

## Media Release

For immediate release

27 February 2019

### **SALGA makes submissions to the Portfolio Committee on CoGTA Municipal Systems Amendment Bill, B2 – 2019**

SALGA made a submission to the Portfolio Committee on Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) regarding the Local Government: Municipal Systems Amendment Bill, B2 – 2019 in support of the professionalisation and administrative stabilisation of Local Government. The presentation by SALGA took place in Cape Town, Parliament on Tuesday, 26 February 2018.

The amendment Bill which is before Parliament seeks to amend the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act to build an efficient, effective and transparent local public administration that conforms to constitutional principles, and to strengthen the capacity of municipalities to perform their functions by setting uniform standards.

SALGA submitted to the Portfolio Committee that micro-management of municipal administration by political parties continues to be a threat to good governance in municipalities. SALGA advocates for the adoption of key principles towards the Professionalisation of Local Government and that bold steps be taken to limit political interference in municipalities.

Section 54 A (7), SALGA has observed that municipalities make appointments and thereafter – within 14 days – inform the MEC of a relevant Provincial Department of CoGTA for concurrence.

At times, MECs take longer than the 14 days to consider the municipal appointments. Taking the appropriate enforcement steps include instructing municipalities, at times more than 3 months later, to reverse decisions – at times contrary to rules and orders of Council and illegally.

In the current Act, the role of MEC is loosely interpreted as “Concurrency” – meaning prior approval. It should be accepted that Municipal Councils have the Executive Authority to appoint a Municipal Manager – it does not require “Approval” from the MEC.

SALGA is also concerned that the Section 56 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, blurs the lines of accountability and authority between the Council and Administration. In practice, the appointment of Managers directly accountable to the Municipal Manager, by Council after consultation with the Municipal Manager, has led to managers directly accountable to the municipal manager actually reporting, or feeling obliged to report to Council members who appointed them rather than to the municipal manager.

The fact that only municipal managers and managers directly accountable to the municipal managers are excluded from being officers of political parties may, in addition, create a discriminatory practice. SALGA believes that the politicisation of local government also inhibits endeavours to professionalise the sector.

SALGA has set out its role to represent, promote and protect the interests of local governments and generally play a meaningful role in cooperative governance system of the South Africa.

**ENDS**

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