

Rogue Liberal MP crosses the floor, forcing release of documents

SMH 12 April 2018

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Rogue Liberal MP Matthew Mason-Cox has forced his government into releasing the business case for the relocation of the Powerhouse Museum, in a move that could see him suspended from the party room.

In what has been described as an unprecedented step, Mr Mason-Cox crossed the floor of parliament to support a Greens' motion to have the business case released within 14 days.



Liberal MP Matthew Mason-Cox. Photo: Samuel Groves

The parliamentary order comes less than a fortnight after the government committed to releasing only a summary of the business case, and not until 90 days after its investment decision had been made.

A senior Liberal source said the upper house MP's decision to cross the floor could see a push to have him suspended from the Liberal party room.

"There are a cadre of members who would like to see him suspended," the source said.

Another said: "This is very unhelpful when we are trying to win an election."

The source said that while the Liberal party has a non-binding caucus, and members are free to vote on matters of conscience, an MP is expected to support the government on procedural matters, which would include a vote on the release of papers.

Mr Mason-Cox, a former fair trading minister, has become a vocal opponent of some of the government's major policies, [including stadiums](#).

Earlier this week, he said the relocation of the Powerhouse Museum was another example of the government "[failing to do its homework](#)".

Mr Mason-Cox said the state government had developed a "perverse culture of secrecy" that threatens the public's confidence in its decision making.

The government has been considering the business case since December and has said it will announce its decision on the fate of the Powerhouse "in the near future".

Greens MP David Shoebridge said his motion "embarrassed" the government into releasing the documents.

"If the government wants to spend \$1.5 billion blowing up the Powerhouse and moving it to Parramatta, it needs to publicly release the business case before any decision is finalised," Mr Shoebridge said.

"The government now has 14 days to end the secrecy, release the full business and show the people of NSW why it thinks this is a good idea."

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/nsw/rogue-liberal-mp-crosses-the-floor-forcing-release-of-documents-20180412-p4z9a6.html>