




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2018

MOTION

Amendments to Sessional Orders

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.47 pm): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the Leader of the House. At the start of this sitting week, Mr Speaker, you said—

Since August 1868, this very room, the Legislative Assembly chamber, has been where Queensland's elected representatives have met to debate and vote on the issues that have shaped our great state.

You went on—

The construction of Parliament House in the 1860s was a bold and difficult project. At the time we were a very small and isolated colony with little money or infrastructure. Those who decided that a building of this stature should be attempted believed that Queensland would be judged by its public buildings. They stated—

'Wise laws might be passed in a barn; but the outer world—the world beyond the colony—would think but lightly of the civilization of a people content to see their halls of Legislature reflect no efforts of mind greater than those required in buildings for the protection of inanimate matters.'

You concluded—

It was a very conscious decision to build an impressive and permanent home for our parliamentary democracy—a house that Queenslanders would be proud of.

We have a very impressive House, but now we are at risk of entering an era where the debate on our laws does not match the stature of this building. This democracy is being undermined by constant decisions of the lazy Palaszczuk Labor government so the point will come where those outside look at this House and wonder why exactly we bother coming here for. Earlier in the week the Deputy Premier crowed about full-time jobs growth. I must point out that the only reason we have had full-time jobs growth in this state is because of the work of the federal coalition government. However, the one area where we are seeing an increasing casualisation of the workforce is in the parliamentary attendance of Queensland members of parliament. They have cut our hours. We have shorter hours. Is it family friendly? I am sorry, but it is not helping my family. I cannot drive back up the Bruce Highway and see any of my kids before they go to bed each night.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr POWELL: It is insulting. We have had our speaking opportunities cut—we have had our legislative debate gagged—all because those opposite are lazy and cannot manage this House and cannot manage their legislation.

Ms Simpson: Glass jaws!

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection from the member for Maroochydore: those opposite have glass jaws and cannot accept criticism of the decisions they are making. It is increasingly arrogant and the people of Queensland are going to look at decisions like this and realise that is exactly what it was.

I was not elected to be a part-time parliamentarian. My voice—my ability to speak in this House on behalf of the people of Glass House—should not be curtailed because of the laziness of those opposite. What is being proposed here is a sham. It is reducing the democracy in this state. It is further limiting the ability of the opposition and the crossbenches and indeed the members of the government themselves to contribute to debate on laws that matter—laws that impact all of our constituents across the entire length and breadth of this great state. I implore all members—not just those in the opposition or those on the crossbench but the members of the government as well—to vote down this motion to ensure that we can continue to have robust debate in this House as long as is required to pass the legislation that is required.