

Senate reform is off the table

By Bill Rea

Last week's Supreme Court ruling on Senate reform has prompted the government to take the matter off the table.

The high court ruled that substantial support from the provinces will be needed to bring in reforms, such as elections to the upper chamber or term limits, and there would have to be unanimous consent to do away with the Senate all together.

“Any Senate reform of any kind, and that includes abolition, is a decision that only the provinces can take,” Dufferin-Caledon MP David Tilson commented in reaction to the announcement from the court. “The provinces don't even want to talk about it.”

Tilson added the court ruling essentially calls for the status quo.

“We're stuck with it for the time being,” he remarked.

Tilson observed that the government will respect the court ruling, although he didn't think it was in accord with the wishes of most Canadians.

“I believe almost all Canadians want some kind of reform,” he commented, but added there doesn't seem to be any consensus among the provinces for either abolition or reform.