

ELECTORAL REFORM

Statement

HON WILSON TUCKER (Mining and Pastoral) [5.31 pm]: I would like to offer a few remarks about an earlier debate on electoral reform. Hon Kyle McGinn, who is away on urgent parliamentary business, mentioned that I had an aversion to the number 500 with regard to the membership number for —

Point of Order

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I do not mean to do this to the member but the debate this morning was the second reading contributions on a bill. As I understand it, members' statements are not for making second reading contributions. The member specifically referenced the debate on electoral matters this morning. I just seek some guidance on that. I do not mean to do this to the member, but it is an unusual situation. I seek the guidance of the house.

The PRESIDENT: Honourable member, as the bill is essentially a live question before the house, it could be brought on for debate again and you will have an opportunity to contribute to that debate. Members' statements are really an opportunity for members to make contributions on a broad range of matters rather than a specific question before the house. You may also like to consider expanding your remarks to the general issue of electoral reform or related matters, but not to speak specifically on the bill.

Statement Resumed

Hon WILSON TUCKER: Thank you for the ruling, President. I will keep my remarks very brief and will avoid pivoting into the second reading debate.

I take this opportunity to respond to the remarks by Hon Kyle McGinn, which I do not believe were related directly to the second reading debate. I think the member was making some general observations about debate that we had had on the Constitutional and Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Equality) Bill 2021. The member made a comment that I had an aversion to 500 members being required to achieve registration for a political party. I would like to correct the record. I do not have an aversion to that number and I do not believe I had an aversion then. The comments that I made in 2021 were mostly centred on the resources that Independents or minor parties have to canvass their member base to try to reactivate them and achieve that 500 registration number. The Western Australian Electoral Commission made a ruling that parties could not rely on their existing membership pool and that parties had to go back and essentially re-canvass those existing members and get them to fill out a form. I believe I said then, and I maintain it now, that that is not an easy exercise. Even if a party has a much larger pool of members for the party, activating them and getting them to re-register is not that easy for minor parties or other members who do not have the resources of the Labor or Liberal Parties or any of the majors. I leave my comments there and reserve the rest of my comments for when we get back into the second reading debate on the Electoral Amendment Bill 2023.