



RACHEL NOLAN MP

Member for Ipswich

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What if school captains had to be boys?

School is back and new captains are being sworn in – but what if you could only vote for boys and only boys could vote?

Member for Ipswich, Rachel Nolan is urging students to think hard about the importance of voting this year because 2005 marks 100 years since women won the right to vote in State elections and 40 years since Indigenous people won that right.

“One hundred years ago, only men voted for Queensland’s Members of Parliament and they certainly did not vote for any women,” Ms Nolan said.

“Now, at schools like Bremer State High, male and female students are putting their hands up for leadership roles – and leading together.

“Women won the right to vote in Queensland elections on Australia Day in 1905 and voted in their first State election on May 18, 1907.

“Women won the right to be elected to Parliament in 1915 and Queensland’s first women MP was Irene Longman from 1929.

“We have certainly come a long way since then. Now Queensland has the highest representation of women in any Australian Parliament – 34.8 per cent of Queensland MPs women,” Ms Nolan said.

Thirty-one out of 89 Queensland MPs are women. The Federal Parliament is made up of 37 women – or 24.7 per cent – and 113 men.

“Many women today take the right to vote for granted, but it is such a powerful way to influence change. And it is so important our elected representatives represent our diverse society.

“Women highlight important issues that men may not have such a keen knowledge of, such as maternity leave and the right to affordable childcare.

“After council, State and Federal elections last year, there won’t be any voting for a while, but I urge you to make sure you’re enrolled and ready to have your say.”

Ms Nolan said she hoped people would get involved and host activities to mark Queensland’s Centenary of Suffrage.

For more information or to register your event, go to www.women.qld.gov.au/womenvote.