FREE STATE LEGISLATURE

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND OFFICE OF THE PREMIER REGARDING THE COMMUNITY POLICING BILL, 2024

26 November 2026

REPORT PROFILE

Title of the Report:	Report of the Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and the Office of the Premier to the Free State Legislature regarding the Free State Community Policing Bill, 2024 (Private Member's Bill).
Status of the Report:	For submission to the Office of the Speaker and tabling in the Free State Legislature.
Responsible Committee:	Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and the Office of the Premier

Chairperson and Members of the Portfolio Committee:

CLOETE, AB

CHAIRPERSON

FOKO, MJ

PRETORIUS, W

GAREKOE, NJ

KHOABANE, M

MEEKO, TP

MKHABELA, SL

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SIGWEBELA, Z

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Report for tabling in the House on: 26 November 2026

3. PRESENTATION/ ANALYSIS BY THE RESEARCH UNIT

The Research Unit presented a research analysis on the proposed Bill, which included:

- The constitutional and legislative background to community policing.
- The rationale for strengthening community policing within the province.
- A comparative analysis between the proposed Free State Community Policing Bill and the Western Cape Community Safety Act, 2013.
- An assessment of the proposed establishment of a Provincial Police Ombudsman.
- An overview of the impact of the Western Cape legislative framework on community safety and police oversight.
- Policy recommendations to strengthen the proposed Bill.

The researcher noted that the proposed Bill seeks to strengthen provincial oversight of policing, improve community participation through Community Police Forums and accredited neighbourhood watches, enhance accountability mechanisms, improve information sharing, institutionalise community safety planning, and strengthen partnerships between government and communities. The Research Unit further recommended that consideration be given to strengthening oversight mechanisms, establishing funding and accreditation frameworks for community safety structures, integrating community safety planning into municipal planning processes, promoting evidence-based policing, strengthening public accountability and enhancing intergovernmental cooperation.

4. PRESENTATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Department of Community Safety briefed the Committee on its assessment of the proposed Bill and its compatibility with the existing constitutional and legislative framework.

The Department submitted that:

- The Constitution, the South African Police Service Act and the Civilian Secretariat for Police Service Act already provide a legislative framework for provincial oversight of policing.
- The proposed SAPS Amendment Bill and amendments to the Civilian Secretariat for Police Service Act may have a direct impact on several provisions contained in the proposed Bill.

- Several provisions contained in the proposed Bill are like those contained in the Western Cape Community Safety Act.
- The proposed establishment of a Provincial Police Ombudsman may duplicate functions currently performed by existing oversight structures within the Provincial Civilian Secretariat.
- The existing oversight institutions should first be strengthened before additional structures are established.

The Department recommended that consideration of the proposed Bill be deferred pending the finalisation of the relevant national legislative amendment processes.

4. OBSERVATIONS BY THE COMMITTEE

Having considered both presentations, the Committee observed that:

1. The proposed Bill seeks to strengthen community participation, police accountability and provincial oversight of policing.
2. The comparative analysis with the Western Cape Community Safety Act provides valuable lessons that may inform future legislative development within the Free State Province.
3. National legislative review processes currently underway may have implications for the implementation and constitutionality of certain provisions contained in the proposed Bill.
4. The establishment of additional oversight mechanisms requires careful consideration of constitutional mandates, institutional arrangements and financial implications.
5. The Committee acknowledged the importance of ensuring that any provincial legislative framework complements, rather than duplicates, existing national legislation and oversight structures.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends that:

1. The Legislature must continue to process the Free State Community Policing Bill in accordance with the applicable legislative processes.
2. The Department of Community Safety must continue engaging with the Committee during the legislative process and provide updates on developments relating to the SAPS Amendment Bill and the review of the Civilian Secretariat for Police Service Act.
3. The Committee must utilise the findings of the Research Unit, together with the Department's report, to inform subsequent deliberations on the Bill.
4. That the House adopt the report.