

18 May 2023

TO: Mr Lubabalo Nodada
PER: (Email) Lnodada@parliament.gov.za

AND TO: Ms Estelle Grunewald, Committee Secretariat, Select Committee on Appropriations
Email: egrunewald@parliament.gov.za

Dear Mr Nodada and Ms Grunewald

SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS ON THE APPROPRIATION BILL [B3-2023]

This letter is sent on behalf of the Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA). As a civil society organisation and a public benefit organisation, we work within the public's interest. This submission speaks to the invitation to submit comments on the Bill to the Select Committee by 19 May 2023

Our comments pertain to *Vote 5, Home Affairs*, page 7. Our research and investigation over the course of a few years, together with very recent developments, have raised some concerns insofar as the matters related to funding provisions to the Independent Electoral Commission ("IEC"), and the Represented Political Parties' Fund ("RPPF").

Under "Transfers and Subsidies", OUTA notices the appropriation of R350,345,000-00 to the RPPF. Treasury's contribution to RPPF has increased significantly: R149m (2018/19), R158m (2019/20), R163m (2020/21), R167m (2021/22) and a massive R342m in 2022/23, which was more than double that of the previous year has received which now receives an extra R350m taking it to nearly R700m for this year.

We are concerned about this additional increase to the RPPF, which is run by the Electoral Commission, especially in light of the recent budget cuts experienced by the IEC itself. Based on research conducted by studying the IEC's Annual Reports, the IEC has experienced budget adjustments of:

- R278,501,000-00 for 2022/23
- R240,241,000-00 for 2023/24
- R251,007,000-00 for 2024/25
- **Total: R769,749,000-00**

These figures are supported by the IEC's presentations to the PC on Home Affairs on 28 February 2023 and 22 May 2022. The IEC is integral to ensuring free and fair elections, safeguarding the principles of security and safety within the electoral lifecycle, as well as promoting voter awareness and encouraging the public to register and vote. The IEC should get more funding allocations, not political parties.

We kindly request you to consider OUTA's submission as it speaks to the the concerns light of the National and Provincial Elections in 2024.

Yours Sincerely,

Rachel Fischer

Rachel Fischer
Parliamentary Engagement & Research Manager