




Speech By
Linus Power
MEMBER FOR LOGAN

Record of Proceedings, 17 February 2016

MOTION: AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.15 pm): I rise to speak against the motion moved by the member for Mudgeeraba. The motion takes the extraordinary step to move to change the standing orders of this House and to change the process by which committees work. I wonder if there is a better process with due deliberation which could discuss the issue and is there perhaps a current committee that is discussing these exact issues? For the benefit of the member for Mudgeeraba, I will let her know about a little-known resource that the parliament provides us that may aid her in her quest. There is an obscure website with the address parliament.qld.gov.au, and it has a clear link 'Work of Committees'. There is a committee right at the top of the page—the member does not have to scan down too far—called the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. Its work is described as—

The committee has the following areas of responsibility—

...

- (c) standing rules and orders about the conduct of business by, and the practices and the procedures of, the Assembly and its committees ...

I wonder who the members of this committee are. I myself am often a proxy member, but the rest like myself are probably obscure backbenchers whom perhaps the member does not even know. Again, the website can help us out with the link entitled 'Members'. It states Hon. Peter Wellington, Speaker of the House; Mick de Brenni, member for Springwood; Stirling Hinchliffe, Leader of the House—hold on, there are a few more—John-Paul Langbroek. Has anyone heard of him? He is apparently the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. There is also Lawrence Springborg. He has the title Leader of the Opposition.

It is possible that this committee is reluctant to involve itself in looking at the role of committees or perhaps it is too busy with other matters to look at committees. That is possible. Again, however, a click on the website shows that the CLA is currently in the midst of a review of the role of committees. That was referred to the CLA by this House on 3 December. The terms of reference state—

That, in undertaking this inquiry, the committee consider how the current parliamentary committee system could be strengthened to increase accountability by:

- examining the role of parliamentary committees in other jurisdictions with unicameral parliaments, including the functions and powers of those committees and how they are exercised, to see if the functions and powers of Queensland Parliamentary committees can be further strengthened; and
- reviewing the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 ... to ensure these functions, powers and procedures are operating as effectively as possible as an accountability mechanism.

It seems as if the terms of reference that were given to the CLA were almost exactly what the member for Mudgeeraba asks for. It is almost as if this inquiry were designed to soberly and reasonably address the problem that the member for Mudgeeraba thinks she sees with the committee system.

Perhaps she could have made a submission to the CLA on this matter. Let's see if she has. Again, it is only a click away. Let's see if anyone made submissions. It is all on the public record. Perhaps no-one did, and this is the first piece of information the CLA might consider.

Let's check: SG Brown; the Integrity Commissioner; D Wills; the Queensland Ombudsman; the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties; the Queensland Audit Office; the Queensland Greens—the Queensland Greens could make a submission but apparently the member for Mudgeeraba cannot—the Queensland Resource Council; the Local Government Association of Queensland; the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner; the Queensland Law Society; the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland; the Clerk of the Queensland parliament; Shane Knuth, the member for Dalrymple; the Queensland Council of Unions; and the Liberal National Party of Australia managed to make a submission. I have a copy here. I did a quick scan. I could not see in the submissions any of the vitally important issues which were raised. Let me see if I can see 'R Bates' on the list. No, there is no-one of that name here. No, the 'member for Mudgeeraba' is not there either, but not to bother. It seems that the only person in this House who has not had a say is the member for Mudgeeraba. The member for Mudgeeraba could have realised at any time that these issues were of great importance to her.

I represent the great city of Logan which shares one thing in common with the Gold Coast, and that is the M1 motorway which the member for Springwood is fighting so hard for. We could have taken the time today to put forward a joint motion to condemn the federal government for their inaction and failure to pay 80 per cent of the M1 project. Instead we are wasting our time on a motion when we should be debating the bill before the House. That is a shame, and I condemn the motion.