



Speech By  
**Ann Leahy**


**MEMBER FOR WARREGO**

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Record of Proceedings, 21 March 2018

## **VACANCY IN SENATE OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA**

### **Election of Senator**

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.26 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion to nominate Amanda Stoker to fill the casual Senate vacancy that has been created through the resignation of Senator George Brandis. Like our leader, Deb Frecklington—the first female opposition leader of the LNP in Queensland—I, too, am very proud to support the election of another LNP woman to high office in our democracy. I wish to welcome Amanda to the Queensland parliament today as well as her husband, Adam, whom I have known for a long time; her three beautiful daughters—and I am sure they would again like to hear their names—Mary, Jane and Emma; her proud mum, Connie; and her younger sister, Susan.

It is a pleasure to talk about Amanda—a mother, a lawyer and a friend—whom I have watched grow professionally and politically within the LNP. It is also appropriate that I acknowledge Senator George Brandis for his service to this state as a senator and also in his roles with the federal government as attorney-general, minister for the arts and sport, and the leader of the coalition in the Senate. Many members of this House may not know that Senator Brandis has a strong connection with my electorate through his family members at Dunkeld and his ancestors at Quilpie. Senator Brandis was a frequent visitor to my electorate, the south-west region and many other places in regional Queensland. I wish Senator Brandis well in his forthcoming role as Australia's High Commissioner to London. It is good to have a Queenslanders in that role.

There is no doubt that Amanda Stoker is a remarkable mother, wife and professional who will serve Queensland with distinction and compassion in her new role as a Queensland senator. I know that many of her values and her motivation at a very early age came about because of economic management and recession and the impacts that that had on her family while she was young. Amanda comes from humble beginnings that, no doubt, will drive her conviction and her fearless advocacy to achieve outcomes for our state of Queensland. Amanda has always sought to excel by working hard and walking in the shoes of those who have aspirations and have experienced the struggles of middle Australia. Amanda grew up in a small business family and now runs her own. Amanda knows what it is like to take risks, to come from a little to build something great.

As a candidate Amanda has already taken to the roads in Queensland and visited St George in my electorate where she talked to many locals and I thank her for doing so. I am very sure she will not forget those roads to regional Queensland as she makes the journey to the Senate in Canberra. I know that Amanda shares a passion for regional Queensland. I have already seen that firsthand. I look forward to her servant leadership in the Australian Senate. I commend the motion and look forward to working with Amanda Stoker in the future as one of Queensland's senators.