



KWAZULU-NATAL LEGISLATURE

AN ACTIVIST PEOPLE - CENTRED LEGISLATURE

VOTE 02

2024/25 BUDGET SPEECH



16 AUGUST 2024



Social Media Links



Hon NN Boyce
Speaker: KZN Legislature



Hon M Tembe
Deputy Speaker: KZN Legislature

Vision

An activist people-centred Legislature

Mission

**To deepen democracy in KwaZulu-Natal
through robust oversight, effective public
involvement, and progressive and efficient
law-making**

Speech by
Honourable Nontembeko Boyce (MPL)
Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature
on
Budget Vote 2: KwaZulu-Natal Legislature
16August 2024

Honourable Deputy Speaker
Honourable Premier
Members of the Executive Council
Members of the Provincial Legislature
Secretary to the Legislature
Senior management of the Legislature
Senior managers of all government departments
Invited guests
Ladies and gentlemen

1. INTRODUCTION

Honourable Chairperson and Members, we present this budget speech in a month specially dedicated to women. We feel the warm and heroic spirits of our first and second female Speakers of this House, Former Speaker, Peggy Nkonyeni and Lydia Johnson respectively. It is probably no wonder that both the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of this Seventh Legislature are both women. Yes, we are standing on the shoulders of these two giants. We therefore celebrate the contributions of all women across our Province and country for our very being because without them, we all would not be here.

Honourable Chairperson, it is prudent that we congratulate the six political parties that won seats in this august House. These parties carry a heavy responsibility of driving the aspirations of citizens of this Province. Our young and yet steadily maturing democracy has given us an electoral outcome that recommended a collaborative approach to government.

Honourable Members, a Unity Government is not a new phenomenon especially in this Province. The wisdom of our struggle heroes in 1994 saw it fitting to work as a team in lieu of the volatile political tensions of the time. Our maturing democracy has taken us back to that wisdom. It is this reality, Honourable Chairperson, that has given rise to yet another Government of Provincial Unity in this Province.

Having considered the unique and current state of our Province and contextualised the reality of a Unity Government, your political parties deliberately chose you to represent them in this august House of democracy. We therefore congratulate you as individuals for the varied competencies that saw your parties put their confidence in you and send you to deliver their electoral mandate as Honourable Members of this House.

Honourable Members, we also take this opportunity to congratulate Hon. T. Ntuli on his election as the Premier and Head of the Government of Provincial Unity of KwaZulu-Natal. As this House, we are here to support you and your team of MECs through an unwavering and focused type of oversight. Through our Constitutional mandate, this House will draw lessons from the past 30 years of our celebrated democracy to deliver on the service delivery priorities of our Unity Government.

Honourable Chairperson, this newly elected leadership of this House will ensure that the image of a Unity Government is evident to all that enter these premises. This will include reviewing signs, logos etc within the precinct.

Legislature Opening & The Royal Household.

Honourable Chairperson, in terms of Rule 10(2) of our Standing Rules, the head of the Zulu Monarchy plays an annual role in the opening of this House. We are the only Legislature in the country that has openly embraced and respected at this level, the valuable role of Traditional Leadership and cultural traditions within the Province. We want to thank His Majesty, King Misuzulu kaZwelithini Zulu for once again, gracing this term's first Legislature Opening ceremony.

Honourable Members, this is not the only partnership we have with the Royal Household, we are also visibly active in all other government funded programmes of the Royal Household. Honourable Chairperson, as this newly elected leadership of the Seventh Legislature, we want to thank Members of this House for the dignified way His Majesty was received and respected during his address.

