

STATES OF JERSEY



DRAFT STATES OF JERSEY (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) LAW 201- (P.176/2010): FOURTH AMENDMENT (P.176/2010 Amd.(4)) – COMMENTS

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

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Senator Ozouf is proposing amendments to amend the transitional cycle of elections agreed by the States on 13th October 2010 by a large majority. Under the Senator's amendment, the term of office of all members elected in October this year would be restricted to 3 years, enabling a general election for all members to be held in October 2014, with the move to the first spring election being deferred from May 2015 to May 2018. The proposals have the advantage that the first full 'general election' for all members would take place in October 2014, which is earlier than under the proposals agreed last October, albeit that this first 'general election' would take place in the autumn and not in the spring.

PPC accepts that it is somewhat unfortunate that a one-off transitional Senatorial election is necessary in October 2014 in order to move to a spring election cycle, and recognises that the one-off transitional election could lead to disruption, particularly if the Chief Minister or another Minister was a candidate in the election. Senator Ozouf's amendments would avoid the need for this election in isolation, but would have the consequence that the move to the spring election is deferred for 3 years. In addition, it is likely that no amendments can be brought to the budgetary cycle so that, as in 2011, the "old" States would need to debate the 2015 Budget after the October 2014 elections.

PPC believes it is a political decision for members to decide whether it would be appropriate to defer the undoubted benefits of spring elections for large numbers of members for 3 years, simply to avoid a one-off transitional Senatorial election for 4 out of 49 members. PPC has always been aware that designing transitional arrangements to move to a new system of elections will always be difficult, and in putting forward its own proposals last October the Committee considered that the advantage of moving quickly to a spring election outweighed the disadvantages of the 'one-off' election for 4 Senators in October 2014. PPC nevertheless accepts that members may believe that the benefits of a spring election are not so great as to justify the potential disruption that could be caused by the one-off election for 4 Senators in October 2014, and it is therefore a matter for members' political judgement to decide where the appropriate balance lies.