

**Council of Ministers**

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14 July 2008

Sir Philip Bailhache  
Bailiff's Chambers  
Royal Square  
St. Helier  
JE1 1BA

Dear Bailiff,

**P.107 / 2008 'Vote of No Confidence – The Bailiff of Jersey'**

As Chief Minister, and on behalf of the entire Council of Ministers, I am writing to express our absolute confidence in your continued ability to serve the Island, with distinction, as Bailiff.

The Council of Ministers believes that, in a system of parliamentary democracy, no individual, whether they are a States Member, senior official or Crown Officer, is immune from scrutiny or beyond accountability. The Council accepts that in matters of public interest the States Assembly has every right to express a view. Nevertheless, a Proposition to request Her Majesty to dismiss the Bailiff of Jersey is of the utmost gravity.

The Council of Ministers is in no doubt that you have executed the numerous functions of your office in keeping with the highest traditions of this proud and ancient position and that you have, at all times, demonstrated exemplary probity, integrity and impartiality. The office of the Bailiff of Jersey, like that of the Bailiff of Guernsey, is a venerable Norman institution. Combining the rôles of President of the States, President of the Court of Appeal, presiding over the Royal Court of Jersey and civic head of the Island, the position is of the highest constitutional importance.

I would expect that any case for dismissal to be supported by the most thorough and substantial analysis of serious failings. Moreover, any such failings must be shown to clearly merit the ultimate sanction of dismissal. The Report submitted by Deputy Pitman falls far short of the standards required for such a Proposition.

The Report asserts that your actions have damaged public confidence and that the extent of such damage renders your position untenable. The Council of Ministers rejects this suggestion wholeheartedly. It is disappointing that the report uses selective quotations in an attempt to construct a case. Any reasonable person, on reading the report's appendices, which are transcripts of the full texts of your statement and speeches, would be satisfied that the case for dismissal has not been made.

Indeed, the President of the Jersey Law Society has confirmed that under your presidency of the Royal Court, the judgements given "command respect and indeed admiration worldwide." It is clear that you are generally held in the highest regard.

The Council of Ministers considers any attempt to make political gain from an attack on the office of the Bailiff to be utterly inappropriate. It is the Council's opinion that this Proposition is without merit and should be seen for what it is – a tendentious and opportunistic abuse of the States Assembly in the pursuit of political gain before an election. The Council of Ministers believes the Proposition to be a naked political ploy and will treat it with the disdain it deserves.

The Council of Ministers wishes to express both its complete confidence in your position and its appreciation of your exemplary and distinguished record of public service to the Island over the last three decades. The Council is, therefore, united in its determination to vigorously reject this Proposition.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Walker". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Senator Frank Walker**  
Chief Minister

For, and on behalf of, the Council of Ministers

cc. All States Members