



Speech By  
**Ray Stevens**


**MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH**

---

Record of Proceedings, 15 February 2018

**MOTION**

**Sessional Orders**

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (5.31 pm): Mr Speaker, as you would know, this so-called family-friendly change to the sessional orders started back with the CLA in the previous parliament, the 55th Parliament, when the then member for Mermaid Beach raised it at the CLA and the CLA members all agreed. I think the member for Sandgate and the member for Logan were two of the members who agreed with this matter going forward. We sent the Clerk away to come forward with a report on what the hours would be, and the Clerk came back with the same ridiculous sessional order times that we have today, which is seven for a 7.30 finish, mainly because it suited the Parliamentary Service budget which he controls to keep it down so he could have more money to spend on other areas of the Parliamentary Service.

The CLA rejected that particular report. The CLA agreed eventually after a good debate that 9.30 was the appropriate time to pull up stumps in this parliament for three days and it enshrined the Wednesday morning for the portfolio committees, which are our upper house in terms of protecting the legislation. That was the important part—that we enshrine Wednesday morning for the portfolio committees. Unfortunately, this new procedural regime we are voting on here today will force the portfolio committees to sit again on Mondays—pretty early Monday mornings—which means our regional members will all have to fly in on Sunday. There is no-one who can come in on a Monday morning and make it on time for portfolio committees, which are a very important part of this Parliamentary Service.

In relation to the Parliamentary Service officers, there will be complaints when they get a lower wage cheque for the lack of overtime that they will not get paid for. There will be some complaints going forward to the Clerk's office about the new shorter hours. Nine to five might suit some around the place, but there will be a decrease in some officers' wages.

As I have said, portfolio committees are integral to the success of this parliament and we are jeopardising them, I am sure, by making them take place on a Monday morning to fit in with this ridiculous new regime which this Labor government is putting in purely for political purposes. The political purposes are that there are 38 seats in Brisbane. Forget about the regional members. There are 38 seats in Brisbane drive time of which the Labor Party has 33. Unfortunately, at seven to 7.30 we will see a drove of Labor Party cars going out—

**Mr Costigan:** The red motorcade.

**Mr STEVENS:** I take that interjection from the member for Whitsundays. They will be off to all their P&C meetings, school meetings and local meetings. That is the driving force behind this, 'Let's leave Parliament House in Brisbane at 7.30.' There is no respect for regional members whatsoever in terms of the impost of another day out of their family time to fly down on Sundays. I am not even sure

whether there will be regional flights on a Sunday afternoon, but that is what they will have to put up with to suit the Labor Party trying to fit in its politicking on weeknights when they have school functions in the Brisbane area.

It is an absolute shame that they are ignoring the portfolio committees. It should have been resolved by the CLA, as it was resolved by the CLA previously until they changed the personnel unfortunately—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mermaid Beach, please resume your seat. I have a question to ask you. Can you assure me that you are not breaching standing order 211 regarding the confidentiality of portfolio committees or committees of the Legislative Assembly? Has the Committee of the Legislative Assembly produced a report to the parliament?

**Mr STEVENS:** I am not aware of a specific report, but I am not breaching any confidentiality of the CLA other than the matters that were put in the minutes and put forward to all members.

**Mr SPEAKER:** That is fine. I will take your assurance. You have provided me with an assurance.

**Mr STEVENS:** Mr Speaker, I cannot give you an assurance that the report did not cover all of the matters that I have raised but it was put in place—

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will allow you to continue your contribution, but your assurance has been given that this is not breaching standing order 211.

**Mr STEVENS:** All these matters were resolved by the committee at the time.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Please continue your contribution.

**Mr STEVENS:** In terms of confidentiality, I believe that they were put in place out there, resolved and finalised. Unfortunately, there was a change in personnel, Mr Speaker, and those matters changed thereafter, and I do not know what happened after that particular time.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members, please let the member for Mermaid Beach be heard.

**Mr STEVENS:** In terms of the sessional orders now becoming family friendly, that is not the case whatsoever. It is an arrogant and hubris effort in terms of further politicking by the Labor Party and ignoring regional members' interests by requiring them to fly here on a Sunday and taking a day out of their family life.