

Hawker Britton

Government Relations Strategy

Australian Conservatives-Family First Amalgamation

On Wednesday 26 April it was announced that the Family First political party will cease to exist, and will formally amalgamate with Cory Bernardi's Australian Conservatives.

The Australian Conservatives party was formed when Senator Cory Bernardi announced his defection from the Liberal Party on 7 February 2017, declaring his intention to sit as an independent member representing the newly-formed Australian Conservatives.

Lucy Gihuchi was declared by the High Court to be eligible to sit as the new Senator for South Australia, filling a vacancy left by former Family First Senator Bob Day. She will be sworn in on 9 May, when the Senate meets next. She has declared her intention to sit as an independent for the time being, rather than as a member of the Australian Conservatives. The bloc of Australian Conservatives in the Senate will therefore not be altered by the amalgamation.

The amalgamation has implications for the composition of the South Australian Legislative Council, where Dennis Hood and Robert Brokenshire both sit as representatives of Family First. Hood and Brokenshire will henceforth be representatives of the Australian Conservatives.

Bernardi will become the Party's federal leader, whilst Hood will serve as the leader in South Australia.

In his application to the Australian Electoral Commission, Senator Bernardi the Australian Conservatives stood for limited government, personal responsibility, free enterprise and civil society.

Bernardi has signalled his intention to run candidates at the upcoming South Australian state election, to be held on 17 March 2018.

Senate Composition

There are 76 Senators, comprised of:

- Coalition 29
- Labor 26
- Greens 9
- One Nation 4
- Nick Xenophon Party 3
- David Leyonhjelm 1
- Jacqui Lambie 1
- Australian Conservatives 1
- Derryn Hinch 1





Lucy Gichuhi 1

For the government to pass legislation it needs 39 votes.

Where the Coalition faces opposition from the Labor Party and the Greens, it requires the support of 10 of the remaining 12 crossbenchers. Where the government requires 10 of the 12 crossbench votes, the positions of One Nation (4 votes) and Nick Xenophon Team (3 votes) become critical.

Further information

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