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1 MEETING OF SENATE

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

2 AUSTRALIAN TECHNICAL COLLEGES (FLEXIBILITY IN ACHIEVING AUSTRALIA'S SKILLS NEEDS) AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2) 2006

Order of the day read for the adjourned debate on the motion of the Minister for Community Services (Senator Scullion)—That this bill be now read a second time—*and on the amendment moved by Senator Carr:*

At the end of the motion, add “but the Senate considers that the present government has been complacent and neglectful about the Australian economy by:

- (a) presiding over a skills crisis through its continued failure over more than 10 long years in office to ensure Australians get the training they need to get a skilled job and meet the skills needs of the economy;
- (b) failing to:
 - (i) make the necessary investments in our schools and technical and further education systems to create opportunities for young Australians to access high quality vocational education and training, including at schools, and
 - (ii) increase the number of school-based traditional apprentices and provide funding support for schools in taking up the places;
- (c) creating expensive, inefficient, stand-alone colleges, without cooperation with the states within the existing vocational education and training framework;
- (d) riding roughshod over the states and territories in establishing these colleges, despite the role the states and territories play in vocational education and training;
- (e) making Australian industry wait until 2010 for the Australian technical colleges to produce their first qualified tradesperson; and
- (f) failing to provide support to other regions that have skill shortages, but are not listed for a technical college”.

Debate resumed.

At 12.45 pm: Debate was interrupted while Senator Carol Brown was speaking.

3 MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Matters of public interest were discussed.

At 2 pm—

4 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were answered.

5 UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE—STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT

The President made a statement relating to unparliamentary language and a matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (Senator Evans) on 27 February 2007.

6 ORDERS FOR PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS—EXPLANATION

The Leader of the Australian Greens (Senator Bob Brown), pursuant to standing order 164, asked the Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation (Senator Abetz) to explain why the following orders for the production of documents had not been complied with:

- (a) the orders of 12 May and 14 June 2005 relating to a proposed pulp mill in Tasmania; and
- (b) the order of 21 June 2005 relating to the deductible gift recipient status of environment groups.

Senator Abetz indicated that an explanation would be provided.

7 ENVIRONMENT—NUCLEAR POWER—ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Senator Carr moved—That the Senate take note of the answers given by the Minister for Finance and Administration (Senator Minchin) and the Minister for the Arts and Sport (Senator Brandis) to questions without notice asked by Senators Carr and Marshall today relating to nuclear power.

Debate ensued.

Question put and passed.

8 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES—PROPOSED ACCESS CARD—ANSWER TO QUESTION

Senator Stott Despoja moved—That the Senate take note of the answer given by the Minister for Human Services (Senator Ian Campbell) to a question without notice asked by Senator Stott Despoja today relating to a proposed health benefits, veterans' and social services access card.

Question put and passed.

9 NOTICES

Senator Bartlett: To move on the next day of sitting—That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act to amend the *Migration Act 1958* to provide fair access to judicial review of migration decisions. ***Migration Legislation Amendment (Access to Judicial Review of Migration Decisions) Bill 2007.*** (*general business notice of motion no. 727*)

Senator Bartlett: To move on the next day of sitting—That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act to amend the *Migration Act 1958* to remove unjust restrictions on applications for protection visas, and for related purposes. ***Migration Legislation Amendment (Removal of Unjust Restrictions) Bill 2007.*** (*general business notice of motion no. 728*)

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

- (a) notes:
 - (i) that Mr David Hicks remains in Guantanamo Bay despite all British prisoners having been released by request of their government, and
 - (ii) the failure of the Howard Government to request that Mr Hicks be released; and
- (b) calls on the Government to place a request with the Government of the United States of America for Mr Hicks to be released. (*general business notice of motion no. 729*)

Senator Nettle: To move on the next day of sitting—That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act to amend the *Marriage Act 1961* to create marriage equality for all relationships regardless of sexuality or gender identity, and for related purposes. ***Marriage (Relationships Equality) Amendment Bill 2007***. (*general business notice of motion no. 730*)

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

(a) notes that:

