



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

Parliament House
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600
Tel: (02) 6277 3197
Email: senator.burston@aph.gov.au

27 September 2018

Senator The Hon Scott Ryan
President of the Australian Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear President,

I write to bring to your attention my recent treatment by Senator Pauline Hanson as I believe that she may be in breach of resolutions of the Senate.

On 1 June 2018 Senator Hanson wrote to me informing me that I was no longer the deputy registered officer of Pauline Hanson's One Nation, either at the Federal or State levels of the party. Senator Hanson also asked me to give up my seat in the Senate. That correspondence is attached.

Senator Hanson failed to give me any reasons and as a result I am unable to ensure procedural fairness.

My assumption is that it was because Senator Hanson disagreed with my decision to honour the agreement that I made with the government to support the company tax reduction from 30 to 25 per cent. I explained very clearly that I had agreed to this position and that I am a man of my word. Senator Hanson has been very public in the media that this is the case. Immediately after I advised her of my position in relation to the Company tax cuts she removed me as Party Whip.

I wrote to Senator Hanson on 4 June setting out my concerns, and I attach a copy of this correspondence for your review. I have not received a reply.

It was improper and inappropriate for Senator Hanson to pressure me into changing my vote and I believe that her actions raise concerns that she may be in contempt of the Senate. In particular I am referring to resolutions of the Senate in 1988 regarding parliamentary privilege:

Interference with the Senate

(1) *A person shall not improperly interfere with the free exercise by the Senate or a committee of its authority, or with the free performance by a senator of the senator's duties as a senator.*

Improper influence of senators

(2) *A person shall not, by fraud, intimidation, force or threat of any kind, by the offer or promise of any inducement or benefit of any kind, or by other improper means, influence a senator in the senator's conduct as a senator or induce a senator to be absent from the Senate or a committee.*

Molestation of senators

(4) *A person shall not inflict any punishment, penalty or injury upon, or deprive of any benefit, a senator on account of the senator's conduct as a senator.*

I bring this to your attention as President of the Senate, and ask that Senator Hanson be referred to the Standing Committee of Privileges and Members Interests to inquire into and report on whether Senator Hanson is in contempt of the Senate resolutions of 1988 as described above.

I am happy to provide any additional information that you may deem necessary.

Yours sincerely

BRIAN BURSTON
Senator for New South Wales

attachments



1 June 2018

Senator Brian Burston
Parliament House
Capital Hill
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Brian

I no longer have confidence in you as an officer of Pauline Hanson's One Nation. You have been removed as deputy registered officer in NSW and in the federal party.

Please consider resigning from the Senate seat and handing it back to the party. It would be the honourable thing to do as you would not be a senator but for your association with me.

You describe yourself as loyal to me and I now ask that you demonstrate that loyalty by giving up your seat in the Senate to enable the party to appoint a replacement NSW senator.

I bear you no animosity or ill will. However, I can no longer be confident that you will work as a member of my team, and both our interests will be served if you resign from the Senate.

Yours faithfully

Pauline Hanson



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

Parliament House
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600
Tel: (02) 6277 3197
Email: senator.burston@aph.gov.au

4 June 2018

Senator Pauline Hanson
Australian Senate
Suite S1 88
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

and by email: senator.hanson@aph.gov.au; phanson@datawave.email

Dear Senator Hanson

I refer to your letter informing me that I am no longer the deputy registered officer of Pauline Hanson's One Nation, either at the federal or state level of the party. You also asked me to give up my seat in the Senate to enable you to appoint a replacement senator representing the people of New South Wales.

You say you lost confidence in me, but you fail to give me any reasons. I am unable to answer the case against me without you telling me what it is I am alleged to have done. To act against me so precipitously is a denial of procedural fairness.

My best guess is that you disagree with my decision to honour the agreement with the government to support the company tax reduction from 30 to 25 per cent. I see no reason to walk away from the agreement and I propose to exercise my vote in the Senate consistent with the agreement.

It is improper and inappropriate for you to pressure me into changing my vote and the way you have acted raises possible issues of contempt of the Senate. I draw your attention to resolutions of the Senate in 1988 regarding parliamentary privilege:

Interference with the Senate

(1) A person shall not improperly interfere with the free exercise by the Senate or a committee of its authority, or with the free performance by a senator of the senator's duties as a senator.

Improper influence of senators

(2) A person shall not, by fraud, intimidation, force or threat of any kind, by the offer or promise of any inducement or benefit of any kind, or by other improper means, influence a senator in the senator's conduct as a senator or induce a senator to be absent from the Senate or a committee.

Molestation of senators

(4) A person shall not inflict any punishment, penalty or injury upon, or deprive of any benefit, a senator on account of the senator's conduct as a senator.

In the absence of a proper and reasonable explanation of your conduct, I propose raising the matter with the privileges committee of the Senate. In the meantime, kindly refrain from taking any further or other action that might be regarded as influencing or aggravating the alleged contempt.

~~Yours~~ sincerely

BRIAN BURSTON
Senator for New South Wales