



EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE
Office of the Leader of the Official Opposition in the
Provincial Legislature

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Hon. Ms. Helen Sauls-August
Speaker of the Legislature
Private Bag X0051
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Dear Madam Speaker,

RE: PORTFOLIO MEETING: VIDEO CONFERENCE

At a time like this, the legislature has an even greater responsibility to conduct its oversight function. The executive remains accountable to the legislature and this work needs to continue, particularly to assess the effectiveness of the operations of government during the lockdown period.

The rules of the House make provision for meetings to take place via other platforms. There are examples of this in the rest of the world and in South Africa where parliament and councils are continuing with their work using electronic communication.

All members have been issued with smart devices namely cellphones, tablets, laptops and data. If the current data allowance is inadequate for this purpose, then I suggest that the savings from the travel claims should be utilized for this purpose.

Rule 70 (4) makes provision for video conference meetings

Rule 2 (1) empowers the Speaker to make an interim rule

The Democratic Alliance proposes that the portfolio committees of Health, Safety and Liaison, Public Works, Office of the Premier, Provincial Treasury, Social Development, Education as well as the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform be convened.

The purpose of these meetings would be to assess the effectiveness of departmental programmes in the current environment, to ascertain whether or not they are making a meaningful impact, and to make findings and recommendations in this regard.

We wish to emphasize that we are living in a constitutional democracy where the functioning of parliament is a key component and although we appreciate the difficulties under the current circumstances, we need to adapt so that the work of the legislature can continue.

I look forward to your response in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Bobby Stevenson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

BOBBY STEVENSON, MPL
DA LEGISLATURE LEADER

CC: Mr. Mapolisa & Adv. Netshitumbu