

“JWALE KE NAKO YA KOTULO, REYA KUBELE TSA”

**BUDGET VOTE
(VOTE 3);
TABLED BY**

MEC MOSEBENZI ZWANE

**MEC: DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC, SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT,
TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

DATE: 24 MARCH 2015

Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Free State Legislature,

Honourable Premier,

Honourable Members of the Free State Legislature,

Leaders of different political parties,

Mayors and Speakers of different Municipalities,

Chairpersons, Board Members and Chief Executive Officers of Public Entities,

Members of State Institutions supporting democracy,

Director-General and Heads of Department,

Members of the Traditional House

Mme Motswadi

Bomme le Bontate

Baqolotsi ba Ditaba

Madam Speaker, we appreciate the opportunity to table before this house the Policy Statement for the Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs. This policy statement will allow us to execute our mandate “To improve the socio-economic livelihoods of Free State communities through economic, small business, tourism and environmental development programmes and our vision of a transformed economy and a prosperous society that is living in harmony with its natural resources through integrated and sustainable economic growth”.

Somlomo kulonyaka ophezulu sigubha iminyaka engamashumi amabili nanye yenkululeko. Sesihambe ibanga elide ekwenzeni ngcono izimplilo zabantu bakithi, ukubuyisa isithunzi sabo, ukulwa nobumpofu, ukungalingani kanye nokuntuleka kwemisebenzi. Sithi kuSizwe sakithi esimpisholo, leminyaka engamashumi amabili nanye ingcono kakhulu kuneminyaka engamakhulu amathathu yobandlululo, yengcindezelo nobugqila kubantu abaningi begqilazwa yidlanzana nje.

Die regering het die jaar 2015 as die “Jaar van die Vryheidsmanifes en Eenheid in aksie om ekonomiese vryheid te bevorder” verklaar. Dit is die jaar om ‘n bykomende myl te loop vir die bou van ‘n verenigde, demokratiese, nie rasistiese , nie seksistiese en voorspoedige Suid Afrika.

Dit is ook belangrik om te herken dat die ter tafellegging van hierdie begrotingsrede aan die agbare huis plaasvind drie dae na die viering van Menseregte Dag op 21 Maart 2015.

Hierdie Nasionale Dag herhinder ons aan die opofferings wat gemaak is in die stryd vir demokrasie en vryheid gedurende die laaste een en twintig jare.

Die tema vir die jaar is die “Viering van die Vryheidsmanifes, Gelykheid, en Menseregte vir almal”.

In the same celebratory mood, as we table this statement today, we are Happy people. We are happy because four days ago on the 20th March, the World celebrated the International Day of Happiness. This day was established by the United Nations General Assembly on 28 June 2012. This day recognizes the relevance of happiness and wellbeing as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings. Our Programme of Action is intended to evoke emotion of happiness from our people - the Happy People!!!

Our programmes for this financial year will take cue from the ANC Manifesto and the President’s vision of this country’s economic growth as outlined in the State of the Nation Address 2015. President Zuma put down 9 points that will ignite growth and create jobs. These are:

1. Resolving the energy challenge.
2. Revitalizing agriculture and the agro-processing value chain.
3. Advancing beneficiation or adding value to our mineral wealth.
4. More effective implementation of a higher impact Industrial Policy Action Plan.
5. Encouraging private sector investment.
6. Moderating workplace conflict.
7. Unlocking the potential of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), cooperatives, township and rural enterprises.
8. State reform and boosting the role of state owned companies, information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure or broadband roll-out, water, sanitation and transport infrastructure, as well as,
9. Operation Phakisa aimed growing the ocean economy and other sectors.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Honourable Speaker, research by Stats SA indicates to us that the biggest contributor to the provincial economy in 2014 is Government Services with a contribution of 14.7% followed by the Finance sector at 14.2%. Mining recorded a contribution of 13.3%. The manufacturing sector's contribution was 8.5%, which was mostly attributed to the activities linked to the chemicals sub-sector in Sasolburg. The agricultural sector contributed 4.3%.

