

Liberal MP Craig Laundy confirms he will quit

Written by Michelle Grattan, Professorial Fellow, University of Canberra

Former minister Craig Laundy, a close friend of Malcolm Turnbull, has finally confirmed he will quit at the election, leaving the Liberals highly vulnerable in his marginal Sydney seat of Reid.

Laundy said he needed to spend more time with his family, who had faced challenges over the past 12 months.

His exit has been anticipated for months. Scott Morrison failed to talk him into recontesting and then reportedly asked him to delay while a search was underway to find a strong candidate.

Reid is on a margin of less than 5%. Labor's candidate, Sam Crosby, has already a well-established campaign running in the seat.

Laundy previously held various frontbench positions, culminating in the post of minister for small and family business, the workplace and deregulation in the Turnbull government.

But after the overthrow of Turnbull he said he did not want to be considered for the ministry in the Morrison reshuffle.

Laundy said in a statement on Friday: "The reality of modern politics is that, more often than not, a member of parliament has to put their constituents ahead of their family, something I've done over the past six years.

"It's now time to focus on my family, who I have spent so much time away from".

He said over the past year, his family had faced a number of challenges, "and as a father, husband and son, I've made the difficult decision to quit politics to put them first".

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Emphasising his family's long association with the area of his electorate, Laundy said: "In the years to come, I will be able to walk around this part of Sydney with the fifth generation of my family, my grandkids, and be able to point to things and proudly say, 'You know what, Grandpa had something to do with that.'"

Laundy's planned departure follows announcements by a number of senior government figures that they will not contest the election.

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

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