



Parliament of Zimbabwe

Petition Procedure

Chapter 6 section 149(1) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides that—

“Every citizen and permanent resident of Zimbabwe has a right to petition Parliament to consider any matter within its authority, including the enactment, amendment or repeal of legislation.”.

Standing Order 195 as read with Appendix E of the National Assembly Standing Orders and Standing Order 187 as read with Appendix E of the Senate Standing Orders sets out the manner and presentation of petitions emanating from section 149(2) of the Constitution. Below are the details related to the processing of petitions—



The Form and Manner of a Petition

Petitions may be presented to Parliament by citizens, permanent residents or juristic persons. In the case of juristic persons, it must clearly state the names of the citizens or permanent residents being represented and the organisations source of funding. The signatures of the petitioner must be clear and where there are a number of petitioners all of their signatures. The language of a petition must be respectful, proper and emotionally calm and controlled language.



Admissibility of a petition

Petitions to Parliament may only be made on matters within Parliament's Constitutional mandate enshrined in Section 117 and 119 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe. Parliament cannot entertain matters that are before the courts awaiting judgement. Petitions relating to Money Bills are not admissible unless recommended by a Vice- President, Minister or Deputy Minister.



Way of presentation and when

Petitions must be lodged when the office of the Clerk is open and Parliament is not dissolved. They may be typed or hand written and may be emailed to the Clerk. If a petition is received during a period that Parliament has adjourned, the Clerk must notify the Petitioner(s) of the next possible sitting day.



Petition processing

In terms of the Standing Orders of Parliament the Clerk must examine petitions to establish that they are compliant with the Constitution as read with the Standing Orders within two days. Once examined a petition must be submitted to the Speaker or the President of the Senate with recommendations, to the effect that it be referred to the relevant Portfolio Committee for consideration or not. The Speaker or the President of the Senate shall inform the National Assembly or the Senate or the relevant committee whichever the case may be of the decision reached. The Clerk will in turn inform the petitioner(s) of this development. The relevant Committee will consider and decide on the best way to handle the petition without derogation from the Standing Orders. The Committee must consider the petition within 60 days and report its recommendation to the House that referred the petition to it. The House may adopt or reject the recommendations. The Clerk will then inform the petitioner(s) of the outcome.