Despite the economic challenges experienced by the Province, 26 000 new job opportunities were created, through direct intervention of the government and partnership with the private sector. Global data providers project that the Free State economy is to record a growth of 1.5 percent during 2015, and thus to increase in momentum over the years ahead to peak in 2017, at 2.6 %.

RADICAL SOCIO ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth. The national wealth of our country, the heritage of South Africans, shall be restored to the people.

Honourable Speaker, in order to make this principle a reality we have undertaken a programme that promotes the development of industries as a means to grow the economy and create more job opportunities. For this, we have embarked on an aggressive industrialization programme in the Free State. We have allocated a total amount of **R124 645 Million** for Economic Development Initiatives.

Maluti-a-Phofung Special Economic Zone

The contractor is currently on site to put down preliminary infrastructure after DTI made available R68 million for this purpose. We have also submitted an application for further infrastructure development to the value of R1, 4 billion to the Department of Trade & Industry. We are also at an advanced stage to attract investors.

We are aware of SANRAL's proposed De Beers By-Pass. The Department will continuously engage all the role players to address the matter amicably. We wish to assure fellow Free Staters and investors in the affected towns that the ANC government and the citizens are opposed to this By Pass.

Revitalization of Textile Industry

Ka Lwetse selemong se fetileng re thehile feme ya Textile Trading House, Maluti a Phofung ka tjelete e kana ka R10 million. Ha jwale ke batho ba lekgolo le mashome a mahlano a metso e supileng ba tswang dikoporasing tse leshome le metso e meraro hona sebakeng seo ba seng ba fumane mosebetsi moo. Sepheo sa rona sa pele e bile hore feme e fumane metjhini mme batho ba kwetliswe hantle hore ba be le tsebo e hlokahalang. Mme tsena re di fihlelletse ka katleho.

Jwale ke Nako ya Kotulo!!

Ho fihlela ha jwale feme e se e fumane tumellanno ho tswa ho Mr Price bakeng sa thepa ya yona mme dipuiso di mothating wa ho phethelwa le le leng la mabenkele a maholo mona Afrika Borwa. Re batlile ditsebi hore di tlo thusa ka mekgwa ya tshebetso, papatso le tsamaiso ho etsa bonnete ba hore sepheo sa rona sa ho theha mesebetsi ya moshwelella ha se nyope. Tsena tsohle mmoho le tebello ya hore ha mmuso o kenya dipehelletso tsa ona menyetla ya mesebetsi e tla nyolohela ho makgolo a mabedi le mashome a mahlano lemong sena sa ditjhelete mme kgabareng ebe mesebetsi e ya eketseha ho ba sekete. femeng eo.

Ekonomiese inisiatiewe vir Matjhabeng

In lyn met groter staatsdiens programme om myndorpe te stabiliseer en 'n stabiele werksomgewings te skep, gaan ons ontwikkelings inisiatiewe fasiliteer vir Matjhabeng. Hierdie inisiatiewe gaan geleentehede vir ekonomiese diversifikasie aanspreek deur gebruik te maak van plaaslike kundigheid om lewensomstandighede te verbeter deur middel van handel, toerisme en kulturele aangeleentehede. Die Department sal aanhou om 'n deurslaggewende rol te speel in die ekonomiese inisiatiewe in die myn gebiede van die Provinsie.

Initiatives in partnership with the Private Sector

In order to achieve more, the department has worked together with many various private stakeholders at a global and local level. In identifying programmes, we have highlighted priority sectors which are amongst others:

- The Manufacturing Sector and;
- Agro Processing Sector

We are in the feasibility process of an automotive accessory manufacturing company as well as various initiatives relating to agro processing across the province.

