




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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MOTION

Business Program

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.27 am): We start the year where we finished 2018—with a lazy government. Two bills! The ministers and government members are so busy that we might get through two bills this week, but I would say that that is a record, because there were sitting weeks last year where we only got through one bill. Those opposite are doubling the work capacity and doubling the debates in the parliament by one to two, so congratulations on that!

The Attorney-General and Leader of the House wants to talk about achievements of the last year and says that there have been 58 per cent non-government members speaking and 40 per cent government members speaking. If she did the statistics for the last 20 or 30 years, she would find that there were probably 80 per cent more speeches than there were last year because our members are being gagged. They are being gagged and they are being cut off. Not only are they being gagged; they are being cut off midsentence. Who could ever forget the tourism minister jumping up and cutting off the member for Coomera midspeech just because she did not like what she was hearing? That is the new operative of the government: 'We don't like what we're hearing so we'll shut you down, and if we don't shut you down midspeech we'll ensure that there's not sufficient time.'

I turned up to the Business Committee meeting yesterday and it is like *déjà vu* in a revolving door. Although I did not have the courtesy of a message to let me know what was going to be decided yesterday at that meeting, I assumed that the government would come in and tell us and the crossbench what the government intended to do and seek our advice in a bipartisan way and then, having received that advice—which I have never given, other than to say that we want more time on everything—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I did say hello. I was very cordial.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Direct your comments through the chair, please.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Leader of the House stands here and says, 'We want to work in a cooperative manner with everyone in the chamber,' but the sad reality is that, when past governments of all political persuasions guillotined a debate, there was huge media scrutiny about that gagged debate. This government does not want to have that scrutiny. It is silencing members.

In the terms of past governments, whether it was two o'clock in the morning or four o'clock in the morning—whenever it was—there was always scrutiny from outside this chamber about governments gagging debates. Yet this government gets away with it by guillotining debates at the start of every week and shutting down members by saying, 'There is going to be only 5½ hours for debates on bills.' Yesterday in the bills committee meeting the time limit was six hours. Now it is 5½ hours. The members opposite cannot get the time limit right from the bills committee meeting to the moving of this motion. That is how fluid this process is. It changes all the time. The reality is that the government is ramming though its agenda—albeit not a very big agenda—because only two bills are going to be debated.

There are important issues that all members from throughout Queensland need to deal with in parliament. It is not acceptable for the Leader of the House to say, 'Fifty-eight per cent of non-government members spoke in the debates.' A lot of members did not get to speak in the debates. The member for Currumbin has raised with me the fact that her name has continually been cut from the speaking list. The list of speakers to a bill would be prepared, the names of all the members on this side of the House would be on that list and half, or less than half, of those members would get to speak to a bill. That is what happens when the government guillotines debate.

Mr Ryan interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Minister for Police is interjecting over there. He does not understand that guillotining a debate at the end of the debate or at the start of the debate is the same thing. There is no accountability, no transparency. The minister was elected in 2009 and then, in 2012, had a short holiday. The last time he was in government, his party guillotined debates in the early hours of the morning, but we have this new team of Labor members who are so lazy that they cannot work past 7.30 at night. These Labor ministers cannot stay up. They cannot debate bills. They do not want the scrutiny.

From the Premier's performance this morning, it is clear that, other than natural disasters, she does not get briefed on anything. The Premier did not know about Crime Stoppers. She did not know about her own employee sending text messages about Robert John Fardon. She is clueless. We need to debate such issues, but we do not have the opportunity to debate them because this government is arrogant and gags the members of this chamber.

(Time expired)