

**JUSTICE ALLIANCE OF SOUTH AFRICA
“JASA”
MEDIA RELEASE**

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NO NATIONAL HEARINGS ON CHILDREN’S BILL

PUBLIC SERIOUSLY MISLED

**JASA CALLS ON PARLIAMENT AND GOVERNMENT TO
DEAL WITH CHILDREN’S DISCIPLINE IN SEPARATE BILL**

Yesterday, the Portfolio Committee on Social Development decided that there would be no “national hearings in Cape Town” on the Children’s Amendment Bill despite the widespread objection to the clause banning smacking of children.

Although members expressed their concerns about whether this course was constitutional, the legal adviser persuaded the Committee to push the Bill through without further hearings “in view of time constraints and financial constraints.” It was said that the Committee was so underfunded that there was doubt as to whether the snacks provided at the Committee would be paid for.

JASA is appalled that a Bill containing the very controversial clause about child discipline should be treated in this way. JASA, other stakeholders and many very concerned parents have been seriously misled into thinking proper public hearings would be held in Cape Town as well as in each Province. The public have also been confused in that this extremely controversial provision is submerged and concealed amongst hundreds of other clauses.

Some Provinces have had public hearings, not others. The separate roles of the NCOP and National Assembly seem to have become confused.

JASA believes the parameters laid down in the DFL vs Parliament case are not being met.

Accordingly JASA has today written to the Speaker of Parliament and Chairperson of the NCOP calling upon them to take the controversial clause out of the Bill and deal with it in a separate Bill. We believe this is the only way to prevent the Bill as a whole coming under the threat of action in the Constitutional Court. Copies of our letter to Parliament are available by email from the above address.

Jasa is a coalition of churches and individuals committed to the highest moral values in South African society.

Wherever possible JASA is determined to assist Parliament by suggesting carefully drafted alternative or additional clauses rather than merely criticising the Bills. For copies of submissions email above address.

Executive Board of JASA

**Pastor Tim Makamu (chairman) Pastor Stephen van Rhyn (Vice-Chairman)
Pastor Tendai Musikavanu Roger Gifford Pastor Nigel Desmond John Smyth**