

2008

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

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1 MEETING OF SENATE

The Senate met at 9.30 am. The President (Senator the Honourable John Hogg) took the chair and read prayers.

2 TEMPORARY CHAIR OF COMMITTEES

The President tabled a warrant, dated 18 September 2008, revoking the warrant nominating Senator Joyce as a temporary chair of committees.

3 PETITION

The following petition, lodged with the Clerk by Senator Siewert, was received:

From 4 156 petitioners, requesting that the Senate support the reinstatement of the Racial Discrimination Act in the Northern Territory.

4 NOTICES

Senator Bernardi: To move on the next day of sitting—That the Senate—

- (a) congratulates the 170 Australian Paralympic athletes and 121 officials, Australia's largest ever overseas team, on their success and efforts in the recent Paralympic Games in Beijing; and
- (b) notes that the 2008 Australian Paralympic team brought home a total of 79 medals, including 23 gold, placing Australia fifth on the 2008 Paralympic Games medal tally. (*general business notice of motion no. 203*)

The Chair of the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee (Senator Crossin): To move on the next day of sitting—That the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee be authorised to hold a public meeting during the sitting of the Senate on Tuesday, 23 September 2008, from 4 pm, to take evidence for the committee's inquiry into the provisions of the Same-Sex Relationships (Equal Treatment in Commonwealth Laws—General Law Reform) Bill 2008. (*general business notice of motion no. 204*)

The Chair of the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee (Senator Crossin): To move on the next day of sitting—That the time for the presentation of reports of the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee be extended as follows:

- (a) Same-Sex Relationships (Equal Treatment in Commonwealth Laws—Superannuation) Bill 2008 and the provisions of the Same-Sex Relationships (Equal Treatment in Commonwealth Laws—General Law Reform) Bill 2008—to 8 October 2008; and
- (b) Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Laws Bill 2008 [No. 2]—to 14 October 2008. (*general business notice of motion no. 205*)

The Chairman of the Standing Committee on Regulations and Ordinances (Senator Wortley): To move 15 sitting days after today—That the Higher Education in External Territories Guidelines 2008, made under section 238-10 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, be disallowed.

The Leader of the Australian Greens (Senator Bob Brown): To move on 23 September 2008—That the Senate calls on the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Water (Mr Garrett) to ensure that the assessment of the proposed dam on the Mary River in Queensland include all prudent and feasible alternatives. (*general business notice of motion no. 206*)

5 ORDER OF BUSINESS—REARRANGEMENT

The Minister for Human Services (Senator Ludwig) moved—That the order of general business for consideration today be as follows:

- (a) general business notice of motion no. 201 standing in the name of Senator Fifield relating to the management of the economy; and
- (b) orders of the day relating to government documents.

Question put and passed.

6 COMMUNITY AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE—REFERENCE

The Chair of the Community Affairs Committee (Senator Moore), pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved business of the Senate notice of motion no. 1—That the following matter be referred to the Community Affairs Committee for inquiry and report by the last sitting day in March 2009:

Progress with the implementation of the recommendations in the reports by the Community Affairs References Committee, *Lost Innocents: Righting the Record*, a report on child migration tabled in August 2001, and *Forgotten Australians*, a report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children tabled in August 2004.

Question put and passed.

7 CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION

The Minister for Human Services (Senator Ludwig), pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved government business notice of motion no. 1—That the provisions of paragraphs (5) to (8) of standing order 111 not apply to the following bills, allowing them to be considered during this period of sittings:

- First Home Saver Accounts (Further Provisions) Amendment Bill 2008
- First Home Saver Account Providers Supervisory Levy Imposition Bill 2008
- International Tax Agreements Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2008.

Document: Senator Ludwig tabled the following document:

Consideration of legislation—Statement of reasons for introduction and passage of the International Tax Agreements Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2008 in the 2008 spring sittings.

Question put and passed.

