




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

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MOTION: SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (6.27 pm): I rise to oppose the motion and the outrageous attempt by the Leader of the Opposition to suspend standing orders, including the rule against redebating the same question. Tonight, the Leader of Opposition Business has described this motion as unusual. He is quite right. It is unusual. In fact, it is more than unusual. Earlier today we saw the member for Southern Downs not even able to get right the drafting of his motion, in which he verbalised me as the author of the proposed dodgy amendments. But having allowed that correction to occur—

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I do note that, if you cannot get a fairly simple motion right, you cannot be trusted to run the state. Tonight, we are seeing a political try-on and a stunt. There is no question about that. Political parties should not be seeking to change voting systems on a mere political whim. This whole motion is predicated on setting down a path that is based on purely political motives. I thought that the LNP members were supposed to be the conservatives relishing and respecting tradition. But they have learned nothing from the Newman era. They remain the wild-eyed radicals who throw the rule book out the window whenever they see an opportunity.

So quite apart from the substantive motion, the opposition is seeking to suspend orders, including standing order 87, which states that a question or amendment shall not be proposed which has been already resolved during the same session. I will let members in on a secret. Here is some more information so that members can understand where these traditions come from. This standing order has been developed out of longstanding traditions in Westminster parliaments. The background to the rule is no more an authoritative source than Erskine May. It notes the following Westminster tradition, which was established as long ago as 2 April 1604—not 1904; 1604—

That a question being once made, and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again, but must stand as a judgment of the house.

Erskine May goes on to state that proposing a negated question for the second time for the consideration of the House would be contrary to the established practice of the parliament. So if the opposition wants to turn 400 years of parliamentary best practice on its head, we see what its agenda is.

I turn to parts 2 and 3 of the motion. They are asking the parliament to drop everything and waste our valuable time debating this issue when there are many important pieces of legislation to deal with this year. We have already heard that there is a suggestion that the parliament does not meet enough and those opposite are using the time on frivolous matters. Apart from having a rather glaring typo on his first draft, more than that, the Leader of the Opposition clearly had not thought through the implications of his motion. It was just a thought bubble, just a stunt like we see each and every day in question time.

Secondly, taken to its logical conclusion, ensuring the 'debate of the motion in (2) take precedence over all other business and be concluded by the end of this day's Sitting' means no more government business today, no dinner break and 20 minutes for each speaker of the parliament. We will be here until the wee early hours. Those opposite were today saying there are too few sitting days and not enough parliamentary scrutiny and accountability and now they are seeking to tie up the parliament into the wee early hours to deal with this matter for purely base political reasons.

Let me for a moment go back briefly to the substance. Any amendments should be sound reforms developed through robust processes. As the Leader of Opposition Business admitted and acknowledged in his contribution, in the last parliament, the 54th Parliament, the current rules were worked through the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. If they are genuine about these matters they would seek to have them discussed and debated through that process, but no, this is throwing out 400 years of parliamentary practice and is just a political stunt and a political try-on. It could have gone to a proper forum first to have a mature discussion but no, it is a try-on for the six o'clock scream. Here we are yet again. I am getting used to having to stand up in these debates and talk about the vandals opposite who throw out our Westminster traditions and have no respect for them. We understand that they draw more from Bjelke-Petersen and Newman traditions than they do from any Burkean traditions. These people opposite are absolute wreckers.