- (i) nuclear energy is not economically viable in Australia,
- (ii) nuclear energy is not a climate change solution for Australia, and
- (iii) the delay in establishing nuclear power would only exacerbate the 11 years of inaction under the Howard Government; and

(b) calls on the Government to publish the details of any plans, including possible locations, for nuclear reactors and high level nuclear waste dumps in Australia. (*general business notice of motion no. 731*)

Senator Nettle: To move on the next day of sitting—That the Senate insists that Australia's teachers, through their unions, be directly involved in formulating a national curriculum. (*general business notice of motion no. 732*)

Senator Murray: To move on the next day of sitting—That general business order of the day no. 2, relating to the Charter of Political Honesty Bill 2000 [2004], be discharged from the *Notice Paper*. (*general business notice of motion no. 733*)

Senator Murray: To move on the next day of sitting—That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act to amend the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, and for related purposes. ***Electoral (Greater Fairness of Electoral Processes) Amendment Bill 2007***. (*general business notice of motion no. 734*)

Senator Milne: To move on the next day of sitting—That the Senate endorses Australian law which bans nuclear power stations. (*general business notice of motion no. 735*)

10 POSTPONEMENTS

The following items of business were postponed:

Business of the Senate notice of motion no. 1 standing in the name of Senator Carr for today, proposing the reference of a matter to the Community Affairs Committee, postponed till 1 March 2007.

Business of the Senate notice of motion no. 3 standing in the name of Senator Bartlett for 1 March 2007, proposing the reference of a matter to the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee, postponed till 21 March 2007.

11 WOMEN—INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The Leader of the Australian Greens (Senator Bob Brown), at the request of Senator Nettle and pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 722—That the Senate—

(a) notes that:

- (i) 8 March is International Women's Day,
- (ii) International Women's Day is now an official holiday in Armenia, Russian Federation, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Vietnam, and

- (iii) recent average weekly earnings data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that female earnings are 66 per cent of male earnings; and
- (b) calls on the Government to:
 - (i) take immediate action to address wage discrepancies between Australian men and women,
 - (ii) reinstate the Office for the Status of Women in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and
 - (iii) repeal the WorkChoices legislation, which is disadvantaging female workers.

Question put and negatived. All Australian Greens senators, by leave, recorded their votes for the ayes.

12 FOREIGN AFFAIRS—JAPANESE ‘COMFORT WOMEN’

The Leader of the Australian Greens (Senator Bob Brown), at the request of Senator Nettle and pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 723—That the Senate—

- (a) notes that:
 - (i) the term ‘comfort women’ refers to an estimated 200 000 women who were forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Government during World War II,
 - (ii) the enslavement of comfort women was officially commissioned and orchestrated by the Government of Japan to include gang rape, forced abortions, sexual violence, human trafficking and numerous other crimes against humanity,
 - (iii) for the past 16 years, since 1992, survivors in Korea have been holding weekly ‘Wednesday demonstrations’, and
 - (iv) on 7 March 2007 the ‘Friends of Comfort Women’ in Australia will hold a similar Wednesday demonstration at midday outside the Japanese Consulate in Sydney; and
- (b) calls on the Government to:
 - (i) demand an official and unequivocal apology from the Japanese Government for its sexual enslavement of comfort women during the duration of World War II,
 - (ii) urge the Japanese Government to establish a system of payment and reparations to the comfort women, and
 - (iii) urge the Japanese Government to accurately teach the history of comfort women in Japanese schools.

Question put.

The Senate divided—

AYES, 34

Senators—

Allison	Faulkner	Marshall	Sherry
Bartlett	Fielding	McEwen	Siewert
Bishop	Forshaw	McLucas	Stephens
Brown, Bob	Hogg	Milne	Sterle
Brown, Carol	Hurley	Moore	Stott Despoja
Campbell, G (Teller)	Hutchins	Murray	Webber
Carr	Kirk	O'Brien	Wortley
Crossin	Ludwig	Polley	
Evans	Lundy	Ray	

NOES, 36

Senators—

Abetz	Colbeck	Kemp	Patterson
Adams	Eggleston	Lightfoot	Payne
Barnett	Ellison	Macdonald, Ian	Ronaldson
Bernardi	Ferguson	Macdonald, Sandy	Santoro
Boswell	Fierravanti-Wells	Mason	Scullion
Brandis	Fifield	McGauran	Troeth
Calvert	Heffernan	Minchin	Trood
Campbell, Ian	Humphries	Nash	Vanstone
Chapman	Johnston	Parry (Teller)	Watson

Question negatived.

