



**SPEECH BY GAUTENG MEC FOR FINANCE, BARBARA CREECY, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2019/20 BUDGET PRESENTATION, GAUTENG PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE 5 MARCH 2019**

Madam Speaker and Deputy Speaker

Premier David Makhura

Fellow members of the Executive Council

Chief Whip Member Sochayile Khanyile

Leaders of Political Parties

Members of the Provincial Legislature

MMCs of Finance and Councilors

Representatives from the Auditor General's Office

Senior Officials of Government and Municipalities

Representatives of Business, Organised Labour, and Civil Society

Distinguished guests

Comrades and Friends

I am honoured to present to this House, the fifth and final budget of this administration as well as our Medium-Term projections for the next three years.

Let me begin with tabling the following documents for consideration:

- The Appropriation Bill for 2019
- The Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill
- Estimates of Provincial Revenue and Expenditure
- Estimates of Capital Expenditure
- The Socio-Economic Review Outlook and
- A copy of my Speech

Honourable members throughout this term, Gauteng residents have advised us each year on where we should deploy our resources.

True to the Gauteng Spirit, this year more than 150 000 residents participated in our on line campaign *#GPBudget2019*.

We received more than 1800 written submissions. We had guidance on where we should spend money, how we should save precious resources and ways to grow our economy and our province.

Top of the agenda is the call for Provincial Government to invest in education and do more to equip young people for the workplace with the skills they need now and in the future.

Seven out of ten contributors mentioned the importance of supporting small enterprises and township entrepreneurs to create work opportunities. There was a loud call for government to invest more in renovating industrial parks and regulating illegal businesses.

Many stressed the importance of using government's procurement muscle to provide market access for emerging enterprises in areas like infrastructure construction and maintenance.

A strong call was made for government to make it easier for SMMEs to understand what support is available and how it can be accessed.

Many asked that more be invested in employing doctors and nurses in hospitals and clinics so that the quality of service improves, and health practitioners treat patients with dignity and care.

Some of our residents asked that more be spent on improving road infrastructure, repairing potholes and building our public transport system.

Others complained about environmental conditions in the province and demanded more be done about littering and illegal dumping.

There was widespread condemnation of wasteful expenditure, and support for greater transparency and accountability in government contracts and tenders.

Public servants who are arrogant, self-serving, dishonest, corrupt and incompetent came in for the harshest criticism.

Honourable members, the 2019 Gauteng Budget I table for your consideration today, does its utmost to respond to this important counsel.

It sets out how this provincial government funds our commitment to transforming and growing our province and our support for small businesses and township enterprises.

It highlights our significant progress in improving education outcomes and supporting young people to get the skills they need now, and in the future.

It shows how, through investing in economic and social infrastructure, we are improving the conditions of life for all our residents.

It speaks to our work in building social cohesion in our diverse province, so we secure a future for all our people.

We explain that here in Gauteng, we have built our financial management capacity to root out waste and ensure hard-earned taxes are spent directly on providing quality infrastructure and services.

This budget also addresses the measures this administration takes to keep pace with service needs in a context of tight budgets at national level.

We can proudly say Honourable Members, that the 2019 Budget I table for your consideration today is indeed a Gauteng People's Budget.

When Minister Tito Mboweni delivered his Budget Speech in the National Assembly on the 20 February, he indicated that our economy is recovering slowly but steadily from the technical recession.

Restrained growth means lower than expected revenue collection. Because government is committed to ensuring sustainable finances, we must all help contain the budget deficit and stabilize public debt.

In the State of the Nation address, President Ramaphosa indicated that only faster and more inclusive growth will expand employment and raise the revenues needed to support social development.

Gauteng Province, is now a home to one in four South Africans. As the economic and industrial hub of our country, we have a special role to play in promoting faster and more inclusive growth.

Today, nearly five years since the introduction of the Ten Pillar Programme of Transformation, Modernisation and Re-industrialisation, Premier Makhura is able to confirm the significant contribution Gauteng Province is making to our national economic recovery effort.

Over the past five years, Gauteng has attracted R199 billion in foreign direct investment and created 469 000 net jobs.

In the course of the coming year, R40 billion will be invested by the private sector in new and expanded industrial developments across the province.

Gauteng is now the best performing province with regard to Grade 12 results, both in terms of the absolute number of students who passed matric and the numbers who qualify to go to university.

