



Ellis replaces Rowe in upper house

WHEATBELT farmer and Liberal Party member, Brian Ellis, has been appointed to the Legislative Council by the Western Australian Electoral Commission, following the resignation of fellow Liberal Margaret Rowe.

Opposition leader Paul Omodei told *WA Business News* Mr Ellis, a third-generation farmer from Bindi Bindi and Calingiri, would base his electorate office in Geraldton.

"It's good to have Brian Ellis on board," Mr Omodei said.

He said Mr Ellis had extensive local government experience as the former deputy president of the Shire of Moora.

"I'm sure he'll make a good addition to the team, taking the fight to the Labor government towards the 2009 state election," Mr Omodei said.

Mr Ellis will be the third Liberal representative from

the Agricultural region, joining opposition whip Bruce Donaldson and backbencher Anthony Fels, who lost his position on the opposition frontbenches earlier this year after the Corruption and Crime Commission found lobbyist and former Liberal senator, Noel Crichton-Browne, had written a parliamentary speech and motion for him.

Ms Rowe resigned after being found in contempt of state parliament last month for failing to explain her absence from sittings for more than six days without seeking leave of absence.

She has been ill for some time.

WA Electoral Commissioner Warwick Gately this week declared Mr Ellis elected in Ms Rowe's place, following a recount of votes from the 2005 state election.

Andrew Hobbs