COGTA's role becomes even more critical. However, instead of providing impartial support and guidance to these coalitions, there are concerns that the department is using its position as a political tool to advance the interests of the ANC while disadvantaging residents in opposition-led municipalities.

A prime example of this is the department's approach to the City of Johannesburg, where political instability has hampered service delivery. Instead of fostering cooperation and providing technical support to stabilize the coalition government, COGTA has been accused of exacerbating tensions and interfering in local affairs for political gain.

To truly serve the residents of Gauteng, COGTA must rise above partisan politics and focus on its constitutional mandate. This should include:

1. Developing and implementing effective turnaround strategies for struggling municipalities, with clear timelines and measurable outcomes.
2. Establishing minimum standards for municipal performance and consistently monitoring adherence to these standards.

3. Providing impartial support to all municipalities, regardless of their political leadership, to ensure equitable service delivery across the province.
4. Offering specialized assistance to coalition governments to help them navigate the unique challenges they face, without favouring any political party.
5. Enhancing transparency in its interventions and regularly reporting to the provincial legislature on the progress of municipalities under administration.

The Democratic Alliance cannot support a budget that fails to address these critical issues. COGTA's current approach not only falls short of its constitutional obligations but also perpetuates the cycle of poor governance and inadequate service delivery in Gauteng's municipalities.

We call for a comprehensive overhaul of COGTA's strategies and operations. The department must prioritize its constitutional responsibilities over political considerations, focusing on building capable, efficient, and responsive local governments that serve all residents of Gauteng, regardless of their political affiliations.

Only when we see a clear commitment to these principles, backed by concrete action plans and measurable outcomes, can we consider supporting COGTA's budget. The residents of Gauteng deserve nothing less than a department fully dedicated to fostering good governance and equitable service delivery across all municipalities.

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Democratic Alliance speech by  
**Khathutshelo Rasilingwane MPL**

DA Gauteng Spokesperson for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA)

## Gauteng residents continue to suffer as COGTA budgets neglect municipal woes

Release: Immediate

31 July 2024

**Madam Speaker,**

Today, I stand before you to express the Democratic Alliance's (DA) concerns regarding the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs' (COGTA) budget vote for 2024/2025 financial year.

Our position is informed by a careful analysis of COGTA's performance over the past year, as reflected in their 2022-2023 Annual Report.

While we acknowledge that COGTA has made some strides in supporting our municipalities, the persistent challenges in local government demand that we scrutinize this budget. The harsh truth is that CoGTA has failed.

It has failed to provide the oversight, support, and leadership to ensure the effective functioning of local governments.

This failure is not just a bureaucratic issue; it is a human catastrophe that affects the daily lives of our residents in profound and painful ways. The health of these municipalities is the foundation of service delivery and local democracy. Yet, in Gauteng, we see a troubling pattern of financial mismanagement, inadequate service delivery, and a lack of accountability.

Let us start with municipal finances.

The Annual Report highlights COGTA's efforts to enhance revenue collection in municipalities. In Midvaal, they identified potential revenue of R38 million from top debtors.

In Lesedi, the figure was a staggering R291 million. While identifying potential revenue is a step in the right direction, it also reveals the depth of our municipalities' financial woes.

In terms of service delivery, the current situation is equally worrying. Despite COGTA reporting that they monitor nine municipalities on infrastructure delivery programs, no data is available on actual improvements in service delivery. Our constituents continue to grapple with water shortages, electricity outages, and poor waste management. Imagine waking up every morning uncertain about having clean water for drinking, cooking, and bathing. Or picture trying to study by candlelight due to the government's failure to provide reliable electricity. This is more than just an inconvenience; it's a crisis that affects every aspect of daily life.

Perhaps most worrying is the underspending reported, particularly in Traditional Institutional Management. In a province where every rand counts, how can we justify allocating more funds to a department that has not effectively utilised its current budget?

The current budget does not convince us that it will effectively address the significant challenges facing our municipalities. It also does not provide us with the confidence that it will

result in improved financial management, service delivery, or governance. Given this context, the department should consider the following when developing its budget:

1. Providing clear, measurable targets for improving municipal financial health.
2. Outlining specific strategies for enhancing revenue collection and reducing unauthorised expenditure.
3. Committing to concrete improvements in basic service delivery, with clear metrics for success.
4. Addressing the critical issue of corruption and maladministration in our municipalities.

Until we see such a budget that seeks to address these critical issues, the DA cannot, in good conscience, offer its support. We owe it to the people of Gauteng to demand better. We owe it to our communities to ensure that every rand spent translates into improved services, better governance, and a higher quality of life.

I thank you.

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# Gauteng learners face uncertain future amid budget deficiencies

Release: Immediate  
31 July 2024

**Madam Speaker,**

Today I rise to debate the 2024/25 Budget Vote 5 for Education with one major concern. As the Democratic Alliance, we will continue to advocate that every child has access to quality education and ensure that every child in our province has access to a safe and conducive learning environment.

The DA notes the budget decrease from R5.1 billion to R5.0 billion under Programme 1: Administration. This reduction, especially in the remuneration of employees, has major effects on the Department's capacity to retain and attract more qualified human resources. Given what the DA discovered in its countless oversight visits to schools across Gauteng, we ill-afford not to retain or attract teachers.

