



CSG Leader Scott Tannas Introduces Motion to Safeguard the Senate's Sober Second Thought

Ottawa, February 8, 2022 — Today, Senator Scott Tannas introduced a motion on behalf of the Canadian Senators Group (CSG) that sends a strong signal that the Senate will not compromise its constitutional duty to provide sober second thought.

Over many years and many governments of different political stripes, the Senate has suspended stages of the legislative process when receiving bills in the final days of a session. Every government bill that has come before the Senate in the current Parliament has been fast-tracked.

“We have to stop granting leave all over the place,” Senator Tannas said in the chamber. “In aid of that, I’m pleased to announce that CSG senators will not grant leave to facilitate or waive our rules on the passage of any legislation. Anymore.”

The CSG motion to change debate rules for government bills would require a minimum of one week of debate before a final vote in the Senate. In case of a genuine emergency, this proposal would require the government to convince senators why they should pass legislation more quickly. Senators would then decide whether to proceed on a constrained timeframe before they consider the legislation.

Throughout the pandemic, the Senate has demonstrated its readiness to quickly pass legislation that responds to pressing public matters.

“Senators should be concerned about blurring the line between public emergency and political expediency,” said Tannas. “We need to be more critical of emergencies. Even if we want to see legislation passed – if we support it with our hearts – we should still do the job we are here to do and provide due diligence.”

-30-

The Canadian Senators Group is a non-partisan recognized parliamentary group in the Senate of Canada that was formed in November 2019. It is comprised of 13 senators from across the political spectrum who want to advance the interests of Canada’s regions, as well as to see the Senate return to its roots: research-based, long-term analysis of public policy matters.

For more information please contact

Sara Caverley
Office of the Honourable Scott Tannas, Leader
Sara.Caverley@sen.parl.gc.ca