



Speech By  
**Ray Stevens**


**MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH**

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Record of Proceedings, 3 May 2018

**MOTION**

**Amendments to Sessional Orders**

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (3.22 pm): I rise to speak to the motion before the House in relation to the change to the sessional orders for the budget week. We have just received notice of these matters. It is a culmination of what I warned this House about when the new sessional orders were coming into the parliament. As the architect, I am proud to say, of family friendly hours in this House in the 55th Parliament, I am pleased that the foreboding that I expressed in parliament in my speech on the original sessional orders has come to fruition through this motion we have before the House today.

As the Manager of Opposition Business mentioned, the reality is that we have a backlog of speeches in this House to clear, we have a backlog of bills before the House to clear and we have a lot of work to get through in budget week because of the changes to the previous sessional orders that bring the House to a close at 7.30 pm. Whilst it does not relate to this motion, in terms of the portfolio committees meeting on a Monday morning, it does transgress the intent of family friendly hours by the very fact that members have to move in from a Sunday—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Mermaid Beach, can I bring you back to relevance and back to what the motion is.

**Mr STEVENS:** I am giving the background to why we have this motion before the House. The reality is that this is a direct result of the family friendly changes to the sessional orders that were put forward in this House that pulled the House up at 7.30 every night. At this stage we have still to get through one bill in this week. I have been in this place for 11 years and there is not one week that I can remember where we have done one bill for the week. Over those years we have had some pretty contentious bills, as members would know, where debate has gone into the early hours of the next day. That is the very reason why I see this motion that the Leader of the House has put forward here today for parliamentary consideration as being inappropriate for the House and unfortunately leading to changes again to the sessional orders. If we had not had those changes to sessional orders, if we had worked through what I suggested—without going into matters of the CLA at the time—in terms of a 9.30 pm pull-up, which was a suggestion that I have made consistently in public—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I understand that this could be committee work that you are now discussing. I encourage you to tread cautiously with the rest of your comments.

**Mr STEVENS:** Thank you for that advice. I do take on board directions in these matters. I have said personally for a long time in the media, recommending family friendly hours for the parliament to sit, that on a personal basis I thought 9.30 pm was the appropriate time for the House to operate to. That personally suited me. Whatever considerations there may have been by other committee members is a matter, of course, we have to keep confidential.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think you are continuing to be tedious. Please move on.

**Mr STEVENS:** That is what my wife says. It has not worked with her either. This is a culmination of what I predicted would happen. We are having to change sessional orders for budget week. This motion landed on our laps after lunch on a Thursday in a very tedious week, as you mentioned, Mr Deputy Speaker. This would have been a very appropriate time for me to move an amendment that we incorporate family friendly hours that move to a 9.30 pm finish as opposed to our normal sessional orders rather than just debate this specific motion about the budget week. That amendment would be cause for further debate and deliberation. There are many people from regional areas who are here at night after 7.30 pm raring to go for parliament the next day.

**Mr Lister:** All those electorates, name them!

**Mr STEVENS:** There are many regional areas that have excellent representation from our side of the House. The reality is that sitting until 9.30 pm, as I suggested, would have meant getting through bills so that we did not have to extend budget week to take in speeches on the address-in-reply et cetera. Those matters could have been dealt with through the normal processes and it would have eased the burden on the week that we now have to change the sessional orders for.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Order! One moment, member for Mermaid Beach. I am continuing to hear tedious repetition in your speech. Under standing order 236, I need to advise you that if you do not add anything new to your speech you will be asked to resume your seat.

**Mr STEVENS:** I am just about out of new things to tell you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I have not got to the repetition. The reality is that, unfortunately, the motion before the House puts into reality what I predicted previously. Even though we will agree to the motion, the motion is unfortunate for the effective operation of the House.