




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 15 February 2018

QUEENSLAND COMPETITION AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL; EDUCATION (OVERSEAS STUDENT) BILL; TOW TRUCK AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; POLICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION (IDENTITY AND BIOMETRIC CAPABILITY) AMENDMENT BILL; LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION (VALIDATION OF RATES AND CHARGES) AMENDMENT BILL; CRIME AND CORRUPTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Declared Urgent; Portfolio Committees, Reporting Date

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (6.39 pm): The LNP opposition will be opposing these reporting dates. The House has just debated new sessional orders for family-friendly hours and now we are debating whether or not bills should be declared urgent because there is limited time to debate the legislation and put the bills before committees. The House is debating whether legislation such as the Police and Other Legislation (Identity and Biometric Capability) Amendment Bill should have a report-back date of 2 March. That is two weeks away. The Leader of the House, on behalf of the ministers, has said that the bills contain things that affect the Commonwealth Games, but the Commonwealth Games did not happen overnight. We have known about it for years.

Mr Pegg interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: If the member for Stretton wants to interject, I can give him another example. The Police and Other Legislation (Identity and Biometric Capability) Amendment Bill changes the liquor trading laws in relation to ID scanners, which have been law for years. When did we know about the Commonwealth Games? It has been planned for years. For three years this government spruiked about it, but now, all of a sudden, it has realised that it has to change the liquor laws. Therefore, the committee will have only two weeks to look at the new liquor laws before this House enacts them. A year ago the Attorney-General, as the minister responsible for liquor licensing, introduced into this chamber a bill about liquor laws. She could have put this amendment in there, but she forgot.

In all of this—and I cannot remember which bill they have tacked it onto this time—the worst one would have to be the great hot cross bungle. They forgot Easter again. Two or three years ago when we debated industrial relations legislation, I warned the then minister for industrial relations that they forgot to amend a particular provision in the legislation that, in fact, made one of the Easter days—I think it was Easter Monday—a public holiday. They forgot to amend the trading hours legislation to allow businesses to open and trade on Easter Monday. They said to businesses, ‘Here is the legislation making Easter Monday a public holiday’, but they forgot to change the allowable trading hours legislation so that businesses could actually open. They had to rush in an amendment to fix that. Last year, another amendment was introduced because of something else they forgot in relation to Easter.

Now, we have *deja vu*. Easter is a few weeks away and we have another hot cross bungle. Another Easter amendment has to be moved. The minister has been caught out by the National Retail Association which has said, 'You didn't get the amendments you made to the legislation last year quite right and, in fact, they have serious consequences for small businesses in Queensland at Easter'. Therefore, for the third year in a row we have to rush through legislation. We have to declare legislation urgent so that we can deal with an absolute mess, because the government cannot get it right. They cannot get it right because they forget things and rush the legislation, which makes things worse. Each year we are required to come back and fix Easter. What has the government got against Easter? What does the government have against traders trading on Easter?

An opposition member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: They hate the Easter bunny; I take the interjection. They hate Easter. They are saying that committees will have two weeks to look at brand new legislation, such as the police bill. I suspect that biometric capability amendments are complicated and ought to be properly scrutinised by a committee, but the Attorney-General and the government say that the committee will have two weeks to do that. That is not enough time. They set up the committee process to look at legislation and to find errors. If you pass legislation without proper scrutiny, you will end up with errors.

The industrial relations amendment and the Easter bungle do not surprise me. When the Minister for Industrial Relations, the Hon. Grace Grace, was the racing minister she had to amend her own legislation. She made 300 amendments to her own legislation. She introduced a racing bill and, by the time we debated it, she had moved 300 amendments.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Gympie is surprised by that. I can tell the member for Gympie that the amendments that she moved were longer than the bill. When she was minister for racing, Grace Grace introduced a racing bill to which she moved 300 amendments that were longer than the bill itself. Last year they forgot Easter and had to amend the trading hours legislation. This year they have again forgotten Easter and we have to also tack an amendment onto the Police and Other Legislation (Identity and Biometric Capability) Amendment Bill. They forgot that people might want to have a beer or a glass of wine at the Commonwealth Games and now we have to amend the Liquor Act to cater for that. It is a disgrace. It is incompetence. The Commonwealth Games have been planned for years. Because they do not know what they are doing, we are continually fixing issues in the parliament.

The committees will go through the process. I am not confirming or denying what we will do on the particular provisions of the legislation. I am saying that for new bills to be two weeks before a committee is not enough time. The normal provisions of the standing orders should apply and the committees should have at least five to six weeks to look at these matters, not two weeks, particularly with new pieces of legislation. That is why we will be opposing the time lines set out by the Leader of the House.