

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Standing Orders Suspension — Motion

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [10.13 am] — without notice: I move —

That so much of standing orders be suspended as to enable the following variations to the order of business and sitting times for next week —

- (1) Tuesday, 4 December —
 - (a) the Council to sit at 1.00 pm; and
- (2) Wednesday, 5 December —
 - (a) no motions on notice;
 - (b) no consideration of committee reports;
 - (c) the Council to sit after 6.20 pm and suspend sittings between 6.00 pm and 7.00 pm; and
 - (d) members' statements to be taken at 9.45 pm.

If I may, this government has followed the practice of previous governments of identifying in advance to members of the house, in the lead-up to a break in the sittings, the priority legislation the government seeks the house to deal with prior to the house rising. I provided members of the house with that priority list. It is legislation that is prioritised for policy purposes, financial purposes or for the purposes of giving effect to the government's election commitments. I followed the practice that I have followed for the past 20 months and the practice of previous governments. I have asked members for their preferences in respect of how we accommodate additional hours in order to give effect to that, and the motion I am moving today takes on board the suggestions and recommendations of members of the house.

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [10.15 am]: I would like to confirm the comments made by the Leader of the House with regard to potential increased sitting times for next week. It reflects the practice that has been upheld pretty much for as long as I have been here for the government to get through its legislative agenda, and for that reason the Liberal Party will be supporting the motion.

HON JACQUI BOYDELL (Mining and Pastoral — Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA) [10.15 am]: I have not actually seen a copy of the motion, although I have had conversations with the Leader of the House regarding her intended proposals for the house. The Nationals WA will not be supporting the motion, for a couple of reasons that I have already discussed with the Leader of the House.

I have continually asked the Leader of the House for some explanation for why these bills are being considered priority legislation for the government. The Leader of the House's responses to me have been reflected in the comments she made as she moved the motion. My concern is that the Legislative Council, in passing this motion, will effectively be giving the government a rubberstamp by saying that sitting these extra hours means that we actually will pass those bills. I am not prepared to do that, and neither are my National Party colleagues, without some further debate in the house on those pieces of legislation, because some of them are sensitive pieces of legislation that the house needs to consider. Without being able to have those debates, I cannot give an assurance that we will pass those bills in the amount of time within which the Leader of the House seeks to do so. That is why I was trying to get an indication from the Leader of the House as to why these bills were, indeed, priority bills.

We are not prepared to say that, in sitting those extra hours, we will pass those bills, because that is not the role of the Legislative Council. When the Leader of the House suggested to me that this has been the past practice of former governments, I indicated to her that my role as a member in this house is in the here and now. Continuing to do what we have done for 20 years means that we are not keeping up with what members of our community expect of members of this house. To rely on the practice of the last 20 years is not, in my view, something the government should be asking of members of this house.

I had this conversation with the Leader of the House last year, so this is not a new debate. Last year, the National Party agreed to support a similar motion, but this year we cannot, as the National Party, bring ourselves to support this motion for the reason that we cannot in any way give an undertaking that we can facilitate the passing of those bills within the extra sitting time. For that reason, the National Party will not be supporting this motion.

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [10.19 am]: I indicate, on behalf of the Greens, that we are prepared to support this motion. I note that discussion has taken place behind the Chair and that consultation has occurred with us. Having said that, as I always say in this place, the Greens make it clear that we will nevertheless take as long as we need to deal with each piece of legislation, but no longer. We will see how we go in respect of the progress of the stated legislative agenda.

Extract from *Hansard*

[COUNCIL — Thursday, 29 November 2018]

p8868b-8869a

Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Jacqui Boydell; Hon Alison Xamon

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: Members, you will be aware that this type of motion requires an absolute majority and because there has been a dissenting voice, I call for a division.

Division

Division taken with the following result —

Ayes (25)

Hon Ken Baston
Hon Robin Chapple
Hon Jim Chown
Hon Tim Clifford
Hon Alanna Clohesy
Hon Peter Collier
Hon Stephen Dawson

Hon Sue Ellery
Hon Diane Evers
Hon Nick Goiran
Hon Laurie Graham
Hon Alannah MacTiernan
Hon Kyle McGinn
Hon Michael Mischin

Hon Martin Pritchard
Hon Samantha Rowe
Hon Robin Scott
Hon Tjorn Sibma
Hon Aaron Stonehouse
Hon Matthew Swinbourn
Hon Dr Sally Talbot

Hon Dr Steve Thomas
Hon Darren West
Hon Alison Xamon
Hon Pierre Yang (*Teller*)

Noes (7)

Hon Jacqui Boydell
Hon Colin de Grussa

Hon Colin Holt
Hon Rick Mazza

Hon Charles Smith
Hon Colin Tincknell

Hon Martin Aldridge (*Teller*)

Question thus passed with an absolute majority.