Despite the budget increasing to R47.3 billion under Programme 2, overcrowding and inadequate infrastructure persist in most parts of the province. Many schools lack sufficient classrooms, are in poor hygiene conditions, and do not have proper sports facilities (if they have any in the first place).

Regarding Independent School Subsidies, the budget has been slightly increased, but it currently lacks a proper system of supervision and monitoring. Without proper measures in place to ensure the implementation of relevant policies and standards for allocation, this funding may not fulfil its intended purpose. Additionally, there should be continuous monitoring and enforcement to address the proliferation of independent schools operating illegally.

Madam Speaker, the decrease in the budget for Public Special School Education by R187.8 million is concerning. Learners with special needs require more support, not less. The Department must prioritise their needs and ensure they receive the education and support they deserve. Public Special Schools require specialised classrooms, therapy rooms, specialised therapists as well as counsellors and psychologists amongst many other requirements.

Although the budget for Early Childhood Development has increased, we must ensure that these funds are effectively used to expand access and improve quality, especially in our township and low-income communities. Early education is the foundation of a child's future, and we must lay this foundation with care and dedication.

There is a dire need for infrastructure development of schools within the province. When one looks at the number of schools built during the 5th administration compared to the 6th administration, there has been a significant decrease in the number of schools built. Improved collaboration between the Health and Infrastructure Departments is needed to ensure the timely construction of quality schools. Constructing new schools and eliminating all schools with asbestos is crucial. Progress has been slow despite the raised alarms. The department

should finally listen and provide safe, modern, and well-maintained school facilities for learners.

Furthermore, the notes the budget cut on Examination and Education Related Services which may threaten the quality and effectiveness of the examinations we administer.

In closing Madam Speaker, I urge the MEC to consider the following proposals:

1. Adopt the Rapid School Build Programme as seen in the Western Cape which has shown that it is possible to build decent schools in as little as 71 days.
2. Maximise learning time by ensuring that learners are engaged for the full school day, with catch up classes after school or on weekends for those who fall behind.
3. Promote time management by instilling a culture of being present, punctual, and prepared, making the most of the 210 teaching days per year.
4. Curriculum breakdown by allocating specific times in the annual programme for different curriculum components for each grade.
5. Focus on foundation phase by dedicating the first two hours of each school day in grade R to 3 to developing reading and writing skills, and one hour each day to numeracy skills.

The Department of Education's budget should reflect a commitment to providing quality education tailored to the needs of all learners, empowering them for future success. However, the current budget does not meet this standard.

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# Technology can revolutionise education in Gauteng

Release: Immediate  
31 July 2024

**Madam Speaker,**

In the global knowledge economy, success depends on quality education. Those with a quality education can fulfil their potential. Those without it are destined to remain excluded from opportunities and dependent on the state to survive.

Quality education is the key to improved quality of life. It empowers individuals to obtain fulfilling jobs, contribute to the economy, and fully utilise their talents.

While spending money on education is important, this is not enough. What matters is what is taught, how it is taught, and how the system is managed. The DA believes that an education policy must focus on instilling quality, accountability, and strong leadership into the system.

To improve education outcomes, our focus will be on:

- Establishing an enabling regulatory environment for educational excellence.
- Improving school management and teacher quality.
- Promoting accountability through appropriate assessment of (i) academic performance and, (ii) adherence to the principles of good governance.
- Rewarding good management, teacher and learner performance.
- Aligning education outcomes with the world of work by regularly reviewing the curriculum to ensure that it equips learners for participation in a competitive, global knowledge economy and
- Creating a school environment that is conducive to learning.

Madam Speaker, it is impossible to compete in a globalised world without ensuring (i) that all learners have the language skills to comprehend tests and work materials and to communicate their learning (ii) that they have basic skills in terms of maths and science, and (iii) that can use the technologies that permeate every aspect of the world of work.

South Africa is facing deeply entrenched systemic challenges to provide quality education for all. Innovative and creative solutions are needed to bridge the gaps. The paradoxical nature of ICT innovation is that it not only reflects the developmental gap between societies but simultaneously provides the best hope for bridging these socio-economic divides. ICT can improve education through various means – the obvious one is ensuring all children can and do have access to the best teachers in Maths, Science and Technology – no matter where they are in the province. In addition, ICT can increase the efficiency of school systems, providing diverse and extended life-long learning opportunities and ensuring an innovative curriculum delivery. It also enables learner information to be integrated into school management, intervention, and assessment systems.

To utilise technology to broaden learner access to information and support, the DA would like to make a few suggestions:

- Make online support available to learners, by developing websites that will serve as knowledge databases containing relevant curriculum materials and access to online research and informational databases for learners.
- Develop an online portal for learners.
- Engage education experts in various fields to develop and produce interactive e-textbooks and teacher guides.
- Actively encourage the use of mobile cellular ICT platforms for educational purposes. Examples include Mxit applications such as 'Dr Maths' and 'Quizmax', which offer real-time tutor support and revision tools, respectively.
- Develop and use ICT technology to provide tailored support to students with special needs.
- Explore the available e-schooling options which can be used to broaden access to education in remote rural areas.

Madam Speaker, the use of technology can and will revolutionise education. We need the political willingness to ensure this becomes a reality. Refusing to do so will only ensure we have another lost generation.

