




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 23 May 2023

MOTION

Business Program

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.19 am): I will use this opportunity to reflect on the recent regional sitting of parliament in Cairns and convey on behalf of the members of the LNP opposition our thanks to all of the staff, starting with the parliamentary staff who prepared and enacted that regional sitting in Cairns. They did a mountain of work to ensure that everything ran as smoothly as it did. I thank all of the staff at the Convention Centre and the various facilities that the members on both sides of the chamber and the crossbench also utilised during that time, and to the people of Cairns for welcoming us so well. It was great, particularly for those of us on this side as we went around the community and spoke about the issues that really mattered to the people of Cairns, issues like youth justice and crime, that we were very well received in terms of listening to them and advocating on their behalf.

I also want to reflect on some comments made by Mr Acting Speaker at the conclusion of the Cairns sitting where he reflected on the level of debate and the nature of the debate on the Path to Treaty Bill as it being quite a level, even, respectful and well-balanced debate on a very sensitive issue. Whilst that might have had something to do with the nature of the bill itself, I suspect what it also had was the fact that it was not a guillotined debate, that it was given the credit that it required, the time it required, the opportunity for members from all parties, from all electorates across the state of Queensland to contribute on a very important piece of legislation. Members were not trying to rush their contributions. Members were not having to give way to other members to ensure that points were made, speeches were made and therefore the debate was conducted in a manner that we have not seen in this chamber since this government brought in these business motions.

The Leader of the House has again suspected, quite rightly, that we are going to be opposing this motion. We are. Why? Because what we are seeing, having returned to Brisbane, is a return to the bad old days. We are now going to try to rush through four pieces of legislation. Admittedly, one of them, I accept, is nearly finished in terms of debate—the monitoring of detention centres—but the other three have had to come up with arbitrary time limits to ensure they are finished by the end of this week. What that means again, and I repeat it, is that opposition members do not get the opportunity to speak on legislation that they want to. I suspect government members, too. Those backbenchers waving the speaking list around and concerned that they are not going to get their opportunity to speak on the legislation, the Corrective Services bill—

Mr Tantari interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Member for Hervey Bay.

Mr POWELL: Don't look at me, member for Hervey Bay. Take it up with the Leader of the House. You are in the same party. It is your rules. It is your motion. If members have a grievance with their speaking list and the fact that the member for Hervey Bay and the member for Bundaberg are going to get guillotined, it is not the LNP opposition's fault. Support us in opposing this motion. Come and cross the floor.

Government members interjected.

Mr POWELL: Come to the light side; stop living on the dark side—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr POWELL:—and you will get the opportunity to have your say on this legislation. I find it ludicrous that members of the backbench somehow think they are going to be guillotined by something the LNP opposition are doing. It is not the case at all. It is the government's motion. If the member for Bundaberg and the member for Hervey Bay and other backbenchers want to ensure they get a speaking opportunity, they need to get in the ear of their Leader of the House, their ministers, their representatives around the cabinet table.

We want to ensure that we continue to have debates of the nature that we had in Cairns—respectful, democratic debates where every member in this chamber has an opportunity to have their say on the legislation they want to have a say on. Sadly, with the return to time caps on three important pieces of legislation—around corrective services, waste reduction and recycling, and tobacco and other smoking products—we are again going to find that debate is guillotined. The LNP opposition will not be supporting this motion.