8 COMMUNITY AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE—LEAVE TO MEET DURING SITTINGS

Senator McEwen, at the request of the Chair of the Community Affairs Committee (Senator Moore) and pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 197—That the Community Affairs Committee be authorised to hold public meetings during the sittings of the Senate, from 3 pm, as follows:

- (a) on Monday, 22 September 2008, to take evidence for the committee's inquiry into the draft National Health (Pharmaceutical Benefits — Charges) Regulations 2008; and
- (b) on Thursday, 25 September 2008, to take evidence for the committee's inquiries into the draft National Health (Pharmaceutical Benefits — Charges) Regulations 2008, the Poker Machine Harm Reduction Tax (Administration) Bill 2008, the Poker Machine Harm Minimisation Bill 2008 and the ATMs and Cash Facilities in Licensed Venues Bill 2008.

Question put and passed.

9 COMMUNITY AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE—EXTENSIONS OF TIME TO REPORT

Senator McEwen, at the request of the Chair of the Community Affairs Committee (Senator Moore) and pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 198—That the time for the presentation of reports of the Community Affairs Committee be extended as follows:

- (a) special disability trusts—to 16 October 2008; and
- (b) petrol sniffing and substance abuse in central Australia—to the last sitting day in March 2009.

Question put and passed.

10 RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT—STANDING COMMITTEE—LEAVE TO MEET DURING SITTING

Senator McEwen, at the request of the Chair of the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee (Senator Sterle) and pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 199—That the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee be authorised to hold a public meeting during the sitting of the Senate on Thursday, 18 September 2008, from 4.30 pm, to take evidence for the committee's inquiries into the management of the Murray-Darling Basin system and the Emergency Water (Murray-Darling Basin Rescue) Bill 2008.

Question put and passed.

11 FOREIGN AFFAIRS—INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

Senator Ludlam, pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 182—That the Senate—

- (a) notes that:
 - (i) on 7 September 2001, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 55/282 declaring that the International Day of Peace should be observed annually on the fixed date of 21 September, as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence, and
 - (ii) the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his predecessor, Kofi Annan, have urged member states to support the observance of global ceasefire on the day;
- (b) supports non-government organisations in Australia who intend to observe the day through vigils, concerts and walks;
- (c) calls on the Australian Government to actively support the observance of a ceasefire in Iraq, East Timor, Afghanistan, the Solomon Islands, Egypt (the Sinai Peninsula) and Sudan on Sunday, 21 September 2008, by ensuring that Australia's armed forces:

- (i) do not engage in hostilities for the duration of 21 September, unless provoked to do so in self-defence, and
 - (ii) promote the observance of a global ceasefire for the duration of 21 September; and
- (d) requests that the Australian Government encourage other nation states also to support the observance of a global ceasefire.

Question put.

The Senate divided—

AYES, 6

Senators—

Brown, Bob	Ludlam	Siewert (Teller)	Xenophon
Hanson-Young	Milne		

NOES, 53

Senators—

Adams	Colbeck	Forshaw	Moore
Arbib	Collins	Furner	Nash
Barnett	Coonan	Heffernan	Parry
Bernardi	Cormann	Hogg	Polley
Bilyk	Crossin	Humphries	Pratt
Birmingham	Eggleston	Hurley	Ronaldson
Bishop	Ellison	Hutchins	Ryan
Boswell	Farrell	Joyce	Stephens
Boyce	Feeney	Ludwig	Sterle
Brandis	Ferguson	Lundy	Williams
Brown, Carol	Fielding	Macdonald	Wortley
Bushby	Fierravanti-Wells	Marshall	
Cameron	Fifield	McEwen (Teller)	
Cash	Fisher	McGauran	

Question negatived.

12 FOREIGN AFFAIRS—BURMA

Senator Ludlam, pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 202—That the Senate—

- (a) notes that:
- (i) 18 September 2008 marks one year since the peaceful uprising in Burma that became known as the Saffron Revolution, and
 - (ii) a fortnight later this pro-democracy uprising was brutally suppressed by the Burmese military regime at the cost of an unknown number of lives, injuries and ongoing detention;
- (b) calls on the Australian Government to:
- (i) use all diplomatic means available to encourage the Burmese regime to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners, and engage in genuine dialogue with pro-democracy and ethnic representatives towards democratic reform and national reconciliation,
 - (ii) work actively with the United Nations (UN) to ensure that its ‘good offices role’ delivers progress, including on the release of political prisoners,
 - (iii) maintain pressure on the Burmese regime to engage in reform through targeted financial sanctions and travel restrictions,

- (iv) urge the Burmese regime to respect the fundamental human rights of the Burmese people, including freedom of religion, and
- (v) evaluate what other measures the Government can take to support the Burmese pro-democracy movement; and

(c) expresses its support for the democratic aspirations of the people of Burma.