Township Bed Supplier Programme

In September last year, Kings Comfort, a bed manufacturing factory was launched in Botshabelo and is currently manufacturing hundred beds per day and permanently employing 55 local young people. To improve the factory's market outreach and support, the department is working on a downstream supply of beds to township stores. The department will embark on providing stock to 40 shops in the townships across all Districts in the Province. Each store will consist of a hybrid portfolio of beds per store to the value of R50 000.00. Capitalized to the total amount of R4.1million, this programme will increase the production capacity of Kings Comfort to 5000 beds per month. The supply to the shops will constitute 24% of the production of Kings Comfort, which will create an additional 250 new jobs.

Small Business Development

During the State of the Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma reminded us that, Small business is big business. The President further said ***“Government will set-aside 30% of appropriate categories of State procurement for purchasing from SMMEs, co-operatives as well as township and rural enterprises.”***

Speaking during the State of the Province, Honourable Premier Ace Magashule said, ***“Acting Speaker, we are committed to ensuring that we utilize the purchasing power of government in a much more strategic and efficient manner. Our procurement strategy will increasingly focus on procuring through transversal contracts to increase maximum value and efficiencies. In addition, provision for procurement through cooperatives and youth- and women-owned enterprises will be escalated through increased application of the relevant provisions of the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act, 2000. Thirty percent of procurement will be allocated to rural and township enterprises and cooperatives. This is in line with the 2014 Elections Manifesto of the ANC and the State of the Nation Address”.***

To give expression to this undertaking, we have put in place several initiatives that will transform Small Businesses and Cooperatives.

Provincial Master Caterers Challenge

During the tabling of our budget vote last year, we made a commitment to support 55 caterers who are currently on a transversal contract to provide catering services to the Free State Provincial Government. In January this year we launched what had become the most innovative and interactive competition to capture the imagination of the food and hospitality industry in this Country.

On the 5th of March this year we handed out prizes totalling R4 million to all the 55 caterers. The Overall Winner, Ms Segametsi Mopalami won herself restaurant equipment to the value of R500 000. Ms Mopalami and the other 11 finalists are my guests here today.

This we achieved together with the private and public sector and wish to thank them for working with us.

Honourable Speaker, indeed we mean it when we say, Jwale ke Nako ya Kotulo, Re a Kubeletsa.

Youth Development Initiative

Honourable Speaker, development of young people and their ultimate absorption in the mainstream economy not as job seekers, but job creators remain central to our programmes. In collaboration with the Amalgamated Beverage Industry (ABI), we have come up with yet another exciting initiative, this time aimed at young people aged between 24 and 28 years. These young people will undergo intense assessment in a format of a boot camp which allows youth to be illuminated by means of a scoring matrix of skills, sales and marketing expertise.

The initial 2500 young people will be reduced to 100 successful candidates through this boot camp initiative. Successful candidates will receive fully stocked containers to the value of R60 000 each.

The ultimate result from this initiative is that the successful candidates turned entrepreneur will continue to have mentorship support, access to relevant skills in the beverage industry; growing their credit profile and finally they will be able to sell off shares to the ABI once they are able to make sufficient margins to fully own the franchise.

Enterprise Support Programme

Leano la rona la Jwale ke Nako ya Kotulo le tlisitse tshepo bathong ba bangata ba kotetsweng ka thoko seboping sa ntshetsopele ya moruo. Ka leano lena re se re file batho ba mangata thepa e ntlafatsang dikgwebo tsa bona.

Selemong sena sa ditjhelete re behelletse ka thoko diranta tse dimilion tse 15 ho thusa dikgwebo tsa makeisheneng le mahaeng tse 150. Bekeng e tlang re tla be re fa Ntate Vusi Madonsela wa Dihlabeng lori ya 8 ton hore kgwebo ya hae ya matlalo e tsebe ho hola. Ka mora moo Monghadi David Mothebe wa Mangaung le ena o tlo fumana bese e majababaja ya ho tsamaisa baeti hore le ena a tsebe ho kena kgabong mosebetsing ona. Jwale ke Nako ya Kotulo !!

