

People of Parliament: Backbench & Crossbench

Cloze Passage

Read through the following passage and select the word or phrase from the table that best fits in each space. You can use each word or phrase only once.

independent	crossbenchers	government	represent	legislation
independents	people	Legislative Assembly	three	major
backbenchers	Question Time	hung parliament	minority	cross the floor

The front rows of seats in the _____ (1) are occupied by Government Ministers and Shadow Ministers. Other members of the Government or Opposition sit behind the front rows. These members are called _____ (2). The crossbench is made up of the Members of Parliament who belong to minor parties, along with those who are _____ (3), meaning they don't belong to any party. These members are called the crossbench because they can _____ (4), which means they don't always have to vote with the parties in government or opposition.

Like all Members of Parliament, backbenchers and _____ (5) must be active in their own electorates, staying in touch with the needs and opinions of the _____ (6) so they can effectively _____ (7) their electorate in parliament. As MPs, they must also participate in making laws by speaking on motions and Bills, ask questions during _____ (8), and serve on committees.

Sometimes, when the two _____ (9) parties have nearly equal numbers in the Chamber, the crossbench can play a very important role in helping one of the major parties form _____ (10). In this situation, crossbenchers determine whether or not _____ (11) is passed by the Parliament. This is called a ' _____ (12).

In modern times, Queensland has had a hung Parliament on _____ (13) occasions. In 1995 the Coalition government relied on the support of the independent member for Gladstone, Liz Cunningham, to guarantee supply. In 1998 and again in 2015, Labor achieved _____ (14) government through the support of _____ (15) Member for Nicklin, Peter Wellington.