Through Tshepo One Million, over half a million young people have benefitted from bursaries, learnerships, internships, and entrepreneurial training. This enables our most productive citizens to more easily enter the economy, and use their skills and abilities to better our province and their own lives.

One of the contributors to #GPBudget 2019, Priscilla Motsoane from Katlehong says:

*“When I finished my studies I was miserable after spending a year looking for work. But now I have an internship linked to through the Yes programme. So I think Gauteng must continue with initiatives such as Tshepo One Million. As far as I know this the only big provincial youth initiative that has been able to assist a lot of young people find job placement or use their energies to start business. So I say YES to Tshepo One Million”.*

Nadia Nagiah from Randfontein says:

*“My brother was placed through this project and I have seen a lot of changes in his outlook on life. He is motivated, believes in achieving his dreams. Before he was stressed, without direction after finishing his studies at UJ because he was struggling to find a job”*

Over the past five years, we have invested R53 billion in infrastructure, building schools, clinics, hospitals, libraries, roads, public transport, broadband and industrial parks. This has massive social and economic benefits for the people and the economy of our province.



The success of our Welfare-to work programme has far exceeded our expectations with 36 000 young mothers who used to be dependent on the child support grant now self-employed through training and skills development.

Over the past five years, Gauteng has spent R 74 billion, on procuring goods and services from businesses owned by historically disadvantaged individuals. This includes procuring twenty billion rands' worth of goods and services from Women owned enterprises and nine billion from Youth owned businesses.

While the Provincial Government and our citizens do all in our power to fulfill our special responsibility to grow the provincial economy, we also face increasing demands on our provincial finances.

Our provincial population has increased to 14.7 million (Statistics South Africa: Mid-Year Estimates, 2018). Our public health system serves 20 million healthcare users per annum and our education system now has 2.3 million learners.

A combination of improved own revenue collection, a more creative approach to off- budget financing, and tight financial management has enabled us to meet the ever-growing demand for public services.

In 2014 we took a conscious decision to increase provincial revenue. Together with our sister departments we set out to eliminate loopholes in collection mechanisms and promote operational efficiency.

Every year during the five-year term, we surpassed our annual revenue targets and to date we have collected over R20 billion in own revenue.

This is the highest amount raised by any provincial government and goes a long way to explaining why we have managed to keep the province's finances afloat.

These resources have been particularly important in keeping teachers, social workers, nurses and doctors in our frontline facilities. Consequently, we have been able to protect citizens from cuts in health, education and social services.

Five years ago, we also took a decision to build the capacity of our Infrastructure Finance Agency to develop a project pipeline for alternative and blended financing solutions.

As we speak, the West Rand Logistics Hub and Jewelry Manufacturing Precinct are in phase-one construction and approval has been received to conclude the PPP agreement with the developers of two buildings at the Tshwane Innovation Hub that will incubate innovation and smart industries.

Gifa's project pipeline now has more than 20 projects which include the Kopanong Precinct and the Gauteng Schools Projects.

National Treasury has indicated it has already begun drafting legislation to support the new Infrastructure Fund announced by President Ramaphosa last year.

We are told this fund will offer a range of blended-finance solutions for infrastructure projects ready for implementation. It is our belief that the Gifa project pipeline will place Gauteng in an advantageous position to approach the fund for support once work on the regulatory environment is completed.

We spoke earlier of Gauteng's significant track record of infrastructure delivery over the past five years that has made a considerable contribution to our economic and job creation objectives.

Provincial Government's investment in infrastructure is estimated to have added R41 billion to the provincial economy over the last four and a half years, created or sustained 265 000 jobs and created 499 000 public works opportunities.

Another contributor to our #GPBudget 2019, Peter Kobue from Mayfair says:

*"This province has put a lot of effort in infrastructure development, building roads, clinics and schools. I want to see this work continue in future because infrastructure is important to economic growth and job creation."*

This achievement would not have been made possible without significant management reform and initiative, known as the Infrastructure Delivery Management System (IDMS), that has allowed us to average a 97% spend on our infrastructure budgets.

Our unrelenting policy of only funding shovel ready projects has paid off, particularly in the departments of Transport and Education.

The Department of Transport has delivered 365.7 km of road rehabilitations 100 kilometres that have been upgraded from single to dual carriageways in the last 5 years.

The Department of Education, has built 52 new schools in the last 5 years.

Honourable Members, our activist treasury remains on track in its quest to restore public confidence in our public procurement system and promote open and clean government across the province.