Ditho tse kgabane ona morero o ipapisitse haholo le Bebele. Letsheng la Bethesda monna o kutse dilemo tse 38 ho se ya mo kenyang ka letsheng hobane hang ha metsi a se a fuduuwe ba bang ba kena pele ho ena. Ha ba ntse ba o pota kapele, le ho wena re re. "Nka Diphate tsa hao o tsamaye"

Residential Home Market

The Free State Development Corporation is in the process of re-launching the residential home loan book to provide Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme market services to the Department of Human Settlements. This programme is meant for people who earn between R3500.00 and R15 000,00 a

month because they do not qualify for the RDP house from government and they also do not qualify for finance from the banks. We have already received over 100 applications in this regard.

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

With the South African economy increasingly becoming integrated into the global economy, there is a growing need for local businesses to diversify and become exporters of goods and services.

To this end, we have put together programmes to promote the Free State domestically and internationally as a preferred investment destination.

In pursuit of direct foreign investment in our Province, we are in a position to announce that we will have two inward missions this year.

China in South Africa Week

Honourable Speaker, we are proud to count the People's Republic of China as among the friends who lent moral, material and political support to achieve a free and just South Africa. We will use our international co-operation with the People's Republic of China for the radical economic transformation of the province and create inter alia, opportunities for attracting trade and investment into the province.

In line with this Objective, we shall this year, during 13 – 19 April, have the honour to host the Year of China in South Africa. To this end, we have extended invitations to ten (10) provinces; thirteen (13) cities and eight (8) Universities; Investors; and Chinese Tourists to come to our province. This includes the Chinese towns that have existing co-operation with the counterpart towns in the province.

Global Investors Trade Bridge

We will stage the Global Investors Trade Bridge in September 2015. This is an unparalleled opportunity to bring together investors from all over the world,

economic development organisations from all over the country, high – level government officials, and others working towards increased investment in the Free State Province.

The objective is to showcase the trade and investment profile of the province to those investors whom are thinking of expanding operations in South Africa and the Free State Province.

The idea to create a robust online matchmaking programme and link each investor to the trade show floor, where investors will be able to connect with other businesses, economic developers and government officials who can provide tools and information required to make smart investments within the Province.

BUSINESS REGULATION

Local and Foreign Trade

Honourable Speaker, there is no way that we could ignore the fact that foreign traders have become an integral part of this equation of the township and rural trade. To address the tensions that exist between the local and foreign traders we called a dialogue which was attended by 450 delegates from both sides.

The dialogue discussed amongst others the Regulatory environment, co-existence between foreign traders and local traders, trade in illicit goods and problems of compliance and law enforcement in particular the bylaws in historically black residential townships.

We have setup a forum made up of relevant stakeholders to implement the action plan agreed at the dialogue. We will create a platform where we will interact on a quarterly basis with big business in the Free State for upwards and downward streaming initiatives alignment.

Consumer Protection Services

Motsamaisi wa dipuisano re lwana ntwana e kgolo tshireletsong ya ditokelo tsa bareki kgahlanong le borakgwebo ba dinokwane. Selemong sena re se re fumane ditlitlebo tse 384 moo ho amehang tjehelete e kalo ka R2.6 million mme re se re di rarollotse. Ho bohlokwa hore re tsebise batho ba rona hore tshebeletso ena ha e lefelle ke mahala. Bekeng e fetile re ne re kgakola ditho tse ntjha tsa lekgotla la bareki le tla nkankana le dinyewe tsena moo bareki ba qhekanyeditsweng.

