



Speech By  
**Jeff Seeneey**


**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 June 2015

## MOTION

### Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates

 **Mr SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (6.00 pm): I move the motion of which I gave notice, but I move it in an amended form and that has been circulated in my name. The amended form of the motion deletes the first 16 words, the first half of the first sentence. So I move—

That the reporting date of 14 September 2015 be set for:

1. The Health and Ambulance Services Committee's inquiry into the Mental Health (Recovery Model) Bill, referred by the House on 5 May 2015.
2. The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's inquiry into the Liquor and Fair Trading Legislation (Red Tape Reduction) Amendment Bill, referred by the House on 6 May 2015.
3. The Agriculture and Environment Committee's inquiry into the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill, referred by the House on 19 May 2015.
4. The Health and Ambulance Services Committee's inquiry into the Health Legislation (Waiting List Integrity) Amendment Bill, referred by the House on 19 May 2015.

And that the House ensures all parliamentary committees meet at 9 am on Wednesday morning of each sitting week as the time set aside for committee business.

**Mr Hinchliffe:** It's nice to see you being nice.

**Mr SEENEY:** I am trying to be conciliatory. I am trying to make this parliament work, Leader of the House. I have a particular interest in the committee system, as the member would know. I have a particular interest in ensuring that the committee system in this House works well because the committee system in this House was an initiative that was put in place by a bipartisan committee of very senior members of the House who came together and agreed that we should have a committee system to provide a function in this place that is not provided by an upper house. In my view the committee system has a huge potential to serve the people of Queensland well. Some of the members who were part of that committee that set up the committee system served many years in this place, people like Robbie Swarten and Judy Spence. All of us shared the same goal of ensuring that we had a committee system that worked well.

So it does concern me when I see issues arise that would indicate that the committee system is not performing the function those members who designed the system, and the members who were in the House who supported it, designed it to perform. What this motion is about tonight is to primarily set some reporting dates for four private members' bills that were introduced into this place and are languishing in the committee system because a reporting date was not set. I do not want to get into a finger-pointing exercise, Leader of the House. I do not want to get into an exercise to question why those reporting dates were not set. The fact is that the reporting dates were not set and these private members' bills are languishing in the committees.

It is paramount that the committee system serve the purposes of allowing examination of private members' bills every bit as expeditiously as it does for allowing the examination of government bills. Some of the government bills that have been considered by the committees in this term of parliament under this government have been considered in very short time frames, very short time frames indeed given some of the content of the bills. What this motion does tonight is to set very reasonable time frames for the consideration of the private members' bills. In fact, to give the committees until 14 September 2015 is a very reasonable time frame for the consideration of the private members' bills that have been brought into this House by both members of the opposition and members of the crossbench.

By removing the first half of the first sentence of the motion, by removing any contention from the motion, I would expect that there is no longer any reason for the government to oppose it. There is no reason to oppose it. Let us all reflect the bipartisanship that was evident in this House when we put the committee system in place to ensure that the committees work and they work properly.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr SEENEY:** There was bipartisanship. The committee system was put in place when the Labor Party was in power, member for Brisbane Central, and it was designed to ensure that all members of the House had an opportunity to have their bills considered in a way that gave the Queensland public an opportunity to have an input and to make submissions on those bills. This is essentially what this motion is about tonight, with the exception of the last paragraph which is about reflecting the intent of the parliament that Wednesday mornings are set aside for parliamentary committees. We made some major changes to the sessional orders of this House to ensure that every member of the House had an opportunity to participate in committee business without detracting from their duties in the parliament. We set aside that block of time on Wednesday morning to make sure that every member could serve on a committee and not be disadvantaged by being absent from the House. It is important, I think, that today's committees provide that opportunity, that the committees of this parliament meet at the time that was designated by the parliament for committee business and that is the Wednesday morning of the sitting weeks. Of course committees can meet at other times if they so choose, if the workload they have is such that it so demands. By being conciliatory, by being reasonable with amending this motion, I expect the government can support it.