DEAN SMITH

Liberal Senator for Western Australia

LIBERAL
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A **Strong Voice** in a **United WA Team**

A Senate leadership role

I was first elected by my Senate colleagues to the role of Chief Government Whip in the Senate in January 2019.

During those almost two years, I have been a trusted and dependable member of the five-member Coalition Senate Leadership Team, first under the leadership of Mathias Cormann and now Simon Birmingham.

Only six Liberal Senators have been Chief Government Whip since 1990, and it has been an honour to join the ranks of former WA Liberal Senators Reg Withers, Fred Chaney and John Panizza.

The work I do with the Coalition Senate Leadership Team ensures the effective, timely passage of the Government's legislative agenda – in almost two years I have guided the Coalition Government in the Senate through 618 divisions over almost 720 hours and 74 sitting days, ensuring 223 Government bills were passed.

The role of Chief Government Whip has taken on a new importance during COVID-19, when it has been central to continuing the smooth operation of our parliamentary democracy when it has been needed most.

"In his role as Chief Government Whip, Dean is highly regarded for his discretion, work ethic and commitment to building a strong Coalition Senate team.

Dean brings highly valued insight and strategy to the discussions of our Senate Leadership Team, helping us to effectively manage both opportunities and risks in day to day Senate management.

His professionalism during the last two years in the role, working across the Senate with non-Government Senators, has been an integral part of the legislative success enjoyed by the Morrison Government."

Senator Simon Birmingham, Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Stepping-up on the big issues

In addition to supporting the broader achievements of the Coalition over the last seven years, my record in advancing WA's interests and our values includes:

2012

- Calling for GST reform in my First Speech to the Senate, and consistently and convincingly arguing WA's case.
- Backing WA wheat growers and the united view of WA farming communities by challenging attempts to re-regulate Australia's wheat exports.

2013

- Protecting our Federation by co-ordinating Coalition Senators' opposition to Labor's proposal to recognise local government in the Constitution.

2014

- Calling for reform of Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 by co-sponsoring a Private Senators Bill with Senators Bernardi, Day and Leyonhjelm.

2016

- Progressing GST reform by calling for an independent, transparent inquiry by the Productivity Commission.
- Progressing reforms to Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 and the Australian Human Rights Commission.
- Progressing reform of the wine equalisation tax to better support WA's premium wine producers and drive regional employment and tourism opportunities.

2017

- Asserting our values regarding the People's Republic of China by opposing Australia's ratification of an extradition treaty.
- Progressing reform of Australia's media by improving the viability of regional broadcasters and reducing gambling advertising during sport broadcasts.
- Progressing resolution of Australia's marriage debate with the introduction of legislation to extend the definition of marriage and protect key religious freedoms.

"I would like to extend thanks to you from the WA wine industry for your support in 2016. The outcomes regarding the wine equalisation tax will have a generational positive impact on south west WA and other fine wine regions around Australia. The significance of this from our industry cannot be overestimated."

Larry Jorgensen, CEO, Wines of WA, December 2016.

"Thanks to my Coalition colleagues, thanks to the support of the Prime Minister and can I particularly single out ... Senator Dean Smith from my party, who have been great stewards of this endeavour with me and my crossbench colleagues."

Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield, Minister for Communications, Parliament, September 2017.

"The Prime Minister on 3AW this morning said that the government would consider a proposal put forward by West Australian Liberal Senator Dean Smith for a parliamentary inquiry by the human rights committee.

This would help break the deadlock in parliament over section 18C and provide people with an opportunity to outline the consequences of limiting freedom of speech."

Simon Brehemy, Director of Policy at the IPA, October 2016.

A values-based approach to COVID-19 recovery

Having been on track to deliver the Budget back to surplus for the first time in 11 years, the Coalition is now entrusted with the responsibility of steering Australia through the COVID-19 recovery and rebuilding its economic future.

While many challenges remain, we are now presented with possibilities that couldn't have been imagined pre-COVID-19 - put simply, we have a compelling opportunity to reshape Australia's future - for our generation, and those that follow.

In doing so, we must strongly assert those values we hold true, to protect Australia's freedoms and liberties, and secure its future prosperity.

The Coalition's emphasis on jobs is critical – employment provides opportunity, independence and self-worth, as well as the economic security for Australians to succeed.

To further drive jobs growth, we must reduce the cost of doing business and boost Australia's competitiveness with polices that:

- **improve access to low cost energy** at internationally competitive prices to stimulate our exports, broaden our manufacturing base, and promote greater self-reliance;
- **reset the relationship between employer and employee** to drive productivity and reduce the strength of Labor's trade union influence;
- **broaden the tax base to better reward personal effort and entrepreneurship**, while minimising the tax burden on businesses and families; and
- **reinforce the virtues of Australian federalism**, ensuring the voices of communities far from Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne are part of our political decision making.