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# Gauteng on the verge of a humanitarian crisis due to shambolic GDSD

Release: Immediate  
31 July 2024

**Madam Speaker,**

Mme Faith Mazibuko has inherited a department that is in complete disarray and is rapidly leading to a humanitarian crisis in Gauteng. It is for this reason that the Democratic Alliance (DA) will not support this budget today.

Contributing to the unmistakable chaos within the GDSD is the lack of accountability among its leaders. Questions were raised in the previous administration, both in writing and through the department's committee, regarding the remuneration of the Nasi Isani Social Development brigades, team leaders, and supervisors. No response has been provided to date.

It is quite alarming to learn that some members of this program have allegedly been conducting site visits at NPOs, which has led to the failure of the adjudication process for the funding of NPOs. Why has the department funded Nasi iSpani when there is a desperate need for social workers, social auxiliary workers, and caregivers?

Furthermore, 14 senior officials of the department have been suspended, some since September of last year. There are serious violations of labour laws with these suspensions. The Department has not yet explained why these cases have not been concluded, and why it continues to pay salaries for suspended officials while also paying for people to act in their positions.

The Acting Head of the Department (HOD) and his fellow actors are way over their depths and fumbling as they go along because of not having a full grasp of the entire department and what it is supposed to be doing or how it is supposed to be doing it.

The department has engaged in several eight-million-rand shopping sprees, including hiring the controversial audit firm Openwater and FSG without following the proper tender process. This was done despite warnings by the Auditor General (AG) in previous departmental annual reports. Additionally, there was a suspicious parallel process for food parcel distribution costing R36 million. All these actions indicate a waste of public funds.

Additionally, GDSD had multiple deviations totalling over R300 million, which were irregular despite prior warnings from the AG. The department also refused to pay cooperatives it had hired to make uniforms and dignity packs as part of a Mandela initiative.

At the end of the fourth quarter, GDSD had underspent by R554 million, of which R228 million was money earmarked for transfers to NPOs. Considering the frequent closure of nonprofit organisations and reductions in services due to lack of funding, this situation is alarming.

Madam Speaker, are you aware that children are dying of hunger because a drop-in centre has stopped receiving funding? Do you know that vulnerable elderly men and women are being sent home as shelters meant to care for them shut down due to lack of funding?

With all of this, how can Gauteng residents trust this department to protect and look after the vulnerable?

Mme Faith, as a newcomer to the department, you should be given the benefit of the doubt. However, I am concerned that despite you being in office for over a month, many compliant non-profit organizations (NPOs) remain unpaid. I urge you, MEC, to prioritise this issue and the suffering of the vulnerable residents in our province.

Thank you.

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Democratic Alliance speech by  
Nazley Sharif MPL  
DA Gauteng Spokesperson for Social Development

## Crisis looms: GDSD budget not aligned to the growing GBVF threat

Release: Immediate

31 July 2024

Thank you, Madam Speaker,

There is no denying that the Department of Social Development (DSD) has failed to make meaningful changes in the lives of the people of Gauteng. Based on the department's performance, it is clear that marginalised and vulnerable people in Gauteng have not been on top of the department's agenda. That is one of the reasons the DA cannot support the budget. Communities on the ground, where it matters most, have not felt the reach and impact of the department.

Gender-based violence and femicide ravage Gauteng unabated – the epicentre of GBVF across the country. At least 1 in 3 women in this Province face violence. Evidence of the need to combat the scourge of GBVF against women and members of the LGBT+ Community.

The budget for Victim Empowerment was not spent by the end of the financial year, as reported in the Department's Annual Report for 2022/23. As the DA, we urge the Department to implement the National Strategic plan and must formulate a Provincial Strategic Plan to combat GBVF. The Department must focus on increasing the amount of training given to GBVF first responders.

The state of shelters and places of safety is precarious and fraught with many challenges. The number of shelters and NPOs at Victim Empowerment Rooms (VEP) is declining compared to the previous financial year. The department must prioritise increasing the resources and capacity of NGOs and NPOs working at police stations. It must also increase funding for these organisations and ensure they are paid on time. This will help make the work at VEP stations meaningful and impactful. The idea that GBVF only happens between 8am to 4pm is unacceptable.

The DA in Gauteng is committed to bringing issues around the safety of those most vulnerable as we focus on Rescuing Gauteng. We are committed to speaking up for the marginalised citizens of our province. The lives and livelihood of the residents of Gauteng must always be at the center of what we do. All programs, budgets and plans developed by the Department must speak to improving people's lives in Gauteng, especially the most vulnerable in our communities.

As the Democratic Alliance we will continue to provide solutions to the many societal issues we are facing but we will also hold this Government accountable without fear and favor. Our focus remains to ensure that everybody in this province has a life of dignity, equality, and justice.

I thank you.

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## Gauteng Roads and Logistic Budget does not cater to the needs of a growing province

Release: Immediate  
1 August 2024

Madam Speaker,

The Gauteng Department of Roads and Logistics budget is R9,433bn for the 2024/25 financial year which is an increase from the R8,478bn in 2023/24. This increase is welcomed as the demands on the department are ever increasing. However, such increase must be utilised strategically.

The department has five budget programmes with the following share of the budget:

- Administration - 3,76%
- Transport infrastructure - 34,05%
- Transport operations - 34,67%
- Transport regulation - 3,58%
- Gautrain - 23,94%

The current budget is very similar to the budgets presented during the past five years. This means that no change is being implemented as the department's functions in practice remain the same year after year, after year.

