



Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference
PARLIAMENTARY LIAISON OFFICE



Submission

to the

Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs

on the

Resolution in terms of S24(1)(a) of the Political Party Funding Act 6 of 2018

1. Introduction

The Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office (CPLO) is an office of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, tasked with liaising between the Church and Parliament/Government, commenting on issues of public policy, and making submissions on legislation. The CPLO welcomes the opportunity to comment on this matter, which has important implications for our multi-party democratic system.

2. Party Funding Thresholds

In our 2017 submission on what was then the Political Party Funding Bill we were among the organisations that called for a low threshold for reporting of donations (R10 000). Even though Parliament eventually adopted a threshold of R100 000, we still believe that the lower figure is more appropriate. In our view there is certainly no reason to increase the current threshold of R100 000. This amount may not seem like a lot to a political party, but to the average South African voter it is much more than they will earn in a year¹ – and they have a right to know who is giving such large sums to which parties.

We accordingly submit that the Committee should recommend to the National Assembly that it should resolve, for purposes of S9(1)(a), that the threshold should be R100 000 per annum.

Regarding the cap on donations from a single source, we again believe that there is no reason to increase the existing cap of R15 million. As with the reporting threshold, this is a large sum, and it is certainly the kind of money that could be highly influential in a party's choice of policies and standpoints.

We accordingly urge the Committee to recommend to the National Assembly that it should resolve, for purposes of S8(2), that the limit on donations from a single person or entity should remain at R15 million.

¹ <https://businesstech.co.za/news/wealth/771399/salaries-in-south-africa-half-of-all-workers-earn-less-than-you-think/>

3. Conclusion

We wish the Committee well in its deliberations.

MPothier

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