

# The Australian Women's Register

---

**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE1867

## Keneally, Kristina Kerscher

(1968 - )

---

**Born** 19 December, 1968, Las Vegas Nevada United States

---

**Occupation** Politician, Premier, Social worker, Teacher

---

### Summary

Active in student, religious and union affairs since 1990, Kristina Keneally was the first American born member of the N.S.W. Parliament. In 2003 she was an ALP candidate elected to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly seat of Heffron.

After being re-elected in 2007, she became the Minister for Ageing and Disability Services and was subsequently appointed Minister for Planning by incoming Premier Nathan Rees in September 2008. She held the position of the NSW Government's Spokesperson for World Youth Day 2008.

On 3 December 2009 the Australian Labor Party caucus elected Keneally to replace Nathan Rees as leader of the parliamentary party. She was sworn in as Premier on 4 December, 2010. She led the Labor Government to defeat at the 2011 election and was replaced as Leader of the ALP by John Robertson in March 2011. She resigned from the Parliament on 29 June 2012.

### Details

Kristina Keneally was born and educated in USA, at Notre Dame Academy, Toledo, Ohio, the University of Dayton, Ohio (B.A.(Hons) 1991; M.A. (Hons) 1995), and Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She also studied at Australian Catholic University, Strathfield, N.S.W. Kristina Keneally emigrated to Australia 1994, and became a naturalised Australian in 2000, when she also joined the ALP.

She was a member of the Teamsters Union, and the Australian Services Union and was President of National Association of Students at Catholic Colleges and Universities 1990-91.

She married Ben Keneally in 1996, and they have two sons, and a daughter (deceased).

### Published resources

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

#### Site Exhibition

Putting Skirts on the Sacred Benches: Women Candidates for the New South Wales Parliament, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2006,

<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/pssb/home.html>

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,

<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders>

#### Article

Brawler who never played like a girl, Snow, Deborah and Davies, Anne, 2009,

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/brawler-who-never-played-like-a-girl-20091203-k8uo.html>

**Author Details**

Annette Alafaci

**Created** 31 January 2006

**Last modified** 16 February 2016