



Skweyiya maintains stance on basic income grant

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Zola Skweyiya, the social development minister, has maintained his position that he is in favour of the introduction of the basic income grant.

Briefing the media in Tshwane today, Skweyiya also revealed that close to half a million members of the public were being investigated for allegedly defrauding the social grant system. Skweyiya was representing the Social Cluster, where he also touched on health, education and housing issues. He said the basic income grant issue was being informally discussed within the ANC circles.

Trevor Manuel, the finance minister, has already expressed his opinion on the matter saying the country could go bankrupt if such a grant was introduced. Meanwhile, in North West about two weeks ago, President Thabo Mbeki told the SABC that the ANC might review some of its policies during the party's policy conference in June next year in order to address service delivery and poverty.

Earlier today the minister revealed that more than 400 000 people could be prosecuted for receiving social grants fraudulently. Earlier this year, 45 000 public servants were found guilty of defrauding the social grant system. At the same briefing, Yogan Pillay, the chief director for strategic planning in the health department, revealed that a task team comprising representatives from the National Treasury and the departments of health and social development, is drawing up a proposal around social grants for people with chronic diseases. This includes those suffering from HIV/Aids. The proposal will soon be presented to Cabinet.

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