Thus, the strategic objectives of the department are not being realised in terms of the socio-economic demands of the province.

On paper it seems like the department is funding its strategic objectives, however in reality the department is merely wheel-spinning as it is just propping up the status quo with regards to roads and transport.

There is no link to the province's Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) which is supposed to direct the future development of roads and transport in the province based on forecasts in the province's population growth. Therefore, the ITP is not being implemented because it is not being funded.

In practical terms this means that no new significant roads or transport infrastructure is being funded for construction to meet the future demands of Gauteng Province.

The province is growing by approximately 500 people per day which means more citizens require access to opportunities through transport in the province. At the same time, because of limited access to reliable public transport, the vehicle population in the province grows annually.

Because there are more vehicles on the province's roads, increasing congestion is slowing down traveling time. This means that the economy loses billions of rands annually because of a loss of productivity. In other words, the time people spend in cars and on slow public

transport prevents them from spending more time being productive or being with their families which brings about a social cost.

The solution is to construct a limited number of new highways that can mitigate against congestion in the short to medium term while investing in quality public transport that can replace vehicle travel over time. This is a balancing act that requires investment right now or else Gauteng will face a gridlocked future that will harm its economy severely.

Therefore, the budget must now be constructed in such a way that it drives this transition.

Unfortunately, the continuation of more of the same does not achieve this strategic imperative of change and transition. It will just put Gauteng one more year behind schedule to avoid a gridlocked future.

Therefore, the DA cannot support this budget as it does not address the future needs of the province.

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# Proper maintenance of road infrastructure crucial for economic growth

Release: Immediate  
1 August 2024

**Madam Speaker,**

Today, we debate the Gauteng Department of Transport and Logistics' 2024/2025 budget, with a particular emphasis on our road infrastructure. As the backbone of our province's economy, the quality and efficiency of our roads directly impact every citizen's daily life and the business community's prosperity. The road infrastructure, being the most utilised form of transport, remains a key focus area.

A significant portion of the budget is allocated to the maintenance and upgrading of existing roads. The wear and tear from daily use, weather conditions, and heavy freight transport have taken a toll on our roadways. To address this, we need to prioritise the rehabilitation of key routes, including major highways and arterial roads that connect our urban centers. By investing in these upgrades, we aim to reduce congestion, improve travel times, and enhance road safety.

In addition to maintenance, the budget needs to include plans to expand our road network to support the growing population and economic activities in Gauteng. New road projects should ease traffic in high-density areas, facilitate better access to remote areas and improve connectivity across the province. These projects should be designed with future growth in mind, ensuring that our infrastructure can accommodate increased demand.

We also need to be committed to sustainability in our infrastructure projects. The budget should include initiatives to integrate green technologies and practices in road construction and maintenance. This includes using environmentally friendly materials, implementing measures to reduce carbon emissions, and enhancing roadside vegetation as done in the Western Cape. These efforts not only contribute to environmental conservation but also improve the quality of life for our residents by reducing air pollution and promoting green spaces.

Road safety remains a top priority. We need to invest in advanced technologies for traffic management, including intelligent traffic systems and better road signage. These technologies will help in monitoring traffic flows, managing incidents more effectively, and providing real-time information to road users. Additionally, we need to enhance road safety measures, such as better lighting, pedestrian crossings, and bike lanes, to protect all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic lights also remains a continuing problem that has a very adverse effect on the Gauteng road users.

We should recognize that the success of these projects depends on the active involvement of our communities and stakeholders. The budget includes provisions for public consultations and stakeholder engagements to ensure that the voices of all affected parties are heard. This collaborative approach will help us to address local concerns, incorporate

valuable feedback, and build infrastructure that truly meets the needs of our communities.

In conclusion, the 2024/2025 budget for the Gauteng Department of Transport and Logistics does not speak to all these aspects. Through strategic investment, innovation, and community engagement, we are not only addressing current challenges but also laying the groundwork for a more connected, efficient, and sustainable future.

The Democratic Alliance therefore cannot support this budget due to the fact that the budget does not speak to the clear focus on forward thinking road maintenance and public transport.

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## e-Government budget does not focus on the future

Honourable Speaker,  
Members of the Legislature, and fellow citizens,

I rise today on behalf of the Democratic Alliance (DA) to express our opposition to the proposed budget for the Department of e-Government. While we recognise the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure for government efficiency and service delivery, the current budget does not adequately address the challenges and opportunities of the imminent 5th Industrial Revolution.

The 5th Industrial Revolution emphasises a human-centric approach, enhancing human capabilities and well-being through technology. It focuses on collaboration between humans and intelligent systems, sustainability, inclusivity, and personalised solutions. Our strategy must reflect these principles.

The proposed budget for WAN, LAN, VOIP, and Wi-Fi hotspots, while essential, is insufficient alone. We need to invest in smart city technologies leveraging the Internet of Things (IoT), advanced data analytics, and artificial intelligence. Imagine a Gauteng where smart traffic systems, real-time environmental monitoring, and intelligent energy management enhance efficiency and sustainability.

While the budget includes surveillance technologies like CCTV and facial recognition, their responsible and ethical use is crucial. We must incorporate robust ethical guidelines and oversight mechanisms, ensuring technology serves the people, aligning with the human-centric focus of the 5th Industrial Revolution.

