

STATES OF JERSEY



CONNÉTABLES: VOLUNTARY RE-ELECTION IN 2005

Lodged au Greffe on 4th January 2005
by Senator M.E. Vibert

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

- (a) to agree that draft legislation should be prepared and submitted to the States for approval to provide that –
 - (i) any Connétable whose term of office expires later than 31st December 2005 should be permitted, on a purely voluntary basis, to submit himself for re-election at an election to be held on the same day as the 2005 senatorial elections, namely 19th October 2005, whilst remaining in office until the date on which successful candidates in the senatorial and Deputies elections are sworn in;
 - (ii) the successful candidate for Connétable in any election held in accordance with the provisions of sub-paragraph (i) shall be sworn to office on the same day as successful candidates in the senatorial and Deputies elections, for a term of office of 3 years from that date;
 - (iii) any Connétable submitting himself for re-election who is not successful in the election shall leave office when the successful candidate is sworn in with no form of compensation, notwithstanding the fact that he was initially elected for a total period of 3 years.
- (b) to charge the Privileges and Procedures Committee to bring forward for approval the necessary legislation as soon as practicable.

SENATOR M.E. VIBERT

REPORT

Introduction

This proposition is designed to balance P.221/2004 'Senatorial Elections 2005' brought by Deputy Peter Troy. That proposition seeks to allow the 6 Senators not up for election in 2005 to voluntarily stand for re-election; my proposition seeks to extend this to include Connétables as well.

This is to enable all elected States Members not due for election in the general election of 2005 to stand voluntarily in that election if they so wish.

Inclusion

The States have recently made a number of decisions, notably in the new States of Jersey Law, which emphasize the equality of all States members, be they Senators, Deputies or Connétables.

That being the case, it would seem contrary to offer the choice of opting for voluntary re-election at the end of 2005 to only one group, the Senators and not to another, the Connétables.

Ministerial Government

I regret that both Deputy Troy's and my proposition are necessary, as I had hoped successive Privileges and Procedures Committees would have brought forward legislation in time to obviate this.

I do not believe the commencement of ministerial government demands the simultaneous election of all States members.

When the 6 Senators, including myself, were elected in 2002, it was then believed that ministerial government would be coming into operation with the election of a Chief Minister and Ministers in early 2004.

So all States members were returned in that election on the understanding that ministerial government would come into effect during their term of office.

It is, I believe, purely for individual members to decide whether their existing mandate needs to be renewed or not, given the subsequent change in date of the coming into force of ministerial government.

I believe there is a strong argument for States members to complete the full term of office they were elected for. I do believe though that, if there is to be the option of voluntarily standing for re-election, it should be open to all States members not automatically due for re-election at the end of 2005, Connétables as well as the 6 Senators.

To suggest otherwise would be to differentiate between the different categories of States members when all previous States' decisions have been to emphasize the opposite.

Elections of Connétables

My proposition seeks to make it possible for any Connétable whose term of office ends after the end of 2005 to stand for re-election later this year on a purely voluntary basis.

The proposition would also allow for a Connétable to continue in office until a new States is sworn in. The term of office would be 3 years from that date.

It is proposed such elections would be held on the same day as the senatorial elections, the 19th of October 2005, to enable anyone who might be an unsuccessful candidate for Connétable the opportunity to stand in the following deputies elections if they so wished.

My proposition would enable any Connétable who considered it necessary for a States member to renew his or

her mandate prior to the introduction of ministerial government to be able to do so.

The only possible additional financial implications arising from this proposition would be the costs associated with any contested elections if any of the Connétables decided to avail themselves of the opportunity to seek re-election.