



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BUSINESS

Standing and Sessional Orders

SPEECH

Thursday, 1 September 2016

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

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Speaker Burke, Tony, MP	Question No.

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (12:46): The opposition will be supporting the amendments to standing orders that are in front of us at the moment. They have been the subject of a negotiation. Like the Leader of the House, I have to say that whatever time the dinner break is meant to be is irrelevant to most of us. It makes a difference only to the extent that committee meetings and other things that are organised around the place can be guaranteed to occur without divisions.

The opposition sought a particular change to standing orders, which is included in the amendment. Up until now, during these periods it has been possible for a division to be called anyway if a minister came in and simply moved a motion of that nature. This amendment says that can happen only by leave. It means that the capacity that has always been there for government members, in being able to schedule events during that period, will now be available for non-government members as well.

With that, I thank the Leader of the House for what was a constructive negotiation. I will not say it was terse, but there were different moments during the process of the negotiation. There have been a number of different proposals floated for changes to standing orders. Some of them came up in the weekend media and amount to absolute atrocities. They are not in front of us at the moment. We are told that whether or not they will be in the future will depend on the 'mood' of the Leader of the House—which means that at a later date anything could happen. As to what is in front of us at the moment, the opposition will be supporting the amendments.

Question agreed to.