

**Full Day Hansard Transcript (Legislative Council, 22 October 2014, Proof)****Proof**

Extract from NSW Legislative Council Hansard and Papers Wednesday, 22 October 2014 (Proof).

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT (PARLIAMENTARY PRESIDING OFFICERS) BILL 2014**Second Reading**

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads and Freight, Minister for the North Coast, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) [6.06 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Constitution Amendment (Parliamentary Presiding Officers) Bill 2014 to provide for consistency for the roles of the Presiding Officers in continuing their administration duties during the election period. The changes will provide certainty and stability to the administration of the Parliament and the employment of parliamentary staff. The Presiding Officers administer the executive functions of the Parliament, including during the period when Parliament is dissolved ahead of an election and until the Parliament assembles after an election. The administrative duties of the Presiding Officers include approval of the appointment and termination of staff, including members' staff, management and control of the parliamentary buildings and precincts, and approval of administrative matters concerning the Department of the Legislative Council, Department of the Legislative Assembly and the Department of Parliamentary Services.

In accordance with longstanding practice, the Constitution Act permits the Speaker to remain in office until the assembly of a new Parliament following a State general election. However, there is currently no power for the President to exercise administrative functions once he or she ceases to be a member of the Legislative Council. The bill will amend the Constitution Act to expressly provide that the President of the Legislative Council remains in office until the Council assembles for its first meeting after a State general election. The bill amends the wording of the Constitution Act in relation to the Speaker to align the provisions in relation to both Presiding Officers. Similar amendments are made for their deputies when the Presiding Officers are unavailable.

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The bill also removes redundant and outdated provisions in relation to the procedures for electing the Presiding Officers, which existed before such procedures were determined by the standing orders of the particular House of Parliament, and it makes some consequential amendments to the Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989. I commend the bill to the House.