The budget lacks emphasis on integrating Fourth Industrial Revolution skills into our education system. As we move towards the 5th Industrial Revolution, our workforce must have the skills to thrive in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. We call for a strategic partnership between the Department of e-Government and the Department of Education to implement a curriculum that prepares our youth for the future.

The integration of data science and machine learning into public governance holds the potential to revolutionise decision-making and service delivery. By analysing large volumes of data, these technologies can uncover patterns and insights that inform policy and improve operational efficiency. For example, predictive analytics can identify areas with high crime rates, enabling targeted law enforcement and resource allocation. Machine learning algorithms can optimise traffic management by analysing real-time data, reducing congestion, and improving public transportation efficiency. Additionally, data-driven insights can enhance public health by predicting disease outbreaks and facilitating timely interventions. In education, personalised learning plans generated by machine learning can cater to individual student needs, improving outcomes. Overall, the use of data science and machine learning empowers governments to make evidence-based decisions, allocate resources more effectively, and deliver services that are responsive to the needs of their citizens.

Sustainability is a critical issue. As we embrace new technologies, we must ensure our initiatives are environmentally sustainable. This means investing in green technologies, reducing our carbon footprint, and promoting renewable energy sources.

In conclusion, while we recognise the efforts of the Department of e-Government, the current budget and performance plans are inadequate for the challenges and opportunities of the 5th Industrial Revolution.

We urge the government to rethink its approach, embrace innovation, and prioritise human well-being and sustainability. Only then can we build a future that is inclusive, equitable, and prosperous for all citizens of Gauteng.

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# Technology should become a tool of trade in every school

Release: Immediate  
1 August 2024

Madam Speaker,

The Department of e-Government has an important role to play to ensure government services are consistently easily available to residents. Going online instead of standing in long unnecessary queues.

One vital area that this department can contribute to is to ensure that every school has access to the internet – which I spoke to in my speech yesterday.

If we are to ensure quality education for all children is achieved, then this has to become a reality.

If we are to ensure that no child is left behind and that we do not create another lost generation then we need to make sure that this department is sufficiently resourced to connect every school.

It is telling that while this department has the ability to open new unlimited opportunities to learners across the province, the ANC minority coalition has decided to decrease this budget by over 9% in real terms.

This Madam Speaker, reflects a coalition that is out of touch with reality and one that has a could-not-care-less attitude. Access to the Internet is no longer a luxury it is a necessity.

To address the challenges within the Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) sector we must be ambitious in our objectives and aim to position South Africa as the ICT, innovation and technology incubation hub of Africa and the developing world. It must start here today with our education system. If you want bang-for-your-buck, then get every school connected.

The Democratic Alliance's (DA) open opportunity society includes affordable access to and comprehension of the connected and digitalised world we live in. For South Africans to effectively compete globally and for the country to meaningfully take its place as a leader in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), South Africa will have to be adequately connected.

Currently the roll-out to schools is lacklustre and given its importance this Department should be fixated on ensuring every school has connectivity. MEC, if you want to leave a legacy, leave this one. Given your department's crippling budget, it needs to laser in on one or two priorities, do them well, and see the impact. This way you will show the ANC MECs up, by doing more with less.

Another factor that inhibits many people in accessing the Internet are the high costs of mobile devices and smartphones, in fact it is one of the primary inhibitors to internet usage.

One of the driving factors that contributes to the cost of smartphones in the country, are the high taxes that these devices incur. Therefore, measures which will cut taxes and reduce tariffs paid would make a considerable difference in addressing the problem of cost.

You see Honourable Members the ANC still perceives smartphones as a luxury item when in fact they ought to be seen for what they are – an essential tool-of-trade for every child.

Madam Speaker, while Premier Lesufi may believe he has set up the MEC of e-Government for failure, through a greatly reduced budget, I believe that with the right priorities and commitment the MEC and his department can show the ANC what service delivery looks like. Let's make connecting every child to the internet a reality.

I thank you.

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# GDID does not address proper implementation of infrastructure projects

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1 August 2024

Madam Speaker,  
Honourable Members,  
Fellow citizens of Gauteng,

Madame Speaker let me start by congratulating the ANC placing as the 16<sup>th</sup> out of 7000 most corrupt organisation in the world according to the MyStick Corruption Index.

The Gauteng Treasury Socio-Economic Review and Outlook 2024 report paints a concerning picture of slowing economic growth across our municipalities. This economic stagnation has profound implications for infrastructure development, potentially leading to reduced investment and increased strain on our existing infrastructure.

In this context, one would expect the Department of Infrastructure Development to rise to the occasion. Regrettably, this has not been the case.

The department has persistently underperformed, failing time and again on its key performance indicators. Projects are consistently not completed on time or within budget, indicating serious issues with planning, execution, and oversight.

In the 2023/24 financial year, we witnessed an underspending of R112.7 million, attributed to delays in implementing EPWP training plans, slow recruitment processes, and delays in capital projects due to poor contractor performance. In a province desperate for infrastructure development and job creation, such underspending is unacceptable.

The department's capacity constraints further compound these issues. With a vacancy rate of 13%, compared to the 10% norm, the department is clearly understaffed. This directly impacts its ability to plan, manage, and execute projects effectively.

The persistent issues with project delays and poor contractor performance are equally concerning. This suggests fundamental problems with the contractor selection process, contract management, and oversight.

Furthermore, the department's ongoing struggles with revenue collection are alarming. Its inability to effectively collect debts from tenants and dispose of non-core assets impacts its financial sustainability.