2. PROGRESS ON EARLIER BUDGET SPEECH COMMITMENTS & 2024/25 FOCUS

Induction and capacity building programme

Honourable Members, in our last year's Budget Speech, we indicated that the Sixth Legislature's term was coming to an end and as such, we had to prepare for the then fast approaching Seventh term. This included developing and implementing End of Term closeout processes. In pursuing this goal, we were futurist in that we for the first time in the Sector, developed a ***Guide For The End of a Legislature And The Commencement of a New Term.***

The guide was tabled, discussed and adopted by the House on the 30th November 2023. The guide provides step by step processes on what needs to be prepared and executed to terminate Members of the sixth term and how to on-board newly elected ones. The guide draws obligations from all applicable legislation, policies, Standing Rules of the House and the Rules of the Chief Justice that pertain to the establishment of a new Legislature.

In terms of the guide, the Legislature also compiled a Legacy Report that captured mainly the Sixth Legislature period but also reflected on the 30-year journey of this Legislature since 1994. The report is available on our website and a few hard copies in the Library.

Honourable Members know that we are still fresh from an induction programme that was designed to help Members to settle in their new roles and functions. As part of implementing this Guide, we will soon be going into a series of strategy planning sessions for next five years. Honourable Members should note that this guide is a living document that gets updated to respond to the needs of our growing and maturing democracy.

Capacity Building

It is important, Honourable Members to state that capacity building is not an event, but an ongoing process that will continue throughout the term. The induction phase was just the beginning of the capacity building process.

This is a function that is delegated to the capable hands of the Deputy Speaker, Hon. M Tembe. As budget allows, she will ensure that targeted training programmes are made available especially for Chairpersons of Committees who run the engine house of the Legislature and individual Members to enhance their performance in the House, Committees and in their Constituencies.

While on this point, we will be reviewing our Training & Development policy to ensure that Honourable Members and Employees that do not complete their registered programmes payback the amounts paid by the institution.

It is through you, Honourable Members, that citizens of this Province will hear their voices and aspirations being echoed in this House and Committees. Capacity building should help us achieve this as a People Centred, Activist Legislature.

The quality of our Order Paper and debates should mirror and resonate with the manifestoes represented in this House. Our need to be capacitated in effectively drawing inputs from our Constituencies and use them in the legislative processes should motivate us to avail ourselves to training programmes that will be rolled out.

As a member of at least the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), and other similar associations, there will be opportunities for additional capacity building programmes. This, however, will be informed by budget availability.

Standing Rules

As part of implementing the ***Guide For The End of a Legislature And The Commencement of a New Term***, the Standing Rules had to be reviewed to accommodate both the amendments of the *electoral legislation* especially to accommodate independent candidates. The process of amending our Rules, Honourable Members is a continuous process that enables the Legislature to respond to developments within our environment. This is one of the strategic items set for further consideration at the strategic planning sessions.

Furthermore, planned and targeted workshops for different structures of the Legislature to enhance understanding, compliance and impactful implementation of our Rules are on the cards.

Governance & Audit Outcomes

To strengthen the credibility of its oversight mandate, the Legislature made it a strategic objective to establish and maintain a culture of clean audit outcomes. It is heartwarming, Honourable Chairperson to report that we have just emerged out of the audit season with a fourth clean audit outcome in a row.

Honourable Members, this outcome is a product of sustained efforts from the whole Legislature family. Every employee and Member of the Legislature had to do their part to ensure that the policy environment of the Legislature is both followed and strengthened.

This culture of clean audits is what we have inherited from the Sixth Legislature. This was achieved under difficult conditions of dwindling financial resources, impact of Covid-19 Lockdown protocols and several flood disasters in the Province.

In the words of our father of the nation, Nelson R Mandela, *“it is now in your hands”* to sustain and strengthen this culture.

The financial situation of both the country and province remain constrained as indicated by our very own MEC for Finance. As I will state later, the budget baseline for the Legislature remains both thin and stagnant against growing resource demands. In the context of pursuing oversight for impact approaches, our plea goes to Provincial Treasury, remember that resources to implement SOM remain inadequate especially in the research area. This is our reality and the need for more collaboration, improved performance and compliance cannot be overemphasised.

