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GOVERNMENT’S ‘GAG PARLIAMENT’ IS NO JOKE

Manager of Opposition Business Paul Fletcher has today slammed the Albanese Labor government’s changes to the House of Representatives standing orders as cynical and dangerous.

The Albanese Government has set the 47th Parliament up to be the ‘gag Parliament’.

But it’s no joke.

Labor’s new and unprecedented gag orders are designed to end Parliamentary debate in order to dodge scrutiny and accountability, with Ministers given unfettered power to enact a gag by labelling legislation ‘urgent’ without even the need for justification.

The government is clearly aware of how dangerous these gag orders are having only circulated them very late last night and the crossbench complained of only seeing them this morning.

The effect of the new gag orders:

- Bills can be deemed ‘urgent’ by a Minister at any time without debate and without any justification to the Parliament.
- Once declared ‘urgent’ the Bill is subject to an automatic guillotine.
- Collapses the consideration in detail phase of debate of debate on legislation. Instead, any amendments, government or otherwise, are moved together and voted on immediately

During his time in opposition Tony Burke opined on the supposed ‘trashing of Parliamentary norms’ but has now been responsible for the cementing of these dangerous changes to the House standing orders.

Australians should expect to see an ever increasing number of Bills declared “urgent”.

No amount of hiding behind supposed altruistic motives can justify these gag powers.

Indeed, this attempt just makes these changes more cynical.

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