



*Real Reform for ECD Campaign: Statement for immediate release*

## **A window of opportunity for the Real Reform for ECD Campaign as Parliament offers another shot to make the Children's Act better for early childhood development**

On Saturday 6 March, the Portfolio Committee on Social Development issued a [statement](#) announcing their decision to reject the proposed amendments that relate to early childhood development (ECD) in the Children's Amendment Bill that is currently before Parliament. The Real Reform for ECD Campaign welcomes this decision, and calls upon Parliament to commit to a clear time-line for when proposed amendments to the ECD chapters must be ready. Reforming the legislation for ECD cannot take five more years!

The [Real Reform for ECD Campaign](#) was launched in August last year in response to the poorly drafted Children's Amendment Bill which did not address the issues the ECD sector has with the Children's Act. In addition, the Bill was in some ways worse for the sector. We also noted that there had been insufficient consultation with the Department of Basic Education (DBE), which was surprising, given the impending migration of ECD services from the Department of Social Development (DSD) to the DBE.

Thousands of people in the sector rallied behind the Campaign, calling for real reform for ECD now and for the Bill to be improved. Over 1200 submissions were made to Parliament in November last year across seven provinces, with 90% of those submissions coming from ECD practitioners. Comprehensive solutions were proposed in these submissions and template submissions can be accessed on the Real Reform for ECD [website](#). The winds of change are starting to blow, and the ECD sector is uniting behind the reform we know the sector needs.

We mark the decision of the Portfolio Committee as a small victory. The Portfolio Committee acknowledged that there was a lack of consultation prior to introducing the Bill and that a technical team will be set up consisting of Parliament, DSD, SALGA, the Office of the State Law Advisor and DBE to look at the ECD related amendments and provide a way forward. **We now have another chance to make the Bill better. We have to make it count.**

We call on Parliament to commit the technical team proposed to a clear time-line of when amendments to the ECD chapters of the Children's Act will be ready. **The sector is in [crisis](#) and cannot wait five more years for law reform.** Parliament must also require the technical committee to consider the submissions in relation to ECD made as part of this round of public consultation. **The submissions of 1000s of practitioners cannot simply be ignored.** Finally, Parliament must still allow for the ECD sector to present to the Portfolio Committee on the relevant amendments. **We must still get our day to present our ECD recommendations to Parliament.**

We are calling on practitioners, parents and caregivers to support the Campaign for Real Reform for ECD

by doing the following:

1. Tell Parliament and DSD that we cannot wait five more years for law reform;
2. Pick a colour that represents an area you want to support, and make a placard, voice note or video to send to our whatsapp number **072 017 1682**, post and tag on facebook, twitter, instagram **@ECDreform**.



The positive outcomes of the past years' hardship is that we, as a sector, have never been more united and committed to working alongside one another towards a common goal; that is, access to quality ECD services for our children. We will continue to push for Real Reform now.

#### **Statement Issued by the Campaign for Real Reform for ECD**

*To find out who already supports our Campaign visit our website:*

<https://www.ecdreform.org.za/>

#### **For further information or to arrange an interview:**

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