Our innovative Open Tender system has been rolled out in all departments and six entities. To date, over 80 projects with a collective value of about R18 billion have been adjudicated in public. This process has enhanced transparency in government and created significant awareness about public procurement and accountability in decision making.

Treasury received a number of positive comments about the role the Open Tender Adjudication process is playing in

promoting clean governance. Mr Lucas Mabena from Bronkhorspruit told us:

*” the Open Tender system is one of the best initiatives that has been introduced by government to stop corruption in tenders. This project must continue and also introduce it nationally. As a supplier within Gauteng, I attended a few public adjudications and saw for myself how bids discussed and decisions on who won etc are taken”*

I am happy to report that the Bill which will enshrine our Open Tender system in law, is now before our Finance Committee. We hope Madam Speaker, that this house will pass this bill into law before we rise in March.

I am sure you will all agree Honourable members, that we have significantly improved provincial financial management and compliance. This has resulted in 65% clean audits and a hundred percent unqualified audits for all departments and entities for three years in a row!

I have no doubt that the significant progress we have achieved in this term in establishing a culture of transparency, public accountability and credible financial controls can, if sustained in the next term, ensure the Provincial Government achieves its target of 100% clean audits.

We are also happy to report to this house, that all Gauteng municipalities where audits are complete, have received unqualified audits, also for the third year in a row. One municipal audit is outstanding, and Midvaal must be congratulated for sustaining its clean audit for 5 years in a row.

Honourable members in the State of the Province Address Premier Makhura described Gauteng as:

*“the pioneer, laboratory and leader in the revitalisation and transformation of township enterprises into sustainable and job creating businesses”*

Honourable members, I am sure our collective experience tells us that the township economy is, indeed, an idea whose time has arrived.

Over the past five years the Gauteng Provincial Government has procured goods and services to the value of R22 billion from township entrepreneurs.

We have registered 32 616 township businesses many from as far afield as Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Free State on the Gauteng SAP System which is linked to the central supplier database. Of the Gauteng based township enterprises, we have used 7 192 in the provincial supply chain.

Two and a half thousand Gauteng-based township enterprises have received training through our supplier development programme since 2014.

Our efforts in this regard have not gone unnoticed by Gauteng residents. Mathebe Mathebula from Mamelodi says:

*“I own Dikakarapa Construction which was established in 2010 My company is involved in general maintenance work, and one day I received a call from an agent of the South African Supplier Diversity Agency. They invited me to join a supplier development programme that they were involved in with the Gauteng Government. Since then we have improved as a company in areas such as corporate governance and financial management.*

*The focus of Gauteng Government has been how to ensure that our companies are sustainable and we hope that in the next few months we will get other projects from the private sector.*

Martha Sibeko from Pretoria says:

*When I started my cleaning company four years ago, I did not understand how to source government work. One day a government official from DED told me about the Weekly Tender Workshops that take place at 75 Fox. I attended several times for two months. Now I understand how the process works and the attendance was free. So government is working to support particularly us as small businesses from townships.*

In an effort to ensure that our procurement opportunities do not undermine the cash flow stability of township and other



enterprises, Gauteng has made significant strides in paying our suppliers on time. One of the successful programmes that helped us achieve this has been our e-invoicing application which won a Bronze Award at the Premier's Service Excellence Award last week.

Johan Kruger from Mayville commented on-line that:

*“Payment of our invoices has improved since we decided to register for e-invoicing. I think that is the way to go for government service providers so that we can track our invoices and see whether officials are making sure that they are paid. If we as small businesses get paid on time we will grow and create jobs for more people.”*

In compliance with Public Finance Management Act and as a direct response to supporting small enterprises, most of our departments now pay 92 % of their invoices within 15 days

The Department of Health now pays 68% of its invoices within 30 days and makes an effort to ensure small enterprises are prioritised.

Honourable members, this year we are taking our Township Economic Revitalisation Strategy one step further with the creation of the Provincial Small and Micro-Enterprise Clearing House.

This partnership between the Gauteng Government, the private sector and the University of Johannesburg links township entrepreneurs to those who want to buy their goods and services and to those who want to fund and support such partnerships.

It is designed not only to develop SMMEs in their own right, but also to link the support of the Youth Employment Service (YES) so that township enterprises can host interns from Tshepo 1Million partnership.

The programme will be piloted in Tembisa for the first six months of this year and then be upscaled in the second half of the year.

