

NFP Debate on Division of Revenue Bill 2015

Hon Speaker

Hon MEC

Hon Committee Chair

Hon Members

All guests,

The NFP notes the increase in national allocation to provinces from R439 billion to R468 billion. It is our hope that this will result in improved service delivery and a better quality of life for all our people.

The NFP welcomes government's policy proposal to fast track the provision of bulk water and sanitation and the extension of infrastructure to areas without water supply. We all know that the province is facing a water crisis and it is those in rural areas who are affected the most. We are however deeply concerned that in the 2015/16 financial year, there is a baseline reduction in provincial equitable share allocations. This will without a doubt have a negative impact on service delivery and economic development in the province.

As far as conditional grants are concerned, the NFP welcomes the amount of R37.1 million which has been allocated to the agricultural support programme. We believe this will provide much needed assistance to emerging farmers as well as previously disadvantaged farmers.

We further welcome the commitment of R313.7 billion to local government. A central tenet of the NFP's approach to governance is an emphasis on strengthening the capacity of local and district municipalities. This will help the process of implementing government initiatives at grass-roots levels.

We also welcome the commitment of R5.3 million for HIV and Aids grant. KZN still has the highest level of HIV infections and so we need to increase efforts in skills education and awareness. During the legislatures health institutions visit we noted the various challenges to infrastructure, so we welcome the increased allocation to repair damaged clinics under the health facility revitalization grant.

KZN has rising service delivery challenges and high unemployment levels and therefore requires significant funds to address these needs and create opportunities for our people. There is however a challenge in this province of departments who are unable to spend their conditional grants because of challenges like lack of infrastructure, poor planning and poor management. In the coming year, this needs to be a thing of the past. We call on Provincial Treasury to be very firm on departments going forward, budgets must be spent and for the purposes for which they were intended. This is the only way in which we may overcome the negative effects of the budget cuts we will experience in the coming years.

Speaker, the NFP will vote in favour of this Bill.

Presented by Hon VR Mlotshwa