Digitisation & Budget Constraints

As already indicated above, our budget constraints are motivating us to fast-track the implementation of the Legislature’s Digitisation Strategy. We are one of the Legislatures in the country that have evidence that digitation is a cost saving and efficiency improvement tool. Amongst other cost saving measures, it is the digitisation that both modernised and carried us through the hard Covid-19 Lockdown period and its budget cuts.

In terms of the digitisation strategy, the following are some the projects that have been delivered:-

- (i) Micro-soft Teams platform (Virtual & Hybrid Meetings)
- (ii) Business Process Mapping : in this financial year, these business process maps will be used to analyse and determine areas for efficiency improvement.
- (iii) E-Library, E-Learning & E-Calendar
- (iv) E-Participation: E-Petition will commence as soon as funding is made available
- (v) Performance & Budget Planning Monitoring Dashboard, however, training and implementation is set for this financial year.
- (vi) Risk & Audit Planning Process Dashboard
- (vii) Security Operation Centre (SOC)

ERP, Voting & Resolution Tracking systems

One of the important digitisation projects is the replacement of our current aging ERP system. The process started in the last financial year and the new and cost-effective system is scheduled to be fully operational by the end of this financial year.

The electronic voting system has been developed; however, issues of trust and confidentiality are yet to be concluded and this should be addressed in this financial year. The Resolution Tracking and Monitoring System is one strategic project that requires budget allocation. This will be discussed in the upcoming strategy planning sessions as part of initiatives to address AG's Sector (Committee and House) Audit findings.

Provincial Treasury

Honourable Members, the need to improve institutional efficiencies and budget performance has moved us to invite our Provincial Treasury to participate in our scheduled strategy planning sessions. Apart from our digitisation initiatives to address our finances, we need Treasury's objective view on our finances and ideas on cost curtailing measures without handicapping critical operations of the Legislature.

Resourcing For Oversight

In our last Budget Speech, Honourable Chairperson, we lamented our underfunding that continues to negatively affect our resourcing for oversight. We still have vacant posts in the critical Research Division in our pursuit of a Research-driven oversight. Linked to this was an expressed need to procure a panel of professionals and discipline specific experts to support the oversight work of Committees on technical matters especially on Departments such as Transport, Works, Housing etc. We had also strategically committed to assess the impact of laws that this House has been passing, but because of budgetary constraints, this remains an unachieved outcomes target.

This is one of those items on the agenda of the strategy planning sessions as well as the relook at our public participation approaches to ensure both their cost effectiveness and impact. Inputs by our planning stakeholders including Provincial Treasury will be of great assistance.

FMPPLA & Top Slicing

As part of addressing our budget challenges, we cannot forget to restate as we did in previous years, the need to push for processing FMPPLA amendments, the introduction of FMPPLA Regulations. This is a national competence, however, through the National Speakers' Forum of South Africa, we need to continue to push this agenda.

Part of the gaps that were long identified in FMPPLA relate to the financing of the sector's oversight work. The *envisaged "top slicing"* ideals are yet to be realised.

Linked to the above, the task to formalise the Legislative Sector through a legislation of Parliament cannot be over emphasised. This Seventh term needs to pick this challenge with a greater sense of determination to pass and effect the *Sector Bill* that has been with the sector for over three terms now. Although strides have been made towards harmonising *Conditions of Service* in the sector, the passing of the Sector Bill will better fast-track registration of a *Sector Bargaining Council* at the same level with the Public Service Bargaining Council.

Gender, Sex Work & LGBTQIA+ Mainstreaming

The pursuit equal, inclusive and non-discriminatory communities remains a noble objective for this House. In the past year the Legislature continued to reach out to vulnerable communities such as the LGBTQIA+ and women formations and their progressive agendas. We are fully aware that our Province of KwaZulu-Natal has a relatively conservative cultural outlook. We are however happy to report that our intervention programmes in this area continue to break down the levels of stigma attached to these sectors. This is an area we seek to intensify albeit our financial constraints. Creative ways of funding this progressive agenda will find a direct expression in the Legislature's 2025/26 budget allocation.

