

Honourable YI Carrim, MP, Chairperson: Standing Committee on Finance.  
Honourable CJ De Beer, MP, Chairperson: Select Committee on Finance.  
Cced to ANC Caucus, Minister Mboweni and President Ramaphosa.  
21 February 2019

**Re: Written submission to The Standing Committee on Finance and the Select Committee on Finance on Budget 2019 from the Pietermaritzburg Pensioners Forum.**

Greetings and thank you for providing us the opportunity to make a written submission into Budget.

*Singogogo sisibonile isabelo zimali besikade sihlangele ndawonye, sabona ukuthi usifakele uR80; lokho kusibonise ngokusobala ukuthi asibalulekile. Iminyaka iya phambili kodwa imali ishona phansi.*

*Kusho ukuthi ukukhala kwethu sehla senyuka siza ephalamente akusho lutho, ziwela phansi njengezithukuthuku zenja.*

*Ithina esingogogo esazi kabanzi ngomlando ka ANC, izingane zethu kumele zifundiswe ithina ngomlando, lokho-ke kuzokwenza ukuthi sigodle ivoti lethu kanye nezingane zethu kanye nabazukhulu ngeke zivote yithi. (20/02/2019)*

*As grannies we listened to the budget speech. We were all sitting together, we saw that in our grant only R80 was given. That showed us very clearly that we are not important. The years are going on but the money is going down.*

*That means all our efforts going up and down, even to parliament didn't mean anything.*

*It is us grannies that knows about the ANC struggle and the history of apartheid, we lived it. It is us that teach our children about the history. We hold this memory. In that sense that means that we are not going to vote, even our children and our grandchildren too. (20/02/2019).*

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of February at the same time the 2019 Budget Speech was being delivered we were picketing outside the KZN Legislature. The picket was part of our on-going advocacy to try and call on government to listen to us. We all heard that you were only going to give us R80 and no 13<sup>th</sup> cheque in December together.

We have been to see you in parliament and we have also written many letters to you, the ANC Caucus, Minister Mboweni and President Ramaphosa. We have been calling on government to provide all pensioners with a 13<sup>th</sup> cheque equal to double the monthly pension annually in December (starting in December 2019), and as a start towards equalising the pension with the National Minimum Wage and towards a living wage, for the monthly old-age grant to be increased to R2 500 in April 2019.

Last year, the Standing Committee on Finance, having considered the 2018 Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement for the revised fiscal framework of 24 October 2018, and having listened to a submission from the Pietermaritzburg Pensioners Forum recommended that "...National Treasury considers a higher increase in grants than is usually the case by reprioritising expenditure ..." (under 10.3 page 24). Treasury did not listen.

You have given us R80. That is even less than the R100 increase last year. We so disappointed, upset and angry. It means that you don't care about us. You don't care about 3,5 million pensioners and our families. We cannot make it through the month on our pensions and most of us are in terrible debt. R1 780 is far too low. We will continue to stand in the queue to collect the old age grant and then go and stand in the line to borrow money from omashonisa. We will continue bringing no money home to where we live. Increasing the child support grant by R10 which is not even enough to buy toothpaste, puts even more pressure on our pension.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of February we wrote another letter to Minister Mboweni and cced President Ramaphosa. We attach the letter for you to see.

Thank you for considering our written submission. We would like to be provided a space to make a public submission during the Budget 2019 hearings organised through your committee. We want Minister Mboweni to reconsider his decision and offer us something that we will be able to live on and create a better future for ourselves, our children and grandchildren.

We would be speaking in isiZulu and ask that translation be provided for MPs. We further request if possible that we be given the space to hand over 30 000 petitions from pensioners from across South Africa during the hearings. We did try and hand the petitions over on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February but the presidency couldn't be bothered to come and meet us, instead the police were sent to chase us away. We had travelled all the way from Pietermaritzburg and didn't expect the ANC to treat us like that.

Lastly, we will have to make arrangements again to travel to Cape Town by bus and therefore would be very grateful if you could let us know as soon as possible whether we will be given a space to speak.

We ask you with great love and increasing desperation to please let us speak again to you and for you to try and hear us this time. This is really so critically important.

Yours sincerely,  
Thina Ogogo

**The Pietermaritzburg Pensioners Forum**

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