



Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszcuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 21 May 2015

VACANCY IN SENATE OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA: ELECTION OF SENATOR



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.31 pm): I move—

That Joanna Lindgren be elected to hold the place in the Senate of the Parliament of the Commonwealth rendered vacant through the resignation of Senator Brett Mason.

It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak in this debate to elect the candidate to fill the casual Senate vacancy caused by the resignation from the Senate of the Australian parliament of Senator Brett Mason. I take this opportunity to congratulate Senator Mason on his appointment as ambassador to the Netherlands and wish him well in his new posting.

The Liberal National Party has confirmed its preselection of Ms Joanna Lindgren and formally notified that she should be nominated for election to hold a place in the Senate. I have therefore produced and tabled Ms Lindgren's declaration of qualification and consent.

Today the House is now being asked to elect a senator for Queensland to fill the casual Senate vacancy. In accordance with the conventions of our federal system of government, since the commencement of the Constitution Alteration (Senate Casual Vacancies) Act 1977 and in accordance with the Constitution, the person to fill the vacancy caused by Senator Mason's resignation should come from the same political party.

The election of a replacement senator is an important constitutional function and the conventions of our federal system of government and our Westminster system are things that I take very seriously and treat with the upmost respect. The Labor government also respects the conventions of our Westminster system and therefore we will not be opposing the nomination of Ms Lindgren to fill the casual Senate vacancy.

Ms Lindgren was born in Brisbane and attended Brigidine College in Indooroopilly. Ms Lindgren grew up in and around Inala, where her parents still live. Her parents and family are here today and I know that they would be immensely proud to see their daughter elected to fill this very high office.

Ms Lindgren later studied at Griffith University where she received a graduate diploma in education after her initial arts degree. Ms Lindgren has worked as a high school teacher in Brisbane and has been a member of the Australian Army Reserve. She is currently a principal project officer and lives at Jimboomba.

Ms Lindgren is, of course, known to me. She was one of my opponents for the electoral district of Inala at the 2012 state election. While Ms Lindgren's candidature was unsuccessful at that election, I have the pleasure of moving in this House today that she be elected to fill the casual vacancy in the Senate.

As many honourable members will know, Ms Lindgren is an Aboriginal Australian and is the great-niece of the first Indigenous member of the Parliament of Australia, Neville Bonner. Mr Bonner had a proud record of service to this state as a senator for Queensland for over 12 years. I am confident that Ms Lindgren will similarly be a strong advocate for Queensland in the Senate of the Parliament of Australia.

I have spoken previously about what the characteristics are that people look for in a good politician. I believe a number of qualities are invaluable—qualities such as honesty, integrity, compassion, humility and honour. I have every confidence that Ms Lindgren will bring these qualities to her representation of the Queensland people in the Senate of the Parliament of Australia. I commend Ms Lindgren's nomination and this motion to the House.