

## ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Adjournment means to suspend a meeting until a later time. The Speaker of the House of Representatives usually proposes that 'the House do now adjourn' at 10.30pm on Mondays and Tuesdays, 7.30pm on Wednesdays and 5.30pm on Thursdays. This is a signal that the sitting of the House will end in 30 minutes.

The adjournment debate gives members and senators the opportunity to speak on almost any matter for five minutes. Unlike most other motions, there are no limits to the subject matter. For example, during an adjournment debate in March 2001, the following subjects were raised by members of the House:

- the Family Court in Dandenong, Victoria
- partners of the NSW Veterans Association
- breaching Centrelink provisions
- MRI scanner for the Prince Charles Hospital
- Ashfield Council NSW
- Bank Charges, and
- Centrelink benefits.

Adjournment debates in the Senate are similar. However, the President of the Senate normally proposes that 'the Senate do now adjourn' at 9.50pm on Mondays, 7.40pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and 8.00pm on Thursdays unless there is further business. The Senate adjournment debate lasts for 40 minutes.