Illegal Gambling

In order to protect the public, our licensees and the revenue generated for the Province the Free State Gambling and Liquor Authority together with other enforcement partners will continue with a massive drive to clamp down on illegal activities including internet gambling. We will conduct a minimum of 40 enforcement operations with other enforcement partners throughout the 5 regions in the Free State Province.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

To improve the province's share of tourism, a number of strategic interventions have been put in place to prioritize tourism possibilities, such as the expansion of tourism products in the five identified routes, prioritizing of continuous education and skills development, as well as the development of a more diversified ownership profile in respect of tourism establishments. For this programme, we have allocated **R55 739 Million**.

State Owned Resorts and Reserves

Dibaka tse 8 tsa phomolo tsa mmuso wa Freisatata di ntlafaditswe hore di tshwane le tse tsamaiswang ke borakgwebo ba poraefete ka hara provinsi. Selemong sena ke batho ba ka bang 60 000 ba ileng ba etela dibaka tsena mme re tshepa hore bokgoni ba dibaka tsena bo boholo. Lekala la rona la Papatso ya Bohahlaodi FSTA e tla sebetsa ka matla ho etsa hore dibaka tsena di tsebahale

mme baeti batle ka bongata ho tsona. Tebello ke hore lekeno le nyolohe ka 13% selemong sena sa ditjhelete.

National Tourism Career Expo

Honourable Speaker, our relentless efforts to boost domestic tourism were handsomely rewarded when we were awarded the bid to host the National Tourism Career Expo for the next three financial years. Through this, an estimated number of more than 50 000 people mainly learners will visit the Free State to attend the National Tourism Career Expo over a period of three years.

The benefits of hosting the NTCE in the province and in Mangaung Metro in particular include economic spin offs throughout the tourism value chain.

Naval Hill Planetarium

Since opening in November 2013, the facility has been visited by 12532 people of which 385 were teachers, 2872 were learners and 9197 were members of the public. The Naval Hill Planetarium provides shows and operates every day of the week and presents two shows per sitting. This project, which is inside a protected area, the only one in the centre of the city, will ensure that the Free State becomes the hub of eco and astro tourism in South Africa. The environmental education centre will be finalized in 2016/17 financial year to the tune of R5 million.

Tourism Marketing

In order to attract and keep tourist in our province, through the Free State Tourism Authority we will continue to support the following projects;

- Cherry Festival
- Route Signage
- Powerboat Championships
- Tourism Route Packages

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

South Africa hosts some of the world's richest biodiversity, but the country's economy is also one of the most energy- and carbon intensive. According to the World Health Organization, approximately 16% of all deaths and one-third of disease in children under the age of five are environmentally related. Inadequate sanitation and indoor air pollution are two key factors. These are some of the reasons why transitioning to a low carbon, resource efficient economy, protecting the natural asset base, and improving the environmental quality of the lives of our people is among the key policy objectives of this government.

Honourable Speaker the Constitution unites the people of SA in working towards a society where all have sufficient food, clean air and water, decent homes and green spaces in their neighbourhood. Section 24 of the Constitution entitles everyone to an environment that *is not harmful to their health or well-being and to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations*. For this reason, our environmental programmes are aimed at ensuring sustainable and responsible development to which we have allocated **R154 403 Million**.

Environmental Quality and Protection

Vir die uitvoering van die voorgemelde konstitusionele mandaat, het die lands wette ingrypende veranderings ondergaan sedert 1996. Ons het nou omgewings wette wat internasionaal aanvaarde norme en standaarde bevat om individuele - , institusionele - en regerings besluiteneming te stuur. Verder bevat dit `n reeks sleutel beginsels soos omgewings- samewerkende regering, voorkomings-wetstoepassing, en geïntegreerde omgewings bestuurs beginsels.

Dating this year, the Department has issued about 66 Environmental authorisations within legal timeframes. An estimated 70 Environmental authorisations will be processed in 2015/16.

These authorisations are issued to mitigate detrimental impacts of developments on the environment and the people. Authorisations include bulk services projects, human settlement and industrial development. Out of this process our people receive the benefits with regard to job creation, a healthy and sustainable environment and sustainable economic development. That is why the People of the Free State do not support the De Beers By-Pass so as to protect the socio-economic and environmental integrity of the area.

