

**ABC Tasmania:** <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-06-08/bridget-archer-to-run-for-bass-in-state-election/105391136>

## **Bridget Archer puts her hand up to run for Tasmanian Liberals in Bass, despite election yet to be called**

**By Adam Holmes**

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Bridget Archer and Jeremy Rockliff have announced Ms Archer will seek preselection to run for the the Liberals in Tasmania. (ABC News: Bec Pridham)

### **In short:**

Bridget Archer will attempt to return to politics just a month after losing the federal seat of Bass for the Liberals.

She has confirmed she will seek preselection to run for the state seat of Bass, with Premier Jeremy Rockliff planning to ask on Tuesday for a state election once emergency budget bills are passed.

### **What's next?**

The Liberals hold three out of seven of the state seats in Bass under Tasmania's multi-member Hare-Clark system, and retaining those could be critical to the party's chances of maintaining minority government.

One month after losing the federal seat of Bass for the Liberals, Bridget Archer will attempt an immediate return to politics.

Tasmanian Premier Jeremy Rockliff has confirmed she will seek preselection to run as a candidate for the state seat of Bass, despite a state election yet to be called.

Mr Rockliff intends to ask on Tuesday for an election, after the state's lower house passed a no-confidence motion in him last week. It would be Tasmania's fourth election in seven years.

At the federal election, Ms Archer suffered a 9.4 per cent swing against her to Labor's Jess Teesdale — a relatively unknown candidate who was preselected at the last minute — and lost the seat by 8 per cent two party preferred.



Bridget Archer says the federal election loss last month was "a little bit bruising". (ABC News: Jonathan Mcnee)

Ms Archer — a moderate Liberal who crossed the floor multiple times during her time in federal parliament — said the events of the past week had driven her to put her hand up.

"I have just come off the back of a federal election which was a little bit bruising, I think it's fair to say," Ms Archer said.

"And I don't think I have really quite had enough time to process that.

"But I think like many Tasmanians, I have spent the last few days absolutely appalled with the shenanigans that have been played out by [Labor leader] Dean Winter in the state parliament."



Bridget Archer voted against her party in the federal parliament in support of independent MP Helen Haines' motion to debate a federal anti-corruption commission in November, 2021. (ABC News: Tamara Penniket)

Ms Archer said she would continue to stand up for what she believes in.

**"I'm not going to be anybody's stooge or anybody's puppet, I am going to say exactly what I think."**

After her loss in the federal election, Ms Archer pointed to Labor's messaging that linked her to former Liberal leader Peter Dutton as a critical factor.

She won the federal seat of Bass in 2019, then held the seat in 2022, becoming the first incumbent Bass MP to do so in more than two decades.

**'Bridget is a fighter': Rockliff**

Last week's no-confidence motion was in Mr Rockliff, rather than the government itself, but he continues to rule out stepping aside for another Liberal leader in order to attempt to maintain minority government.

He said Ms Archer's candidacy would help the party against Labor.

**"Bridget is a fighter. Bridget understands the importance of being part of team Tasmania,"**

**Mr Rockliff said.**



Bridget Archer will attempt to resurrect her political career, announcing she'll run in the state seat of Bass. (ABC News: Tamara Penniket)

"With the calibre of someone such as Bridget Archer willing to join many other candidates who are putting up their hands right now to ensure that we can stop Dean Winter's selfish grab for power."

The Liberals hold three out of seven seats in Bass in Tasmania's multi-member Hare-Clark system, driven by the local electoral popularity of former deputy premier Michael Ferguson.

Former sports presenter, now MP, Rob Fairs also polled well for the party.

The selection of Ms Archer could help the party attempt to sandbag its seats in the electorate.

Polling by EMRS — owned by Liberal-aligned Font PR — shows the proposed Macquarie Point stadium is unpopular in Bass, with 29 per cent in favour and 58 per cent against.

**Rush for candidates**

The Liberals, Labor and the Greens preselected seven candidates each for the five seats at the last state election — 35 candidates in total for each party.

Unions Tasmania secretary Jessica Munday was overlooked by Labor to replace Anne Urquhart in the Senate following Ms Urquhart's win in Braddon at the federal election.

The ABC asked Ms Munday if she would seek preselection to run at the state election.

"At the moment, I am interested in fighting for workers and doing my job at Unions Tasmania," Ms Munday said.



Jessica Munday hasn't ruled out a tilt at state parliament, but says she's focused on her current role with Unions Tasmania. (ABC News: Luke Bowden)

Mr Winter said the party was sounding out candidates.

"We've already seen a lot of interest in what we're doing," he said.

**"You've seen candidates like Jess Teesdale coming through in Bass for the federal Labor ticket and she's just incredible, and that's the sort of talent that we're looking for, the sort of talent that we are speaking to."**

Mr Winter said an early election would be Mr Rockliff's fault for losing the confidence of the lower house.

"If there is an early election called by Jeremy Rockliff that will be on him, but we'll be ready to go," he said.

Greens MP Vica Bayley said both the Liberal and Labor leaders had options to avoid an election, which they should explore.

But Mr Bayley said the Greens were preparing for an election, should that be the outcome.

"Of course we're getting our ducks line up and making sure we're ready to go," he said.

"We just want to reiterate that it's not too late [to avoid an election]."

At the 2024 state election, the Liberals won 14 seats, Labor won 10, the Greens won five and three independents were elected, along with three Jacqui Lambie Network candidates, two of whom have since become independent.



Jeremy Rockliff says he'll ask for an early election, after the parliament passed a motion of no-confidence in him. *(Supplied)*

### **Political donation laws could start mid-campaign**

Tasmania is the only state or territory that does not have its own political donation disclosure system in place, but that is set to change on July 1.

Donations above \$1,000 will need to be publicly disclosed from that date.

Independent MLC Meg Webb said the government must ensure the Electoral Commission was ready to implement the system — or even bring its start date forward.

"If the Tasmanian people are going to be sent to another early election, basically to protect the political self interest of both major parties, it's only right that we should prioritise integrity and transparency and have our new political donation laws in place," Ms Webb said.



Meg Webb says the government must ensure the Electoral Commission is ready to implement a new political donation disclosure system from July 1. *(ABC News: Kate Nickels)*

"Presumably, the Electoral Commission is ready to go with the systems needed to put these laws into effect.

"Bringing them forward, if an election is called this week, shouldn't be too much trouble and I would like to see that happen to deliver the trust and integrity to the Tasmanian people."

Mr Rockliff said the Liberal party would "comply with the law".

"We will ensure that we comply with the Tasmanian legislation which will be implemented on the 1st of July," he said.

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