

One Nation and Animal Justice forge 'unholy alliance'

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The push by One Nation's Mark Latham to overhaul lawmaking in NSW will be investigated by a parliamentary committee.

The NSW leader of Pauline Hanson's party [moved a motion in the NSW upper house last month to change the way contentious laws](#) such as council mergers or the greyhound ban are considered.



Former NSW Treasury secretary Percy Allan has teamed up with One Nation leader Mark Latham to overhaul how NSW Parliament passes contentious laws. CREDIT: LOUISE KENNERLEY, DOMINIC LORRIMER

A key aspect of the proposal was a requirement for community input into controversial laws through a citizens' panel or jury.

Greens' MLC David Shoebridge amended Mr Latham's motion and the proposal will now be considered by the upper house's procedure committee.

Mr Latham, who worked on the idea with former NSW Treasury secretary Percy Allan, said the most problematic laws in NSW had been "rushed, ill-considered legislation and decision-making".

"I still get representations about uncoupling councils that are unhappy with amalgamations and we are still trying to unscramble the egg out of the lock-out laws," Mr Latham said.

"There is no evidence that rushing legislation through with a command of numbers leads to good public policy and good public outcomes."

A parliamentary inquiry into the lock-out laws is now underway, with hearings to start next month.

[Premier Gladys Berejiklian ordered a review into the controversial laws](#) ahead of a push in the upper house from the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers, and the Greens to scrap the lock-outs.

Mr Latham told Parliament last month that it was the support of the Animal Justice Party that helped gain backing for his plan to overhaul how contentious laws are made.

"The Animal Justice Party and One Nation make for somewhat of an unholy alliance in today's politics," Mr Latham told Parliament.

Mr Shoebridge said that "one thing that has been good about this new Parliament is the willingness to take a step back and look at how we can improve procedures."

Special Minister of State, Don Harwin, conceded the government "might not have got itself into trouble on a few pieces of legislation" if it had followed a similar process.

"However, I make this point: If the Government is silly enough to get into that sort of situation, as in my experience governments have been frequently in the 20 years that I have been here, then it is at its own peril," Mr Harwin told Parliament.

Last year, Mr Allan [chaired a project for the newDemocracy Foundation](#) with two ideologically opposed think tanks that rated how 20 state and federal government policies were developed.

The traditionally left-leaning Per Capita and free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs singled out four policies as having an "unacceptable" level of rigour, including NSW's [local council mergers policy](#) and the federal government's same-sex marriage postal survey.

"Governments lose support because of half-baked policies foisted onto an unwitting public which provokes a backlash," Mr Allan said.

Ms Berejiklian has called for [a significant shake-up of both houses of NSW Parliament](#) to make it a place for "modern and progressive debate".

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