

# STATES OF JERSEY



## REFERENDUM: POSITION OF THE CONNÉTABLES IN THE STATES (P.146/2009) – AMENDMENT

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Lodged au Greffe on 23rd September 2009  
by the Deputy of St. Martin

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STATES GREFFE



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**PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –**

After the words “the position of the Connétables” insert the words “and Senators”; for the word “question” substitute the word “questions” and after the existing question insert a second question as follows –

**“Do you think that the position of Senator with its island-wide mandate should be maintained?”**

**YES**

**NO** ”

DEPUTY OF ST. MARTIN

## **REPORT**

In December 2000 the Report of the Review Panel on the Machinery of Government in Jersey under the Chairmanship of Sir Cecil Clothier, K.C.B., Q.C. was published and contained a number of recommendations.

The Panel recommended that Connétables should cease to be *ex officio* members of the States. It also recommended the abolition of the category of Senator and the substitution of 12 additional members of the States.

In his proposition P.146/2009, Deputy Tadier is correct when he states that States members are never ceasing to tell us what it is that the people want. He is also correct when stating that what the people want is unverifiable.

However we part company when he claims that the position of Senator does not seem to polarise public opinion in the same way that Connétables do. I submit that the Senators' position is very much part of public debate with strong views on either side.

I have been content to support the Clothier Panel's recommendation that there should be a reduction in the number of States members with one category of member all elected on one day. My support is based on the weight of evidence received by the Clothier Panel which was obtained from the people interviewed during their review. However the Panel understandably would not have had the views from the range of the public that could be obtained by a referendum. Plus the public's views may have changed since 2000.

I have participated in every composition of the States debate and am now firmly of the view that unless Members are given some steer as to what the public want they will continually vote on perception rather than fact.

Deputy Tadier's initiative is to be commended and hopefully will be supported by fellow Members; however it would make more sense to invite the public to express their view on the Senators' position at the same time when seeking views on the Connétables' role. I also believe that offering the public the opportunity of expressing their views on both roles would heighten interest which in turn will lead to a higher turnout and more accurate evaluation of what the people really want.

### **Financial and manpower implications**

My amendment would not add to any manpower or financial implications.