Question put and passed.

13 REGULATIONS AND ORDINANCES—STANDING COMMITTEE—DOCUMENT

Chairman of the Standing Committee on Regulations and Ordinances (Senator Wortley) tabled the following document:

Regulations and Ordinances—Standing Committee—Ministerial correspondence relating to the scrutiny of delegated legislation, March 2007 to June 2008.

14 TREATIES—JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE—94TH REPORT

The Deputy Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties (Senator McGauran) tabled the following report:

Treaties—Joint Standing Committee—94th report—Treaties tabled on 14 May 2008, dated September 2008.

Senator McGauran moved—That the Senate take note of the report.

Debate ensued.

Question put and passed.

15 RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT—ADMINISTRATION OF THE CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY AUTHORITY (CASA) AND RELATED MATTERS

The Chair of the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee (Senator Sterle) tabled the following report and documents:

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport—Standing Committee—Administration of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and related matters—Report, dated September 2008, Hansard record of proceedings, documents presented to the committee, additional information and submissions.

Report ordered to be printed on the motion of Senator Sterle.

Senator Sterle moved—That the Senate take note of the report.

Debate ensued.

Documents: Senator Heffernan, by leave, tabled the following documents:

Transport—Qantas—Newspaper articles—

‘MAS: Qantas staff monitored work’, *New Straits Times*, dated 9 August 2008.

‘Qantas won’t send two planes for maintenance work here’, *New Sunday Times*, dated 10 August 2008.

Debate adjourned till the next day of sitting, Senator Heffernan in continuation.

16 AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL AMENDMENT BILL 2008

A message from the House of Representatives was reported transmitting for the concurrence of the Senate the following bill:

Message no. 150, dated 17 September 2008—A Bill for an Act to amend *Australian Research Council Act 2001*, and for related purposes.

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship (Senator Evans) moved—That this bill may proceed without formalities and be now read a first time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a first time.

Senator Evans moved—That this bill be now read a second time.

Consideration of legislation: Pursuant to order, the debate was adjourned and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the first day in the next period of sittings.

17 STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT—SELECT COMMITTEE—REPORT

Pursuant to order, the Chair of the Select Committee on State Government Financial Management (Senator Macdonald) tabled the following report and documents:

State Government Financial Management—Select Committee—Report, dated September 2008, Hansard record of proceedings, documents presented to the committee, additional information and submissions.

Report ordered to be printed on the motion of Senator Macdonald.

Senator Macdonald, by leave, moved—That the Senate take note of the report.

Debate ensued.

Debate adjourned till the next day of sitting, Senator Bushby in continuation.

18 PROCEDURE—STANDING COMMITTEE—FIRST REPORT OF 2008—CONSIDERATION

Order of the day read for the consideration of the Procedure Committee's first report of 2008.

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship (Senator Evans) moved—That—

- (a) the amendment to standing order 72, contained in attachment 3 of the report, be adopted as a temporary order with effect to the end of 2008; and
- (b) the amendment to standing 25(9), at page 3 of the report, be adopted.

Debate ensued.

The Leader of the Australian Greens (Senator Bob Brown), by leave, moved the following amendment:

Omit paragraph (a), substitute:

- (a) standing order 72 be amended by omitting paragraph (2) and that this amendment operate as a temporary order with effect to the end of 2008.

Debate ensued.

On the motion of Senator Parry the debate was adjourned till a later hour.

19 ORDER OF BUSINESS—REARRANGEMENT

The Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector (Senator Stephens) moved—That the government business order of the day relating to the International Tax Agreements Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2008 be considered from 1.30 pm till not later than 2 pm today.

