

Updated Politics Victoria [Liberal Party](#)

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Liberals move to expel Moira Deeming over neo-Nazi rally links



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Opposition leader John Pesutto will move to expel controversial Liberal MP Moira Deeming from the parliamentary party room after she attended a rally that has been associated with neo-Nazis.

Deeming attended the Let Women Speak rally organised by British anti-trans rights campaigner Kellie-Jay Keen-Minshull at Parliament House on Saturday.



Moira Deeming was seen with campaigners in areas of Parliament House that are restricted to the public. [TWITTER](#)

About 30 people from neo-Nazi group the National Socialist Network, dressed in black and most with their faces covered, attended the protests on Spring Street supporting Keen-Minshull, repeatedly performing the salute and holding up a sign using offensive anti-trans language.

Pesutto on Sunday night announced he had met with Deeming earlier that day, and discussed her involvement in “organising, promoting and participating in a rally with speakers and other organisers who themselves have been publicly associated with far right-wing extremist groups including neo-Nazi activists”.

“At our meeting I informed Ms Deeming that I will move a motion at the next party room meeting to expel her as a member of the parliamentary Liberal Party as her position is untenable.

“The violence, prejudice and hate that these protesters conveyed by their odious actions will never be acceptable in our state. I condemn them and commit to opposing such hate wherever it may exist.”

The opposition leader moved against Deeming, whose views on transgender issues are well documented, because she was promoting the event and had attended a karaoke night with the organisers.

Deeming also appeared in a video with Keen-Minshull, who made comments that in the UK trans rights activists were posing as neo-Nazi agitators at women’s rights rally to smear their cause.

Pesutto said her planned expulsion was not about restricting free speech, but denouncing the actions of a Liberal MP who associated with people whose views were “abhorrent” to his, the party’s and the wider community’s values.

“The Liberal Party I joined and which I am now honoured to lead, must strive to represent all Victorians,” the opposition leader said. “Regardless of religious faith, race, sexual preference and identity, Victorians everywhere should know that the Liberal Party is inclusive and can be a voice for them.”

But Liberal members are threatening to quit if Deeming is expelled.

A group mobilised late Sunday evening and early Monday morning, encouraging Liberal members to write to their MPs opposing the motion.

Deeming was preselected by the Liberal Party to top its ticket in the Western Metropolitan Region at last year’s state election, after controversial Liberal Bernie Finn was expelled from the parliamentary team and then defected to the Democratic Labour Party.

In her [inaugural speech](#) last month, Deeming criticised equality that had been “taken to extremes”.



Neo-Nazis, led by Thomas Sewell, marched on Spring Street on Saturday. CHRIS HOPKINS

Senior Liberal sources, not authorised to comment publicly, said Deeming was hauled before the parliamentary leadership team late on Sunday to explain her conduct at the rally and why she remained until the end even when a group performed neo-Nazi salutes on the steps of Parliament.

A Liberal member urging other members to back Moira Deeming in a private WhatsApp group.

The leadership team, made up of Pesutto, David Southwick, Georgie Crozier and Matthew Bach, were adamant Deeming's views were incompatible and she must be expelled from the party room.

Under the party's constitution, the party room meeting to expel Deeming can occur five days after the notice has been provided. The Opposition is hoping to have the matter resolved by Friday. The leadership team is confident more than 50 per cent – the minimum required – will support the motion.

The Liberal Party has been at a crossroads over social issues as it struggles to bridge the gaping internal divide between its socially liberal and conservative members, with debate flaring up in the aftermath of the 2022 federal election about how the party avoids lurching further to the right of mainstream Australians.

Since being elected as leader in December, Pesutto has signalled his intention to bring the party back to the centre on socially progressive issues.

The Age last year revealed the Victorian Liberal Party's powerful administrative committee voted for Deeming to run in the federal seat of Gorton at the 2022 election, but was deemed too risky by Scott Morrison's office to run as part of his team.

Morrison's office believed negative media coverage of Deeming's views on transgender rights could distract from the then prime minister's campaign.

Keen-Minshull tweeted in "solidarity with Moira" on Sunday evening, while former federal Liberal MP Nicolle Flint said Deeming's expulsion from the party room was "insane".

"The only person who should go is the leader of the Liberal Party because he's clearly not a Lib," Flint said.

Deeming's supporters have pointed to the comments by the Australian Jewish Association, which issued a statement saying it was "disgraceful" some politicians and elements of the media had falsely smeared the rally as being involved with neo-Nazis.

"The Let Women Speak organisers had nothing to do with the event," the association said.

Deeming has been contacted for comment.

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