



# EDITOR'S POINT OF VIEW

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## Now is a good time to abolish the Senate

If you think that the Senate is a democratic institution, think again. The Senate doesn't need to be reformed, it needs to be abolished along with all pensions and severances attached to it with no exceptions. Stephen Harper, as an opposition leader, was relentless in bombarding the government with accusations of pork-barreling and appointing friends and insiders to the Senate. Stephen Harper told Jean Chrétien that the Senate was the "dumping ground for the favoured cronies of the prime

minister" and said "Canadians ... are ashamed that the prime minister continues the disgraceful, undemocratic appointment of undemocratic Liberals to the undemocratic Senate to pass all-too-often undemocratic legislation." On September 7, 2012 Harper appointed five new Senators bringing the Conservative presence in the Senate to 62 seats of 105. Harper has appointed 59 Senators since taking power. Although the Senate rarely rejects bills, they have the power to do so, and this from an unelected entity.

The latest fraudulent actions by Duffy, Wallin, Harb and Brazeau should theoretically put a nail in the Senate's coffin, but it won't. These individuals should be tried and imprisoned as soon as legally possible because we can assume that illegal acts were committed. It is alleged that Wallin may have tried to alter her claims after the fact. What do you call that? Some people have been jailed for lesser charges. The latest Senatorial fiasco will not affect us as a society, we will continue to ramble thru life as if nothing was wrong. This is where

the real problem lies. We, as a society, need to be pro-active in the way our country is governed. Canadians should sue all of the accused for the costs of the investigation or maybe garnishee the remainder Senators' wages or pensions to account for all of the costs associated with the scandal. It is probably also fair to assume that this is but the tip of the iceberg.

A smokescreen bill to reform the Senate was introduced by the Tories in 2011, but has languished in the House of Commons ever since.

It was estimated that abolishing the Senate could cost \$10 to \$30 million in severances and pensions. It shouldn't. What happens to employees when a major layoff occurs? They're sent home and sometimes fortunate to get a year's worth of unemployment

ment. Why should we honor pensions and severance payments for fictional positions in a fictional institution. The only real events in this scenario is fraudulence and dishonesty. All this at the expense of hard working Canadian tax payers. The estimated cost to run the Senate this year: \$92,500,000.00, Senators work, on average, three months a year and in 2012, thirty-one Senators missed 1/4 of their work days.

Set a date, hand out pink slips and let's be done with the Red Faced Chamber. It's bad enough that we have to put up with silliness from some elected officials, but having to put up with this most repugnant behavior from well-paid un-elected officials is unacceptable.

Taking better care of our veterans especially the homeless

might be a more honorable gesture to accomplish with our valuable tax dollars!

This is hard to swallow when most of us are struggling to make ends meet in order to pay OUR municipal, provincial and federal taxes but we continue to see this pattern in these same municipal, provincial and federal governments. These invertebrates don't have the moxie to resign from an appointed unmerited position when caught cheating. How much more of this can taxpayers endure.

According to Webster a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections is still the definition of democracy.