13 ENVIRONMENT—RENEWABLE ENERGY

The Leader of the Australian Democrats (Senator Allison), pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 721—That the Senate—

- (a) notes the recent polling conducted by the Australian Research Group on community attitudes to climate change solutions which found that:
 - (i) Australians want to embrace new, clean renewable energy technologies to deal with the challenge of climate change,
 - (ii) Australians support a future based on new renewable energy industries rather than a continuing reliance on coal or a move to nuclear power, and
 - (iii) the renewable options of more solar panels (91 per cent support) and more wind turbines (82 per cent support) were favoured alongside the proposal of reducing overall energy consumption (78 per cent support); and
- (b) calls on the Government to introduce effective policies that will result in significant clean energy investment and greenhouse abatement through support for:
 - (i) the renewable energy market, by extending and expanding the existing Mandatory Renewable Energy Target, a renewable energy trading 'green' certificate scheme,
 - (ii) the increased deployment of solar power through dual market of continuing the photovoltaic rebate scheme and introducing a feed-in-tariff,
 - (iii) energy efficiency markets, by introducing a national energy efficiency target and an energy efficiency trading 'white' certificate scheme, and

- (iv) a transition to clean energy, by introducing a carbon emissions target and carbon emissions trading 'black' certificate scheme.

Question put.

The Senate divided—

AYES, 7

Senators—

Allison	Brown, Bob	Murray	Stott Despoja
Bartlett (Teller)	Milne	Siewert	

NOES, 50

Senators—

Adams	Ellison	Lundy	Ray
Bernardi	Ferguson	Macdonald, Sandy	Ronaldson
Bishop	Fielding	Marshall	Scullion
Brandis	Fierravanti-Wells	Mason	Sherry
Brown, Carol	Fifield	McEwen	Stephens
Calvert	Forshaw	McGauran	Troeth
Campbell, George	Hogg	McLucas	Trood
Campbell, Ian	Hurley	Moore	Vanstone
Carr	Johnston	Nash	Watson
Chapman	Kemp	Parry (Teller)	Webber
Colbeck	Kirk	Patterson	Wortley
Crossin	Lightfoot	Payne	
Eggleston	Ludwig	Polley	

Question negatived.

14 FOREIGN AFFAIRS—MR DAVID HICKS

Senator Siewert, at the request of Senator Nettle and pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 725—That the Senate calls on the Government to return Mr David Hicks to Australia.

Question put and negatived.

15 FOREIGN AFFAIRS—BURMA—THAILAND—PROPOSED SALWEEN DAMS

Senator Siewert, at the request of Senator Nettle and pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 724—That the Senate—

(a) notes:

- (i) that on 28 February 2007 people around the world will participate in an international day of action against the proposed Salween dams in Burma and along the Thai-Burma border, and
- (ii) the Salween dams will permanently degrade Southeast Asia's longest free flowing rivers, fisheries, floodplains, teak forests and wildlife habitats, and flood villages and fertile agricultural land; and

- (b) calls on the Government to oppose the dams and to place pressure on the Thai and Burmese Governments to halt plans to dam the Salween River.

Question put and negatived.

16 DEATH OF MR MURRAY CHAPMAN

Senator Stephens, pursuant to notice of motion not objected to as a formal motion, moved general business notice of motion no. 726—That the Senate—

- (a) notes the sudden death of Mr Murray Chapman in Canberra on 24 February 2007;
- (b) acknowledges:
 - (i) the contribution of Mr Chapman's energy, commitment and dedication to the land rights movement during his long and distinguished career in Aboriginal affairs at both the national and the state level, with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and the Indigenous Land Corporation, and
 - (ii) his appointment, in November 2003, as New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council Administrator, a position he served with distinction until his sudden and premature passing; and
- (c) expresses its condolences to Mr Chapman's family, the Land Council network and the broader Indigenous community.

