



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

2024–2025–2026

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No 57

WEDNESDAY, 6 MAY 2026

- 1 The Assembly met at 10 am, pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Mr Hanson) took the Chair and made the following acknowledgement of country in the Ngunnawal language:

Dhawura nguna, dhawura Ngunnawal.

Yanggu ngalawiri dhunimanyin Ngunnawalwari dhawurawari.

Nginggada Dindi wanggiralidjinyin.

This is Ngunnawal country.

Today we are all meeting on Ngunnawal country.

We always pay respect to Elders, female and male.

The Speaker asked Members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

2 PRIVILEGE—ALLEGED BREACH—STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

The Speaker made a statement concerning an alleged breach of privilege raised by Mr Parton (Leader of the Opposition) in relation to evidence given to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration during its inquiry into the CIT CEO recruitment process.

Paper: The Speaker presented the following paper:

Alleged breach of privilege—Letter from the Leader of the Opposition to the Speaker, dated 6 May 2026.

Having considered the matter, the Speaker stated that he was prepared to allow precedence to a motion under standing order 276.

The Speaker, in accordance with standing order 81A, indicated that he would call Mr Parton at a later hour.

3 PETITIONS AND MINISTERIAL RESPONSE—PETITIONS AND RESPONSE NOTED**Petitions**

The Clerk announced that the following Member had lodged petitions for presentation:

Mr Braddock, from 201 and 26 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to include an extension to Mawson in the final design and business case for Light Rail Stage 2B (e-Pet 081-25 and Pet 042-26).

Ministerial response

The Clerk announced that the following response to a petition had been lodged:

Ms Cheyne (Minister for City and Government Services), dated 3 May 2026—Response to e-petition No 049-25, lodged by Ms Lee concerning a pedestrian crossing in Griffith.

The Speaker proposed—That the petition and response so lodged be noted.

Debate ensued.

Paper: Ms Tough, by leave, presented the following paper:

Petition which does not conform with the standing orders—Kambah—Morrison Street—Safety improvements—Ms Tough (10 signatures).

Question—put and passed.

4 A.C.T. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ELECTED BODY—REPORT FROM HEARINGS 12-14 AUGUST 2025—THIRTEENTH REPORT TO THE A.C.T. GOVERNMENT—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND PAPER—PAPER NOTED

Ms Orr (Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs) made a ministerial statement concerning the Government response to the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body's report from its hearings on 12-14 August 2025 and presented the following papers:

ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act, pursuant to subsection 10B(3)—ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body—Report from hearings 12-14 August 2025—Thirteenth Report to the ACT Government—

Government response, undated.

Government response—Ministerial statement, 6 May 2026.

Ms Orr moved—That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

5 A.C.T. AIR QUALITY—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND PAPER—PAPER NOTED

Ms Orr (Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water) made a ministerial statement concerning ACT air quality and presented the following papers:

Bushfire Smoke and Air Quality Strategy 2021-2025—Final Report, undated.

ACT Air Quality—Ministerial statement, 6 May 2026.

Ms Orr moved—That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

6 BUSHFIRE AND STORM SEASONS 2025-26—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Dr Paterson (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) made a ministerial statement concerning the end of the 2025-26 bushfire and storm seasons and presented the following paper:

End of the 2025-26 bushfire and storm seasons—Ministerial statement, 6 May 2026.

Dr Paterson moved—That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

7 ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURE—STANDING COMMITTEE—REFERENCE—BILL NOMENCLATURE

Ms Barry, having amended her motion by leave, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

- (a) transparency and clarity are fundamental to the effective scrutiny of legislation;
- (b) the title of a bill, particularly its short and long title, is a primary means by which Members and the public understand its purpose and scope;
- (c) the use of generic titles for bills such as Liquor Amendment Bill 2025, Family, Personal and Sexual Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2026 and similarly framed bills, contains provisions whose scope or effect is not readily apparent from their title; and
- (d) scrutiny reports have, on multiple occasions, identified deficiencies in explanatory statements, including failures to clearly identify the scope, purpose or human rights implications of provisions;