Question put and passed.

20 TAX LAWS AMENDMENT (LUXURY CAR TAX) BILL 2008 AND RELATED BILLS—CONSIDERATION

Order of the day read for the adjourned debate on the motion of the Minister for Superannuation and Corporate Law (Senator Sherry)—That the Tax Laws Amendment (Luxury Car Tax) Bill 2008, A New Tax System (Luxury Car Tax Imposition—General) Amendment Bill 2008, A New Tax System (Luxury Car Tax Imposition—Customs) Amendment Bill 2008 and A New Tax System (Luxury Car Tax Imposition—Excise) Amendment Bill 2008, be now read a second time.

Debate resumed.

At 1.30 pm: Debate was interrupted while Senator Fifield was speaking.

21 INTERNATIONAL TAX AGREEMENTS AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2008

Order read for the adjourned debate on the motion of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing (Senator McLucas)—That this bill be now read a second time.

Debate resumed.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

No amendments to the bill were circulated and no senator required that it be considered in committee.

On the motion of Senator McLucas the bill was read a third time.

Suspension of sitting: On the motion of Senator McLucas the sitting of the Senate was suspended at 1.38 pm till 2 pm.

At 2 pm—

22 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were answered.

23 MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF ANSWERS

Senator Coonan moved—That the Senate take note of the answers given by ministers to questions without notice asked today.

Debate ensued.

Question put and passed.

24 **HEALTH—DEMENTIA AWARENESS WEEK—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—DOCUMENT**

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing (Senator McLucas) tabled the following document:

Health—Dementia Awareness Week—Ministerial statement by the Minister for Ageing (Ms Elliot), dated 18 September 2008.

25 **FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE—JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—AUSTRALIA'S TRADE WITH MEXICO AND THE REGION**

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing (Senator McLucas) tabled the following document:

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade—Joint Standing Committee—Report—Australia's trade with Mexico and the region—Government response.

26 **SELECTION OF BILLS—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT NO. 11 OF 2008**

Senator Sterle, by leave and at the request of the Acting Chair of the Selection of Bills Committee (Senator McEwen), tabled the following report:

SELECTION OF BILLS COMMITTEE

REPORT NO. 11 OF 2008

1. The committee met in private session on Thursday, 18 September 2008 at 12.40 pm.
2. The committee resolved to recommend—That the *provisions* of the Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Other Legislation Amendment (Further 2008 Budget and Other Measures) Bill 2008 be *referred immediately* to the Community Affairs Committee for inquiry and report by 10 November 2008.
3. The committee resolved to recommend—That the following bills *not* be referred to committees:
 - Defence Amendment (Parliamentary Approval of Overseas Service) Bill 2008 [No. 2]
 - Emergency Assistance Fund for the Lower Lakes and Coorong Region of South Australia Bill 2008 [No. 2]
 - International Tax Agreements Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2008
 - Plastic Bag Levy (Assessment and Collection) Bill 2002 [2008]
 - Restoring Territory Rights (Voluntary Euthanasia Legislation) Bill 2008.

The committee recommends accordingly.

4. The committee deferred consideration of the following bills to its next meeting:
 - Archives Amendment Bill 2008
 - Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority Bill 2008
 - Broadcasting Legislation Amendment (Digital Radio) Bill 2008
 - Financial Transaction Reports Amendment (Transitional Arrangements) Bill 2008.

Anne McEwen
Acting Chair
18 September 2008.

Senator Sterle moved—That the report be adopted.

Question put and passed.

27 DOCUMENTS

The following document was tabled by the Clerk:

[Legislative instruments are identified by a Federal Register of Legislative Instruments (FRLI) number]

Civil Aviation Act—Civil Aviation Regulations—Instrument No. CASA EX63/08—Exemption – refuelling with passengers on board [F2008L03236]—Explanatory Statement [*in substitution for explanatory statement tabled with instrument on 15 September 2008*].

