



**The Hon Penny Sharpe MLC**  
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Procedure Committee  
NSW Parliament  
Via email

Dear Chair

I wish to make a short submission regarding children of members in the house.

Regarding ToR 1: Whether standing order 196(3) should be varied to allow a member with a child under the age of four years to bring that child into any part of the House reserved for members while the House is sitting,

I support such a change.

I have been in Parliament for ten years. When I started my son was one, he is now eleven. In that time my family also added a daughter who is now six.

I have experienced being called for a division when I had care of one of my children. It has been dealt with in either of two ways, either the Labor whip was able to obtain a short term pair for me during the division or when this was not possible my child sat in the gallery next to me. I was fortunate that both the whip and my kids were happy to do this at the time. There may well have been times where the whip or my kids would not have been so willing to be so accommodating.

The reality of a modern Parliament is that we have members that have young children, young children who are sometimes in the care of the members when the Parliament is sitting. Our standing orders should be able to accommodate the occasions when a member is required for a division and has no option but to bring their child into the chamber.

I thank the Procedure Committee for looking at this issue, just like updating our rules to accommodate breastfeeding mothers, our Parliament should be flexible enough to accommodate young children in the care of a member.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Penny Sharpe', written in a cursive style.

Penny Sharpe

