




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 17 April 2024

MOTION

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.04 pm): I rise to make a contribution on this motion. If you need further evidence of the chaos and crisis that is gripping the Labor government, tonight has proven it on two fronts. They offer an opportunity to have a bipartisan committee to consider youth crime and now, they want to throw that out. Secondly, we now have to extend sitting hours for at least two hours, more likely 2½ hours, this evening.

We used to have a business program motion debate on Tuesday. Members of the opposition were able to explain why we opposed the business program. I can tell members that had that debate on the business program motion occurred yesterday, the Leader of the House would have been told that we did not have enough time this week to debate the six pieces of legislation that they were proposing to debate, let alone these kind of silly motions that the government continue to move. That is exactly what they would have been told. Because they have guillotined the guillotine debate, you do not hear that. I am pleased that the Leader of the House has now moved this motion because it gives me an opportunity to explain again. This kind of extension of hours, sitting later into the evening, is exactly what the members of the opposition have been saying from day one.

We do not have enough time to debate the legislation that this government is putting before us. Members do not have the opportunity to speak on bills that are important to their constituencies and to their electorates. Why can we do it tonight? Because the government has suddenly discovered they need to change the voting pattern for a select committee. Why can we do it tonight and not any other night? Go figure. This is a permanent solution that the government could adopt to ensure that members continue to be able to contribute on important bills. Let us return to why we are also having to do it this evening, and that is in what we have just heard in the contributions from the member for Noosa and the member for Cooper. We have heard a suggestion that because it is taking time to reach a bipartisan outcome on an important matter such as youth crime, they now want to throw out the voting procedures for that committee.

I cannot believe that we are extending hours this evening for that reason. I thought I had seen the most abysmal trashing of parliamentary democracy undertaken by those opposite in this term, particularly this year. You can tell an election is around the corner because they have thrown out all care that has been taken for years and years—indeed centuries of tradition in the Westminster system—in debate and in how contributions can be made in chambers like this one. They have completely and utterly thrown it out, but tonight it reaches new levels. It is a new low. I am constantly amazed at how low those opposite can go.

Mr Watts: They cut off their own member before.

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba South. They were clearly running out of time so they would not even allow their own member to extend his contribution. We will allow the extension of debate this evening, but please do not interpret that in any way as an agreement to the ongoing practices of those opposite regarding the motions put in this chamber—whether they be the business program motions at the start of the week or motions such as the ones we are about to hear from the Leader of the House. Supporting an extension of hours is consistent with the approach we in the opposition have been saying from day one, but to continue to put forward motions of this nature is not acceptable.