During this financial year the Department has issued Compliance notices and Directives to environmental offenders. Compliance Notices and Directives are issued to individuals and institutions for non-compliance with environmental legislation. As I speak now, 23 Compliance Notices and Directives have been issued so far. Compliance notices have on the main been served to industries and municipalities.

Furthermore the Free State province will also be hosting the 10th Annual National Air Quality Governance Lekgotla during the National Air Quality Week planned for later this year. The National Air Quality Governance Lekgotla is an annual event enshrined in the 2007 and 2012 National Framework for Air Quality Management in South Africa as contemplated in section 7 of the National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act, 2004 (No. 39 of 2004).

The Air Quality Governance Lekgotla was devised in order to give effect to the vertical and horizontal integration of Air Quality Management approaches amongst all three levels of government in South Africa. This event will be followed by the National Association of Clean Air Conference where Government Technocrats, Academia, NGO/NPO and Industry interact on how to improve air quality.

In conjunction with the National Department of Environmental Affairs, the Department is surging ahead with the proclamation of Ingula as a Provincial Nature Reserve.

Anti Rhino Poaching Programme

Honourable Speaker, poaching still remain the biggest threat to South Africa's rhino population. There has been an alarming increase in rhino poaching countrywide. This is because it is part of a multi-billion dollar worldwide illicit wildlife trade. We are proud to say that in this financial year, no Rhino was killed in our Province. This is because there is good cooperation between our officials and various law enforcement agencies. We have doubled our efforts in the fight against illegal trade in fauna and flora as well as rhino poaching. Working together with police, about 17 roadblocks have been conducted within the borders of the province and 20 cases of fauna and flora are before courts. Only two of the 20 are related to rhino poaching.

In the fight against rhino poaching, the department is working with private sector and total of about 800 DNA samples has been collected to assist with tracking of poached rhinos during roadblocks. Training on environmental contraband has been provided to 450 SAPS officers, 350 officers from SANDF are patrolling the Lesotho border and 60 Custom officials are manning border posts.

Dinosaur Interpretive Centre

Honourable Speaker, we are pleased to announce that the building of the Dinosaur Interpretive Centre (DIC) at the Golden Gate Highlands National Park will commence soon. An investment to the value of R250m has been set aside for the construction of the DIC and is informed by the National Rural Tourism Strategy (2012) and the National Heritage and Cultural Tourism Strategy. The Centre will exhibit the fossil remains of the Triassic era and will be situated at the Golden Gate Highlands National Park, which is situated in the rolling foothills of the Maluti Mountains in the north-eastern Free State near the Lesotho border. About 800 temporary and permanent jobs will be created over a period of two years.

Vredefort Dome World Heritage Site

The declaration of the Vredefort Dome as World Heritage site in 2005 has placed the uniqueness of the site in the limelight with regards to global geological significant sites. Although the site has not been declared a national heritage site, government has made some progress. The Minister gazetted the intention to declare the Site as a World Heritage Site, in terms of national legislation. The Landowners have been included in the Interim Management Structure. We are currently working hard with the Department of Environmental Affairs and North West Province, to resolve the challenges faced by the site particularly vandalism of the unique rock formations, pollution of the Vaal River, land fragmentation, increased habitation and national declaration of the site.

Transformation of the Game Industry

Free State Province is well renowned as one of the better hunting destinations in South Africa. We are the second best hunting destination in the country. That is why we are also improving as a tourism destination in the country. Last year alone, the professional hunting industry generated an income in the region of R250m to the province.

Our programme of the transformation of the game industry by introducing the previously disadvantaged into this industry is slowly but surely beginning to take shape. During 2014, game in excess of R4 million was delivered to black farmers and new farms are constantly being evaluated to become part of the programme.