(2) recognises that:

- (a) the title of a bill should provide a clear and accurate indication of the nature and effect of the proposed law; however, in practice, titles may be framed in broad or generic terms that do not clearly reflect the substantive changes being made, creating a risk that the scope and impact of legislation is not readily apparent to Members or the public;
- (b) where the title of a bill does not clearly reflect its substance, particularly in bills containing multiple or significant reforms, it may limit effective parliamentary scrutiny and reduce transparency in the legislative process; and

- (c) improved clarity in the naming and presentation of bills would enhance parliamentary scrutiny, public understanding and confidence in the legislative process;
- (3) refers the matter to the relevant Assembly committee to:
 - (a) consider whether amendments to standing orders are required to strengthen requirements for the clarity and accuracy of bill titles;
 - (b) examine options for empowering the Speaker to require amendment of a bill title where it does not adequately reflect the bill's content; and
 - (c) report on mechanisms used in comparable jurisdictions to limit the use of omnibus bills or to improve transparency in legislative drafting; and
- (4) requests that the relevant Assembly committee report to the Assembly within six months on any recommendations it may have to improve the standing orders or Assembly procedures, to ensure better clarity and accuracy of bill titles.

Ms Cheyne (Attorney-General) moved the following amendment: Omit all text after "That this Assembly", substitute:

- "(1) recognises that:
- (a) parliamentary scrutiny of bills is central to ensuring that proposed laws are carefully examined before they are passed;
 - (b) scrutiny – through committees and Assembly debate – helps identify unintended consequences, test human rights implications, and ensure legislation reflects both sound policy and practical experience;
 - (c) scrutiny of draft legislation requires careful consideration of all material available to the Assembly, including the text of the bill, explanatory statements and speeches;
 - (d) transparency and clarity of this material is fundamental to the effective scrutiny of legislation;
 - (e) the title of a bill should provide a short, clear and accurate indication of the purpose and scope of a bill;
 - (f) in naming bills drafted for the Assembly, the ACT Parliamentary Counsel's Office applies established principles to achieve clarity, consistency and accessibility;
 - (g) explanatory statements should provide a clear, plain-language summary of all provisions in a bill;
 - (h) statute law amendment bills, legislation amendment bills (often referred to as omnibus bills), and stand-alone bills have specific purposes and functions; and
 - (i) where omnibus bills contain controversial or contentious amendments, this should be clearly indicated in the explanatory statement;

- (2) recognises that:
 - (a) scrutiny reports have, on multiple occasions, identified issues with explanatory statements, including in relation to descriptions of the scope, purpose or human rights implications of provisions; and
 - (b) omnibus bills that include urgent reforms or amendments relating to subject matter that traverses the responsibility of multiple Assembly committees can pose challenges to the efficient and effective scrutiny of proposed legislation; and
- (3) requests that the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure:
 - (a) consider the current conventions and guidance for the naming of bills, the content of explanatory statements, and the use of omnibus bills in the ACT and comparable jurisdictions;
 - (b) consider whether any changes are required to the standing orders to support parliamentary scrutiny of proposed legislation by the Assembly; and
 - (c) report back to the Assembly, with any recommendations, within six months.”.

Debate continued.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) recognises that:
 - (a) parliamentary scrutiny of bills is central to ensuring that proposed laws are carefully examined before they are passed;
 - (b) scrutiny – through committees and Assembly debate – helps identify unintended consequences, test human rights implications, and ensure legislation reflects both sound policy and practical experience;
 - (c) scrutiny of draft legislation requires careful consideration of all material available to the Assembly, including the text of the bill, explanatory statements and speeches;
 - (d) transparency and clarity of this material is fundamental to the effective scrutiny of legislation;
 - (e) the title of a bill should provide a short, clear and accurate indication of the purpose and scope of a bill;
 - (f) in naming bills drafted for the Assembly, the ACT Parliamentary Counsel’s Office applies established principles to achieve clarity, consistency and accessibility;
 - (g) explanatory statements should provide a clear, plain-language summary of all provisions in a bill;

