

**A**  
**BILL**  
**for**  
**AN ACT TO AMEND THE JURIES ACT**

**Enacted by the Parliament of The Bahamas.**

**Short title and commencement.**  
**Amendment of section 18 of the principal Act.**

1. (1) This Act which amends the Juries Act may be cited as the Juries (Amendment) Act, 2007.

(2) This Act shall come into force on the date appointed by the Minister by notice in the Gazette.

2. Subsection (1) of section 18 of the principal Act is repealed and replaced as follows -

" (1) In every trial for murder or treason, the jury shall consist of twelve persons, and subject to the provisions of subsection (3) of section 28, in every other trial, the jury shall consist of nine persons."

**Amendment of section 19 of the principal Act.**

3. Section 19 of the principal Act is repealed and replaced as follows -

"Peremptory challenge. 19. On the trial of an offence by the Court the prosecutor and the accused may each challenge peremptorily and without cause any number of jurors not exceeding -

(a) ten, in a trial for murder or treason;

(b) seven, in every other trial,

but any other challenges on either side shall be for cause."

**Amendment of section**

4. Subsection (2) of section 24 of the principal Act is amended by the deletion of the words "two-thirds of the

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Amendment  
of section  
28 of the  
principal  
Act.**

jury" and the substitution of the words "six jurors".

5. Subsection (3) of section 28 of the principal Act is amended by the deletion of the word "eleven" and the substitution of the word "eight".

#### **OBJECTS AND REASONS**

This Act seeks to amend the Juries Act to reduce the number of persons in a jury for non-capital trials to nine.

This amendment would easier facilitate the empanelling of jurors for the twelve Supreme Courts.

Additionally, certain consequential amendments are provided for.

A consequential amendment is provided for in section 19 to reduce the number of peremptory challenges to seven in all trials, other than capital cases.

Further, in section 24, it was necessary to reduce the fraction of persons required to return a verdict.

As the number of jurors empaneled is now being reduced to nine, the number of jurors required to return a verdict will now be six.

Additionally, in section 28, with respect to proceeding with a trial where a juror dies or fail to appear, this number has consequently been reduced from eleven to eight.