The Director General

Private Bag X895

Pretoria

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19th October 2017

Attention: Adv. TD Rudman

Dear Adv. Rudman,

**Draft BASIC EDUCATION LAWS AMENDMENT BILL - Request for an extension to the closing date for comments on the Bill.**

**Introduction and Background**

My name is Jane Doe and I am a mother who home educates my 3 children aged between 6 and 17. Our family has been homeschooling for the last six years. We began educating our children at home when my oldest son was diagnosed with dyslexia and (incorrectly as it turns out) with ADHD. I was told to go to the doctor that all the teachers refer “difficult” learners to and that he would prescribe Ritalin.

I was not at all happy with the effects of the medication and took my child to another doctor who said he does not need to be on Ritalin. The teacher was not happy with this and she told me I must either place him on Ritalin or remove him from the class as they did not have time to waste on difficult children like my son.

On that day I decided to leave my job and investigate homeschooling. While we have had difficult and trying times, since that day my family has never looked back and we would never put my son back in school or subject him to school pressures again.

I am a member of the Pestalozzi Trust, The Association for Homeschooling and the Gauteng Association for Homeschooling.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill.

Unfortunately, I only became aware of the invitation to comment on this Bill on the 16th October. I saw mention of the bill on the Homeschooling Facebook group I belong to.

I would very much like to comment on the Bill but will be unable to as I do not have sufficient time to do so.

**Reasons for seeking an extension**

I have not received any prior notice of the release of the bill nor of its content and this means that I have not been able to consider it implications for my family. This seems very unfair as this will have a significant impact on my children.

Even though I belong to a number of home education bodies and groups they have not consulted with me on this Bill although they are trying to do so now. I understand that this is because the DBE has had no offical communication with the main home education bodies for more than two years. It seems very unfair that you have spoken to other organisations about this Bill but not home educators. Before I can offer comment I would like to communicate with the organisations I belong to and expresses my opinions and obtain their assistance as I have done when writing this request for extension. I will only be able to do this if you grant an extension of the period for comment.

I recently attended the Gauteng Home education Expo and no details of the bill were discussed; no one knew that the Bill was about to be released for public comment.

My oldest son is currently writing AS-level Cambridge Exams until the 17th November and I will not be able to comment until he has finished his exams

In addition to the reasons mentioned above this bill is very difficult to understand. It appears that I have to read the existing South African Schools Act and then refer to this amendment Bill. Is it not possible to issue a plain language version of the Bill? I would very much like to understand and comment intelligently on the Bill. I would also like the option to refer this matter to legal counsel if I feel my rights are being violated. But this cannot be done before the 10th November.

**Duration of extension**

I would therefore like to request an extension for 30 days from the 17th of November 2017 (the date of my son’s last exam). As that would take us into the December holidays, during which we will be going away, I would like to ask that we have 30 uninterrupted days to make comments.

As this period would start on the 15th January I therefore respectfully request an extension until the 15th February 2018.

Could you please inform me your decision regarding the requested extension within 7 (seven) working days of the receipt of this letter by you?

Ms. Jane Doe

e-mail.

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Postal address