




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Record of Proceedings, 18 February 2020

MOTION

Business Program

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.26 am): Once again, I rise to speak to the business program motion. First, I refer to the meeting last night at which were the Manager of Opposition Business, the Leader of the House, the health minister and the Independent member for Noosa. This meeting is a complete and utter waste of time. The meeting before the last sitting week was a classic example where they went through the program for the week and then, during the week, the program chopped and changed. They changed their mind on a whim. Some bills were deferred and others were added. It is a total waste of time.

It is simply going through the motions to make it look like there is some sort of democratic process taking place. Of course, yesterday the Manager of Opposition Business suggested that other bills of more urgency and more importance—and I agree with that sentiment—should be discussed this week but, of course, they were railroaded because the government is just going through the motions. Again, it is a stab at the heart of democracy when these meetings are a complete and utter waste of time.

Secondly—and I touched on this during the last sitting of parliament—one thing I take great umbrage at is not just the fact that we have limited time to speak on bills but that the hours of parliament are limited in terms of the amount of time that we can discuss bills. If we had more time in parliament, we could consider and look at more bills. We would make more efficient use of parliamentary time than what occurs at the moment. These issues are very important. It seems to me that one of the main reasons we have shortened the parliamentary sitting week is so that the Premier and her ministers can splash millions of taxpayers' money on receptions here every night of the parliamentary week. Most of these receptions the opposition is not invited to. Again, the guise of the parliament inviting stakeholder groups to this precinct is a total misnomer.

The reason we want longer hours is so we can scrutinise ministers and their policies far more intently. That would be the democratic process, and there are so many things that we want to ask questions about. Over the last two weeks we heard about the public housing waiting list blowing out, we heard about the hospital surgery waiting list getting longer and longer, and of course there is the Labor Party waiting list to see who wants to take over the Deputy Premier's role. That list is getting longer and longer as well. These are the reasons we should have longer hours in parliament—only what has been practised by every other parliament before this one—so that we can, from an opposition's point of view, ask more questions to keep this government accountable—and, man, does it need to be kept accountable!

Just in the last fortnight a number of issues have emerged that deserve public examination, and already the police minister came in here today and talked about solving the North Queensland crime issue by simply rearranging top level police on the organisational chart. That will not make one ounce of difference whatsoever, but those questions need to be asked. The people of the Gold Coast, the

people of North Queensland and the people of the northern suburbs of Brisbane want real answers, not these superficial solutions that those opposite continue to put up and crow about—changes which will make absolutely no difference whatsoever.

Earlier the Leader of the House said that the bills that are being debated this week will not have much media attention. They deserve to have media attention, and I refer to the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) because it shows the economic incompetence of this government. We should have more than three hours to discuss what is the most important issue in this parliament at the moment—that is, the state of the Queensland economy. It is a basket case. It should be an economic powerhouse, but that will not happen under this government.