Democratic Alliance speech by

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Gauteng residents deserve better than a self-serving SACR department

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Honourable Speaker, fellow Members,

This budget asks us to nod politely while the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation (GDSACR) continues to underperform, underdeliver, and ultimately, underserve the people of Gauteng.

Let’s be clear. We are not opposing sport, arts or culture in Gauteng. We are opposing mismanagement, underachievement, and the steady decay of what could be vibrant community programmes.

We are still sitting with unpaid service providers from football clinics, some dating back years. Small businesses and NPOs who stepped up to serve their communities have been met with silence, excuses and empty promises. Where in this budget is their justice?

Even more shameful is the Women's Living Heritage Monument in Tshwane. After pouring R184 million into it over more than a decade, this monument remains unopened. This year? A pitiful R800,000 is allocated—barely enough to fix a burst pipe, let alone honour the lives of South Africa’s struggle heroines.

And the rot doesn’t stop there.

The Gauteng Film Commission stands at a crossroads. It possesses immense potential to generate employment and showcase South African storytelling. Yet, the failure to meet targets and transparency could be its undoing.

The department’s failure to meet previous targets is appalling. From arts support to sports leagues, it has fallen short. Instead of self-correcting, this department has simply reduced the targets or quietly removed them altogether. Very effective? No.

Infrastructure projects are late or abandoned. Critical posts in the infrastructure unit have remained vacant since 2016. Unqualified interns are staffing libraries. Meanwhile, budget lines for tools, books and equipment are being slashed.

This is not budgeting; it is a surrender by the department and an MEC who continues to treat arts and sport development as an afterthought.

The people of Gauteng deserve a department that serves communities, not itself. A department that builds, funds, delivers, and inspires. Instead, we get vanity partnerships and spin, while township sports fields turn into dumping sites.

Speaker, being aware of this, the DA cannot and will not support this budget.

A DA-led government would support sport, arts, and culture, and remove waste, secrecy, and prioritise the interests of Gauteng residents.

Thank you.

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