

Sydney Morning Herald

Don Harwin to turn in after 23 years

By [Samantha Hutchinson](#) and [Stephen Brook](#)

March 18, 2022 — 6.00am

Just three months after his departure from NSW cabinet, **Don Harwin** will step away from politics. The former arts minister and **Gladys Berejiklian** ally will announce on Friday his “retirement” from Parliament.

During his long parliamentary career spanning 23 years, Harwin spent six years as president of the Legislative Council and five years as a minister.

He is expected to tender his notice of resignation to the Governor on Tuesday.

“It’s time to go, increasingly I’m attracted to opportunities outside parliamentary life,” he said. “It’s the right thing to retire and be replaced by a new member eager to make a contribution to public life.”

Retiring members of the upper house are replaced by parties at a joint sitting of the two houses without the need for a byelection. Harwin was among a core group of MPs who helped rebuild the Liberal Party before its return to government at the 2011 election.

He was also lambasted during 2020 after being photographed at his holiday house in Pearl Beach at a time when the rest of the state was subject to stay at home orders. Harwin has always maintained he did nothing wrong and said he had relocated to the beach house for health reasons several weeks before the lockdown was enforced.

In his role as arts minister, he oversaw the state’s monumental arts capital works program, including Sydney Modern and the Ultimo and Parramatta Powerhouses, and helped save the Theatre Royal from being turned into a food court.

Harwin said he was departing “immediately satisfied with the legacy with what I’ve achieved and the legacy I’m leaving particularly in the arts and I’m looking forward to the next chapter in my life”. He is expected to pursue opportunities on boards in the arts sector and not-for-profit sector.