




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 19 April 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Referendum, Fixed Four-Year Terms; Local Government Elections

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.56 am): In an historic vote, almost 53 per cent of Queenslanders voted to amend our state's Constitution and fundamentally change the duration of parliamentary terms. Not only are fixed four-year terms a landmark reform for the parliament but also this is the first Queensland state referendum question to have been supported since 1910. I congratulate the Queensland public on their choice, which gives business and the community certainty around election campaign cycles. Our electoral cycles will come into line with local governments in Queensland and almost every other state in the country. This will result in fewer elections, less trips to the ballot box and less public money spent on election campaigns. I am particularly proud that in Inala just under 60 per cent of voters voted 'yes', which is one of the strongest votes by an electorate in Queensland.

The parliament can be proud of the bipartisan approach it took to this issue. I thank the Attorney-General and the member for Mansfield for the work that they did, particularly as leaders of the 'yes' committee. I also thank my party for its willingness to devote resources to the 'yes' effort. The ALP funded how-to-vote cards and a radio advertising campaign, and organised volunteers to spread the word on election day. The referendum result means that only federal elections will continue to be held every three years. The current political climate in Canberra and the uncertainty it is creating should encourage the next federal government to also consider fixed four-year terms.

Late last year, the parliament asked the Committee of the Legislative Assembly to conduct a review of the parliament's committee system and the Finance and Administration Committee's recommendation regarding entrenchment of the committee system. Today I table the government's response to that report.

Tabled paper: Committee of the Legislative Assembly: Report No. 17—Review of the parliamentary committee system, government response [\[512\]](#).

I advise the House that, as a result, this week I will be introducing a bill to amend the Constitution to provide that, at the start of every parliament, at least six committees be established. This will be a significant development for the parliament.

Almost 27 years ago, the landmark Fitzgerald inquiry report concluded—

There is need to consider introducing a comprehensive system of Parliamentary Committees to enhance the ability of Parliament to monitor the efficiency of Government.

The bill will ensure that ongoing need remains addressed and is provided for in the Constitution.

I take this opportunity to congratulate those mayors and councillors who were successful at the local government elections. As all honourable members know, serving your community in public office is a noble calling and carries with it a hefty responsibility. My government stands ready and willing to work with any council that is about creating jobs, delivering frontline services and building stronger communities. We wish them all well for the next four years.