



Speech by  
**Jeff Seene**

**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

Hansard Thursday, 19 April 2007

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**VACANCY IN SENATE OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA:  
NOMINATION OF SK BOYCE**

**Mr SEENEY** (Callide—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.56 am): I would like to very briefly add my voice to the motion to nominate Suzanne Kay Boyce to the Senate vacancy here in the parliament this morning. Could I firstly of course add my congratulations to Ms Boyce on the success that she has had in progressing through the preselection process within the Liberal Party to attain the right to this nomination. Wherever you go in politics, I think anyone in politics will tell you that the preselection process is the most difficult part. It is certainly the part that we all remember the most. I think it is almost a bit like an initiation process into politics. It is the bit that you remember the longest, and so it is in every party and so it is with all people who enter politics. I congratulate you, Sue, on the success that you have had in that preselection process and the right to attain this nomination today.

I also commend both the Premier and the Deputy Premier for the way that this parliament has been able to address this process. I think, as they both alluded to, there is a certain temptation to take the opportunity, if you like, to raise some peripheral issues that are best left in the past than in the consideration for the future. I do genuinely commend you, Deputy Premier and Premier, for the way that the parliament has approached this process today. I certainly would give you whatever assurance I can that if at some time in the future I am involved in this sort of process I will ensure the dignity of the process is maintained and the dignity of the parliament is maintained in nominations for the Senate, because some of the events that the Premier alluded to are well and truly best left in the past. I certainly have a determination to ensure that the traditions and the probity of this parliament are always protected and are always respected.

The nomination of anybody to a position such as a senator in the federal parliament is certainly a momentous step. It charges the recipient of that nomination with a huge responsibility. The Senate is a house of legislature that has at its core the responsibility to represent the whole state from which that person is nominated. Over the past few years there has been considerable debate about the role of the Senate and, in particular, the responsibilities of the senators who are elected to that place and where their loyalties belong. I am one who accepts the argument that a senator's first loyalty is to the state that that senator represents. When we look at the system that our forefathers set up in the Commonwealth parliament, that of a House of Representatives and a Senate, that system works best when senators operate from that perspective.

I wish the new Senate nominee here today all the best as she grapples with those sometimes conflicting responsibilities—the responsibility to the political party that nominates that person and the responsibility to the state that that person represents. Certainly, on behalf of the National Party I endorse the motion that has been moved by the Premier and seconded by the deputy leader of the coalition and the Leader of the Liberal Party. I wish the new Senate nominee all the very best for a long career in the federal Senate.