

Dear South Africa is a network of online platforms designed to facilitate government and encourage the public to participate in unbiased decision-making processes or policy formation at SOE, municipal, provincial and national levels. DearSA NPC [2017/264231/08]

Special Appropriations Bill

30 August to 6 September 2019

The Standing Committee on Appropriations invited stakeholders and interested parties to make written submissions on the Special Appropriation Bill [B10-2019]. The Bill was tabled in Parliament by the Minister of Finance on 23 July 2019.

The Bill provides for the appropriation of an additional amount of money (R59 billion) for the requirements of the Department of Public Enterprises to assist Eskom Holdings SOC Limited with its financial obligations and to provide for matters connected therewith.

Dear South Africa hosted a project on our mobile and online platform to facilitate, educate and encourage public participation and comment to shape this bill.

<https://dearsouthafrica.co.za/special-appropriation-bill-2019/>

Included on the web page was;

- 1 - the published Bill as a downloadable PDF
- 2 - a summary of the Bill
- 3 - a live view of public comments (with a counter reflecting number of participants)
- 4 - a video summary
- 5 - links to relevant media articles
- 6 - a portal which posed a single question (with the option of three responses)
- 7 - a comment facility to provide input on the Bill

Each public entry was individually delivered to the committee Secretary Mr Darrin Arends at daarends@parliament.gov.za. DearSA also captured all public entries which have been used to produce this report.




Note; In order to accurately reflect public comment, DearSA projects are unbiased and hold no influencing opinion or agenda. [Raw captured data is attached as an Excel file.](#)

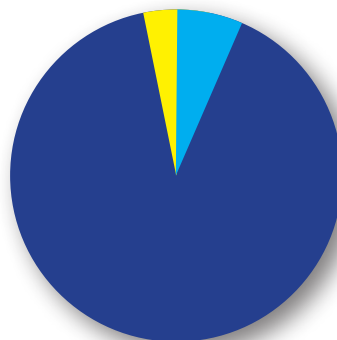


A total of **20,870** comments were received of which **16,482** were received by the set closing time and **4,388** were late entries (included in the Excel file as a separate sheet). This report reflects the legitimate entries sent before the closing date.


Question asked;


Do you support the Special Appropriation Bill?

	Yes, I do	[505 selected]	3%
	No, I do not	[14,781 selected]	89.68%
	Not fully	[1,196 selected]	7.3%





Comments

 Of the Yes comments, the common theme was concern around Eskom as the backbone of South Africa - a utility which we economically cannot survive without. Mention was made around all taxpayers contributing to a bailout instead of only those Eskom customers who pay bills. Several supportive comments were provided by Eskom employees.

 Majority of the Yes comments carried conditions, including;

- 1 - this must be the final bailout before privatisation (some said to avoid privatisation)
- 2 - bailout must include placing honest, experienced, Energy professionals in board positions
- 3 - coal and other supply contracts must be publicly available
- 4 - municipal debt must be addressed
- 5 - employee salaries must not be increased and bonuses must not be awarded
- 6 - employee count must be reduced
- 7 - IPP contracts must be re-looked as they are too expensive
- 8 - tariffs should not be increased during bail-out period

 Of the No comments, the common theme was around Eskom being a "bottomless pit" of endless bailouts and tariff increases where funds are diverted away from social needs towards a proven corrupt entity. Many mentions were made around corruption, over-staffing, high salaries and bonuses as the drivers of high tariffs and bailouts.

 Suggestions in place of a bailout include;

- 1 - privatisation and unbundling
- 2 - opening the grid to allow consumers and other producers to feed back in
- 3 - appointing Energy Experts into management positions
- 4 - reclaiming stolen funds
- 5 - cancelling overpriced supply contracts
- 6 - cutting staff, salaries and bonuses
- 7 - collecting outstanding debt from municipalities and consumers
- 8 - cutting expensive IPP deals



Comments (continued)

Of the Not fully comments, majority reflected a concern over previous bailouts and how the funds were utilised. The common theme was a recognition of the importance of the Energy utility within SA's economy alongside a concern for perpetual bailouts and tariff increases. **This comment option provided the richest input in terms of solutions, suggestions and criticism (view Excel file for complete input).**

Suggestions and conditions include;

- 1 - ring-fencing the bailout to core operational functions
- 2 - no bonuses or salary increases
- 3 - management of the bailout funds must be done by treasury and must be transparent
- 4 - outstanding collectable debt is close to bailout amount - collect it.
- 5 - reduce staff, overheads and supply contracts
- 6 - investigate cost-overruns at Medupi and Kusile
- 7 - open the grid to allow competition and reduced tariffs to stimulate the economy
- 8 - publish a financial plan to reveal how the R59bn will be allocated and used
- 9 - sell Eskom shares (bonds) to the public in order to raise funds and create investment

Demographics

Comments originated from all provinces with the greatest input arising from Gauteng, followed by Western Cape. Demographics can be further broken down into comment options (yes, no, not fully) per region.

Eastern Cape -	924
Free State -	458
Gauteng -	6270
KZN -	1938
Limpopo -	387
Mpumalanga -	602
North West -	432
Northern Cape -	129
Outside SA -	40
Western Cape -	5302

Thank you

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