28 INDEXED LISTS OF DEPARTMENTAL AND AGENCY FILES—ORDER FOR PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS—DOCUMENTS

The following documents were tabled pursuant to the order of the Senate of 30 May 1996, as amended:

Indexed lists of departmental and agency files for the period 1 January to 30 June 2008—Statements of compliance—

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Human Services portfolio agencies.

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government portfolio agencies.

29 ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS—STANDING COMMITTEE—DOCUMENT—GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2008

Senator Parry, by leave, tabled the following document:

Environment, Communications and the Arts—Standing Committee—Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2008—Additional comments by Senator Joyce.

30 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Deputy President (Senator Ferguson) informed the Senate that the President had received a letter requesting changes in the membership of a committee.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing (Senator McLucas), by leave, moved—That senators be discharged from and appointed to the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee as follows:

Substitute member: Senator Siewert to replace Senator Milne for the committee's inquiry into natural resource management and conservation challenges

Participating member: Senator Milne.

Question put and passed.

31 PROCEDURE—STANDING COMMITTEE—FIRST REPORT OF 2008—CONSIDERATION

Order of the day read for the adjourned debate on the motion of the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship (Senator Evans)—*and on the amendment moved by the Leader of the Australian Greens (Senator Bob Brown) (see entry no. 18)*.

Reference to committee: The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing (Senator McLucas) moved the following amendment to Senator Bob Brown's proposed amendment:

Omit "standing order 72 be amended by omitting paragraph (2) and that this amendment operate as a temporary order with effect to the end of 2008", substitute "the amendment to standing order 72(2) contained in attachment 3 of the report be referred to the Procedure Committee for further inquiry and report".

Question—That Senator McLucas' amendment to Senator Bob Brown's proposed amendment be agreed to—put and passed.

Question—That the amendment, as amended, be agreed to—put and passed.

Main question, as amended, put and passed.

Accordingly, standing order 25(9)(d) was amended to read as follows:

- (d) The deputy chair shall act as the chair of the committee when the member elected as chair is absent from a meeting of the committee or the position of chair is temporarily vacant.

General business was called on.

32 ECONOMICS—MANAGEMENT OF THE ECONOMY

Senator Fifield, pursuant to notice, moved general business notice of motion no. 201—That the Senate condemns the Rudd Government for its reckless management of the Australian economy in a time of global economic challenge, including:

- (a) the Government's irresponsibility in talking down the Australian economy;
- (b) the massive collapse in consumer and business confidence since the election of the Rudd Government;
- (c) the delivery of a budget that forecasts an increase in unemployment;
- (d) the Government's raising of inflationary expectations and failure to honour its promise to address cost of living pressures; and
- (e) the absence of a coherent economic strategy and a focus on presentation rather than policy.

Debate ensued.

At 6 pm: Debate was interrupted while Senator Williams was speaking.

33 GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS—ORDERS OF THE DAY—CONSIDERATION

The following orders of the day relating to government documents were considered:

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority—Report for 2006-07. Motion of Senator Nash to take note of document called on. Debate adjourned till Thursday at general business, Senator Macdonald in continuation.

Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997—Live-stock mortalities during exports by sea—Report for the period 1 July to 31 December 2007. Motion to take note of document agreed to.

Which way home? A new approach to homelessness—Green paper by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Housing, dated May 2008. Motion of Senator Macdonald to take note of document agreed to.

Australian Communications and Media Authority—National Relay Service provider performance—Report for 2006-07. Motion of Senator Macdonald to take note of document agreed to.

NetAlert Limited—Report for 2006-07—Statement relating to exemption from reporting requirements. Motion of Senator Barnett to take note of document called on. On the motion of Senator Macdonald debate was adjourned till Thursday at general business.

Regional Forest Agreement between the Commonwealth and Tasmania—Report—Inquiry on the progress with implementation of the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (1997)—Second five yearly review, dated February 2008. Motion of Senator Barnett to take note of document called on. Debate adjourned till Thursday at general business, Senator Macdonald in continuation.

Australian Maritime College—Report for 2006-07 [Final report]. Motion of Senator Barnett to take note of document agreed to.

