




Speech By  
**Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe**

**MEMBER FOR SANDGATE**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2016

**MOTION: AMENDMENT TO STANDING RULES AND ORDERS**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.30 pm): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the member for Mermaid Beach. In doing so, I accept that I am opposing another plank in the ‘Lawrence Springborg for Premier’ election pitch that we heard start last week. Last week we had the election-winning policy of draft parliamentary committee reports being provided to committee members two days prior to any meeting. This week those opposite have come up with a genius idea about changing standing orders to prevent bills being introduced to this House if they appear similar to another bill. It is a double jeopardy rule for a leader in jeopardy.

As I suggested to the House last week when we considered the motion moved by the member for Mudgeeraba, we have a process to consider changes to the standing orders—that is, a reference to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. That is the body of this parliament that is charged with considering, properly and appropriately, changes to standing orders.

**Mr Rickuss:** Yes, but this is the final arbiter.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Of course it is the final arbiter, but we have a good process that involves committees considering matters—to test legislation and iron out any challenges or difficulties that might exist.

I do not think anyone has thought this through. This motion is completely ridiculous. What would stop an opposition member from coming into this place and tabling a frivolous, half-baked bill and then using this standing order to block a government bill that they knew was coming?

Usually we look at practice in other places to understand why we have the standing orders we have, that provide the process to ensure good governance for the state. I am not aware of any other Westminster parliament that has a prohibition like this. In fact, Erskine May, *House of Representatives Practice* and McGee all make it clear that such sterilising of a bill should not happen until after a second reading. That is the opportunity to debate the merits of bills, particularly after, in our process, they have had the chance to be ventilated and considered via the committee process. Bills need to be available for the parliament to consider. This is a standing order that denies this House the ability to consider bills before it.

Unintended consequences would flow from this change. As I suggested earlier, an opposition or indeed a deliberately destructive or deliberately mischievous Independent—I would say a Messenger-like Independent—could go so far as to introduce an almost facsimile of the previous year’s budget bills and sabotage the ability of the government of the day to introduce an appropriation bill. That could be the consequence of a half-baked, misunderstood concept such as this, without a proper process of assessing whether it is appropriate or not.

This proposed standing order would potentially lead to chaos. That is not what we need in this state right now. What we need is firm leadership. That is what the Palaszczuk government is providing—

not with the assistance of those opposite, I might add. Those opposite are seeking to undermine the consultative opportunities that are presented by alternative, competing bills. They talk about them as alternative and competing as if that is a bad thing. I thought those opposite were all for competition! Why can we not let alternatives be considered in the forum of public opinion, in the committee process and in this House? That is what the standing orders allow for today. That is what we have seen in this 55th Parliament and in previous parliaments. I urge the House to oppose this short-sighted and ill-thought-out proposal.