




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 21 February 2023

MOTION : BUSINESS PROGRAM

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.19 am): I rise to address the business program motion circulated by the Leader of the House. I will echo her comments in regards to a general welcome back to the chamber for 2023, particularly to Mr Speaker, the Clerk of the Parliament and the parliamentary staff who serve us all so diligently regardless of which party we represent or whether we are independents.

As the Leader of the House mentioned, the bills to be debated this week are the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Both are important pieces of legislation, and the opposition will have long speaking lists on both of those. We also note another motion being moved later this week—and I convey my sympathies very early on to the families of those police officers and Mr Dare who lost their lives tragically late last year—and the LNP will also ensure that we speak to the motion in that regard.

I note the Leader of the House is looking for a slightly different tone in debate this year, but it may not come as any surprise to her that the opposition will be opposing the business motion this morning. What may surprise the Leader of the House is the reason why. Whilst we are debating two important pieces of legislation—the domestic and family violence protection bill and the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill—we are not debating one very important piece of legislation, a bill that we were told we would be debating in the House this week. Before I get accused of verballing particularly the Premier on this, I want to refer to the comments the Premier made back in late December 2022 which she replicated in January 2023. This was while the Leader of the Opposition and the opposition were calling for an early return of parliament so we could sort out the youth crime epidemic sweeping this state. I quote—

The Premier shut down calls for an early return, insisting they're working through changes to the law.

Then in a direct quote she said—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, I am listening to your contribution and taking advice at the same time. I would like you to assure us that the contribution you are making here will not be anticipating debate in relation to a bill that is on the *Notice Paper* to be introduced later in the week.

Mr POWELL: With due respect, Mr Deputy Speaker, that bill has not been introduced yet, and therefore I cannot be anticipating debate on it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice on that. Member, you can continue your contribution.

Mr POWELL: As I was saying—

Mr BROWN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order in regards to relevance. The motion talks about the sessional orders of this week, not the sitting calendar as a whole which the member is straying into.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will grant some latitude. The member is making points around his views on what should have been debated this week. I will give him some latitude in relation to that, but I ask him to please bring it back to the subject of the debate.

Mr POWELL: I will add that the Leader of the House actually referenced an anticipated piece of legislation in her contribution on this business motion debate—the Strengthening Community Safety Bill. Also, as I believe the Leader of the House will verify, this was a topic of discussion at yesterday's meeting where we did consider the business motion. Again, let me try for a third time to quote the Premier. This is a direct quote. She said—

They are going to be strong laws, but also the consultation is happening now and they will be ready to be introduced on day one. That is fine. I understand they are going to be introduced today. Going on, she said in a direct quote—
... and if we want to fast-track them, the best thing the opposition can do is agree with us to pass them that week.

We were going to be opposing this notice of motion this morning not because of what is on it but because of what is not on it—that is, the Strengthening Community Safety Bill that we have been told about. We were told that this bill would be ready to go on day 1 and that the consultation would have occurred already. We were constantly told that it could not occur during January and that we could not come back early because consultation was underway. What we have heard from the Premier this morning is that sure she has consulted but it was with the commissioner, the deputy commissioner, the directors-general, her ministers and her caucus but no members of the community.

Mr Janetzki: Not Toowoomba.

Mr POWELL: Definitely not members of the Toowoomba community. The Premier could not even attend the forum in Toowoomba.

What we have now discovered is contrary to the position that was put forward by the Premier herself that we could debate and pass those laws this week. That was something the opposition immediately agreed to. Again, we heard this morning this fallacy that somehow it all comes down to whether or not the LNP will agree to them. Of course we agree to them. They are our laws. They are our amendments. They are our changes. It does not have to be a constant excuse that these laws could not be passed now.

As I raised in question time, tragically three Queenslanders have lost their lives since the Premier announced the changes back in late December. I fear that if we wait two more weeks there will be further Queenslanders who will lose their lives because of young people out on bail. We will not be supporting this motion this morning—not because we think the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 are not important, but because we should be debating the youth justice laws.