



**SENATOR THE HON GEORGE BRANDIS QC
ATTORNEY-GENERAL
LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SENATE**

MEDIA RELEASE

LABOR TO ABOLISH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER

Today, the Opposition announced that a Shorten Labor Government would not fill the position of the Human Rights Commissioner. That would degrade our human rights architecture and significantly set back the cause of human rights in Australia.

When Labor was last in office, it left the position of Human Rights Commissioner unfilled for the whole of its two terms in government. It shows how little Labor cares about our fundamental political freedoms, including freedom of speech, opinion, religion, association and freedom of the press, that it is once again proposing to abandon this role.

Only the Coalition Government will protect the position of Australia's Human Rights Commissioner. Yesterday, the Turnbull Government decided to appoint an eminently qualified Australian to be the next Human Rights Commissioner.

As well, the Government yesterday decided to appoint two other eminent Australians to the positions of Disability Discrimination Commissioner and Age Discrimination Commissioner, respectively. The appointment of three new commissioners will give the Australian Human Rights Commission its full complement of Commissioners.

The appointees will be announced next week following consideration by the Governor-General at Executive Council.

These appointments were recommended by me following an open and comprehensive selection process that began with advertising on 18 March 2016. The panel included the President of the Human Rights Commission, a representative of the Public Service Commissioner, the President of the Australian Law Reform Commission and a former Director-General of the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

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