Public Participation & Voter Education

The right to cast a vote remains one the most central reasons why a liberation struggle had to be waged. Poor voter registration and turnout are a threat to our young and maturing democracy. Honourable Members will recall that our Voter Education targeted young and first-time voters. The reports by the IEC continue to indicate less than expected voter participation improvements. It is, however, important to report that the 2024 election voter turnout was much better than the 2016 Local Government voter turnout. There is, however, still more work to be done in this space especially as the 2026 Local Government elections are in the horizon. Our partnership with Home Affairs during the voter education programme will not only be utilised during the election seasons. We are now going to invite such partners (SASSA etc) to participate in all our public events. We therefore call upon the Office of the Premier to assist us in drawing these departments.

As our democracy, grows, the need to educate our citizens on the country's constitution and its protection has become an urgent reality.

The Constituency Outreach programme coordinated by the Office of the Chief Whip has an opportunity to partner with the Public Participation and Petitions Committee to drive an effective Civic Education in this regard.

Sector/Committee Audits

While we do celebrate these clean audits, Honourable Members, time has come that these clean audits are made to culminate in improved quality of life for our citizens.

The implementation of the Sector Oversight Model (SOM) especially through Committee Oversight Plans (AOPs) and Sittings of the House has become the focal stop by the Auditor-General (AG).

The AG has raised important concerns that need a strategic and policy position if we are to protect our clean audits. The decisions and resolutions we make are one of the strong instruments of oversight at our disposal. If their management is not strengthened, we will put the quality of life for our citizens at risk as well as lose our good audit outcomes.

Our engagement and partnership with local government level and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) needs to be revisited in our effort to contribute to improving service delivery at that level. As we indicated in our earlier Budget Speeches, we will be working on reviving the Provincial Speakers' Forum.

Outcomes-based Committee Oversight

Honourable Members, we are being challenged to look beyond outputs relating to Committee meetings, reports processed and oversight visits executed. This term will be driven by community engagements that relate to the impacts we are making through our House Sittings, Committee meetings, Oversight visits etc. If we are to make tangible impact in our communities, our focus on the performance of our municipalities cannot be downplayed. The Section 132 Hearings on Municipal Annual Reports which were missed last year are planned to be on the radar going forward. Our Chairperson for our **COGTA Portfolio Committee** should not give peace to the Programming Committee until a slot for these hearings is secured. Our interaction with Local Government through Cogta is the level where the concept of Three Sphere Planning should be better embraced and implemented. Honourable Chairperson, there are lessons learnt and proposals conceptualised in the past six terms whose time for fine tuning and implementation has come.

It is in this context that we have scheduled a series of strategic planning sessions to develop techniques for the urgent implementation of Outcomes-based Oversight planning for both the House and Committees. Honourable Members will remember that one of the induction presenters, Prof Chucks EKE from the University of Pretoria presented on outcomes planning. This was deliberate because we have no choice but to urgently mainstream this concept in our performance planning and targeting.

On this note, the stakeholders such as *Academic Institutions, the Auditor-General, Chapter 9 and 10 Institutions* will participate in the upcoming series of strategy planning sessions.

In pursuit of outcomes and impacts, the Functionality Programme and the Taking Legislature to the People programmes were executed as planned and validated by the AG as one of the targets that were achieved. As one of the SOM tools of oversight, the structure of these programmes will be subjected to a review in the context of oversight visits to ensure that the limited resources do not grind these programmes to a halt. We will also make maximum use of our MoU with UKZN to enhance our research capacity.

Scrutiny of Subordinate Legislation and Money Bills

Last year we committed ourselves on pushing for the passing of the *Scrutiny of Subordinate Legislation and Money Amendment Bills*. It is the latter that is still outstanding, however, the *Scrutiny of Subordinate Legislations Bill* was passed. Our Standing Rules had to be amended to accommodate amongst other issues, newly configured House Committees a *Committee on Subordinate Legislation*. We did state that without the ability to oversee subordinate legislation, our legislative powers have been weakened over the years.

