

# STATES OF JERSEY



## STATES ASSEMBLY: SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS, COMMITTEES AND PANELS – RETURN TO SECRET BALLOTS (P.73/2017) – AMENDMENT

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Lodged au Greffe on 24th August 2017  
by Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier

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STATES GREFFE

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**PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (b) –**

For the words “the Minister(s) subject to review by a corresponding Scrutiny Panel should be excluded from voting for the Chair of that particular Panel” substitute the words “all Ministers should be excluded from voting for all Scrutiny Panel Chairs”.

DEPUTY S.Y. MÉZEC OF ST. HELIER

## REPORT

If this amendment is adopted, paragraph (b) of the proposition brought by Deputy R. Labey of St. Helier will read –

“(b) to agree that all Ministers should be excluded from voting for all Scrutiny Panel Chairs;”.

In his proposition, Deputy Labey makes the case that Ministers should not be entitled to vote on who heads up the Scrutiny Panel which scrutinises their Department, on the basis that, irrespective of their goodwill, Ministers would have an intrinsic political interest in seeing a weak Scrutiny Chair.

I agree with his proposal; however, my experience on Scrutiny leads to believe that this intrinsic interest stretches further than just to their official corresponding Scrutiny Panel.

The Council of Ministers works together as a team and shares in their successes and failures together. A blunder from one Minister inevitably reflects badly on the whole Council and, from time to time, it may be necessary for Scrutiny to highlight a blunder in a way which could cause embarrassment to the entire government. It is vital that Scrutiny is independent and able to act without fear or favour to objectively scrutinise Ministers’ policies and outcomes.

Scrutiny Panels often undertake reviews into areas which inevitably cross multiple States Departments. An example is the recent Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Review – [Tertiary Education: Student Finance \(S.R.2/2017\)](#), which examined the work not just of the Minister for Education, but also the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the Chief Minister.

Proposals are also underway in putting together a Brexit Review Panel and a Care of Children Review Panel, which will cross many States Departments and require us to hold potentially all Ministers to account.

I believe that the principle highlighted by Deputy Labey is valid for the whole Council of Ministers, and therefore the principle should be applied across the board.

### **Financial and manpower implications**

There are no financial or manpower implications for the States arising from this amendment.