

Fixed Term Parliaments Bill

Please Note: This is not an actual Bill before Parliament. In the most part, the text contained in this document is the same as that of the actual Fixed Term Parliaments Bill, tabled by Lib Dem MPs David Howarth and David Heath. However, all text in red are amendments made by myself. This is the text as I would have written it had I been in their position.

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BILL

TO

Fix the date of the next general election and all subsequent general elections; to forbid the dissolution of Parliament otherwise than in accordance with this Act **except under exceptional circumstances; to fix the day of the week on which a general election is held;** to allow the House of Commons to **subsequently** change the day of the week on which a general election is held; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows: —

1 Dates of future general elections

- (1) The next general election shall take place on **3rd** May 2008.
- (2) Each subsequent general election shall take place on the first **Saturday** in May in the fourth year after the previous general election.
- (3) This section is subject to section **4**.

2 Dissolution of Parliament **after four years**

- (1) This present Parliament shall be dissolved on **3rd** April 2008.
- (2) This present Parliament may not be dissolved otherwise than as provided in subsection (1), **or as provided in section 3**.
- (3) Each subsequent Parliament shall be dissolved 30 days before the general election provided for in section 1(2).
- (4) No subsequent Parliament may be dissolved otherwise than as provided in subsection (3), **or as provided in section 3**.

3 Dissolution of Parliament following change of Prime Minister

- (1) Whenever the Party of Government has by whatever method chosen a new Party Leader who will take office as Prime Minister no less than 131 days before a general election, Parliament shall stand dissolved on the one hundredth day following the date of the new Prime Minister taking office.
- (2) Whenever the Party of Government has by whatever method chosen a new Party Leader who will take office as Prime Minister no more than 130 days before a general election, Parliament shall stand dissolved as provided in section 2(3).
- (3) Where a Parliament has been dissolved under subsection (1), then-
 - (a) if the date of that dissolution was more than six months from the date on which that Parliament would anyway have stood dissolved as provided in section 2(3), the new Parliament summoned following that dissolution shall itself stand dissolved on the date as provided in section 2(3), and
 - (b) if the date of that dissolution was within six months from the date on which that Parliament would anyway have stood dissolved as provided in section 2(3), the new Parliament summoned following that dissolution shall stand dissolved on the fourth anniversary of the date as provided in section 2(3).

4 Power of the House of Commons to vary date of general election

- (1) The House of Commons may, by resolution, appoint a day of the week other than **Saturday** as the day on which a general election is to take place.
- (2) The power conferred by subsection (1) may not be used to set a date for a general election-
 - (a) earlier, or
 - (b) more than 6 days later,than the date provided for by section 1(1) or 1(2).

5 Power of the House of Commons to delay dissolution of Parliament

- (1) The House of Commons may, by resolution and in exceptional circumstances, delay the date on which a Parliament shall stand dissolved by no more than one year beyond the date as provided in section 2(3) subject to subsections (2) and (3) below.
- (2) A resolution as stated in subsection (1) must be passed by at least a two-thirds majority.
- (3) Exceptional circumstances as stated in subsection (1) are defined as-
 - (a) the Country being engaged in conflict on British soil, or
 - (b) the Country being in a state of national mourning on the date on which Parliament is to stand dissolved as provided in section 2(3).
- (4) The House of Commons may, by resolution, delay the date on which Parliament shall stand dissolved, if the date of the subsequent general election as provided

for in section 1(1) or 1(2) is the same as that of an election to the European Parliament, subject to subsection (5) below.

- (5) The general election delayed by the power conferred by subsection (4) shall take place on the first Saturday in June of the same year.
- (6) The power conferred by subsection (4) does not extend to incidents where the date of the general election as referred to in subsection (4) is the same as that of an election to a Local Authority.

6 Amendment of Representation of the People Acts

- (1) The Secretary of State may, by order made by statutory instrument, make such amendments to the Representation of the People Acts as appear to him to be necessary or expedient in consequence of this Act.
- (2) An order under subsection (1) is subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.

7 Short title, commencement and extent

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2007.
- (2) This Act comes into force on the day on which it is passed.
- (3) This Act extends to Northern Ireland.