

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Standing Orders Suspension — Motion

MR R.F. JOHNSON (Hillarys — Leader of the House) [12.31 pm]: I move —

That so much of standing orders be suspended as is necessary to enable private members' business to have priority from 4.00 pm to 8.00 pm on Wednesday, 16 June 2010.

I will say a few words to explain why I am moving this motion. At this time of year, there are some bills that need to go from this house to the Legislative Council and be passed by 30 June; this happens for the same reasons every year, and we need to progress them as quickly as possible. The Legislative Assembly has only one more sitting week after this one; the Legislative Council has two weeks, and under its standing orders, any bill coming from this house has to lay on its table for one week before it can be dealt with. The government is very hopeful that, by sitting a little longer tonight, we can achieve a good outcome in getting some bills dealt with by this house so that they can go to the upper house by tomorrow to be dealt with by the Legislative Council. This is also one of those rare occasions on which the upper house seems to have run out of business; I am told that it is because it has spent what time it considers necessary on certain bills that have come from this house and has not considered it necessary to go into the Committee of the Whole House. It is happy with those bills and supports them, so the bills have been passed very quickly. I am hopeful that we will see something similar in this house in the future.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [12.32 pm]: In the absence of the manager of opposition business, the opposition will, of course, support this motion. We are always willing to assist the government to ensure that important legislation, particularly that which needs to be passed before 30 June, has safe passage through the Parliament. Of course, we will always exercise the right of any opposition to ensure that we scrutinise legislation appropriately; that is what a good opposition does, and we are a fantastic opposition, eager to return to the Treasury bench at the next election! That is why the opposition has so many members who are very keen and, some would say, almost rabid in their eagerness to devour government ministers in the interrogation of legislation. As our history will show, however, we are not an obstructionist opposition, and we are certainly not an opposition that pontificates or filibusters! We are an opposition that examines legislation very carefully and quickly. In fact, we have already, on a number of occasions, found glaring errors in the presentation of legislation in this place, and that is what good oppositions do—good oppositions, made up of very good members, eager to take the Treasury bench at the next election. We are very happy to support the Leader of the House. As he mentioned, the upper house sometimes runs out of legislation.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Very rarely.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Very rarely, but it does occur. I would sometimes lay it at the feet of the Leader of the House to be responsible for that. I would hate to think that there are members in the other place, twiddling their thumbs, waiting for legislation.

Mr R.F. Johnson: I think the criticism in the past has been that they just don't deal with legislation quick enough. That's a criticism that your party has levelled at them from time to time; however, we're in a different position now and they are getting through legislation very quickly.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Perhaps a laxative has been provided to upper house members that is now having an effect!

I am not sure whether the manager of opposition business wishes to make a contribution also, but the opposition of course recognises the importance of ensuring that this legislation meets the time lines proposed.

Question put and passed.