Statement by leave: Senator Stephens, by leave, made a statement relating to the motion.

Question put and passed.

17 DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—FINANCE

The Deputy President (Senator Hogg) informed the Senate that Senator Sherry had proposed that the following matter of public importance be submitted to the Senate for discussion:

The weak financial discipline of the Howard Government, and in particular, the failure of the Minister for Finance and Administration (Senator Minchin), in view of:

- (a) the recent audit office report that found more than one third of agencies administering programs had no performance indicators to address their effectiveness, quality or cost; and
- (b) the billion dollar policy announcements:
 - (i) that blow out in cost due to being insufficiently funded,
 - (ii) with no public disclosure of ongoing cost or impact on revenue, and
 - (iii) that are not given appropriate detailed examination due to a failure to submit them to Cabinet as required in the Government's own Cabinet Handbook or Charter of Budget Honesty.

The proposal was supported by four senators and the matter was discussed.

18 AUSTRALIAN CRIME COMMISSION—JOINT STATUTORY COMMITTEE—REPORT—AMPHETAMINES AND OTHER SYNTHETIC DRUGS

The Chair of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Crime Commission (Senator Ian Macdonald) tabled the following report and documents:

Australian Crime Commission—Joint Statutory Committee—Inquiry into the manufacture, importation and use of amphetamines and other synthetic drugs (AOSD) in Australia—Report, dated February 2007, Hansard record of proceedings, documents presented to the committee and submissions [33].

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

Senator Ian Macdonald moved—That the Senate take note of the report.

Debate ensued.

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

19 SCRUTINY OF BILLS—STANDING COMMITTEE—2ND REPORT AND ALERT DIGEST NO. 2 OF 2007

Senator Webber, at the request of the Chairman of the Standing Committee for the Scrutiny of Bills (Senator Ray), tabled the following report and document:

Scrutiny of Bills—Standing Committee—

2nd report of 2007, dated 28 February 2007.

Alert Digest No. 2 of 2007, dated 28 February 2007.

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

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

Question put and passed.

20 COMMUNITY AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT—PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE BILL 2006 AND RELATED BILLS

Pursuant to order, Senator Patterson, at the request of the Chair of the Community Affairs Committee (Senator Humphries), tabled the following report and documents:

Community Affairs—Standing Committee—Private Health Insurance Bill 2006 [Provisions], Private Health Insurance (Transitional Provisions and Consequential Amendments) Bill 2006 [Provisions], Private Health Insurance (Prostheses Application and Listing Fees) Bill 2006 [Provisions], Private Health Insurance (Collapsed Organization Levy) Amendment Bill 2006 [Provisions], Private Health Insurance Complaints Levy Amendment Bill 2006 [Provisions], Private Health Insurance (Council Administration Levy) Amendment Bill 2006 [Provisions] and Private Health Insurance (Reinsurance Trust Fund Levy) Amendment Bill 2006 [Provisions]—Report, dated February 2007, Hansard record of proceedings and submissions [21].

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

21 RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT—MURRAY-DARLING BASIN AMENDMENT BILL 2006

Senator Patterson, at the request of the Chair of the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee (Senator Heffernan), tabled the following report and documents:

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport—Standing Committee—Murray-Darling Basin Amendment Bill 2006 [Provisions]—Report, dated February 2007 and submissions [5].

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

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

Debate ensued.

Question put and passed.

**22 RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT—STANDING COMMITTEE—
REPORT—AIRSPACE BILL 2006 AND AIRSPACE (CONSEQUENTIALS AND OTHER
MEASURES) BILL 2006**

Pursuant to order, Senator Patterson, at the request of the Chair of the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee (Senator Heffernan), tabled the following report and documents:

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport—Standing Committee—Airspace Bill 2006 [Provisions] and Airspace (Consequential and Other Measures) Bill 2006 [Provisions]—Report, dated February 2007, Hansard record of proceedings, documents presented to the committee, additional information and submissions [10].

