



Speech By  
**Dr Christian Rowan**

**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

Record of Proceedings, 21 April 2026

**MOTION**

**Amendments to Sessional Orders**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (11.17 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

The following amendments to Sessional Orders to take effect immediately—

1. Insert new Sessional Order 3A—

**'Business Program Motion**

- 3A.** (1) At any time in Government Business, the Leader of the House may move a motion without notice, that provides for the allocation of time for any business.
- (2) The motion may include, that:
- (a) bills be declared cognate in accordance with Standing Order 172;
  - (b) bills or other business on the Notice Paper be reordered; or
  - (c) time for government motions and time limits for speeches.
- (3) The motion may include a requirement that at the expiration of allotted time or a time specified in (1), all remaining processes and questions necessary to pass the Bill, a stage of the Bill or any other business be put, without further debate, which is taken to include any of the following:
- (a) when the member in charge of the Bill is to be called on to reply to the second reading debate;
  - (b) the second reading question;
  - (c) clauses and schedules en bloc;
  - (d) any amendments to be moved by the Minister or Member in charge of the Bill; and
  - (e) the third reading and long title.
- (4) Completion of all questions necessary to pass the Bill, a stage of the Bill or any other business in accordance with (1) and (2) shall take precedence over all other business, with the Order of Business adjusting to recommence after necessary questions are completed.
- (5) Any agreed Business Program may be amended by a motion without notice, moved by the Leader of the House.'

2. Inserting into the Schedule in Sessional Order 12, before 'Debate of Committee Reports' the following—

**'Business Program Motion** Sessional Order 3A

- Total time 15 minutes
- Each Member 5 minutes'

In addressing this, at the outset, it is important to understand the history and the context of the business program motion and its function in the Queensland parliament. On 23 August 2018, the then leader of the House, the former Labor member for Redcliffe, formally introduced to the Queensland parliament amendments to sessional orders enabling the creation of a Business Committee and a business program motion. The so-called Business Committee process under the former Labor government was, in reality, nothing more than a charade. It was all smoke and mirrors. It was presented

as a mechanism for bipartisan consultation, but in practice it delivered no such thing. Decisions were made by the Labor government, and the committee served only to create the appearance of consultation without the substance.

After the Business Committee was held on a Monday, the Labor government would then present the business program motion to the House on the Tuesday of a sitting week where it was debated. The debate was routinely and falsely characterised by Labor as being a result of consultation with the then opposition and crossbench, but, as we know, it was nothing more than an opportunity for Labor to rubberstamp its own agenda.

This farcical process was for years continued by Labor, including through the 57th Parliament until 2024 when the former leader of the House and now Manager of Opposition Business removed all avenues for debate. The former Labor state government still kept the charade of a business committee. However, when it came to the business program motion to be introduced, no member was allowed to debate the motion.

As Labor did in government and now in opposition, Labor continues to demonstrate in the 58th Parliament that they are incapable of treating this House, its processes and the orderly conduct of proceedings with the due respect that Queenslanders deserve. What should be routine procedural matters, including the allocation of set times for ministers in charge of bills to reply, have too often been politicised and turned into opportunities for disruptions, delay and political theatrics by Labor, and that is not what the people of Queensland expect of their parliament. It is for this reason that this government is reverting to the use of a business program motion to be introduced each sitting week to provide clarity, structure and certainty to the management of government business.

Unlike the last reforms to the business program motion brought in by the then leader of the House, the member for Springwood, this government is ensuring time is allocated for debate of the business program motion itself, and that is a critical point. The Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government is restoring transparency and accountability ensuring members of this House have the opportunity to consider and debate the proposed program of business, and that is a fundamental difference in the approach.

These amendments do not include the creation of a business committee. Rather than engaging in such insulting and farcical processes, the Crisafulli LNP state government is interested in delivering a system that is clear, transparent and effective. This is not an unprecedented reform. In fact, it is a mechanism that was embraced, implemented and defended by those opposite when they were in government. To that end, it is worth reflecting on the words of those opposite when they themselves introduced and supported the use of a business program motion.

When first introducing this mechanism, the former leader of the House, the former member for Redcliffe, was very clear about the principles that underpinned it. The former Labor member for Redcliffe acknowledged that this House operates within a framework, and that has always been the case. The former Labor member for Redcliffe made the point that there has never been an absolute or unfettered right for every member to speak on every matter for as long as they wish. The former Labor member for Redcliffe also went on to explain that time limits exist, structures exist and standing and sessional orders exist precisely to ensure that the business of the House is conducted in an orderly, efficient and meaningful way. They are not our words; they are the words of the former Labor government. It did not stop there.

When the first business program motion was introduced, the now leader of the Labor opposition spoke glowingly of its benefits. The Leader of the Opposition noted that a business program motion would ensure that the House maximises the time it spends on matters of importance, delivers certainty to members and allows stakeholders and members of the public to understand when legislation would be debated. In 2024, the now Manager of Opposition Business described the business program motion as 'a powerful tool to ensure we are using this chamber to its full effect'. He went on to say that it provides 'real clarity' to members and ensures 'a clear picture of what this House will debate'. Again, these are not the words of this government; they are the words spoken by Labor in support of a business program.

I am sure that we will soon hear the Labor opposition seek to criticise and undermine this approach. I may be pleasantly surprised and they may support it; however, it is difficult to see that it is anything other than duplicity and petty politics if they do not support this. That duplicity has been on full display. We have previously heard claims from those opposite in this parliament that their ability to contribute to the Queensland parliament has somehow been curtailed, yet during the most recent sitting week in the cognate appropriation debate so far, of the 34 contributions made to the debate that week, only 11 were from Labor members. The assertion that members are being silenced simply does not stand up to scrutiny. It is contradicted by Labor's own participation or, more accurately, as we have seen in this parliament, Labor's lack of participation.

In concluding my contribution, these amendments provide a clear mechanism for allocating time to business. They allow for the orderly progression of legislation and they ensure, where necessary, that the House can come to a decision in a timely way. At the same time, they preserve the opportunity for debate. These changes are entirely consistent with the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government's commitment to be considered and orderly with respect to the operation of the Queensland parliament.

The implementation of a business program motion is about ensuring that debate is meaningful, that time is used effectively and that the parliament can deliver on its core responsibility to Queenslanders. It is also about restoring a level of discipline and respect to the way that this chamber conducts its business. Given the previous contributions by now members of the Labor opposition when they were in government, I look forward to those opposite supporting this motion not only to the benefit of the orderly conduct of business in this House but also to the benefit of all Queenslanders. It is for those reasons that I commend the motion to the House.