



**PRESS RELEASE
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AL Jama-ah raises concern over end of contract of Walking Bus members

The Al Jama-ah party calls on the City of Cape Town Municipality's DA-led council to reconsider extending the contract of its child safety project, the Walking Bus which provides an income to nearly 3000 members.

The Walking Bus members play a pivotal role in keeping children safe while they walk to and from schools. The City says the child safety project will be incorporated into its newest law enforcement unit. "But we know that this unit will not provide the safety network to learners as that of the Walking Bus members. Our children need safety when they walk to school and back," says Al Jama-ah councillor, Shameemah Salie.

We call on the City to provide the necessary training to current Walking Bus members. It is shocking that more than 200 children have been killed during violent incidents since January 2020 – March 31, 2021, and the number has risen since then. Disgraced former MEC Albert Fritz has failed in its plans to eradicate violence and crime in the province. The Province's Law Enforcement Advancement Plan (Leap) a violence prevention initiative, is another failure!

The Walking Bus members have provided a much-needed service by protecting children. Children walking to schools are exposed to bullying, crime and crossing dangerous roads. These Walking Bus members are familiar with the children, their families, and communities. The children feel safe being accompanied by these members.

"The Walking Bus working relationships with school management has assisted schools with discipline especially truancy which leads to the alarmingly high dropout levels. The Walking Bus initiative plays a meaningful role in stemming the tide of school dropouts," says Salie.

The city is depriving not only the children from protection, but also good-standing members of the communities from an income.

For further information contact national spokesperson:

Adv. Shameemah Salie
Cell: 084 423 0476