I am happy to report that some of the first entrants to the programme have come to a point where they could sell game or buy other game species outside this programme. One of these farmers managed to sell game for an income of more than half a million rand. That is a good story to tell. He is a real Economic Freedom Fighter. Game to the value of R8 million will be given and some loaned to black game farmers during the 2015/16 financial year.

Game Auction

In order to improve on revenue collection, the department continues to contribute handsomely to the provincial fiscus through the proceeds of excess game. Last year we generated more than R13m with the sale of game and this year we hope to do even better. The intention is to hold two auctions this year and henceforth. The Department will host the normal game auction in April 2015 at the Willem Pretorius Nature Reserve. The elite auction for Buffalo and Sable will be held towards the end of May.

Environmental Empowerment, Cleaning Campaigns & Greening

Honourable Speaker, Climate Change and Global Warming compel all of us to be good environmental stewards and good citizens in order to promote a green environment within our eco-systems. This is in line with the call made by our honourable Premier in his State of the Province address, the Department has initiated the cleaning campaign project known as **CLEANING THE FREE STATE: GO GREEN GO CLEAN.**

This Project will be implemented within the principles of the Greenest Municipality Competition (GMC) and will be implemented across the Free State in the coming financial year. We are aware that some towns in the FS have poor environment, i.e. litter and general pollution. We are going to do everything possible to make sure our communities live in clean, healthy and safe environments as desired by the Freedom Charter. We will be embarking on a competition, called the “**Clean and Green Municipality**”.

Special focus on awareness, empowerment, planting of trees and cleaning campaigns will be given to 12 municipalities with serious environmental challenges in the Free State with the aim of improving the general environment in these areas. The co-operation of municipalities and other relevant sister Departments will determine the success of the exercise.

One hundred and fifty nine (159) EPWP job opportunities will be creating in the clearing of alien invasive species throughout the Free State.

HUMAN RESOURCES

During the previous financial years, the department has been operating with a high vacancy rate at the Senior Management level. In order to strengthen the Management of the Department, 12 SMS posts were filled over the last 18 months.

Ho ikamahanya le leano la mmuso la ho fihlela 50/50 ya bomme le bontate boemong ba bahlanka ba maemong a hodimo mmusong (Senior Managers), dikgeo tse tsheletseng re ile ra di tlatsa ka bomme, mme tse ding tse tsheletseng ra di tlatsa ka bontate.

CONCLUSION

Honourable Speaker, let me at this stage take this opportunity to thank the Honourable Premier for his guidance and support in the execution of our responsibility; my political home the African National Congress for showing us the way and keeping us focused to the course of changing the lives of the people.

We also wish to thank the portfolio committee for their oversight and commitment to see us do more towards ensuring that our programmes are in line with the Freedom Charter for urging us to “improve the quality of life for all citizens and free the potential of each person”.

We want to thank all the National Departments for their support, Chairpersons of Boards and Board Members, CEOs of Entities, management and staff.

My gratitude also goes to the Head of the Department, Mr Mogokare Seleke, senior management and the staff for their commitment to see this department discharging the mandate given to us by the people of the Free State.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge my source of energy and motivation to serve to the best of my ability my family. I thank them.

Allow me to conclude our address to the people of the Free State by quoting the words of the World most significant moral leader, who is revered as a vital force in the fight for human rights and racial equality, President Nelson Mandela. He writes, ***“For one thing, those who have no soul, no sense of national pride and no ideals to win, can suffer neither humiliation nor defeat; they can evolve no national heritage, are inspired by no sacred mission and can produce no martyrs or national heroes. A new world will be won not by those who stand at a distance with their arms folded, but by those who are in the arena, whose garments are torn by storms and whose bodies are maimed in the course of contest.”***

Honourable Speaker we now table before this house the budget of the Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs for the 2015/16 financial year.

Our total allocated budget for the 2015/16 financial year is **R472 179 Million.**

JWALE KE NAKO YA KOTULO. RE A KUBELETSAAAA!!!

I THANK YOU!