



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA • HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**MARK LATHAM**

Shadow Treasurer  
Manager of Opposition Business  
Member for Werriwa

8 October 2003

Mrs Margaret May  
Chair, Standing Committee on Procedure  
House of Representatives  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE ACT 2600

Dear Mrs May

Thank you for your correspondence dated 18 August 2003 seeking submissions to the Procedure Committee's inquiry into arrangements for Second Reading speeches. Labor supports new Parliamentary arrangements to encourage a greater exchange of views on legislation.

Feedback from Labor Members confirms that the ongoing trial of sessional order 84A in the Main Committee has facilitated a more interactive debating style and led to increased participation in the Main Committee.

It is now appropriate to implement new arrangements to facilitate greater debate in Second Reading speeches in the House. I agree that five minutes be set aside from the maximum speaking time, including speeches by the responsible Minister, in order to allow for questions. Questions and answers should be limited to 30 and 90 seconds respectively. If a Member concludes their speech prior to the maximum time then additional time should be allowed for questions.

It is often the case that, at the end of sitting periods, the time limit for Second Reading speeches is shortened to facilitate the passage of legislation. Under such circumstances, the Opposition would wish to retain the new arrangements allowing for questions, allowing five minutes at the end of all Second Reading speeches.

Parliament House, CANBERRA, ACT 2600

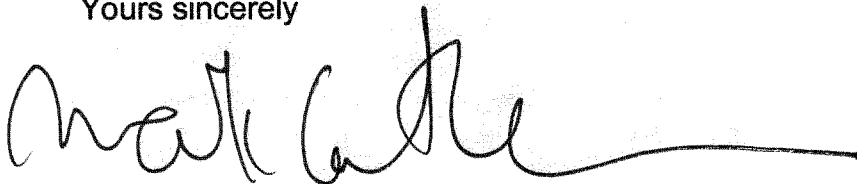
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The continued operation of sessional order 84A in the Main Committee concurrently with the trial of new arrangements in the House could present some procedural difficulties. Therefore, I would urge that the procedural arrangements between the House and the Main Committee be standardised.

I would be happy to attend one of the roundtables scheduled for discussion of these matters. The contact in my office is Phillippe Allen on extension 4393.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Latham', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Latham  
Manager of Opposition Business  
Member for Werriwa