

HOUSE REVIEW



Selected features of House of Representatives business

Sitting period 13 – 22 June 2023 (no. 60)

The last sitting fortnight for the Winter sittings featured: passage of the appropriation bills and a number of statements on significant matters.

Legislation

Introductions

During the fortnight, 15 Government bills were presented. Subjects included amendments to the *Public Service Act 1999*, amendments to intellectual property laws and a prohibition on publicly displaying prohibited Nazi or Islamic State symbols.

Two private Members' bills were introduced. These related to amendments to the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* to regulate junk food marketing and a ban on gambling advertisements.

Proposed consideration of a private Member's bill

On 14 June, the Member for Goldstein moved to suspend standing orders to enable the bill that she sponsored relating to gambling advertisements to be called on and considered immediately. Six crossbench Members and a Minister made contributions in the 25 minutes allowed for the debate under the standing orders, before the motion was defeated on division (43:12).

Passing the House

Twelve bills passed the House during the fortnight.

This included three 2023-2024 appropriation bills, which were considered pursuant to the House's resolution of 22 May. In accordance with the earlier resolution, Appropriation Bill No. 1 had been returned to the House from the Federation Chamber. As the first item of government business on 13 June, the question on the second reading was put and passed and the bill was read a second time. The bill then stood referred back to the Federation Chamber, where consideration in detail commenced later that afternoon.

Before consideration began, the Deputy Speaker reminded Members that the resolution set the order and timing for consideration of portfolios and that the terms of the resolution provided the dates and times after which the question 'that the proposed expenditure be agreed to' would be put. The proposed expenditures for each portfolio were considered in accordance with this timetable, with the final question—that the remainder of the bill be agreed to—put and passed on 15 June. Appropriation bill No. 2 and parliamentary departments bill No. 1 were then each read a second time in turn and ordered to be reported to the House without amendment. Later that afternoon, all three bills were agreed to and read a third time.

On 13 June, debate was resumed on the second reading of the Nature Repair Market Bill 2023. The Member for Wentworth moved a second reading amendment (that is, an amendment to the question 'That the bill be now read a second time'), to which the Member for Goldstein moved an amendment to insert additional words. Following debate, on 21 June the question was put first on the Member for Goldstein's amendment and then, after this had been defeated, on the Member for Wentworth's amendment. After the second reading was agreed to on division (Ayes 82: Noes 55),

the bill was considered in detail. The Member for Clark, by leave, moved four detail amendments together, which were disagreed to on the voices. The Member for North Sydney then moved two amendments together, by leave, which were also disagreed to on the voices. She then moved a further four amendments, which were agreed to. Eight amendments moved together by the Member for Wentworth, by leave, were also agreed to on the voices, as were four amendments moved by the Member for Warringah and two by the Member for Goldstein. Three further amendments moved by the Member for Goldstein were negatived. Four amendments moved by the Member for Curtin were agreed to, and then the bill, as amended, was agreed to and read a third time. A consequential amendments bill was also read a second and third time.

On the morning of 15 June, the Home Affairs Bill was introduced and then, by leave, passed through all stages, with all questions carried on the voices. The bill related to the termination of the lease held by the government of the Russian Federation on a parcel of land adjacent to Parliament House. Later that day the Deputy Speaker reported a Senate message returning the bill without amendment.

Statements on significant matters

On 14 June, the Minister for the Arts made a statement in relation to the death of songwriter Joy McKean OAM, and the shadow minister then made a statement on the same matter. Another Member, on indulgence, also made a statement before the House resolved to permit further statements in the Federation Chamber. Four Members made statements there on 22 June.

On 21 June, the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister, the Member for Perth, made a statement in relation to the death of Constable Anthony Woods, a Western Australian police officer who died from injuries sustained on duty. The Member for Canning also spoke, before all Members present stood in silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased. The House then resolved to permit further statements in the Federation Chamber, where six Members made statements the following day.

Immediately following prayers and the acknowledgement of country on 22 June, the Minister for Indigenous Australians made a statement on the death of Alfred Neal OAM, a Kuku Djungan elder who was a leader of the 1967 referendum campaign. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also made a statement. A further statement was made in the Federation Chamber later that morning.