### **The People's Budget to Grow Gauteng**

Honourable Members I now turn to the Budget itself. This Gauteng People's Budget serves as a bridge between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> Administrations. It concludes government programmes and projects of this term, whilst being mindful of new priorities that will be addressed by a future administration.

This year, we are appropriating R132.4 billion which grows to R150.3 billion in the outer year of the MTEF. This represents a 9 per cent annualized growth rate over the MTEF.

National transfers in the form of the Provincial Equitable Share and Conditional Grants amount to R102 billion and R23 billion respectively. Provincial own revenue amounts to R 6.3 billion and represents 5 per cent of our budget.

**Transform our economy to serve all our people and create work for those who need it most**

The Department of Economic Development continues to lead our drive for economic transformation and recovery. The budget for the department in 2019/20 is R1.6 billion.

The Department has earmarked funds towards the following programme:

- R26 million for the upgrading of township hubs/industrial parks,
- R18.2million to implement the Ekasi Lab programme which now includes the incubation of 80 township IT entrepreneurs

- R5 million for the Pitching Booster that provides financial and non- financial support to township enterprises
- R 75 million for the Conhill Visitors Centre,
- R40 million for the BioPark Phase 3B infrastructure project at The Innovation Hub,
- R40 million for the Superblock structure at the OR Tambo Industrial Development Zone,

## **The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development**

Honourable members, Agriculture and Rural Development remains an important contributor to our programme of economic transformation. The department's budget grows from R990 million in 2019/20 to over R 1 .1 billion in outer year of the MTEF.

Key programmes receiving funding in this budget are:

- R54.6 million for the Agro-processing, Agriparks and mainstream Urban Agriculture
- R91.3 million for the farmer support and development programmes including fences, boreholes, piggeries, broilers, layers, fertilisers, pesticides, implements and seeds.

- R32.4 million for the roll-out of the Community Vets Programme to provide veterinary support small and emerging producers;
- R31.9 million for community, backyard and school food gardens.

## **The Department of eGovernment**

The Department of eGovernment receives R1.4 billion this year. Key programmes for funding include:

- The Broadband network; and
- The platform for common GCR e-Services that are required for the GCR connected government

Honourable members we are all aware that in recent times progress on the Broadband network has been constrained by fiscal challenges.

Today I am happy to share with this house that the Executive Council has in principle approved a co-ownership and revenue sharing model.

Currently, the Provincial Government, SITA, SENTECH and Broadband Infracore (BBI) are developing a collaboration model that could see GBN integrating into the National Broadband Network.

Our aim, through collaboration and co-ownership, is to ensure outstanding provincial government facilities are connected and citizens benefit from ease of access to available e-services.

## **Improve our education system and prioritize youth development**

Our allocation to the Department of Education, Gauteng's Best Performing Department, in this financial year increases from R45.7 billion to R49.8 billion.

Key allocations include:

- R3.7 billion for direct transfers to Public Ordinary Schools, Early Childhood Development sites and Special Schools.
- R2.9 billion for the special school sector which caters for learners with intellectual and other disabilities.
- R1.3 billion to provide nearly 1.5 million learners with a hot meal at school every day;
- R1 billion to transport learners who live more than 5 kilometers from the nearest school; and to provide specialized scholar transport to Learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN).
- R815 million is allocated for e-learning devices and e-LTSM, which will continue to transform township schools

into functional ICT-enabled learning spaces.

- R1.6 billion for textbooks, stationery, school furniture and other learner support materials;
- R56 million to improve the teaching of maths and science
- R531.4 million to improve the Grade-12 performance and to increase the bachelor pass rates.
- R1.4 billion to employ more teachers to assist with the ongoing growth in learner numbers

To support young people make the difficult transition from school to the world of work, we will contribute over half a billion rand for youth development made up as follows:

- R124 million for Tshepo One Million
- R23.8 million to the Expanded Public Works Programme to create 7 000 work opportunities
- R81.2 million for the National Youth Service programme which includes Zivuseni to create 7 000 work opportunities
- R361 million to provide 6 500 bursaries, learnerships and scholarships to universities and TVET colleges;
- R165million for government internships;
- R15 million for the accelerated youth placement programme hosted by the Department of Economic Development

- R45.6 million for the welfare to work programme which will help a further 46 160 women, inclusive of single mothers, to move from dependence on child care grants to sustainable self-supporting economic activity.

