




Speech By  
**Michael Hart**

**MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH**

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Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2023

**COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY: REPORT, MOTION TO TAKE NOTE**

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.30 pm): I was not going to speak to this motion, but I am very tempted after hearing the member for Bancroft and the interjections of the member for Logan. I have been a critic of the way the committee system has worked for the past few years. People will not be surprised to know that that will not change during this speech.

In a couple of weeks I will have been a member of this parliament for 11 years. Over that 11-year period, the committee system has become worse and worse. From 2012 to 2015 it actually worked pretty well. We had ministers coming along and actually answering questions. There were some changes made to the way the estimates system worked. It actually worked a lot better. Obviously the Labor Party did not like it, but it worked a lot better. We saw ministers sitting in front of committees for six or eight hours at a time, instead of an hour and a half as happens now. The ministers sat in front of committees and gave answers to questions all day. In one instance I think the then deputy premier sat in front of a committee for eight hours and answered question after question. Do we know why that was able to happen? It is because we had competent ministers who could answer the questions. They knew their portfolios and were right across their brief. Instead, in this government we have hopeless ministers who are not capable of being honest and are not capable of answering questions. That forces the majority of chairs to protect them constantly. The exception is the member for Kurwongbah. I have asked questions in front of just about every estimates committee, and I would say that the member for Kurwongbah is the only reasonable chair in this House.

**Mr Power:** You haven't been on my committee.

**Mr HART:** I have sat in the member for Logan's committee. I have sat in on every committee and I have watched every estimates process.

We see chairs delaying the process, repeating questions and trying to change the question—all because they do not like the questions and the ministers do not like the questions. They try to change the question and try to delay the whole process. They give ministers overtime to respond to questions with completely irrelevant answers.

Then we see the Dorothy Dixers from government members with their list of questions that ministers are prepared for, one after the other. It is really amusing to sit there and watch this process when a government member asks a question out of order. The minister has to start flicking through all their paperwork, trying to catch up to the question that was actually asked! We also see other instances where a government member must have fallen asleep during the committee process, has not noticed that a question has already been asked and asks exactly the same question, only to get the same answer.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr HART:** I take the interjection of the member for Logan. The reason some of our members have to ask questions over and over again is that they are blocked from getting an answer and have to change the question slightly. If you want an answer out of this government, do not hold your breath because it is not coming. We are seeing exactly the same thing in question time. There is a good reason it is called question time and not answer time, because we never hear any answers! In my view, estimates is a complete waste of time if ministers will not answer the questions that the people of Queensland want answered. Get it right.