




Speech By
Jarrod Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2016

MOTION: AMENDMENT TO STANDING RULES AND ORDERS

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (6.14 pm): The member for Nudgee talks about procedural matters and she says that we should be dealing with the big issues. To me the procedure of the institution of this House is what we are here for, and that is pretty big. The actual essence of the motion talks about bills before this House, the laws that we enact in this place for the benefit or, in the case of the other side, the detriment of Queenslanders on many occasions.

I wish to talk now to the comments of the member for Nudgee when she said, ‘Let us deal with the big issues.’ Let’s have a little historical lesson, and I only have to go back over the last 12 months. If I go onto the parliamentary website I see the bills register for the 55th Parliament. Let us go through a few of these. First there is the Fire and Emergency Services (Smoke Alarms) Amendment Bill, which is currently before the House. Of course, the Labor Party also introduced a bill after I introduced that private member’s bill. Then we have the Liquor and Fair Trading Legislation (Red Tape Reduction) Amendment Bill introduced by the member for Mansfield. That also got truncated due to the Labor Party’s liquor laws. Then we have the Mental Health (Recovery Model) Bill, which was introduced by the member for Caloundra. It was also trumped by a Labor Party bill.

Then the member for Clayfield introduced three types of planning bills: the Planning and Development (Planning Court) Bill, the Planning and Development (Planning for Prosperity) Bill and the Planning and Development (Planning for Prosperity—Consequential Amendments) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill—all trumped by the Labor Party; they copied the good work that the former deputy premier, the member for Callide, and the member for Clayfield did. Then we had the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Extension of Smoking Bans) Amendment Bill, introduced again by the member for Caloundra, but then the Labor Party introduced its own bill.

Then we had the Workers’ Compensation and Rehabilitation (Protecting Firefighters) Amendment Bill, introduced by me, the member for Kawana. Then the Labor Party introduced its bill. On eight occasions in only the first year of this 55th Parliament—in the last 12 months—we have introduced private member’s bills and then the government has introduced its own bills that have been virtually the same; it has copied our bills. This is the hardest working opposition doing the government’s work that I have ever seen because they are copying us.

Mr Speaker, as the Independent member for Nicklin, you entered into an agreement with Peter Beattie in 1998 when you gave support to his government. You indicated in that letter, which was agreed to by Peter Beattie in a return letter dated 25 June 1998, that there should be more private members’ bills and more debates on private members’ bills. Now, Mr Speaker, you would be satisfied no doubt that in this parliament each day we can introduce private members’ bills.

Little did anyone know back then when that agreement was entered into that the more that private members’ bills are introduced for healthy debate in our democracy, the more the government would introduce their own bills, as is their right, that copy ours because it is such good legislation. The private

member's bill never gets voted on because it is all now cognated. The government bill gets debated first and because of the same question ruling, the private member's bill never gets voted on.

What we are saying and what the Leader of Opposition Business has said is that in government the LNP will retain the standing order because, if a government is sitting on its hands not doing anything, Independent members, the official opposition and the crossbenchers should be able to introduce legislation. As I said, all these private member's bills go through the committee system. The member for Nudgee says that this is somehow abusing the committee system. However, the private member's bills go through the committee system. The government is fully resourced to make submissions to a committee.

Mr Cripps: More than most.

Mr BLEIJIE: Yes. They have departments at their disposal to write submissions, such as, 'Member for Kawana, we like your legislation, but we suggest X, Y, Z amendments.' That can go through the committee system. To truly achieve what the member for Nicklin was trying to achieve back in 1998, we should have more private member's bills; we should have more debate in this House on private member's bills. No-one would have envisaged back then that the government would trump all the bills and we never get to vote on the private member's bills.

This is a good amendment to the standing orders. It is about making sure that Independents, crossbenchers and opposition members can introduce bills in this place, we can debate them, they can be amended and in a bipartisan way we can go forth and be happy in this place in the knowledge that we are serving Queenslanders, as a good group of fine men and women should do and ought to do on all occasions.