



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



THE SENATE

BILLS

Commonwealth Electoral Amendment Bill 2016

In Committee

SPEECH

Thursday, 17 March 2016

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

SPEECH

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Speaker Collins, Sen Jacinta	Question No.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS (Victoria) (08:49): I indicate that Labor will support amendments (1) and (3) as they do indeed relate to delayed commencement. The date on this occasion is 15 January next year. In reflecting on this issue, I could almost coin this one, Senator Muir, the 'clean hands amendment', because what it does in fact do is attempt to remove immediate self-interest in the way that Senator Cormann had characterised. It does tend to try and make it mutually exclusive from the question of when the next election might be and what that election might be. It takes us past the next election, whether it be a general election or a double dissolution election. In some ways, that is probably the most principled stand.

Given that Senator Di Natale is so concerned about dealing with Senate reform as an issue of principle, it is quite a challenge for him to have put to him a way in which, with clean hands, he could further his principle and avoid the criticisms that have been made about the placement the Greens are putting themselves in—whether wisely or not has often been part of the consideration in the debate—with respect to whether there is a double dissolution or with respect to the next general election.

With regard to amendments (2) and (4), we oppose those for the same reasons we have opposed others, which is Labor's position in relation to optional preferential voting.

The **TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN**: I put the question that amendments (2) and (3) on sheet 7874 moved by Senator Muir be agreed to.

Question negatived.

The **CHAIRMAN**: The question now is that amendment (1) on sheet 7874, moved by Senator Muir, be agreed to.