Perhaps most concerning is the significant increase in the Corporate Support budget due to an "escalation in litigations". This represents a waste of public funds that could be better spent on actual infrastructure development.

While there have been reductions, irregular expenditure remains a concern, indicating ongoing issues with financial management and compliance with procurement procedures.

The tender process, which is crucial for infrastructure projects, continues to be plagued by problems.

Madam Speaker, the people of Gauteng deserve better. They deserve a department that can effectively and efficiently deliver the services and infrastructure our communities so desperately need.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) envisions a different approach. We propose a budget that ties funding more directly to performance metrics. We advocate for greater resources to be allocated to recruitment and training, addressing the critical capacity constraints within the department.

We call for improved systems for contractor vetting, management, and performance monitoring. We propose increased funding for internal audit and anti-corruption units within the department to address the persistent issues of irregular expenditure and problematic tender processes.

We believe in investing in technology to improve project management, financial controls, and overall efficiency. Where the department consistently underperforms, we propose considering outsourcing to private sector entities with proven track records.

Most importantly, we call for a budget that prioritises the actual infrastructure needs of our communities. If you don't know how MEC ask the DA Minister Dean MacPherson on how to run Public works in the Province. The Socio-Economic Review highlights significant gaps in basic services across our municipalities. These are the pressing needs that our infrastructure budget should be addressing.

We need targeted interventions that address the uneven development across our municipalities. We need infrastructure development that supports economic diversification and job creation, particularly for our youth who face staggering unemployment rates. We need comprehensive urban planning and infrastructure development to prevent the proliferation of informal settlements and service delivery backlogs.

While we acknowledge the importance of infrastructure development for our province, we cannot support a budget that fails to address the fundamental issues plaguing this department. We cannot approve more funding for a department that has consistently failed to deliver on its mandate.

Instead, we call for a complete overhaul of the department, with stricter oversight measures, specific performance targets, and structural reforms.

The people of Gauteng deserve world-class infrastructure that supports economic growth, job creation, and improved quality of life. They deserve a department that can deliver on this promise efficiently, effectively, and transparently.

Until we see a budget and a plan that can achieve these objectives, we cannot support this budget.

Thank you.

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## GDID plagued by mismanagement leading to infrastructure project running behind schedule

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1 August 2024

Honourable Speaker,  
Members of the Legislature,  
Vhadzulapo vha dorobo khulu la Guateng  
Good Morning

Today we gather to deal with a critical element that shapes the future of our province: the budget allocation for infrastructure. Our discussion on this matter is not merely about numbers on a page, but about the roads we travel, the water we drink, the electricity that powers our homes, and the very foundation upon which our daily lives are built.

Infrastructure is the backbone of our society, and its effective management and development is paramount to our economic growth and the well-being of our communities. However, we must face the harsh realities that have plagued the efforts thus far—mismanagement of funds, fruitless expenditure, and the decay that has ensued.

Fruitless expenditure is more than just a financial loss; it is a betrayal of public trust and a barrier to progress. Every rand wasted on unnecessary projects, poorly planned initiatives, or mismanaged funds is a rand taken away from crucial infrastructure developments. This misuse of funds impacts our schools, hospitals, and public services critical elements that form the backbone of our society and economy.

Madam speaker let's think of the emotional and financial strain on families whose daily commutes become hazardous journeys, affecting their livelihoods and well-being.

Imagine the young students attending schools with leaking roofs, overcrowded classrooms inadequate facilities, and outdated resources. These children, full of potential, are denied a conducive learning environment because funds intended for their education were squandered on unnecessary expenditures. Their dreams and futures are put on hold due to our inability to manage resources effectively. Yet this government find purpose in gaslighting abahlali.

Madam speaker, it is shocking that this department continues to underperform, failing to meet key performance indicators yet hospitals and clinics are overcrowded. Mothers give birth on pavements, loved ones die waiting for an opportunity to seek medical attention. The frustration and fear felt by those in need of immediate medical attention are made worse by the knowledge that better facilities could have been built and equipped if funds had been used wisely.

But beyond the economic implications, this issue touches the very core of our humanity. It speaks to the dignity and respect we owe to each other as members of this community. Every instance of fruitless expenditure is a missed opportunity to make a meaningful difference in someone's life. It is a reminder that our actions, or inactions, have real and lasting consequences.

In conclusion Madam speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I must say this budget doesn't seem to speak to the needs of our people.

Our responsibility is to ensure that every line item reflects the genuine needs of our citizens, to bring tangible improvements to their lives, and to build a Gauteng that we can all be proud of.

It is only a DA government that will prioritise stringent measures to monitor and prevent fruitless expenditure. This includes transparent budgeting processes, rigorous oversight, and a culture of responsibility and efficiency.

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## Decrease in GDARDE budget undermines efforts to foster sustainable growth and support for farmers

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1 August 2024

Honourable Speaker,

The agricultural sector plays a crucial role in the South African economy as a contributor to food safety, an earner of foreign exchange, a source of employment and capital, a buyer of goods and a provider of inputs to the manufacturing sector.

While it is evident that this department's budget aims to address certain strategic priorities, it falls short in several crucial areas that demand urgent intervention.

