



Speech By  
**Jarrold Bleijie**


**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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Record of Proceedings, 14 May 2019

**MOTION**

**Business Program**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.19 am): I move the following amendment—

That all words following “nominated maximum periods of time as specified:” in paragraph 1 of the motion be omitted; and the following words be inserted:

- (a) the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of six hours to complete all stages;
  - (b) the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of eight hours to complete all stages; and
  - (c) the motion standing in the name of the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts proposing the revocation of state forests and dedication of protected areas under the Nature Conservation Act 1992, a maximum of 30 minutes for debate.
2. The following time limits for the bills listed in paragraph 1(a) and (b) apply:
- (a) for the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, the minister to be called in reply one hour before the expiry of the maximum time;
  - (b) for the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, the minister to be called in reply two hours before the expiry of the maximum time;
  - (c) question on third reading to be put two minutes before the expiry of the maximum time; and
  - (d) question on long title to be put one minute before the expiry of the maximum time.”

That was a nice try by the Leader of the House to convince this House that we have now come to the conclusion that this is a great process and that democracy is best served by yielding to Labor’s way. That was a nice try, but that is not what happened. Let me correct the record in terms of why I am moving such an amendment to extend the time.

The reason I am extending the time is that I suggested at the meeting on Monday that we ought to sit on Friday. Because of the amount of controversy and crisis surrounding this Labor state government at the moment, there is not sufficient time on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday to deal with it all. That is why I suggested we ought to stay here Thursday night and come back on Friday in order to have proper debate and to have another question time where we can question the government about the youth justice crisis, the drugs in prison, overcrowding, the watch houses, the crisis in the hospitals—all of those issues. When you mention Labor now, it is synonymous with crisis and chaos. Labor and crisis go together. Labor and chaos go together.

The reason we are moving said amendments is to allow more time—not appropriate time because I believe that we should not curtail any debate and that we should have no time restraints and no guillotine on any debate. For the sake of the government not agreeing to sit on Friday, we ought to have more time. That is why for the natural resources bill we are upping debate time from four to six hours and for the blue card bill we are upping debate time from six to eight hours to allow sufficient time—not sufficient time but more time for the shadow minister to move his amendments.

We recall that the blue card bill was due to be debated last sitting but the government was in such a fluster because we moved some cracking amendments that they had not thought about. Then they went, 'Oh, what do we do? What do we do? Delay, delay, delay. Let's bring on the education bill and take everyone by surprise.' The process is not working. It is not creating an efficient parliament. It is just a guillotine of democracy. Each week I table the speaking lists of the bills that have been guillotined. I table them now.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of bill debate speaking lists from the sitting week of 30 April to 2 May 2019 [750](#).

On the education bill 14 speakers were chopped—14 speakers did not get the opportunity to speak. On the Criminal Code bill 12 speakers got the chop—12 members of parliament were not afforded the opportunity to speak. On the Health and Wellbeing Bill 10 speakers were chopped. I put it to honourable members that it is not in the interests of members' health and wellbeing to be denied the opportunity to speak. How does not having the opportunity to speak impact on the mental health of members of parliament? Members know what would happen to me if I did not get the opportunity to speak in this place when I wanted to and for however long I wanted to at all appropriate times. That is why members of parliament raise these important issues.

For the Leader of the House to say that we have drunk the Kool-Aid and come on board with this new, efficient way that parliament runs—no, it is not because it is a dictatorship. It is a dictatorship when the Labor government, having the majority of numbers, yield their big sword and say, 'You will do this during the week.' The Leader of the House says, 'I look forward to next Monday's meeting where we will all drink lemonade, hold hands and sing Kumbaya.' It is not going to happen. I am sorry to cause such distress to the Leader of the House, but it is not going to happen because I will defend the right of every member of this House to speak for as long as they want to speak to debate the issues.

Some of the new members in this parliament have made great contributions on serious matters. The member for Ninderry, for example, has used speech after speech in this parliament to force the Attorney-General to appeal when she would not have done had he not been given the opportunity to speak. He has wanted more opportunities to talk about other issues but he keeps getting gagged. Every member in this House gets gagged. The crossbench each week vote against this motion but keep sending in the member for Noosa, who supports the government gagging debate. What we want is freedom of speech. We want the ability for members to talk about issues important to members' electorates. That is what we are paid to do. This parliament is not a little plaything for the Labor Party to come in and do what they want, to get their agenda through come hell or high water with no questions asked. If it is an inconvenience for more debate and more divisions then so be it.

*(Time expired)*