Statement by the Speaker

On 22 June, the Speaker made a statement to the House reminding Members of the shared responsibility to improve safety and respect in the Chamber.

Statements by indulgence

On 13 June, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Hunter made statements in relation to the bus crash on Sunday, 11 June, in which 10 people died and others were injured. Also on 13 June, the Member for Cook made a statement by indulgence regarding matters raised in a newspaper report the previous weekend.

On 21 June, prior to question time, both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition made statements by indulgence about the Ashes test cricket series.

The next day, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition made statements about Australian assistance with wildfires in Canada.

Ministerial statement

On 22 June, the Minister for Resources made a ministerial statement, by leave, on the critical minerals strategy. The shadow minister then addressed the House in response.

Personal explanations

Under standing order 68, Members may make personal explanations—that is, an explanation of how they have been misrepresented. There is no opportunity to debate the matter. Members sought to

make personal explanations on several occasions during the fortnight. On 15 and 19 June, the Speaker reminded Members that personal explanations are about informing the House where the Member—not anyone else connected to the matter—has been misrepresented.

Question Time

On occasion during Question Time the Speaker will announce the presence of a distinguished visitor. During the fortnight he informed the House that a range of distinguished visitors were present in the gallery. This included former Speakers, a former Deputy Speaker and a former Clerk, former minister Hon Gareth Evans, representatives from the Australian Local Government Association, a delegation from the Pacific Islands Forum, an Australian Political Exchange Council delegation from the United States, interns from Women Empowerment and Leadership, representatives from Bowel Cancer Australia, a delegation from Vietnam and representatives from MND Australia.

Parliamentary committees

On 22 June, the Chair of the Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests presented a report concerning an application for the publication of a response to a reference made in the House of Representatives on 30 March 2023, under the right of reply procedure adopted by the House in August 1997. The committee considered that the applicant should be given a response and recommended that the response be incorporated in Hansard.

A comprehensive list of committee reports tabled in the House, with hyperlinks, is published in [Last Week in the House](#).

Communication with the Senate

Message traffic with the Senate resumed this fortnight, as both houses were sitting. This included messages regarding the membership of joint committees as well as messages transmitting bills.

On 15 June, the House agreed to amendments to the Public Interest Disclosure Amendment (Review) Bill 2022. On 19 June, the House considered and agreed to Senate amendments to the Treasury Laws Amendment (2023 Measures No. 2) Bill 2023. On 21 June the House agreed to Senate amendments to Treasury Laws Amendment (2022 Measures No. 4) Bill 2022.

On the final day of sitting, the House agreed to amendments to the Education Legislation (Startup Year and Other Measures) Bill 2023. Earlier in the week, the House had considered and agreed to make amendments requested by the Senate to this bill. This two-step process reflects that, when the Senate wishes to amend a part of a bill imposing taxation or appropriating revenue, it does so by request to the House before bill is read a third time in the Senate—thus reserving its right to consider the House's position on the proposed amendments before agreeing to read the bill a third time. Any amendments that the Senate has the power to make are made in the usual way and then considered by the House after the Senate has agreed to the bill.

Also on the last day of sitting, the House agreed to Senate amendments to the Treasury Laws Amendment (Refining and Improving Our Tax System) Bill 2023 and, shortly before the question on the adjournment was proposed, agreed to Senate amendments to the Social Security (Administration) Amendment (Income Management Reform) Bill 2023.

The Speaker reported 11 messages returning bills without amendment or request. This included the Constitution Alteration (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice) 2023, which was passed by an absolute majority in the Senate.

The House is scheduled to meet next on 31 July.

Further information on the work of the House

[Bills and legislation](#)—access bills, explanatory memoranda, amendments, speeches, information about key stages of a bill’s consideration, and a tracking option

[Live Minutes](#)—a real time summary of House decisions and proceedings. When used in conjunction with the [Daily Program](#), the Live Minutes are a simple way to track the House’s work each day

[House of Representatives Practice](#) 7 ed., 2018—the most authoritative guide to House procedure

[House of Representatives Standing and Sessional Orders](#), as at 2 August 2022—the House’s rules of procedure

[Procedural Digest](#)—a record of selected procedural events in the House of Representatives Chamber and the Federation Chamber. It includes Speaker's rulings, precedents and unusual situations.