## **Infrastructure spending**

In the 2019 Medium term Expenditure Framework we are setting aside R33.7 billion for infrastructure. This significant allocation is currently committed to infrastructure programmes in the development corridors over the next three years as follows:

- The Southern corridor: R2.942 billion
- The Western Corridor: R4.955 billion
- The Eastern Corridor: R3.498 billion
- The Central corridor: R7.044 billion
- The Northern Corridor: R4.178 billion

The Department of Human Settlements will this year receive just over half the annual provincial infrastructure budget, an amount of R5.347 billion.

This allocation will be used to deliver 10,682 serviced sites, 21,718 housing units and 8,858 registered title deeds.



The Department of Roads and Transport will receive R1.797 billion in infrastructure money this year. This includes funding of the following key road projects:

- (R114) Phase 3,
- the construction of road K101 from Midrand to the N1, Brakfontein interchange and the upgrading of Beyers Naude to a double carriage-way between the R114 and the Peter Road intersection,
- the K54 From Mamelodi (Tsamaya Rd) to R104 Bronkhospruit,
- Upgrading the R558 to Bekkersdal and the rehabilitation of Road P175/1 from Vanderbijlpark to Potchefstroom Phase 2.

We will continue with the implementation of the following road in Emfuleni:

- Vaal River City: Construction of new interchange and access roads on the R42 (Barrage Road) in Vereeniging
- Rehabilitation of Road P156/3 from P155/1 to D2568
- Designs for repairs and maintenance of bridges in the Vereeniging Region; and
- Regravelling of several roads in the Vereeniging region

## **Stepping up the fight against crime, corruption and state capture**

When we took office in 2014, under the leadership of the honourable Premier, we promised the people of Gauteng that good governance will be at the centre of what we do. We promised that corruption will not be tolerated.

In an effort to tackle and fight against corruption in the province, the Office of the Premier has established the Integrity Management Unit.

To achieve this, OoP working in collaboration with all GPG departments and the Special Investigating Unit has developed four pillar strategy which includes prevention, detection, building investigative capacity and ensuring we take disciplinary and where necessary lay criminal or civil cases.

In total we have allocated R291 million to promoting clean and effective government in 2019/20 it includes

- R23 million for integrity management in the Office of the Premier
- R151million for Gauteng Audit Services and risk management
- R47 million for Gauteng Forensic services; and

- R47 million for the Premier's Hotline.

In the state of the Province Address Premier Makhura welcomed the new Gauteng Police Commissioner Lieutenant General Elias Mawela emphasising his distinguished career as a skilful and dedicated crime buster.

He also welcomed the deployment of high ranking police officers and shifting of resources to clusters and police stations that have a high crime rate.

To support the Police Services we have made the following allocations to Community Safety:

- R50 million this year to improve Community Policing Forums, the Community Safety Forums, and street committees;
- R69.3 million is allocated over three years to fight crimes against women and children. We want to congratulate the Department of Community Safety for its efforts that resulted in a fifteen percent decrease in road the fatalities over the festive season. We allocate R129 million to enhance road safety through targeted law enforcement operations.

## **Improve the conditions of life for all South Africans especially those living in poor communities**

Honourable members, as a government, we remain on the side the most vulnerable in our society. Eighty one percent of the budget we table today funds government provision of health, education and social services.

This year we have allocated R5.5 billion to the Department of Social Development to be used as follows:

- R326 million for services for Gauteng's aged which includes resourcing 26 Community based care facilities that provide support to 24 407 older persons;
- R2.1 billion for services for children, of which R473 million is to fund new Early Childhood Development Centers with toys, libraries and play groups, minor renovations including ablution facilities, standardized meals for children in the poorest wards, and capacity building. This programme will benefit 330 103 children;
- R154 million is allocated for services to people with disabilities which includes implementation of independent living programmes, and increasing income earning opportunities in protective workshops services;

- R92 million to provide people from the poorest households with food parcels this year.
- To support learners from families living in poverty R145 million is allocated for dignity packs and R161million for school uniforms this year.
- R395 million is allocated to the fight against substance abuse and R23 million to the Isibindi programme to combat violence against women and girl children
- To increase the number of social workers available in communities R86 million is added to the budget this year to employ 153 new social workers and R15 million for the placement of 350 social work interns.

### **Provision of Health Services in the Province**

The Departmental budget increases from R46.8 billion to R50.8 billion.

