

Committee concludes public hearings on Housing Consumer Protection Bill

The Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements has successfully concluded its public hearings on the Housing Consumer Protection Bill.



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The bill received an overwhelming support from residents of the City of Cape Town, Cape Winelands and Garden Route district municipalities in the Western Cape.

The Bill seeks to, amongst others, repeal the Housing Consumers Protection Act of 1998 in order to provide protection to housing consumers.

During public hearings in George, participants appealed to the committee for the bill to become law and be implemented. Residents said they are looking forward to the bill ending the historical tendency to provide substandard housing to disadvantaged South Africans.

The residents felt that all spheres of government are failing in the area of human settlements and that it is normal for the government to deliver houses that have floor space amounting to no more than 30 to 40m².

The participants also told the committee that when the bill becomes a law, its implementation must be retrospective to cover remedying the poor and defective government houses delivered to the people.

Participants further called for the inclusion of a clause in the bill calling for the eradication of asbestos and mud houses in their communities.

In welcoming the bill, participants called for the involvement of ward committees in community development programmes, and reiterated their rejection of foreign developers and called for the appointment of only local contractors.

The residents emphasised that the bill must clearly specify the type and quality of building materials to be used to build houses to avoid sub-standard houses.

Participants in the construction industry highlighted a need to publish information pertaining to registration on the National Home Builders Registration Council's (NHBRC) database, since not all in the industry know it.

Committee Chairperson, Machwene Semenya, expressed her appreciation for the meaningful inputs made by residents.

"The committee will deliberate on the bill and submit it to the National Assembly for its consideration and refer it to the National Council of Provinces," Semenya said.

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