

# OpenVoiceNews Australia

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

## Labor Retains Latham's Portrait in Parliament House with Key Modification

---

*July 21, 2025*

— *Categories: Politics & Government*

The Australian Labor Party (ALP) has opted to keep the portrait of former leader Mark Latham in its Parliament House caucus room, but with a significant addition—a note condemning his actions. This article examines the decision, driven by controversy over Latham's behavior, and its implications for the ALP's image, as the party distances itself from its former leader while grappling with historical accountability.

On July 21, 2025, the ALP caucus reached a unanimous decision to retain Latham's portrait, a nod to his tenure as federal leader from 2003 to 2005, despite his expulsion from the party in 2017. The portrait, displayed alongside other former leaders like Gough Whitlam and Kim Beazley, will now bear a caption stating: "In 2017, Mark Latham was expelled from the Australian Labor Party and banned for life. His actions do not accord with Labor values and fail to meet the standards we expect and demand" (SBS News, July 21, 2025). This move follows allegations of domestic violence by Latham's former partner, Nathalie Matthews, who accused him of a "sustained pattern" of abuse, claims Latham denies, asserting he has "broken no laws" (The Guardian, July 21, 2025). Finance Minister Katy Gallagher defended the decision, arguing, "You can't erase history," but emphasized the note reflects Latham's misalignment with modern ALP values (The Age, July 21, 2025).

Latham's post-ALP career, marked by his shift to the Liberal Democratic Party and later One Nation, has been mired in controversy, including a 2024 defamation loss over homophobic comments and allegations of inappropriate behavior in parliament. His response on X, mocking the ALP's decision as a half-measure compared to "Stalinist" erasure, underscores his defiance (Daily Mail, July 21, 2025). Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, who once opposed Latham's leadership, called his views "repulsive," lamenting his elevation to leader (The Guardian, July 21, 2025). The ALP's choice to keep the portrait, albeit with a disclaimer, has sparked debate. Critics argue it's a weak gesture, allowing Latham to revel in the attention, while supporters see it as a pragmatic balance between acknowledging history and condemning his actions.

The decision highlights the ALP's struggle to reconcile its past with its present values. By retaining the portrait, the party avoids sanitizing history but risks criticism for not fully disavowing a figure whose conduct has drawn widespread condemnation.