

NHI most important bill introduced to Parliament in 2019 – 28

December 2019

THE National Health Insurance (NHI) and Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment bill stand out as the most important pieces of legislation that were introduced in Parliament this year.

The NHI aims to provide more equitable access to quality health care, and the health portfolio committee has engaged in public participation process, which included requests for written submissions and holding public hearings.

Public hearings have been held in Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. Other provinces such as Gauteng, Western Cape, Free State and North West will host public hearings in the new year.

The ad hoc committee, tasked to initiate and introduce legislation amending Section 25 of the Constitution, has also published a draft bill.

The committee has issued a notice requesting members of the public to make written submissions until January 31, 2020.

The draft bill seeks to amend the Constitution to provide for expropriation of land without compensation.

The introduction of the NHI and Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment Bill take place against the backdrop of 13 bills that were passed and sent for assent to President Cyril Ramaphosa before the end of the term in December.

These included Public Investment, Division of Revenue Act, Adjustment Appropriation, Taxation Laws, Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA), Ipid, Child Justice and Copyright, among others.

Parliament has also revived 31 bills from the stage at which they lapsed when the previous term ended in May.

There were 39 unfinished bills inherited from the term of Parliament that ended in May.