

Abbott says he will run for another term

Written by The Conversation USA

Former prime minister Tony Abbott has ended months of speculation by confirming he will renominate for his Sydney seat of Warringah.

His decision will be welcomed by many conservatives in the party but will concern those colleagues who fear that his continuation in parliament could be a destabilising force.

In a statement on his website, Abbott said he had been “heartened by the support and encouragement” he had received to continue to serve the country as a member of parliament. “Therefore, I am renominating to represent the people of Warringah for another term as their Liberal MP,” he said, adding that it had been an honour to serve them for 22 years. “I hope to retain their trust and confidence.”

Since being replaced by Malcolm Turnbull, Abbott has been active in speaking and writing opinion pieces, especially on security issues. However, in his statement, he highlighted only a local issue.

“I am proud of my work to establish the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust that has done so much to improve the amenity of former military land on North Head, Middle Head and Georges Heights. Should I be renominated and elected, I am looking forward to working with Premier Mike Baird to ensure that the Warringah Peninsula gets better transport links to the rest of Sydney,” he said.

Abbott’s preselection was never at risk – it was just a question of whether he would choose to seek another term. But there is a question mark over the preselections of several other Liberals, which is creating division in the NSW Liberal Party. The father of the House of Representatives, Philip Ruddock, is expected to decide imminently on his future.

Others whose preselections are under question include former speaker Bronwyn Bishop and veteran senator Bill Heffernan.

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Abbott's presence in the parliament for another term will provide something of a rallying point for the conservatives. But certainly in the short run he will be under considerable pressure to refrain from creating trouble as the government prepares for the election.

Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond the academic appointment above.

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