Treaties—*Multilateral*—Explanatory statement 2 of 2008—Amendment, adopted 1 October 2007, to Annex 1 of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) International Convention Against Doping in Sport of 19 October 2005. Motion of Senator Boyce to take note of document agreed to.

Treaties—*Bilateral*—Australia-Chile Free Trade Agreement—Text, together with the national interest analysis, regulation impact statement and annexures. Motion of Senator McEwen to take note of document called on. On the motion of Senator Carol Brown debate was adjourned till Thursday at general business.

AusLink—Report for 2006-07. Motion of Senator Macdonald to take note of document called on. Debate adjourned till Thursday at general business, Senator Macdonald in continuation.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare—Report—Australia's health 2008—Eleventh biennial report. Motion of Senator Boyce to take note of document called on. Debate adjourned till Thursday at general business, Senator Boyce in continuation.

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)—NHMRC Licensing Committee—Report on the operation of the *Research Involving Human Embryos Act 2002* for the period 1 October 2007 to 31 March 2008. Motion of Senator Barnett to take note of document agreed to.

Treaties—*Multilateral*—Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Kyoto, 11 December 1997, [2008] ATS 2)—Text, together with national interest analysis and annexures. Motion of Senator Macdonald to take note of document agreed to.

Indigenous Business Australia—Corporate plan 2008-2013. Motion of Senator Macdonald to take note of document called on. Debate adjourned till Thursday at general business, Senator Macdonald in continuation.

General business concluded.

34 COMMITTEE REPORTS AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSES—ORDERS OF THE DAY—CONSIDERATION

The following orders of the day relating to committee reports and government responses were considered:

Environment, Communications and the Arts—Standing Committee—Report—Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2008. Motion of Senator Collins to take note of report called on. On the motion of Senator Carol Brown debate was adjourned till the next day of sitting.

Procedure—Standing Committee—First report of 2008—Restructuring question time; Reference of bills to committees; Questions to chairs of committees; Deputy chairs of committees; Leave to make statements. Motion of the chair of the committee (Senator Ferguson) to take note of report debated.

The Leader of the Family First Party (Senator Fielding) moved the following amendment:

At the end of the motion, add “, but the Senate is of the opinion that, instead of restructuring question time in a manner that could reduce the accountability of ministers to the Senate, the rules relating to questions and answers, contained in past presidential rulings, which require, amongst other things, that questions actually be questions relating to ministerial responsibilities, and that answers be responsive and relevant to the questions, be written into the standing orders, and that the Procedure Committee, with the assistance of external expert advisers, review the effectiveness of question time and the application of those rules at the end of each period of sittings”..

Debate ensued.

On the motion of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing (Senator McLucas) the debate was adjourned till the next day of sitting.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport—Standing Committee—Interim report—Meat marketing. Motion of the chair of the committee (Senator Sterle) to take note of report agreed to.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport—Standing Committee—Interim report—Climate change and the Australian agricultural sector. Motion of the chair of the committee (Senator Sterle) to take note of report agreed to.

Australian Crime Commission—Joint Statutory Committee—Report—Inquiry into the *Australian Crime Commission Amendment Act 2007*. Motion of the chair of the committee (Senator Hutchins) to take note of report agreed to.

Environment, Communications and the Arts—Standing Committee—Report—Waste management in Australia (including consideration of the Drink Container Recycling Bill 2008). Motion of the chair of the committee (Senator McEwen) to take note of report called on. On the motion of Senator Carol Brown debate was adjourned till the next day of sitting.

Environment, Communications and the Arts—Standing Committee—Report—Save Our Solar (Solar Rebate Protection) Bill 2008 [No. 2]. Motion of the chair of the committee (Senator McEwen) to take note of report called on. Debate adjourned till the next day of sitting, Senator Macdonald in continuation.

35 ADJOURNMENT

The Acting Deputy President (Senator Bishop) proposed the question—That the Senate do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

The Senate adjourned at 6.55 pm till Monday, 22 September 2008 at 12.30 pm.

36 ATTENDANCE

Present, all senators except Senators O’Brien* and Wong* (* on leave).

HARRY EVANS
Clerk of the Senate