

**Summary by the Language Rights Support Program of the impact study  
entitled:  
“Analysis of Bill C-7”**

The author of the impact study, Mark Power, analyses Bill C-7, *An Act respecting the selection of senators and amending the Constitution Act, 1867 in respect of Senate term limits*, introduced in June 2011. Bill C-7 proposed to amend the Senate’s structure by establishing an election process and reducing the length of Senators’ terms. Senators would be elected for a nine years term.

The analysis of Bill C-7 aims to determine the impact of the Senate reform on the Official language minority communities.

After studying constitutional law, jurisprudence and doctrine concerning Senate reform, the author raises the significant impact the reform may cause on the Francophone and Acadian communities. French-language communities being only a small portion of the population among the English majority, it is rather unlikely that a francophone wins a Provincial election. Although there is no constitutional right ensuring fair representation, M. Power points out the unwritten constitutional principle of respect and protection for minorities as the main argument for minority communities. This principle would probably be violated by the adoption of Bill C-7.

The author then examines the linguistic arguments. He first sets the historical context that reflects the interrelationship between the Francophone communities and their representation in the Senate. The Senate has been precisely designed to give a significant voice to minority communities. M. Power finally wonders if the Federal government has the power to act alone in reforming the Senate.