




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Record of Proceedings, 4 February 2020

MOTION

Business Program

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.28 am): I rise to speak on the business program motion. As we start a new year, the final year of this parliament, it is worth going back and revisiting why we are even having this debate, which we have in every parliament. When the Palaszczuk government was re-elected on this occasion, they did not have to worry about a hung parliament. They did not have to worry about the support of the then Independent member for Nicklin. Because of that, all appearance of democracy was thrown out the window. Because they no longer needed the support of the member for Nicklin they introduced a number of different procedural changes which I think decrease the democratic process.

I will outline some of those things. What has happened now is that the hours of the day have been truncated for the first time in living memory—probably ever—in this parliament. This happened under the guise of being family friendly hours, when we all know on this side of the House that they are not family friendly for those people who need to travel from the country and need to now come down a day early rather than being able to travel down on Monday morning. That was the first thing they changed.

The second thing they changed was they removed the ability for the opposition to have private members' statements before question time. That was a great opportunity to air the issues of the day and allow members to talk about those issues that were worrying Queenslanders. I thought it added incredibly to the democratic processes that we had in this parliament.

Then there is the substance of this business program debate that we have every week, which is about limiting the amount of time that members have to discuss the bills of the day. As the Leader of Opposition Business has already said, what the Attorney-General said is blatantly wrong. People are guillotined, sometimes mid-sentence, when they are trying to be part of the debate of the day. Not only that, and this may be lost on some people, when the shadow minister wants to have further debate during consideration in detail, great calculations have to be made beforehand to work out when we need to stop the debate so there is enough time for the shadow minister to investigate, examine, challenge—

An opposition member: Question.

Mr MANDER: And question some of those very substantive issues. It really is a blow to the democratic process of this place. The Attorney-General can quote as many statistics as she likes. The principal argument is that any member should be able to speak on a bill if they so desire, and that ability has been removed.

If some of those things were still in place, we would not have the troubles that this government is currently facing. If we had had the chance to debate more or to raise issues in those statements before question time, we would not have had the backflip that has taken place on the drum lines. The

government would not have been embarrassed because we would have had more opportunity to test, examine and challenge that. However, because that did not take place, the government has done this major backflip and embarrassed itself.

If we had more time to debate these issues, we would not have had the Extinction Rebellion protesters out there today chaining themselves to the fence and gluing themselves to the road because the laws that this government brought in would have covered that. They tried to claim that those laws would solve all the problems with Extinction Rebellion, but of course they are out there again today causing disturbances and that will happen time after time leading up to the next election.

If I can just say briefly, Mr Deputy Speaker, if you will allow me this one small bit of indulgence because of what the health minister brought up about Currumbin, what we are all waiting for is to see the Deputy Premier and Treasurer down in Currumbin promoting her candidate—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Everton, I pulled up the Minister for Health on the same issue. I am going to do the same to you. Come back to the business program motion, please.

Mr MANDER: All I can say is: bring on Currumbin. We cannot wait.