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

**23 RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT—STANDING COMMITTEE—
REPORT—AIRPORTS AMENDMENT BILL 2006**

Pursuant to order, Senator Patterson, at the request of the Chair of the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee (Senator Heffernan), tabled the following report and documents:

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport—Standing Committee—Airports Amendment Bill 2006 [Provisions]—Report, dated February 2007, Hansard record of proceedings, documents presented to the committee, additional information and submissions [73].

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

**24 ECONOMICS—STANDING COMMITTEE—DOCUMENT—TAX LAWS AMENDMENT
(2006 MEASURES NO. 7) BILL 2006**

Senator Patterson, at the request of the Chair of the Economics Committee (Senator Ronaldson), tabled the following document:

Economics—Standing Committee—Report—Tax Laws Amendment (2006 Measures No. 7) Bill 2006—Hansard record of proceedings.

Senator Ludwig moved—That the Senate take note of the document.

Debate ensued.

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

25 CHILDREN—CHILD PROTECTION—DOCUMENT

The Acting Deputy President (Senator Lightfoot) tabled the following document:

Children—Child protection—Letter to the President of the Senate from the Minister for Community Services [NSW] (Ms Meagher) responding to the resolution of the Senate of 18 October 2006, dated 19 February 2007.

Senator Bartlett, by leave, moved—That the Senate take note of the document.

Question put and passed.

26 PARLIAMENTARY ZONE—CAPITAL WORKS PROPOSAL—DOCUMENTS

The Minister for the Arts and Sport (Senator Brandis) tabled the following documents:

Parliament Act—Parliamentary Zone—Proposal, together with supporting documentation, relating to the design and content of the Women Artwork at Reconciliation Place.

Notice of motion: Senator Brandis, by leave, gave a notice of motion as follows: To move on the next day of sitting—That, in accordance with section 5 of the *Parliament Act 1974*, the Senate approves the proposal by the National Capital Authority for capital works within the Parliamentary Zone, being the design and content of the Women Artwork at Reconciliation Place.

27 DOCUMENTS

The following documents were tabled by the Clerk:

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

Civil Aviation Act—Civil Aviation Safety Regulations—Airworthiness Directives—Part 105—AD/F2000/24—Software Integrity Check and Enhanced Avionics System Upgrade [F2007L00512]*.

Migration Act—Statements under sections—

33 [5].

48B [45].

351 [229].

417 [325].

Sydney Airport Curfew Act—Dispensation Report 02/07 [2 dispensations].

Veterans' Entitlements Act—Statements of Principles concerning—

Acute Stress Disorder No. 33 of 2007 [F2007L00497]*.

Acute Stress Disorder No. 34 of 2007 [F2007L00498]*.

Cardiomyopathy No. 23 of 2007 [F2007L00487]*.

Cardiomyopathy No. 24 of 2007 [F2007L00488]*.

Chicken Pox No. 25 of 2007 [F2007L00489]*.

Chicken Pox No. 26 of 2007 [F2007L00490]*.

Familial Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy No. 35 of 2007 [F2007L00499]*.

Familial Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy No. 36 of 2007 [F2007L00500]*.

Hepatitis A No. 29 of 2007 [F2007L00493]*.

Hepatitis A No. 30 of 2007 [F2007L00494]*.

Hepatitis E No. 31 of 2007 [F2007L00495]*.

Hepatitis E No. 32 of 2007 [F2007L00496]*.

Herpes Zoster No. 27 of 2007 [F2007L00491]*.

Herpes Zoster No. 28 of 2007 [F2007L00492]*.

Malignant Neoplasm of the Bile Duct No. 21 of 2007 [F2007L00485]*.

Malignant Neoplasm of the Bile Duct No. 22 of 2007 [F2007L00486]*.

* Explanatory statement tabled with legislative instrument.

