




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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VACANCY IN SENATE OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Election of Senator

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.17 pm): It is a privilege to speak on the motion to support Amanda Stoker's appointment to fill the casual Senate vacancy created through the resignation of Senator George Brandis. I also join with my colleagues in welcoming Amanda here today with her husband, Adam, and her three beautiful daughters—Mary, Jane and Emma. Her proud mum, Connie, is also here with her younger sister, Susan.

Amanda's family are immensely supportive of her as she takes her place in the Senate and public life. Family is and will be a great source of strength for her. The support and encouragement Amanda receives from her husband, Adam, will be essential to her success as a senator. Amanda and Adam share the responsibility of raising their three daughters. Adam is general counsel for the Brisbane Airport Corporation and Amanda tells me that he is a wonderful, involved and helpful father. The support, encouragement and love from family is essential to public life. Like Deb and Jason and their three girls and Gayle, me and our four children, the Liberal National Party is all about family. We wish Amanda and her family the very best as she takes on the responsibilities of a senator and I am confident that she will be an extremely strong voice in Canberra.

Let me add why I think Amanda will make a great Queensland senator. Amanda is full of conviction and holds strong to her values. Amanda has served as an associate for then justice Ian Callinan in the High Court and then justice Philip McMurdo in the Supreme Court. She has also spent time as a Commonwealth prosecutor. As a prosecutor, Amanda worked to bring about justice in horrible cases of child pornography, corporate fraud and drug importations, and as a barrister Amanda has brought cases to the High Court and the Court of Appeal, where she once acted for Police Commissioner Ian Stewart.

Amanda's track record as a lawyer and bringing criminals to justice speaks for itself, but she tells me that she is most proud of how she has assisted other women, particularly women with children like her, establish themselves at the bar. The credentials and experience that Amanda has suggest that a strong and effective force is now entering the Senate. Amanda tells me that she will fight to improve the education system and uphold values of freedom of speech. Amanda will fight for equality of opportunity and a responsible approach to our economy.

As the Leader of the Opposition said, I am very proud to support the election of another LNP woman to high office in our democracy. Amanda is transitioning from one important area of the law to another. The Senate is powerful in shaping legislation. Just as Amanda has had to respect the court, she will now have the necessary respect for the Senate as a house of review for the passage of legislation.

I want to put on record my appreciation for the services of Amanda's predecessor in the Senate, George Brandis—a proud Queenslander who served with distinction. He will become Australia's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom next month. We wish George all the best in his next chapter of service to Australia.

The Liberal National Party has a long and proud history of senators who have upheld the responsibilities of high office. Dame Annabelle Rankin was the first woman from Queensland to sit in the parliament of Australia. Sue Boyce was a senator for seven years and a strong advocate for disability. As the opposition has already mentioned, Neville Bonner was the first Indigenous Australian to be a member of the Australian parliament. Amanda will follow Neville Bonner's grand-niece, Joanna Lindgren, as the LNP's latest woman senator. Amanda will join four other LNP representatives from Queensland in the Senate working hard for this country. Matt Canavan, James McGrath, Barry O'Sullivan and Ian Macdonald proudly represent our state in the Senate.

I also want to back the words of the opposition leader in saying how proud I was Saturday week ago to be involved in a true democratic process where 12 very suitably qualified candidates made themselves available to the state council of the Liberal National Party to show their credentials, to state their claim, to answer questions from the floor, to go through a thorough process to make sure that we have the best candidate to represent this great state. Six men and six women—an incredibly impressive short list—went through that democratic process. I am proud of that process and I am proud to be involved in a party that supports that democratic process.

The LNP voted for Amanda Stoker over the other 11 candidates because of her story, her experience and her convictions. I look forward to working with Amanda and continuing to work hard for all Queenslanders. Amanda has a remarkable story behind her and a bright future as an LNP senator ahead of her. We wish Amanda and her family good health and long service in the federal Senate.