

# HOUSE REVIEW



## Selected features of House of Representatives business

Sitting period 14-16 May (no. 69)

The first week of the Winter sittings featured the swearing-in of a new Member and the presentation of the Budget and the Budget reply speech.

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### **New Member for Cook sworn in**

Just before Question Time on the first day of the sittings, the Speaker announced that he had received a return to the writ which he had issued on 11 March for the election of a Member to serve for the division of Cook, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr Morrison. By the endorsement on the writ, it was certified that Simon Peter Kennedy had been elected. Mr Kennedy was admitted and then made and subscribed the affirmation of allegiance required by law. Mr Albanese and Mr Dutton, by indulgence, made statements welcoming him.

### **Condolence motions**

On 14 May the Prime Minister moved a condolence motion on the deaths of Yixuan Cheng, Pikria Darchia, Ash Good, Dawn Singleton, Faraz Tahir and Jade Young. The Leader of the Opposition seconded the motion and spoke, along with Ms Spender, the local Member, before all Members rose in silence. Debate was adjourned and the order of the day referred to the Federation Chamber, where further speeches were made on 15 May.

Later on 14 May, the Speaker reported that the condolence motions for the Honourable Gerard (Gerry) Leslie Hand AM and Lance Corporal Jack Patrick Fitzgibbon had been debated in the Federation Chamber and were returned to the House. The motions were agreed to, and all Members present rose in silence for each motion as a mark of respect.

### **Legislation**

#### *Budget 2024-2025*

At 7.30pm on Tuesday, 14 May a message from the Governor-General was announced by the Speaker, recommending in accordance with the Constitution, an appropriation for the purposes of the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2024-2025. The Treasurer presented Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2024-2025 which was read a first time. The Treasurer then moved the second reading and made the Budget speech. Following the adjournment of debate, the Assistant Treasurer presented Budget Papers 1-4, a women's budget statement and a regional budget statement. The Assistant Treasurer then presented Appropriation Bill (No. 2), Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) and two additional bills which propose additional annual appropriations for 2023-24 primarily for the Department of Social Services and the Department of Defence. None of these bills was listed on the House's formal agenda, the Notice Paper for 14 May because standing orders enable Appropriation bills to be presented without notice. However, the Daily Program issued on 14 May listed the Appropriation bills.

On Thursday evening, the Leader of the Opposition spoke in reply on resumption of debate on the second reading of Appropriation Bill (No. 1). Under the standing orders, there is no time limit for the speeches by the Treasurer and the Leader of the Opposition on the main appropriation bill. All other Members will have 15 minutes each when debate is resumed.

It is the usual practice for the Speaker to make a statement reminding Members about the particular arrangements for the Budget speech and Budget reply including the visitors in the galleries and how disorder will be managed. The Speaker noted to Members that the clock will be on during the speeches of the Treasurer and the Leader of the Opposition but only as a guide.

#### *Introductions*

During the week nine Government bills were presented, including three Senate bills.

#### *Passing the House*

During the week eleven bills passed the House.

#### *New Vehicle Efficiency Standard Bill 2024*

On Thursday, the Leader of the House moved a postponement of items intervening before the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard Bill 2024. The order in which items of business are taken in the House is set by the order on the Notice Paper. A change to the set order can be made by the selective postponement of items of business and only a Minister may move to change the order of government business.

Following the postponement, the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard Bill 2024 was called on, the question on the second reading was immediately put as no Member rose to speak on the resumption of the debate. The second reading was agreed on the voices. The closure and subsequent question on the second reading were carried on division. Leave was sought for the third reading to be moved immediately and when refused, the Leader of the House moved a contingent motion to suspend standing orders to allow the third reading to take place without delay. This motion was agreed to on division. During the debate on the question on the third reading, closure of question was moved and carried on division. The House agreed to the third reading on division and the bill was read a third time.

When debate resumed on the second reading of a related bill, the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2024, the Leader of the House immediately moved a closure of question which was agreed to on division as was the question on the second reading. The Leader of the House again moved a contingent motion to allow the third reading to take place without delay, and this motion and the question on the third reading of the bill were resolved on division and the bill was read a third time.

Before the next item of business was called on, the Member for Fairfax moved a suspension of standing and sessional orders. Four Members spoke to the debate on the motion until the time allotted for debate expired and the question on the motion was negatived on division.

#### **Ministerial statements**

On Wednesday 15 May, the Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, by leave made a ministerial statement relating to the regional ministerial budget statement. The Leader of the Nationals addressed the House in reply.

#### **Gendered violence – motion by the Member for Warringah**

On Thursday evening, the Leader of the House moved a suspension of standing and sessional orders to allow the Member for Warringah to move a motion without notice and undertake a debate for an hour with time limits for Members which passed on the voices. The Member for Warringah subsequently moved the motion related to domestic and family violence and 12 Members and a Minister made contributions following an extension of time required by a Minister under the terms of the resolution to suspend standing orders. At the conclusion of the time the question was put and passed. The Leader of the House noted that there were more Members wishing to speak and tabled a document, moved that the House take note of the document and the debate was adjourned.

## **Federation Chamber**

The Federation Chamber did not meet on Tuesday, as it was Budget night. It met for extended hours on Thursday.

On Tuesday, the Leader of the House declared eight bills referred to the Federation Chamber at the adjournment of debates on the motions for their second readings. However, the Parliamentary Business Resources Legislation Amendment (Review Implementation and other Measures) Bill 2024 proceeded through all stages in the House.

On Wednesday and Thursday, three bills were fully considered by the Federation Chamber and returned to the House, two bills were returned with unresolved questions including the Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Amendment Bill 2024 which had unresolved questions for each of the detailed amendments moved by the Member for Indi. Upon return to the House, a question was put on the amendments and negated on division. The bill was passed without amendment. The Digital ID Bill 2024 was returned with an unresolved question on the second reading, considered immediately upon return and the question on the second reading was agreed on division.

## **Parliamentary Committees**

During the sittings 47 government responses to Committee reports were presented in the House. The timeframe for government responses to House and Joint committee reports is determined by the resolution adopted by the House on 29 September 2010. Government departments have six months from the presentation of the report in the House to provide a response to the committee.

After question time on Thursday, the Speaker presented the Speaker's responses to certain recommendations of the Standing Committee on Procedure, *Raising the standard: inquiry into recommendations 10 and 27 of Set the standard: report on the independent review into Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces*.

## **Communication with the Senate**

Message traffic with the Senate related to bills and parliamentary committees and their membership.

The Treasury Laws Amendment (Support for Small Business and Charities and Other Measures) Bill 2023 was returned from the Senate with amendments. These amendments were considered on Wednesday and disagreed to on division. The Assistant Treasurer then provided reasons for the House of Representatives for disagreeing to the amendments of the Senate and moved that the reasons be adopted by the House which passed on the voices. Standing orders provide that if the House disagrees with Senate amendments, written reasons for this disagreement need to be presented to the House a motion moved immediately that they are adopted. A schedule of the amendments disagreed together with the reasons was transmitted to the Senate under cover of a message.

On Thursday, a message transmitting a resolution of the Senate seeking the concurrence of the House in establishing a Joint Select Committee on Social Media and Australian Society was received by the House. Once the House agreed to consider the message immediately, a Minister moved that the resolution be agreed to and that a message be sent to the Senate acquainting it of this resolution. After debate, the resolution was carried on the voices. Later that day, Members were appointed to this committee.

The House is scheduled to meet next on 28 May.

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### ***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.