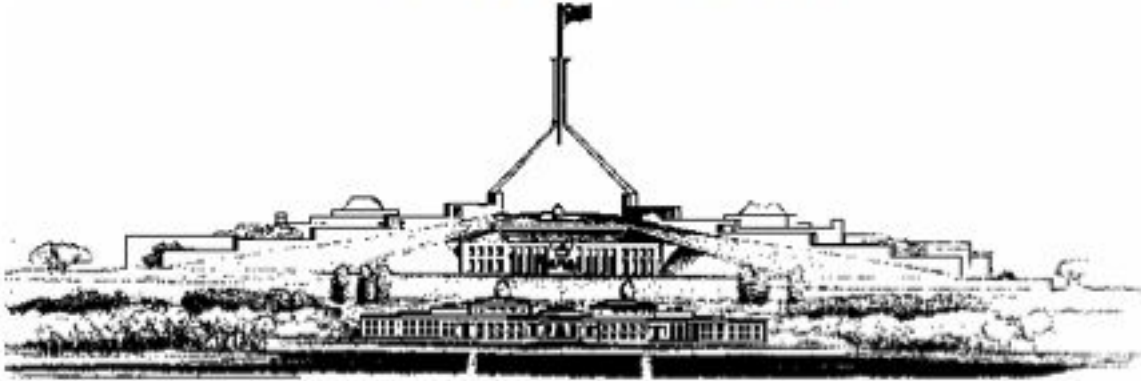




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROCEDURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF WITNESSES BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES AND MEMBERS' INTERESTS

SPEECH

Wednesday, 25 November 2009

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date	Wednesday, 25 November 2009	Source	House
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Questioner		Responder	
Speaker	Pyne, Chris, MP	Question No.	

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Manager of Opposition Business) (5.33 pm)—The opposition does not oppose this motion on the procedures for the protection of witnesses before the Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests. We endorse the recommendations that have been made by the committee. It is not a trend but it is useful to have some bipartisanship in this place every now and then. On this issue, the opposition has been part of the process of proposing these recommendations. I note that they are very similar to the rules that largely are in place in the Senate Standing Committee of Privileges. As the Leader of the House has outlined, they allow a person subject to investigation to be given advance notice of allegations raised, they require that a person who is subject to investigation be given reasonable opportunity to respond, they create the opportunity for the first time for any person appearing before the committee to have counsel and for the committee itself to appoint counsel to assist it in its deliberations, and they put in a new rule that a person affected by a committee finding has the opportunity to respond. The committee may consider reimbursement of costs of representation of a witness before the committee. They enhance the process for people who are the subject of matters before the Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests Committee to be properly looked after and to protect their rights and, as a consequence, the opposition endorses these changes.

Question agreed to.