This is also true regarding the powers to amend *Money Bills* and as such, this outstanding Bill remains a task to be executed.

3. SPEAKER'S SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAMME

It is through the Speaker's Social Responsibility Programme that at a social and community level, the Legislature demonstrates that it is a caring institution of the people. Working with donors and well-wishers, this programme mobilises resources and even employees and Members of the Legislature contribute to assist those in need.

In the past term, this programme's strategy focussed on education; environment and climate change; women, children, senior citizens and marginalised communities such as the LGBTQI+ community and sex workers. It is through this programme that the Legislature contributes in assisting those that became victims of various disasters in the Province. As we start the Seventh term, this Programme will be subject to a review process and a new strategy developed to indicate the term's priorities.

One of the issues that will be covered by the programme will be greater awareness and understanding of the country's constitution, especially the values embedded in it and its foundation on human rights.

4. THE 2024/25 BUDGET

Honourable Chairperson, I now present the 2024/25 budget that was discussed and supported by the Standing Committee on Oversight (Stacov). It is as follows:-

Allocation by Programmes

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Administration | R 236.4m |
| Parliamentary Business | R 449.8m |
| Members' Remuneration | R 95.8m |
| Total | R 782.1m |

Allocation by Economic Classification

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Compensation of Employees | R 288.4m |
| Members' Remuneration | R 95.8m |
| Goods and Services | R 161.8m |
| Political Party Funding | R 225.8m |
| Payments for Capital Assets | R 9.6m |
| Total | R 782.1m |

Honourable Members, this is the budget we need for the effective execution of our constitutional mandate through our 2024/25 Annual Performance Plan. We also invite all our stakeholders and partners to rally behind us as we pursue a non-discriminatory, equal and peaceful society. It is our promise that we will use these state resources to honestly play our constitutional oversight function over the Government of Provincial Unity.

Honourable Chairperson, I cannot conclude this speech without thanking the Deputy Speaker, Hon M. Tembe who has since our election been by my side to this point.

I look forward to working closely with you as we demonstrate collective and compelling leadership in our roles.

The strategic Leadership team has begun to settle into its role and the support and partnership we enjoy cannot be overstated. Without the administrative support provided by Ms Nerusha Naidoo, the Secretary to the KZN Legislature, and her entire management team, our workload would have been beyond us.

Political Party Leaders

Honourable Chairperson, without the engagements we had with the different political party leaders in the House, it would have been more difficult to even get to where we are today in the Programme of this Seventh Legislature. This is a valuable forum that will remain a consultative platform especially at the beginning of a term before formal structures have been established.

We stand tall and in anticipation of a transformative term working together in unity across political party lines. Yes, as our democracy develops and matures, situations will arise requiring partnerships that in the past would have been unthinkable. But for the benefit of our citizens, there is only one choice, to work together and collaborate. We therefore continue to thank and respect the wisdom of different Political Party Leaders and pray that they continue to work patriotically for this Province. Without you, we wouldn't be this shining beacon of hope.

Most importantly, we thank all political parties in the Government of Provincial Unity for both entrusting and guiding us in this work. If we work together, we will achieve much more. And if we remain united, we will always be able to cover long distances. This includes even the opposition parties; by staying in your lane and we on our lane, the healthy tensions should culminate in improved services to our citizens.

As I conclude, I greatly appreciate the parties in alliance and my own party the ANC for prioritizing not its political ambitions after the elections but for putting the people of the province first and the constitutional ideals by being part of those who formed government. This I note especially in the Women's month on behalf of all our women leaders who started this journey the like of Frene Ginwala in the National Assembly and Naledi Pandor in the NCOP, indeed we as women continue to be inspired.

Lastly, I would like to recognise and appreciate the contribution made by the Strategic Leadership of the 6th term and all members of that term and undertake to carry the baton of good governance and robust oversight forward.

We thank you.

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