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## Call for municipal courts to enhance revenue

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**A parliamentary advisory group is calling for the government to introduce special courts to help cash-strapped municipalities collect debt.**

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Krish Kumar, a commissioner for the Financial and Fiscal Commission said at a briefing in Parliament that a lack of dedicated courts was hampering the ability of municipalities to collect debts.

"What we are finding in South Africa is that we don't have dedicated courts dealing with collection of municipal services," he said.

"We have to go through normal processes, to magistrate courts or high courts, to collect our revenues."

"What we are calling for is for the judicial system to be reviewed to have dedicated municipal courts dealing with municipal debt. That would ensure far better collectability."

Kumar, speaking at the release of the FFC's submission on the division of revenue, said municipalities had to "improve on efficiency" so the public received better value for money.

The FFC recommended that over the short term the government continue to consolidate social assistance programmes aimed at cushioning children and the elderly, especially the child support grant and the old age pension.

It said the government should avoid universal income grants as these were "currently unaffordable" and would need to be accompanied "by a broader restructuring of the entitlement system".

"In the medium to long term the government should introduce a block grant for education, health and social development to fund clearly defined and costed outcomes in these areas as well as undertake independent cost effectiveness and quality reviews in both the public and private sectors of education, health and the social wage," the FFC submission says.

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/business/article466615.ece/Call-for-municipal-courts-to-enhance-revenue>