- (h) statute law amendment bills, legislation amendment bills (often referred to as omnibus bills), and stand-alone bills have specific purposes and functions; and
- (i) where omnibus bills contain controversial or contentious amendments, this should be clearly indicated in the explanatory statement;
- (2) recognises that:
 - (a) scrutiny reports have, on multiple occasions, identified issues with explanatory statements, including in relation to descriptions of the scope, purpose or human rights implications of provisions; and
 - (b) omnibus bills that include urgent reforms or amendments relating to subject matter that traverses the responsibility of multiple Assembly committees can pose challenges to the efficient and effective scrutiny of proposed legislation; and
- (3) requests that the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure:
 - (a) consider the current conventions and guidance for the naming of bills, the content of explanatory statements, and the use of omnibus bills in the ACT and comparable jurisdictions;
 - (b) consider whether any changes are required to the standing orders to support parliamentary scrutiny of proposed legislation by the Assembly; and
 - (c) report back to the Assembly, with any recommendations, within six months.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

8 BAIL AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Ms Cheyne (Attorney-General), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Bail Act 1992*, and for other purposes.

Papers: Ms Cheyne presented the following papers:

Explanatory statement to the Bill, incorporating a compatibility statement, pursuant to section 37 of the *Human Rights Act 2004*.

Bail law reform in the ACT—Listening report—YourSay consultation, undated.

Title read by Clerk.

Ms Cheyne moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Mr Cocks) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

9 PRIVILEGES 2026—SELECT COMMITTEE—ESTABLISHMENT

Mr Parton (Leader of the Opposition) moved—That:

- (1) pursuant to standing order 276, a Select Committee on Privileges 2026 be established to examine whether, in relation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration’s inquiry into the CIT CEO recruitment process, Dr McNeill is in contempt of the Assembly by giving false and misleading evidence to the Committee, failing to produce documents and any other related matters;

- (2) the Committee shall report back to the Assembly by 10 June 2026; and
- (3) the Committee shall be composed of:
 - (a) one member nominated by the Government;
 - (b) one member nominated by the Opposition; and
 - (c) one member nominated by the ACT Greens;
 to be notified to the Speaker within one hour of the passing of this motion.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

10 BETTER REGULATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Ms Cheyne (Minister for City and Government Services), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend legislation for better regulation, and for other purposes.

Paper: Ms Cheyne presented the following paper:

Explanatory statement to the Bill, incorporating a compatibility statement, pursuant to section 37 of the *Human Rights Act 2004*.

Title read by Clerk.

Ms Cheyne moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Ms Barry) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

11 CIVIL LAW (WRONGS) AMENDMENT BILL 2026

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—

Debate resumed.

Paper: Ms Cheyne presented a revised explanatory statement to the Bill.

Question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—put and passed.

Leave granted to dispense with the detail stage.

Question—That this Bill be agreed to—put and passed.

12 PLANNING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—

Debate resumed.

Question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—put and passed.

Detail Stage

Clauses 1 to 3, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Clause 4—

Debate continued.

Clause 4 negatived.

Remainder of Bill, by leave, taken as a whole and agreed to.

Question—That this Bill, as amended, be agreed to—put and passed.

13 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice being asked—

Speaker's ruling—Standing order 118AA(a): The Speaker, pursuant to standing order 118AA(a), determined that an answer to a question without notice from Mrs Morris to the Minister for Business, Arts and Creative Industries was not responsive to the question, and directed the Minister to provide a written response to the question and lodge it with the Clerk by 1.45 pm the next business day.

Questions continued.

14 PAPERS

Mr Braddock, by leave, presented the following papers:

Stuff You Should Know—A guide to Government services for young people—

Brochure, authorised by Alicia Payne MP, undated.

Clarification request—Letter to the ACT Minister for Education and Early Childhood from the ACT Greens spokesperson for Education, Skills and Training, dated 14 April 2026.

