

9 November 2015

Attention: AG Wicomb

Committee Secretary

Standing Committee on Finance
P O Box 15
CAPE TOWN
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BY EMAIL: awicomb@parliament.gov.za and pmbele@parliament.gov.za

Dear Allan

RE: RETIREMENT REFORM INDUSTRY

Request

We refer to the Standing Committee on Finance calls for further public submissions on the proposed amendments related to the timing of annuitisation of provident funds. We thank you for the opportunity to be part of the consultation process and to provide our opinion with regard to the preferred option.

We wish to advise that regrettably we will not be able to make oral presentations to the Standing Committee on Finance on the matter.

In the media statement published by National Treasury on 27 October 2015 two options were listed:

Option 1, which entails proceeding with TLAA 2013 tax and retirement reform provisions on 1 March 2016 as legislated, with the only adjustment being to increase the *de minimis* to R250 000.

Option 2 proposes a phased-in approach for annuitisation, together with limits to the tax deduction for member contributions from year 2 onwards if there is no annuitisation, and other adjustments.

SAIT understands that these clauses were drafted in a way to give effect to the specific option that will be recommended by Government after the consultations. We also understand that the further consultation on the 2015 TLAA was limited to whether, and for how long, the annuitisation of provident funds should be delayed.

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It is the view of SAIT that option 1 is the preferred one.

SAIT agrees with the stated intention of Government that ideally, the tax deduction of retirement fund contributions must be related to annuitisation, to reduce vulnerability in retirement by ensuring a secure monthly income for members in retirement. We see no need for the implementation of this to be postponed by another year.

Some additional comments:

The revised version of the section 11(k) deduction limits the deduction in a particular year to the lesser of R350 000 or 27,5% of the higher of remuneration or taxable income limited to R350 000. It is unclear why a cap has been introduced on the taxable income on which the 27,5% is calculated. This discriminates against self-employed individuals and those with income other than remuneration. The original version of the limitation should be used.

The cap of R350000 was set in 2012/2013 and, as the amendment will only come into effect on 1/3/2016 which is more than 3 years later, the amount should be adjusted for inflation.

Having an additional deduction for provident fund contributions seems to over complicate matters. The new section 11(k) now provides in proviso (i) that "the total deduction to be allowed in terms of this paragraph after taking into account the deduction under paragraph (kA) must not exceed..." It is unclear what is meant by this and it may lead to some problems in interpreting the law and determining the deduction where a person contributes to both a provident and another retirement fund. This wording should be looked at.

Yours sincerely,

Piet Nel

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