MEDIA RELEASE	**PSA condemns Limpopo Government's failure to spend R50-million housing budget**
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) learnt with shock that Limpopo Province lost an amount of R50 million on its housing budget to other provinces owing to failure to spend these funds in the previous financial year.

This situation is extremely concerning in view of the extensive housing shortage in the province. It defies logic how the province could not have foreseen this situation and planned better. Several meetings with the Department of Human Settlements wherein the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs was warned of the possible failure to spend the allocated budget, did not assist. The desire of government to reduce the housing deficit cannot be realised if the province continues failing to spend allocated budget, resulting in other provinces benefiting from the incompetence of those entrusted with provision of housing in Limpopo.

The failure forced the Minister of Human Settlements to invoke section 18 and 19 of the *Division of Revenue Act*, which allowed her to stop allocations and reallocate the funds to other provinces that were able to demonstrate need and capacity to execute the mandate. Limpopo is a mostly rural province with some residents living in substandard houses such as shacks, mud houses. Despite this the province failed to spend the allocated R50 million for housing, which would have ensured access to safe and dignified housing to many residents. COVID-19 cannot be used as an excuse for this failure as other provinces managed to spend the allocated budget and even added funds from provinces such as Limpopo that could not execute their plans.

The PSA view this failure in serious light and believes that with proper planning, the province could have done better. The PSA calls upon the Premier to ensure that improved plans are implemented. The oversight role is critical for the province to achieve performance targets and to better serve the people of Limpopo. The constant monitoring of the projects across the province would have assisted in ensuring that the allocated budget was spent, and more than 200 families would have been provided with safe housing. The Premier must hold accountable those who caused the province to forfeit the allocated housing budget and thus denied services to needy communities.

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