15 PRIVILEGES 2026—SELECT COMMITTEE—MEMBERSHIP

The Speaker, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly of today, informed the Assembly that he had been notified, in writing, of the nominations of Mr Werner-Gibbins, Ms Lee and Mr Braddock to be members of the Select Committee on Privileges 2026.

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business) moved—That the Members so nominated be appointed as members of the Select Committee Privileges 2026.

Question—put and passed.

16 NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CODE 2025—ADOPTION—PROPOSED DELAY

Mrs Morris, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

- (a) on 5 February 2026, the Assembly noted that the ACT is in a housing crisis;
- (b) the ACT is more than 1,200 completions behind the trend required to meet the 30,000 by 2030 target;
- (c) construction costs, skills shortages, slow planning approvals and complicated regulations are already making new homes harder to build and more expensive to deliver;

- (d) the National Construction Code (NCC) has become increasingly complex, with industry professionals and the Productivity Commission warning that growing regulatory burden has added to cost, reduced productivity and made the Code harder to practically comply with;
 - (e) the Federal Government's own regulatory assessments found that the costs of NCC 2022 outweighed its benefits, resulting in a net cost to society;
 - (f) Master Builders ACT has warned the NCC 2025 changes could add even more costs for new builds ranging from \$14,000 to \$55,000 and create additional burdens for prospective homeowners;
 - (g) the Government has already delayed adoption of the NCC 2025 changes by 12 months, recognising the need for industry certainty and the cost pressures already facing the residential construction sector; and
 - (h) current global economic conditions, including supply chain disruption, energy cost pressures, material price volatility and broader inflationary pressures are already adding cost and uncertainty to new home builds;
- (2) further notes that:
- (a) changes that add cost, complexity and delay to new homes must be properly assessed in the context of the housing crisis and current global cost pressures; and
 - (b) Canberrans cannot afford any further barriers or increase to costs in building the homes the city needs; and
- (3) calls on the Government to:
- (a) freeze the adoption of any NCC 2025 changes that would increase the cost or complexity of delivering new homes in the ACT; and
 - (b) publish a cost-benefit analysis before adopting any further NCC changes.

Debate ensued.

Question—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 8

Chiaka Barry
Peter Cain
Leanne Castley
Ed Cocks
Jeremy Hanson
James Milligan
Deborah Morris
Mark Parton

NOES, 15

Yvette Berry	Marisa Paterson
Andrew Braddock	Michael Pettersson
Fiona Carrick	Shane Rattenbury
Tara Cheyne	Chris Steel
Jo Clay	Rachel Stephen-Smith
Thomas Emerson	Caitlin Tough
Laura Nuttall	Taimus Werner-Gibbings
Suzanne Orr	

And so it was negatived.

17 LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO MEMBER

Mr Cocks moved—That leave of absence be granted to Ms Lee for this sitting day due to personal reasons.

Question—put and passed.

18 JURIES (PEREMPTORY CHALLENGES) AMENDMENT BILL 2025

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—

Debate resumed.

Question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—put and passed.

Detail Stage

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole—

On the motion of Ms Cheyne (Attorney-General), her amendment No 1 (see [Schedule 1](#)) was made.

Paper: Ms Cheyne presented a supplementary explanatory statement to the Government amendment.

Bill, as a whole, as amended, agreed to.

Question—That this Bill, as amended, be agreed to—put and passed.

19 MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Seven Members' statements were made.

20 ADJOURNMENT

Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for Health) moved—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 5.30 pm, adjourned until tomorrow at 10 am.

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE: All Members were present at some time during the sitting, except Ms Lee*.

*on leave.

Tom Duncan
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

SCHEDULE OF AMENDMENT

Schedule 1

JURIES (PEREMPTORY CHALLENGES) AMENDMENT BILL 2025

Amendment circulated by the Attorney-General

1

Clause 2

Page 2, line 4—

omit

6 months after its notification day

substitute

on the day after its notification day
