




Speech By
Linus Power

MEMBER FOR LOGAN

Record of Proceedings, 13 February 2024

MOTION

Business Program

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (11.22 am): I thank the Leader of the House for laying on the table the business program of the House. If we were speaking to any Queenslanders, they would say that it is sensible and normal for all members to understand how the business of the House will be conducted in any week. They would ask, 'Doesn't that happen in other parliaments?' That would be right. It happens in all sorts of parliaments where the Leader of the House makes clear to each member the times for the debates, how they will be structured and when they will be finalised.

Let's think about the principles of this debate. This is the first time I have risen to speak on it but I have followed this debate with interest. The principles of the debate are that we put forward a business program motion. I think that that would be supported, as I said, by every Australian and every Queenslanders and I think secretly supported by everyone in the opposition.

We used to see debate on bills drag deep into the middle of the night—1 am and sometimes 2 am. If we were to put to our constituents whether they thought it was sensible that debates, votes, amendments, and amendments to amendments were put at one or two in the morning, none of them would say that it was. No-one would think that that is reasonable. Other parliaments including, as the member for Sandgate has said repeatedly, the mother of parliaments—the Westminster parliament—have a sensible business committee that puts these things in place.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr POWER: Those on that side who are making so much noise to show their support for sensible progress and sensible timing for the business program know that we should not be sitting until one or two in the morning. That is the alternative they suggest will happen without a Business Committee.

This business program motion makes it clear to members the timing of debates. There is ample time for debate and for all of the relevant points to be put. There are those who would read the record of previous debates and note that there is endless repetition of talking points given by opposition members. If we were to run some of the software that I used as a high school teacher to pick up plagiarism, all of the speeches from those opposite would have red flags for plagiarism because their points are endlessly repetitive.

There is more than adequate time for all members of this House who have new ideas to contribute to debate. On this side—and this is why we are universally supportive of this—if we have something to say we can approach the whip or the Leader of the House and say, 'I have something to say in this debate that is new and different and innovative and something worth saying,' and we will have the time to contribute to that debate. This endless repetition of debate that drags debates till one in the morning—that is the position that is put by some members of the opposition—is not sensible and no Queenslanders support it, and secretly no members support it.

I have to remind members that during my first term I was lucky enough to serve on the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. We looked at that very proposition. We went to Victoria to see how this worked. We saw it work and all members at that point agreed that it was a sensible thing.

Mr Brown: Bring back Ray!

Mr POWER: I was not going to mention any names, Mr Whip. All members agreed that it was a sensible process and that it was a sensible way to structure debates. Indeed, in Victoria we saw hypocritical oppositions criticise this process while they were in opposition but then when in government, because they all secretly agreed with it and quietly agreed that it was not sensible to present to the people of Queensland debates at one or two in the morning, they decided to keep those sensible arrangements in place. It is a sensible business program motion put forward by the Leader of the House and I thank him for putting it before the House.