

STATES OF JERSEY



DRAFT STATES OF JERSEY (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) LAW 201- (P.176/2010): THIRD AMENDMENT (P.176/2010 Amd.(3)) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 12th January 2011
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

PPC strongly opposes the amendments brought forward by Senator Ferguson. The Committee is very disappointed that the Senator is seeking to re-open the debate on the number of Senators when the States took a decision by a very large majority on 13th October 2010 to reduce the number of Senators from 12 to 8 over time. In bringing forward P.176/2010, PPC has simply done exactly what it was charged to do by the States, namely to bring forward the legislation to give legal effect to the decisions taken on 13th October 2010. The Committee believes that it simply brings the States into disrepute to constantly re-open decisions and ask members to reverse decisions that have already been taken.

Under Senator Ferguson's proposals, the electorate will be required in due course to elect 12 Senators on one single election day alongside all Connétables and all Deputies. PPC has made it clear on a number of occasions in the past that it does not believe it would be feasible to obtain a sensible result if 12 Senators were elected on a single day. The electorate would undoubtedly find it extremely difficult to identify 12 candidates to vote for, and this would almost certainly lead to electors casting significantly less than 12 votes. As a result, any candidates elected in the bottom places would almost certainly have received a very small percentage of the votes and the Committee considers that this could cast doubts on the legitimacy of the poll. Senator Ferguson does not address the point in her report other than to say that "*the difference between an election for 12 or for 8 Senators would not be excessive*". PPC considers, on the contrary, that there would be a significant difference.

PPC believes that its proposals to reduce the number of Senators over time to 8 represent an appropriate balance between the desire to keep the Island-wide mandate against the need to implement a workable system of elections. PPC urges members to reject the amendments of Senator Ferguson.