



DPS ref: D23/59839

Senator Pratt  
Committee Secretary  
Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Pratt (Chair)

### Senate Budget Estimates - Department of Parliamentary Services

I would like to correct information provided to the Committee on 13 February 2023 regarding the number of sponsored passes at Australian Parliament House.

During the hearing for DPS, I responded to questioning from Senator David Pocock as follows:

**Senator DAVID POCOCK:** I have some questions about sponsored passes. I'm interested in how many sponsored passes there are at the moment.

**Mr Stefanic:** I might ask Ms Tunngley. She may have that figure at her fingertips or may not.

**Ms Saunders:** If not, we can get that very quickly.

**Senator DAVID POCOCK:** Is there a limit on the number of passes an individual parliamentarian can give out?

**Mr Stefanic:** There is not a limit to how many passes a parliamentarian can sponsor.

**Senator DAVID POCOCK:** Do you know what the biggest number for an individual parliamentarian is?

**Mr Stefanic:** It's probably not something that we would be monitoring for.

**Senator DAVID POCOCK:** Would you be able to find that?

**Mr Stefanic:** What we do is that, at least once a parliament, for anybody that has been sponsored by a parliamentarian, if the parliamentarian ceases to hold office, then those passes also lapse. It's a natural cleansing system for shunting old passes out of the system. But otherwise there isn't really a restriction.

**Ms Saunders:** My understanding of the system is that it would actually be difficult for us to find that information for you. I think we would have to go in and just search name by name, look at the number for each parliamentarian and then let you know—if we were able to—the highest number attributed to a particular parliamentarian. It's not an easy process. It would be a very manual process.

**CHAIR:** Perhaps you might ask about the context of your concerns.

**Senator DAVID POCOCK:** Sure. It's my understanding that some people who work in the childcare centre are on sponsored passes. I'm interested in why they're not on staff passes, given they work in the building.

**Ms Saunders:** Well, they may not all be staff. They might be a partner of a staff member.

**Senator DAVID POCOCK:** But childcare employees are on staff passes to access the building?

**Ms Saunders:** Oh, the employees. Sorry, I thought you were referring to the parents. I'm not sure what category.

**Ms Tuntingley:** I will confirm, but I believe they should be a contractor category and have a building pass.

**Ms Saunders:** Yes—sponsored by DPS.

**Ms Tuntingley:** To answer your question with respect to sponsored passholders, there are approximately 766 passholders that are sponsored. That is as of January 2023.

I wish to correct the number of sponsored passes as at January 2023. The correct figure regarding the number of sponsored passes as at January 2023 is 1,766.

I would appreciate you bringing this to the attention of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Rob Stefanic  
Secretary  
28 March 2023