The total allocation for Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and Environmental Affairs (GDARDE) has been drastically reduced by 19.2%, from R1.259 billion in the previous financial year to R1.035 billion for the 2024/25 fiscal year. This reduction is alarming, considering the pressing need for economic recovery and agricultural development in our province. A decrease of this magnitude undermines our efforts to foster sustainable growth and support our farmers in the most populace province.

The proportional allocation for the department within the total provincial budget has also declined. This downward trend indicates a lack of prioritization and acknowledgement of the serious role agriculture and rural development play in Gauteng. These sectors are vital for food security and economic stability. As MS Swaminathan, who is known as the father of the green revolution, said "If agriculture goes wrong, nothing else will have a chance to go right"

One of the most concerning issues highlighted in the budget analysis is the chronic underutilisation of allocated funds. Over the past four years, significant amounts of the budget have remained unspent, particularly in the Goods and Services category. This inefficiency has been attributed to non-compliance with Supply Chain Management protocols, unresponsive tenders, and delays in the disbursement of conditional grants.

In the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years alone, over R100 million remained unused each year. This, Madam Speaker, is deplorable and highlights a systemic problem within the department's financial management processes.

Conditional grants are essential for supporting and promoting agricultural development, yet the department has struggled with late payments and underutilization. The Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) and the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) grants have not been fully optimised, which has hindered their ability to support subsistence, emerging, and commercial farmers effectively.

The budget allocations for key programmes such as Agriculture and Rural Development have seen significant reductions. This is particularly concerning given the essential role these programmes play in economic upliftment, food security, and infrastructure

development. The reduction in the budget for these programmes by 11% and 39%, respectively, will severely impact service delivery and support for our farmers.

To address these shortcomings, the Democratic Alliance proposes the following measures:

- Re-evaluate the budget priorities to ensure adequate funding for agriculture and rural development, recognising their critical role in economic recovery and food security.
- Prioritise the improvement of financial management systems to ensure full utilisation of allocated funds.
- Implement stringent monitoring and accountability measures to prevent underutilisation.
- Optimise Conditional Grants by ensuring timely disbursement and strengthen the department's capacity to manage these funds effectively, providing targeted support to farmers.
- Develop a comprehensive and sustainable revenue generation strategy and leverage assets such as the Suikerbosrand Reserve to maximise revenue through improved services and strategic marketing.
- Increase support for subsistence, emerging, and commercial farmers by, providing resources for infrastructure development, market access, and agricultural innovation.
- Foster transparency and accountability in all departmental operations and, regularly report on budget utilisation and outcomes to ensure public trust and confidence.

According to Christian Griesel, Marketing Manager at Syngenta "South African Farmers have long been stewards of the land, but we have to change our ways if we want to keep on producing, especially at the levels that a growing global population requires"

Madame speaker, the provided GDARD budget shows a total lack of comprehension for the critical importance of agriculture in this province. Even though the DA stands ready to work collaboratively to address these challenges and build a prosperous future for all residents of Gauteng, we will reject this budget until it indicates a true commitment to economic recovery, food security, and sustainable development.

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# More needs to be done to protect Gauteng's environment

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Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise today to address the budget for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and Environmental Affairs in Gauteng.

While we acknowledge the critical importance of environmental protection, this budget falls woefully short in addressing the pressing ecological challenges facing our province, particularly in light of the newly signed Climate Change Act.

It is concerning that a meagre R179 million has been allocated to Environmental Policy, Planning and Coordination, at a time when climate change adaptation and mitigation should be at the forefront of our priorities.

## **Madam Speaker,**

The state of our rivers and streams in Gauteng is nothing short of an environmental disaster. Yet, this budget fails to adequately address water pollution and ecological restoration. The recent fish die-offs in the Vaal River system are a stark reminder of our failing water infrastructure and ineffective pollution control measures.

Furthermore, the illegal occupation of parks and open spaces continues unabated, threatening our urban green lungs and biodiversity. This budget does not provide sufficient resources for enforcement and protection of these vital spaces.

The DA proposes the following solutions to address these critical issues:

1. Establish a dedicated "Climate Change Adaptation Fund" within the department, with at least 10% of the total budget allocated specifically for implementing the requirements of the Climate Change Act. This should include funding for:
  - Comprehensive climate risk assessments for all Gauteng municipalities
  - Development of local climate change response strategies
  - Implementation of green infrastructure projects to enhance climate resilience
2. Create a "Rivers and Streams Restoration Programme" with a focus on:
  - Increased water quality monitoring and enforcement actions against polluters
  - Investment in upgrading wastewater treatment facilities
  - Community-based River clean-up and education initiatives
3. Implement a "Green Spaces Protection Unit" within the department, tasked with:
  - Regular patrols and swift action against illegal occupations
  - Collaboration with local law enforcement to prevent encroachment
  - Development of a provincial strategy for sustainable urban green space management



4. Launch a "Climate-Smart Agriculture Initiative" to support farmers in adopting sustainable practices, including:

- Training programs on drought-resistant crops and water-efficient irrigation
- Subsidies for farmers transitioning to renewable energy sources
- Research and development of climate-resilient agricultural techniques

5. Establish a "Gauteng Climate Change Council" comprising experts, civil society representatives, and government officials to:

- Monitor the implementation of climate change policies
- Advise on best practices for climate adaptation and mitigation
- Ensure transparency and accountability in climate-related spending

**Madam Speaker,**

The current budget allocations for waste management and air quality monitoring are also inadequate. We cannot hope to create a clean, healthy environment for our citizens without significant investment in these areas.

