

# STATES OF JERSEY



## AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS - INCLUSION OF ISLAND IDENTITY STATEMENT (P.17/2022): COMMENTS

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Presented to the States on 2nd March 2022  
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee

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STATES GREFFE

## COMMENTS

This amendment to Standing Orders would require Members to include a statement with any proposition they lodge (including any amendment) of how the proposition “would either enhance or diminish the Island identity and the international reputation of Jersey”. The Committee appreciates the importance of the work the Minister for International Development has led on defining and enhancing Jersey’s island identity. However, it has reservations as to whether including this requirement in Standing Orders will assist in achieving the outcomes sought by the island identity project. It is also concerned at the increasing burdens being placed on Members seeking to lodge propositions.

There is currently one requirement in Standing Orders for propositions to be accompanied by a supporting statement, relating to the financial and manpower implications of the proposition. Concerns are sometimes raised about the quality of these statements and whether they add usefully to the proposition. However, these statements can give rise to meaningful debates as it is possible to quantify the financial and manpower implications of a proposition, even if Members may disagree about what those implications might be.

A new statutory requirement for certain propositions to be accompanied by a Child Rights Impact Assessment is also proposed. This would require the propositions in scope to be assessed in relation to their effect on the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on Children’s Rights.

Comparing this proposal with the two requirements already in place or mooted, there is no objective standard against which to measure a proposition’s impact on island identity and international reputation (concepts which might themselves sometimes conflict). Any assessment will inevitably be subjective. Furthermore, it is unlikely that any Member would provide a statement to the effect that their proposition would undermine the Island’s identity or its international reputation. It is likely instead that most propositions will be accompanied by anodyne statements that the proposition will enhance both concepts or will have a neutral effect.

There is also a risk that other proposals will come forward for accompanying statements relating to subjects which, although of course important in themselves, will collectively add a considerable burden to Members seeking to bring propositions to the States. It is not hard to imagine proposals being made for accompanying statements on the environmental impact of propositions, or the implications for population growth, or the effect on income inequality. One of the Assembly’s strengths is the ease with which Members, particularly Members who are not in government, can bring their ideas forward for debate. If the procedural requirements on Members bringing propositions increase, that ease of access to the floor of the Assembly will diminish, particularly for non-executive Members.