

Statement

The Hon Dan Andrews MP
Premier



Thursday, 19 March 2020

STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

Special Minister of State Gavin Jennings has advised me of his intention to retire from the Victorian Parliament, effective Monday 23 March 2020.

Just over 20 years ago, Gavin first rose to his feet as a member of our state's Legislative Council – younger, greener and perhaps a little less grey too.

In that first contribution, he spoke of living his life in service to the Labor Party, determined to see it act with confidence and courage in its convictions.

He was, as he put it, devoted to ensuring we “reclaimed our political will and sense of purpose”:

Giving voice to the voiceless, affording power to the powerless, and making life better and fairer for working people.

Every day since then, Gavin has remained true to his values and true to his word.

Perhaps one of his proudest achievements in public life was as Environment Minister in the Brumby Government – intervening to protect 140,000 hectares of River Red Gums along the Murray, Goulburn and Ovens rivers.

Today, those ancient and majestic trees stand tall as testament to Gavin's tenacity.

His list of achievements is long.

As Member for Melbourne Province, and then South-Eastern Metropolitan Region, Gavin has been a fierce and faithful voice for his local community.

As Special Minister of State, he has driven landmark reform to make government more transparent, more open and more responsive to the people who elect it. That includes introducing the strongest political donation laws in the nation.

As Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, he's helped ensure Treaty will no longer be an aspiration, but a reality – and with it, a fairer, more decent future for our First Peoples.

His final achievement in this portfolio is also one of the most profound. The unfinished business of a redress scheme for the Stolen Generations was announced this week, delivering the recognition, respect and support for survivors that has been so long overdue.

As Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, Gavin has been at the forefront of some of our biggest and bravest legislative achievements: fire services reform, gender equality reform and ensuring Victorians at the end of their life have the dignity they deserve.

And as a colleague and comrade, Gavin has been generous in his wisdom, his support and his friendship.

Because of Gavin, our state is more progressive and more principled. And because of Gavin, our movement is more confident, more courageous – and more compassionate.

On behalf of our Party and our Parliament, I'd like to thank Gavin for his unwavering passion, principle and purpose in serving the working people of Victoria.