Moreover, the department's own admission of underspending and delays in filling critical posts is deeply concerning. How can we expect effective environmental management when the department cannot even utilise its current resources efficiently?

In conclusion, this budget represents a missed opportunity to position Gauteng as a leader in environmental stewardship and climate change response. It fails to adequately address the urgent issues of water pollution, land invasion of green spaces, and the implementation of the Climate Change Act.

Until we see a budget that truly prioritises our environmental challenges and provides concrete, well-funded solutions, the Democratic Alliance cannot support it. Our citizens deserve better, and our planet demands more.

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# Gauteng Department of Economic Development fails to deliver on its core mandate

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The Economic Development department exists to foster programmes that are supposed to lead to economic growth and with it, more jobs. The department also oversees agencies that regulate activities in the gambling and liquor industries.

Let's call their work "strategic job creating interventions". These interventions may be small-scale or large-scale. The difference between the two would be whether there is a significant impact on the provincial economy. This department operates mostly on small-scale.

4.6 million people in our province would ordinarily be working if there was full employment. But the bad news is that 1.6 million don't have jobs. There ought to be less people unemployed than last year. Unfortunately, 330000 more of our people are jobless and, despite this department, the situation has gotten worse not better. This Budget Book not only contains money, i.e. budget, but also "service delivery measures" or delivery targets. This is useful. You want to see what you will get for your money. But in the main, the targets are woefully low.

Let's be clear, a government doesn't run businesses well and has limited capacity to be an employer. Its role is a facilitator of economic growth in an economy where private enterprises employ the people. This is where jobs come from.

If our economy's effectiveness is measured by what we call GDP, then the fact that our GDP grew only 0.6% in 2023, which is less than inflation, in real terms we have gone backwards not forwards. This is despite the billions of investments claimed by the department. So, in respect of both jobs and GDP, the Department of Economic Development has failed.

The evidence is clear: the department has failed regarding our economy and the voters sent a clear message. The ANC did so badly on jobs, Nasi Spani and all, that it dropped nearly half a million votes in Gauteng in this last election. It's clearly not just our opinion they failed, the voters that have said so.

What about agencies overseen by this department? Well, if the targets are anything to go by, they are not expected to deliver much. Their workload is easy but they still mess things up: the liquor board only issues licenses after long delays and allegedly issues fraudulent licenses; the gambling board had leadership turmoil with serious allegations of misconduct; our provincial-owned industrial parks and SEZs declined in performance; there was infrastructure vandalism, governance issues, and a lack of integration with city development plans. I will stop there.

Should we expect better. Perhaps if this was a better budget. However, the money has been reduced. They would have to work a lot smarter. If we do the same as last year, we can expect the same disappointing economic result.

There is only one evidence of change – and that is the MEC. MEC Maile, do you understand the enormity of the task you have been given? What new plans are you bringing? Can you emulate the Western Cape, who have agencies such as Wesgro – far more effective than Gauteng's? They have strategies and partnerships that should be copied. Their economy is improving while ours is in the doldrums.

We blame the global economy. But in the same global economy Western Cape has advanced. There they have hope where we have despair. But we can have hope if we learn from their examples.

MEC, you have been given much, and much is expected of you.

Madam speaker,

There is nothing here that gives us confidence that anything will change. Therefore, we cannot support the budget.

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Democratic Alliance speech by  
**Nazley Shariff MPL**  
DA Gauteng Spokesperson for Economic Development

## Gauteng Department of Economic Development fails to create meaningful jobs for young people

Release: Immediate  
1 August 2024

Thank you, Madam Speaker,

Young people in Gauteng are suffering and struggling to find jobs. If this government wants to make any change in the lives of people, especially young people, it is through the creation of meaningful jobs. Too many young people are sitting at home or roaming on the corners of streets trying to hold onto hope.

Hope that one day they will be able to participate in the economy. Hope that they can bring themselves and their families out of poverty. Hope to use the degree or qualification they worked so hard for under such difficult circumstances. Hope to have a successful career in whatever path they take. Unfortunately, we find ourselves in a space where hope continues to dwindle, especially now after voters punished the very same people who choose power over the mandate of the people of Gauteng.

Bear with me for a second, let me put you on game!

If we have learnt anything from history, it is that the ANC always fails in delivering for the people. They are good at promises and positioning themselves as the people's saviours from poverty and inequality. But the truth is, it is this ANC under Premier Lesufi that entrenches poverty and inequality. Our everyday reality is proof of this.

The service delivery targets set for the creation of jobs means almost nothing on the ground. 39% of the population in Gauteng are youth and the numbers provided by the department on the amount of jobs created are so few, in comparison to the need. In fact, it hasn't even made a drop in the ocean of desperation and hopelessness and it won't, if we continue on this projection.

There is no convincing evidence that the Department of Economic Development has uplifted young people out of poverty and into jobs. Unemployment has increased in the first quarter of 2024 from 2,56 million to 2,62 million, evidence that the strategies of this Department is not working. 34% unemployment rate in Gauteng is too high and the Department has no convincing plans to combat unemployment. Rehashing old ideas will not rescue Gauteng from joblessness and make the change so desperately needed in Gauteng.

The need to rescue Gauteng has never been greater. Under the ANC, this province will continue to suffer.

The DA does not support this budget.

I thank you.

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