

STATES OF JERSEY



STANDING ORDERS: ADDITIONAL SIGNATORIES ON PROPOSITIONS (P.174/2010) – SECOND AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 10th December 2010
by Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire of St. Helier

STATES GREFFE

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After the words “other members” insert the words “although the names of the members who endorse and countersign the proposition shall not be disclosed or published by the Greffier of the States unless he or she is requested to do so by the proposer”.

2 PAGE 2 –

Renumber the proposition as paragraph (a) and insert a new paragraph (b) as follows –

“(b) to request the Privileges and Procedures Committee to bring forward, as part of the amendments to Standing Orders to give effect to paragraph (a), a further provision that any member wishing to lodge a proposition that requires endorsement and countersignature under the new provisions shall be permitted to submit it to Greffier of the States prior to obtaining the necessary signatures and, once this is done, the Greffier shall not be permitted to accept a proposition in the same or substantially the same terms from any other member for a period of one week.”.

DEPUTY P.V.F. LE CLAIRE OF ST. HELIER

REPORT

I am suggesting this amendment as, if this proposition is passed, members will invariably be subjected to the usual derogatory comments that we see in the Chamber from the members who like to ridicule those that have not voted in support of the Council of Ministers. It occurs on a regular basis and the usual phrase we hear is “the usual suspects”. This type of comment will invariably dissuade members from signing other politicians’ proposals and will eventually further erode the rights of backbenchers.

One aspect which also needs consideration is that if a lengthy and controversial Law is needed, who will sign up for it in its entirety without the right to support subsequent amendments to it?

The other nonsense in all of this is that amendments don’t require more than one signature. In fact, as arranging any consensus in independent politics is extremely difficult, it will probably lead to groupings and formations of political parties which, if that’s what the supporters of P.174/2010 wish, then fair enough.

This is to stop other people proceeding with ideas that they have been asked to sign before any proposer has had a fair opportunity of attaining the necessary number of signatories, or until one week has passed, in the event that the individual proposing the debate is unable to attain enough numbers for whatever reason. It would be in a practical sense –

1. Member notifies States Greffe of intention to lodge.
2. Member shows other members an intended proposal.
3. One week passes, and if the member is unable to achieve the requisite number of signatures, the proposal may be tabled if another member proceeds in the same manner and through the same process until they are successful, or within the same criteria they are unable within one week, they too are unsuccessful. This will stop other members running off with proposals brought to their attention.

In the event that the process plays out, it will be clearly possible for the original proposer of any proposition to be identified. I do this as my experience has been, over the years, that some members have no ideas of their own but are very willing and adept at progressing the ideas of others.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no financial or manpower implications for the States arising from this amendment.