28 DEPARTMENTAL AND AGENCY CONTRACTS—ORDER FOR PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS—DOCUMENTS

The following documents were tabled pursuant to the order of the Senate of 20 June 2001, as amended:

Departmental and agency contracts for 2006—Letters of advice—
Communications, Information Technology and the Arts portfolio agencies.
Industry, Tourism and Resources portfolio agencies.

29 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 July to 31 December 2006—Statements of compliance—
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry portfolio agencies.
Commonwealth Ombudsman.

30 COMMITTEES—CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

The Acting Deputy President (Senator Lightfoot) informed the Senate that the President had received letters requesting changes in the membership of committees.

The Minister for the Arts and Sport (Senator Brandis), by leave, moved—That senators be discharged from and appointed to committees as follows:

Corporations and Financial Services—Joint Statutory Committee—

Appointed—Senator Bernardi

Economics—Standing Committee—

Discharged—Senator Lundy

Appointed—Senator Hurley

Employment, Workplace Relations and Education—Standing Committee—

Appointed—

Substitute member: Senator Allison to replace Senator Stott Despoja for matters relating to the schools and training portfolios

Participating member: Senator Stott Despoja

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade—Standing Committee—

Appointed—Senator Forshaw

Publications—Standing Committee—

Discharged—Senator Polley

Appointed—Senator Hurley

Public Works—Joint Statutory Committee—

Discharged—Senator Forshaw

Appointed—Senator Hurley.

Question put and passed.

31 APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 3) 2006-2007
APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 4) 2006-2007

Messages from the House of Representatives were reported transmitting for the concurrence of the Senate the following bills:

Message no. 500, dated 27 February 2007—A Bill for an Act to appropriate additional money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the ordinary annual services of the Government, and for related purposes.

Message no. 501, dated 27 February 2007—A Bill for an Act to appropriate additional money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for certain expenditure, and for related purposes.

The Minister for the Arts and Sport (Senator Brandis) moved—That these bills may proceed without formalities, may be taken together and be now read a first time.

Question put and passed.

Bills read a first time.

Senator Brandis moved—That these bills 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.

32 HUMAN SERVICES (ENHANCED SERVICE DELIVERY) BILL 2007

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

Message no. 502, dated 28 February 2007—A Bill for an Act to enhance the provision of Commonwealth benefits, and for related purposes.

The Minister for the Arts and Sport (Senator Brandis) 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 Brandis 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.

**33 RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT—STANDING COMMITTEE—
 PROPOSED REFERENCE**

Senator Siewert, also on behalf of Senator Milne, pursuant to notice, moved business of the Senate notice of motion no. 2—

(1) That the Senate notes:

- (a) the recommendation of the Australian Business Roundtable on Climate Change to ‘Build national resilience to the impacts of climate change’;
- (b) the announcement of support for the Roundtable’s recommendation by the National Farmers Federation (NFF) on 6 December 2006, which stated that the ‘NFF believes that climate change may be the greatest threat confronting Australian farmers and their productive capacity’; and
- (c) the call by representatives of 16 faiths on 5 December 2006 for the Australian Government to take urgent action on climate change.

- (2) That the following matters be referred to the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee for inquiry and report by 30 June 2007:
- (a) the need for a national strategy to help Australian agricultural industries to mitigate and adapt to climate change;
 - (b) consideration of the risks and opportunities presented by reduced rainfall, increased temperatures, higher evaporation and increased climatic variability for Australian agriculture;
 - (c) assessment of the state of existing knowledge, the relevance of current strategies, and the adequacy of existing research and development programs to the need to address impacts of climate change on the security of Australian food production and the viability of rural communities; and
 - (d) the effectiveness of the National Plan for Water Security in meeting the challenges of protecting the health of our rivers, floodplains, wetlands and other dependent environments, ensuring secure water supplies for our towns and cities, and maintaining the viability of our agricultural sector.

Debate ensued.

At 6.50 pm: Debate was interrupted.

34 ADJOURNMENT

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

Debate ensued.

The Senate adjourned at 7.28 pm till Thursday, 1 March 2007 at 9.30 am.

35 ATTENDANCE

Present, all senators.

HARRY EVANS
Clerk of the Senate