

Constitution Amendment Bill submissions extended

The Ad Hoc Committee to Initiate and Introduce Legislation Amending Section 25 of the Constitution has extended the deadline for written submissions on the Draft Constitution Eighteenth Amendment Bill.



Image source: Getty Images

Committee Chairperson, Dr Mathole Motshekga, said the committee unanimously resolved to extend the deadline to 29 February 2020.

“This is mainly because the bill was published over the festive season, and the public did not have sufficient time to comment meaningfully on the bill,” Motshekga said.

The initial deadline for submissions on the draft bill was 31 January 2020.

The aim of the bill is to amend the Constitution of South Africa so as to, among other things, provide that where land and any improvements thereon are expropriated for the purposes of land reform, nil compensation may be payable.

Regarding the perception that Parliament was rejecting certain emailed submissions, Motshekga said the committee was told that 46 of the more than 140,000 submissions were rejected on the grounds of “information technology safety filters used by Parliament”.

“The initial reports indicate that these could be videos that were sent or spam emails sent to the said address. The

committee was assured that Parliament is able to track the rejected submissions and the reasons for this.

“A comprehensive report on this matter will be provided to the chairperson. The committee has not made any decision on inputs received thus far on the Bill,” Motshekga explained.

Motshekga reminded all political parties that the door is still open for all to make submissions to the committee.

“We will consider all inputs irrespective of which political party makes the comment. All submissions carry the same weight. It is only after the closing date for written submissions and public hearings that the committee will deliberate and resolve on the matter,” Motshekga said.

He added that the committee has also agreed to use platforms that are accessible and available to young people, this includes a WhatsApp number, which will be made available as soon as it is set up.

“The draft programme will also be published once it has been adopted. Public hearings will take place in all provinces, predominantly from Fridays to Sundays. The committee will split into two groups [and] the full committee will also hold public hearings at Parliament,” the chairperson explained.

Written submissions must be received by no later than 29 February 2020.

Submissions and enquiries must be directed to V Ramaano, 3rd Floor, 90 Plein Street, Cape Town, 8000 or emailed to section25@parliament.gov.za.

Copies of the bill may be obtained from V Ramaano on telephone: +27 (0)21 403 3820 or +27 (0)83 709 8427, or www.parliament.gov.za

A copy of the draft bill can be found on <https://tinyurl.com/yxydm746>

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