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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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DA SPOKESPERSON ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION

4 May 2026

Hon. Jan Naudé De Villiers

Chairperson: Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration

Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

REQUEST FOR THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION, MR BUTHELEZI, TO APPEAR BEFORE THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE REGARDING PROLONGED PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSIONS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Dear Chairperson,

I write to formally request that the Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Mr Buthelezi, be summoned to appear before the Portfolio Committee to account for the widespread and prolonged use of precautionary suspensions throughout government.

On 3 May 2026, the Sunday Times reported that approximately R800 million of taxpayers' funds are spent annually on the salaries of hundreds of suspended public servants. According to the report, at least 674 officials across provincial and national departments are currently suspended, with the majority exceeding the prescribed 90-day guideline. Of particular concern is that some officials have remained on paid suspension for several years, in certain instances even after the conclusion of disciplinary proceedings.

At a time when service delivery continues to deteriorate in many communities, and fiscal constraints demand prudent expenditure, it is deeply concerning that substantial public funds are being allocated to individuals who are not providing services and, in many cases, are not being held accountable within a reasonable timeframe.

This situation raises serious questions about compliance with applicable legal and regulatory frameworks governing disciplinary processes, as well as the effectiveness of oversight mechanisms within departments. It also points to a systemic failure to enforce accountability for those responsible for undue delays.

In light of the above, I respectfully request that the Committee summon the Minister to:

- Account for the excessive duration of precautionary suspensions across departments;
- Provide a detailed explanation for the failure to conclude disciplinary processes within prescribed timeframes;
- Outline the measures being implemented to ensure that suspensions are managed efficiently, lawfully, and within reasonable time limits; and
- Clarify what consequences, if any, are imposed on officials responsible for protracted disciplinary delays.

Parliament's oversight role requires that such matters be addressed with urgency and seriousness to safeguard public resources and restore accountability within the public service.

I trust that this request will receive your urgent attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Spies', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eleanore Rochelle Jacqueline Spies MP