




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 21 March 2018

VACANCY IN SENATE OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Nomination

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (2.01 pm): I nominate Amanda Stoker for election to hold the place in the Senate rendered vacant through the resignation of Senator the Hon. George Brandis QC. I produce and table Amanda Stoker's declaration of qualifications and consent.

Tabled paper: Correspondence from the Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Deb Frecklington MP, to the Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, regarding the nomination of Ms Amanda Stoker to fill the casual Senate vacancy occasioned by the resignation of the Hon. George Brandis QC, and a declaration of qualification and consent to act in accordance with schedule 4 of the standing rules and orders of the Queensland Legislative Assembly [\[404\]](#).

Mr SPEAKER: Are there any further nominations? There being no further nominations, I call the Premier.

Election of Senator

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (2.03 pm): I move—

That Amanda Stoker be elected to hold the place in the Senate of the Parliament of the Commonwealth rendered vacant through the resignation of Senator the Hon. George Brandis QC.

It gives me great pleasure to speak in this debate to elect a candidate to fill the place in the Senate of the parliament of Australia caused by the resignation of Senator George Brandis. I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Brandis on his appointment as Australia's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and I wish him well in this very important posting.

The Leader of the Opposition has written to me confirming that the LNP has preselected Ms Amanda Stoker to replace Senator Brandis and has formally notified me that she should be nominated for election to hold the place in the Senate. I welcome Ms Stoker to the parliament here today. I note her attendance here today in the gallery and I also am delighted to welcome her husband, Adam, and their children Mary, Jane and Emma. To Ms Stoker's mother, Connie, her sister, Susan, and other friends Rebecca and Rachel and family members who are also present today, we welcome you for this very significant ceremonial occasion. I produced and tabled Ms Stoker's declaration of qualification and consent prepared in accordance with schedule 4 of the standing orders of this House.

Today the House is being asked to elect a senator for Queensland to fill a casual Senate vacancy and it is my pleasure to move that Ms Stoker be elected to hold that place in the Senate. In accordance with the conventions of our federal system of government and since the commencement of the Constitution Alteration (Senate Casual Vacancies) Act 1977 and the provisions of the Australian Constitution, the person to fill the Senate vacancy caused by Mr Brandis'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 utmost respect. Consequently, the government supports the election of Ms Stoker.

I note that Ms Stoker was born in Campbelltown in New South Wales—we will not hold that against her—and that together with the honour of representing Queensland in the Senate there also is a corresponding obligation to support Queensland in the State of Origin! Ms Stoker attended Hurlstone Agricultural High School. After leaving school, she studied at Sydney University and Griffith University where she received a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Laws and a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice. She was admitted as a solicitor in 2006, commenced at the bar in 2011 and has worked widely throughout Queensland. She has also been a prosecutor with the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions and is a former associate of then justice Ian Callinan of the High Court of Australia and then justice Philip McMurdo of the Supreme Court of Queensland.

I also note that Ms Stoker is a lecturer in the business and law faculty at the Central Queensland University and, among other appointments, is vice-president of the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland. She is currently a barrister here in Brisbane and lives in Auchenflower with her husband, Adam, and her three daughters.

I have previously spoken of the characteristics that I believe people look for in a good politician. I believe that the electors expect representatives who have a number of qualities—honesty, integrity, compassion, humility and honour. I am confident that Ms Stoker will embody those characteristics and be a strong advocate for Queensland in the Senate of the parliament of Australia. I am delighted to see another woman senator representing Queensland. The march of progress may be slow but it is determined. I commend Ms Stoker's nomination and this motion to the House.