Key allocations for this year are as follows:

- R30 billion is allocated to fund the personnel budget, which includes R346 million for employment of interns and R310 million for the absorption of Community Health Workers;
- R17 billion to fund the goods and services this includes the carry through costs of R1.6 billion per annum commitment we made last year so that the Department can pay off its accruals;
- R148 million for the Cuban Doctor programme;

- R150.1 million is allocated over the MTEF for the Department to obtain a suitable office accommodation following the fire incident in the Bank of Lisbon building.
- R300 million is made available through the Office of the Premier to compensate the families of mental health care users, who have been approved by the Master of the High Court, as a result of the Life Esidimeni Tragedy.

## **Building a future for all South Africans**

The Department of Sports Arts, Culture and Recreation leads our campaign to promote nation building and social cohesion. This year the Department is allocated R1.1 billion as follows:

- R54 million to continue construction on seven (7) community libraries;
- R17.9 million for the Premier's Social Cohesion and holiday games;
- R35 million for Bidding and Hosting competitive sport; and
- R35 million for the celebration of our National Days

## **Municipal Support Services**

In the coming financial year, both the department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and Treasury will continue to provide the necessary support to our

municipalities. We are today, making the following additional resources to support and intervene in our municipalities:

- An additional R65 million is allocated to support service delivery in distressed municipalities;
- We are setting aside R22 million over the MTEF to support municipalities in developing the necessary capacity in integrity and ethics management;
- R25 million over the MTEF is allocated to provide municipalities with additional capacity to attend to revenue plans, improving billing data quality and implementing cost reflective Tariff Models;
- We are setting aside R3.4 billion over the 2019 MTEF for the payment of rates and taxes on behalf of all Gauteng Depaertments.

## **Acknowledgements**

As I move towards the end of this address, I would like to thank Gauteng's citizens for giving me the opportunity to serve through my election to this House, in different capacities over the past twenty-five years.

To Premier Makhura I express my gratitude for your steadfast

leadership and enduring example of humble service and commitment to improving the lives of Gauteng's people.

I thank my fellow MECs and the MMCs for Finance for all your co-operation and collegial support over the last five years.

Appreciation also goes to you Hon Speaker, the Chief Whip, Honourable Khumalo and all Honourable members of this house for holding us to your high standards of public accountability;

Allow me to say a special word of thanks to Ms. Nomfundo Tshabalala and Team Treasury for their diligent management of our provincial finances. I am sure you all agree Honourable Members that we are indeed blessed to have such dedicated and effective public servants.

And lastly, allow me a personal word of thanks to my family: Geeta, Kwanda and Sean, who spent their babyhood in this Legislature, and who now hold me to account in that robust and fearless way of Gauteng's energetic youth.



## Conclusion

Honourable members I want to conclude today with a quote from the Barak Obama Nelson Mandela Lecture 2018, delivered here in Johannesburg on 18 July last year.

I have chosen this quote because it speaks to this moment in our history. A moment when we need, all of us, to stand up and support President Ramaphosa's vision of growth and renewal for our country.

A vision that advances the values of our Constitution and once again places at the center of our agenda the needs of the poor, the unemployed, the marginalized and the disposed.

It is a vision we will only achieve if each and every one of us in our different ways and locations works to make it a reality.

Former President Barak Obama said, and I quote:

*“what we need right now, we don't just need one leader, we don't just need one inspiration, what we badly need right now is that collective spirit. And, I know that those young people, those hope carriers are gathering around the world.*

*Because history shows that whenever progress is threatened, and the things we care about most are in question, we should*

*heed the words of Robert Kennedy – spoken here in South Africa, he said, “Our answer is the world’s hope: it is to rely on youth. It’s to rely on the spirit of the young.”*

*So, young people, who are in the audience, who are listening, my message to you is simple, keep believing, keep marching, keep building, keep raising your voice. Every generation has the opportunity to remake the world. Mandela said, “Young people are capable, when aroused, of bringing down the towers of oppression and raise the banners of freedom.” Now is a good time to be aroused. Now is a good time to be fired up.*

*And, for those of us who care about the legacy that we honor here today – about equality and dignity and democracy and solidarity and kindness, those of us who remain young at heart, if not in body – we have an obligation to help our youth succeed.”*

Honourable members may the Gauteng Spirit of Eternal Optimism, Resilience and Excellence move our province and our country ever forward!

I salute you all!

Thank you