



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



THE SENATE

**HORSE DISEASE
RESPONSE LEVY BILL 2008**

**HORSE DISEASE RESPONSE
LEVY COLLECTION BILL 2008**

**HORSE DISEASE RESPONSE
LEVY (CONSEQUENTIAL
AMENDMENTS) BILL 2008**

In Committee

SPEECH

Wednesday, 4 February 2009

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

SPEECH

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Questioner
Speaker Xenophon, Sen Nick

Source Senate
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Senator XENOPHON (South Australia) (6.39 pm)—Firstly, I think Senator Colbeck talked about some deals done with the Greens and other crossbenchers. I think he referred to us as the Independents, and Senator Fielding quite rightly corrected him in relation to that. Can I assure Senator Colbeck that there has been no deal. There has been no horse-trading or any sort of trading whatsoever in relation to this. There is some vague allegation that there has been some deal done. There has been no deal done. I have been entirely transparent in the whole process. My principal concern has been the appropriate scrutiny of any regulations. The minister has indicated in broad terms that, subject to, I think, some technical advice, these regulations will not come into force for a period of eight sitting days. However, I note the caveat which the minister in good faith put to that undertaking. My concern is that it is not an unequivocal undertaking, for the quite reasonable reasons the minister outlined in terms of getting appropriate advice. It would be my preference that progress be reported pending that specific advice in relation to that undertaking. To reiterate my position, I will support the bills provided that there is an unequivocal undertaking in those terms about the regulations not coming into force for a period of at least eight sitting days of the Senate in order to allow for appropriate scrutiny of those regulations once they have been prepared.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Senator Parry)—Senator Xenophon, were you asking that progress be reported? That question has to be put if you were.

Senator XENOPHON—Perhaps I have foreshadowed it rather than simply asking for it at this stage, Chair, and thank you for seeking clarification from me. I guess it depends on whether the minister is in a position to go further than what he put earlier. Again, I accept what he says in good faith, but I also note his caveat about the technical advice. I accept the circumstances in which there has been a caveat to that advice. My position is that the undertaking needs to be unequivocal in order for me to support the government in relation to the legislation.