

**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT****NOTICE 1498 OF 2022****PUBLICATION OF EXPLANATORY SUMMARY OF THE CONSTITUTION EIGHTEENTH AMENDMENT BILL, 2022**

1. Notice is hereby given in terms of Rule 276(1)(b) of the Rules of the National Assembly that the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services intends to introduce the Constitution Eighteenth Amendment Bill, 2022 (the Bill), in the National Assembly shortly.

2. The explanatory summary of the Bill is hereby published in accordance with Rule 276(1)(c) of the Rules of the National Assembly.

3.1 The purpose of the Bill is to amend section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (the Constitution) in order to provide for the recognition of South African Sign Language as an official language of the Republic of South Africa.

3.2 Section 6(5) of the Constitution places a duty on the Pan South African Language Board, established in terms of section 2 of the Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act No. 59 of 1995), to promote and create conditions for the development and use of, among others, sign language.

3.3 The recognition of South African Sign Language as an official language of the Republic of South Africa will result in the cultural acceptance of sign language and the deaf culture. Moreover, it is a step towards realising the rights to equal enjoyment of rights and human dignity of persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. It will promote inclusion, substantive equality and prevent or eliminate unfair discrimination on the ground of disability. Effect will also be given to the right to equality in terms of section 9 of the Constitution, which includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms.

3.4 The Bill seeks to:

- (a) amend section 6 of the Constitution in order to provide for the recognition of South African Sign Language as an official language of the Republic of South Africa;
- (b) realise the rights to equal enjoyment of freedoms and human dignity of persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing; and
- (c) promote inclusion, substantive equality and prevent or eliminate unfair discrimination on the ground of disability.

4. A copy of the Bill can be found on the websites of the Parliamentary Monitoring Group at <http://www.pmg.org.za> and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development at [www.justice.gov.za](http://www.justice.gov.za) and, after introduction, may also be obtained from the Government Printers: Cape Town (Telephone number: (021) 465-7531).