




Speech By
Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Record of Proceedings, 2 June 2015

MOTION

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (6.10 pm): Coomera, where heaven meets earth on the Gold Coast. It is the fastest growing electorate in the state.

I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Callide. I note a comment just made by the Leader of the House about the report-back dates and so on. In fact, the document that he has now tabled indicates that the mental health bill 2015 was proposed for introduction in September 2015. I am of the understanding that the Minister for Health wrote to the committee and said he was introducing that bill in July. I would like him to take that on notice and give consideration to the accuracy of the statement that he has made.

I am the deputy chair of the Finance and Administration Committee, which has already put three reports before the House. Right at the beginning, it was my intention to outline the appropriate role of the committee to the newer members of the committee and to rely on my record in the committee system of being fair and balanced in my role. I note that it is important for us all to remember this simple statement: the goal of the committee is to gather evidence from a wide range of witnesses from all sides of the issue, evaluate it and report to this House. That has not been my experience so far in our committee system under this government.

What have we seen? First of all, we have seen a government that tells its department what the policy is and then we find that the government department goes off, makes inquiries and looks for evidence to support that particular position. They only fully consult with those who are in agreement and they pay lip-service to others who have an interest in the matter. Our portfolio committees are following suit. To take a recent example from the Finance and Administration Committee, 13 unions and one over-arching union were consulted on a bill and the report has been presented to the House. However no councils—zero councils—were consulted. We managed to get the councils an invitation to the public hearings, giving them an opportunity to put a report to the committee, only after we walked out of the committee. We had to walk away from the committee, come back with some motions and force those motions into the system, which were initially defeated by the government members, but finally the government members grudgingly agreed to allow the councils to be involved in the process.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. One moment, member.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I seek your guidance. I trust that the honourable member is not disclosing confidential business of the committee?

Mr CRANDON: Confidential business of the committees?

Mr SPEAKER: I understand it has been reported on already. I call on the member to continue.

Mr CRANDON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I suggest that the Leader of the House read the rules. The opportunity is there for him to go back to the standing orders, which contain an introduction in relation to the role of committees. Part 7, chapter 32, under the heading 'Establishment of Committees, contains all the rules. He also has an opportunity to look at things such as this document. I did not see him in the room, but it gives some guidance to committees as to how portfolios can be developed and so on. I suggest that the member checks the rules for committees before he stands in the House and makes such comments.

We on this side of the House have done everything that we can to bring fairness to our committee system, but that has met with a great deal of aggression. We have had to fight to ensure that the committee system stands up for what it is meant to stand up for, which is to provide the people of Queensland with the opportunity to advise this House about their issues. That means all of the people; not just the unions, but all of the people in the state of Queensland.