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Media Statement:

## **COPE Urges Members to Submit Written Contributions to the Immigration Amendment Bill**

Immediate Release:

The Congress of the People (COPE) calls on all South Africans and stakeholders to actively engage in the public participation process surrounding the Immigration Amendment Bill.

The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs has invited written submissions from interested parties following the Bill's presentation to Parliament on 5 April 2024.

The Bill aims to amend the Immigration Act of 2002 to revise provisions related to the arrest and detention of illegal foreigners for deportation, ensuring compliance with constitutional principles.

The committee has emphasised the importance of public participation in shaping South Africa's democratic framework. COPE urges its members and the broader public to contribute to the debate by making written submissions. These contributions will play a key role in guiding Parliament's final decisions regarding the Bill.

The Immigration Amendment Bill seeks to improve the process of arresting and detaining illegal foreigners, ensuring that these actions align with constitutional principles, particularly the rights of individuals who are subject to deportation. The Bill also emphasises the importance of public participation, with the committee urging all South Africans to engage in shaping laws that influence the country's immigration policy and uphold the rule of law.

The Bill also aims to tackle the challenges posed by illegal immigration, especially in cases where individuals bypass official entry points and become untraceable once inside the country.

COPE believes that South Africa's immigration policy must reflect the nation's commitment to the rule of law.

"Lawlessness should never be tolerated, and it is unacceptable for South Africa to be treated as an exception. Issues like drug trafficking, counterfeit goods, and building hijackings should be met with firm action, not leniency," says COPE Acting National General Secretary Erick Mohlapamaswi.

COPE also raises concerns over the rising number of individuals entering the country illegally, often bypassing immigration control systems entirely. Once these individuals cross the border, there is little to no tracking of their movements, making it impossible for authorities to know their whereabouts, much less enforce deportation measures.

As a party committed to strengthening South Africa's legal and immigration frameworks, COPE stresses the urgency of reforming immigration laws to protect the country's citizens and sovereignty.

Comments on the Immigration Amendment Bill can be forwarded to [ImmigrationBill@parliament.gov.za](mailto:ImmigrationBill@parliament.gov.za).

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