

Residents support right to know

RESIDENTS from Umbilo, Glenwood, Wentworth, Seaview, and Morningside united last Thursday to hear a talk on the Secrecy Bill.

Alison Tilley, executive Director of the Open Democracy Advice Centre (ODAC) briefed the community on the proposed Protection of Information Bill and its potential dangers to SA's democracy.

Presented under the banner of the Right2Know Campaign, Alison rendered the complex facts in an easily digestible format and during the discussion session afterwards, answered some of the community's questions.

Some of the main concerns were The Bill being applicable to too broad a sphere and therefore open to individual interpretation and abuse; the fact corruption could be entrenched within government and related bodies and that there would be no defence for whistle-blowers.

Other issues included the effect of the Bill on investigative journalists and researchers and that the Bill could possibly mean self-censorship and resultant suppression of a newly vibrant nation, and would result in a massive increase in litigation through already overburdened courts.

Also present at the meeting were community leaders Steve Thusi, chairman of Dalton Hostel and Thulani Mkhize from Dalton Hostel, Shepherd Zvavanhu from Civil Society's Anti-Xenophobia Community Building Project and Zimbabwe's



Shepherd Zvavanhu, Steve Thusi, Alison Tilley, Sue Burrows and Thulani Mkhize at the meeting.

MDC KZN representative, Alan Murphy from the EcoPeace Party, DA ward councillor, Sue Burrows and her husband Roger Burrows, board member of the ODAC, Marianne Camerer, and members of the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance and Umbilo and Seaview CPFs. The meeting was hosted by the Umbilo Congregational Church and facilitated by the Umbilo Action

Group. Everyone is invited to join the R2K campaign. Visit www.r2k.org.za. SMS INFOFREEDOM, your name and town/city, to 32759.

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