A strong grass-roots campaigner

As a Senator, I have consistently shown a fighting spirit and taken responsibility for State and Federal campaigns – always in marginal seats not held by Liberals.

To this day, I am most proud of my contributions to the strong campaigns that halved the margin to a mere 3% in the Federal seat of Brand in 2010 and snatched the Federal seat of O'Connor from Independent National Tony Crooke in 2013.

Under my leadership, the Liberals have also delivered strong results in the 2016 Perth and 2019 Cowan campaigns.

In Perth in 2016, the Liberals beat Labor's primary vote by 4.3% - the first time the Liberals had won the primary vote since 1980.

The Liberals saw great results in the 2019 Cowan campaign, despite the strength of incumbency and the high profile of Labors' candidate.

In Cowan, Labor was defeated on the primary vote and we inflicted a stinging 3.6% negative first preference swing against them, as well as building a larger and stronger polling day presence of more than 300 active volunteers working on election day.

Cowan is now Labor's third most marginal seat in Australia.

Critically, the campaign diverted Labor's time, energy, and strategic resources from the critical-to-win, incumbent Liberal seats of Swan, Hasluck and Pearce.

"It was very close. It was a surprise – none of this was expected."

Anne Aly MP, 720 ABC Perth Breakfast Program, May 2019.

"And Senator Dean Smith, with his energy and incredible attention to detail, gave my campaign impetus and momentum at precisely the right time."

Rick Wilson MP, First Speech, House of Representatives, December 2013.

Building community support for WA Liberals and the Morrison Government

A Senator's work extends far beyond the Senate Chamber – and a Senator doesn't change votes by staying in their office.

More and more, Liberal Senators are expected to be an accessible and accountable face for the Morrison Coalition Government by being seen out and about in our local communities.

I am proud of the work I do across Perth's northern suburbs and regional WA, building electoral support and creating a strong and positive image for the Liberal Party.

In 2020, through my advocacy, more than $4 million in funding has gone to local organisations including Chabad Lubavitch of WA and Sikh Gurdwara Perth Inc to improve the safety and security of their communities, Chin Charity for community classrooms, Grandparents Rearing Grandchildren WA for respite camps, Olympic Kingsway Sports Club for a new stadium and change rooms, the Organisation of African Communities for a youth mentoring program, and the Vietnamese Community in WA for a long-awaited Community and Cultural Centre.

There is always more to be done, but this will remain a priority for me and the focus of my activity as I prepare for the next Federal Election.

"Dean has been our 'champion' ever since he first became aware of the financial and emotional discrimination faced by grandparent carers. He has always been there for our committee and made members of GRGWA a priority for him."

Jan Standen, President, Grandparents Rearing Grandchildren WA.

"Dean has reached out to communities and individuals in the Northern Suburbs to discuss their needs through thick and thin - we're very grateful for the support we know we'll continue to receive from him."

Navtej Uppal, President, Sikh Gurdwara Perth.

"We are very lucky to have Dean as our Senator and cannot thank him enough for his friendship to the Jewish community as a whole – he always assists us with our needs, including funding for the new Jewish Centre and Holocaust Museum to begin in 2021."

Joan Hillman, President, Jewish Community of WA.

A voice for WA's far north

A Western Australian Senator must be a Senator for everybody in our state, no matter where they live and work.

In recent years, I have become a champion for the Kimberley and Pilbara regions, and a champion for Coalition policies that support them.

The two regions make up almost 40% of the state's land area and, despite having less than 4% of WA's population, produce more than 70% of its merchandise exports.

However, the opportunities for WA's far north remain largely untapped – either tied up in red and green tape or overlooked by Perth and Canberra.

COVID-19 must be an opportunity to revisit ideas previously considered too hard or even impossible, such as pastoral and land tenure reform that better utilises the potential of irrigated feedstock, harnesses the Kimberley's abundant water resources, and transforms Indigenous business and employment opportunities into meaningful outcomes.

But the challenges are real and immediate. The pandemic has already had a disproportionate economic impact on regional communities, especially across the far north.

And pre-pandemic risks remain. Left-wing political activists want to deny Kimberley and Pilbara people the future benefits of an irrigated Fitzroy Valley in the Kimberley and seek to undermine resource and industrial development in the Pilbara.

I remain an active public commentator on far north issues and am a member of various Senate and Parliamentary committees resisting the campaigns of the Australian Greens and others that would harm our regional communities.

"Dean Smith is one of the rare politicians with a genuine interest in improving our local community and has demonstrated an ability to navigate bureaucracy to achieve outcomes for the Kimberley."

Elsia Archer, Chairperson, Regional Development Australia Kimberley.

"Senator Smith is an effective advocate for the Kimberley region because he shows up, he travels the Tanami Road to the NT border, he visits the Duncan Road, and he walks the streets with local Aboriginal leaders after dark. He is a committed, strong voice for the Kimberley."

Malcolm Edwards, President, Shire of Halls Creek.

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