



RENEWAL OF THE CANADIAN SENATE: WHERE TO FROM HERE?

SEPTEMBER 27, 2018
RIDEAU CLUB
99 BANK STREET, OTTAWA

PROGRAM

- 8:15-8:45 a.m.** **Registration and continental breakfast**
- 8:45-9:00 a.m.** **Opening Remarks**
Graham Fox (Institute for Research on Public Policy)
- 9:00-10:15 a.m.** **Session 1: Taking Stock of the Trudeau Government's Changes**
This session will set the scene for the day's discussion and address the following questions:
- What have been the principal changes since the appointment of the first group of independent Senators?
 - What have been the main impacts on the functioning of the Senate?
 - How are the changes being perceived by the media and the public?
- Panel:**
Moderator: **Leslie Seidle** (Institute for Research on Public Policy)
David Smith (Ryerson University)
Senator Ratna Omidvar (Senate of Canada)
Jean-François Godbout (Université de Montréal)
- 10:15-11:15 a.m.** **Session 2: Impact on the Legislative Process and Relations with the House of Commons**
This session will examine the following questions:
- What does a more independent Senate mean for the legislative process?
 - How compatible is a more active Senate with the principles of Westminster government, notably the primacy of the elected House of Commons?
 - Should the Senate have a particular role in scrutinizing certain aspects of legislation or public policy? If so, which ones?
 - What are the potential implications of individual Senators' greater independence for the role of MPs and the mandate of House of Commons committees?

Panel:

Moderator: **Joan Bryden** (Canadian Press)

Paul Thomas (University of Manitoba)

2nd panellist TBD

11:15-11:30 a.m.

Break

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Session 3: Impact on Policy-making and Relations with the Government

This session is complementary to session 2 and will explore the following questions:

- How are the processes for developing government policies and legislation changing as the renewal proceeds?
- Should Senate committees be more active in areas such as the study of broad public policy issues and the review of government policies and programs? If so, how could this be achieved?
- Has the recent Senate renewal changed the manner in which stakeholders and outside policy actors engage in the legislative process?

Panel:

Moderator: **Yaroslav Baran** (Earnscliffe Strategy Group)

Emmett Macfarlane (University of Waterloo)

Elizabeth Roscoe (H + K Strategies Canada)

12:30-2:00 p.m.

Lunch: Keynote address by the Honourable Karina Gould, Minister of Democratic Institutions

2:00-3:00 p.m.

Session 4: Regional Representation

This session will explore the implications of the recent changes for the Senate's role in representing regional interests:

- What would be the potential benefits and drawbacks of establishing regional caucuses within the Senate?
- Are there potential changes to the mandate and composition of Senate committees that could strengthen the Senate's regional representation role?
- How does this role relate to other aspects of the Senate's mission and responsibilities?

Panel:

Moderator: **Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant** (Queen's University)

Hugh Segal (Massey College)

Nadia Verrelli (Laurentian University)

3:00-4:15 p.m.

Session 5: Summing Up and Next Steps

This session would encourage participants to think about further changes to strengthen the Senate's contribution to the legislative and policy processes, as well as its legitimacy. The panellists will be asked to comment on points raised during the day and to address some or all of the following questions:

- In light of the greater attention to merit and diversity considerations in the new selection process, is the Senate acquiring greater legitimacy?
- What are the implications of the transition under way for Senators' accountability?
- What further changes could be made without returning to the multilateral constitutional table?
- Could the current Senate renewal encourage moves toward more fundamental reform? If so, what is required to reach that stage?

Panel:

Moderator **Graham Fox** (Institute for Research on Public Policy)

Senator Raymonde Saint-Germain (Senate of Canada)

Roger Gibbins (University of Calgary)

Jennifer Wallner (University of Ottawa)

Jason VandenBeukel (University of Toronto)

4:15-4:30 p.m.

Closing Remarks

Graham Fox (Institute for Research on Public Policy)

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