



Speech By  
**Hon. Cameron Dick**


**MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE**

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Record of Proceedings, 17 May 2018

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNCILLOR COMPLAINTS) AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL  
(IMPLEMENTING STAGE 1 OF BELCARRA) AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL**

**Allocation of Time Limit Order**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (11.36 am): In beginning my contribution to this debate, in my strong support of the Leader of the House's motion, I say in response to the member for Kawana that when it comes to someone who chronically, shamelessly and routinely wastes parliament's time with irrelevant and meandering contributions, I present exhibit A: the member for Kawana.

One of the great errors that members of parliament often make in this House—and it is a mistake that is made day in, day out by the member for Kawana—is the belief that it is their house. Members of this House think this House belongs to them; that this chamber belongs to them; and that the processes and procedures undertaken exist for their benefit. That is the kind of self-regarding self-importance—and don't we see that all the time from the member for Kawana—that is usually the product of ignorance or hubris—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my left, I listened to the member for Kawana's contribution and I did not detect the same degree of interjections that we are currently hearing, but I do appreciate the minister may be somewhat provocative towards a particular member.

**Mr DICK:** It is the kind of self-regarding self-importance that we hear from members opposite all the time, led by the member for Kawana, that is usually the product of ignorance or hubris and sometimes, as we have seen in the last two sitting weeks from members of the opposition, both. This is the people's house, and those of us who have the privilege to serve here and who have been elected by the people should never forget the responsibility that we have to serve their interests.

We accept that we operate in an adversarial system and that the contest of ideas in a robust democracy should be the subject of rigorous debate. However, when the contest of ideas dissolves into the mindless futility of filibustering for its own sake, when the business of meaningful debate is reduced to a strategy of pointless delay, when fresh contributions are confected into endless repetition, then the parliament has the responsibility to bring important questions to resolution. That is what the people of Queensland expect of us. They expect us to deal appropriately with legislation. They expect us to deliver reform. Debate is imperative but it must be relevant.

One of the greatest responsibilities we have in this House is to ensure that the contributions we make are not repetitious, are not from speaking points but are directly relevant to the point in issue before the House. All Australian parliaments, all of them, have and use the mechanism to bring a bill to a vote, including the parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. If this is such a travesty of

democracy, then I would urge members opposite to urge not just the members of the House of Representatives representing the state of Queensland but also candidates like Julian Simmonds to take this campaign to Canberra and change the standing orders of the Commonwealth parliament, which operates in exactly the fashion the Leader of the House has put before the parliament today. Why should we be any different to any other parliament? Why should the people of Queensland not have their members of this House focused on matters of issue with relevant contributions? We are here to deliver outcomes for our communities.

The last two sitting weeks of this House, that is, this week and the previous week, have exposed an opposition full of tactics—and that may be misleading but bear with me, Mr Speaker—but completely bereft of ideas and completely bereft of leadership. They are bereft of leadership and those members opposite know it. They have no vision, no alternative plans and no useful suggestions on amendments, just a relentless commitment to grinding down, manifested through a repetitious litany of whingeing and whining complaints.

Last sitting week when the vegetation management bill was considered in detail, there were more than 100 speeches made by members of the opposition—or, as I remember them, two speeches made 50 times each. They wasted the time of the parliament for no other purpose than to try to display failure in the mechanism of this House, when they have a responsibility to uphold the mechanisms of this House.

This week they have been at it again, rolling up one after another, droning on, drearily in uniform, each contributor adding progressively less to the debate until they can add nothing at all. We heard that in the 10-minute contribution of the member for Kawana because he always takes the maximum time. Regardless of relevance, he always takes the maximum time. That is what the member for Kawana does. He wastes the parliament's time, personally attacking people, whether it is relevant or irrelevant. What did we get this week? My service in Tuvalu as an Australian volunteer abroad more than 20 years ago was raised in this House. That is what I got in this debate. That was not particularly relevant, can I say, Mr Speaker, to—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left, the minister is not taking your interjections. I am finding them to be causing disruption.

**Mr DICK:** That was not relevant to the bills before the House. It was a personal attack on me, being an Australian volunteer. When you have on your own backbench men and women who have served in the Australian Defence Force or in the Police Service—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Through the chair, minister.

**Mr DICK:** If you agree to volunteer for your country, you are somewhat less, but that is what we got—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** They are still going on. I will take the interjection. They are calling out about Tuvalu. That is what we get in debates on local government reform.

In conclusion, having witnessed the absolutely appalling manner in which the Newman government trampled over the conventions of this parliament and the ruthless and unconscionable way they used their record majority to demean the processes of this parliament—led by people like the member for Everton, the member for Nanango and the member for Kawana—this government has been mindful to respect the institutions of the House and to ensure that all members get a fair go, the fair go that they routinely denied us when they were in government. The fact is this parliament has ample time under the standing and sessional orders to consider matters before the House if members use that time wisely and relevantly. The motion should be supported by all members of the House.