



יושב-ראש הכנסת

*Speaker of the Knesset*Jerusalem, October 31, 2000
2 Heshvan, 5761The Honourable Dennis J. Hastert
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
USA

Dear Colleague,

We are currently beginning the process of making some changes in the structure and role of the legal department of the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, in order to ensure a clear separation of powers between the three branches of government, the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. At this stage, we would like to broaden our knowledge regarding how other parliaments deal with this issue and I would very much appreciate your help in this.

It would be of great help to us if you could arrange for the appropriate department in your parliament to provide us with responses to the following questions:

1. What is the function of the person who heads your parliamentary legal service?
2. Does your parliament have a legal department that provides legal advice to the parliamentary committees, the members of parliament and the parliament itself including counseling on the legislative process? Does the parliament's legal adviser represent the parliament before the courts?
3. If your parliament does not have its own legal department, where do the parliament, its committees and members get legal advice?
4. If your parliament does have its own legal department, is it independent, or is it subordinate to the Attorney General of the state or to some similar position.
5. Has there been any legislation in your country in this regard?
6. Do you believe that it is important for a parliament to have its own legal adviser in order to preserve the principle of a separation of powers between the executive, the judiciary and the legislative branches?

I thank you in advance for your kind assistance in responding to these questions.

Sincerely yours,


Avraham Burg