

July 18, 2018

**Statement by Yoshimitsu Kobayashi, Chairman of Keizai Doyukai
On Enactment of Public Offices Election Amendment Act**

1. The Public Offices Election Amendment Act was enacted today. The Amendment Act as its main objectives adds extra seats to the House of Councillors (the Upper House) and introduces a special quota to the proportional representation system. The reform of the Upper House, or the “House of common sense,” has, from the public eye, ended with a patchwork response without substantial deliberations on the issue. It is regrettable that full-fledged reforms have not taken place although the Amendment Supplementary Provisions of 2015 clearly requests the reforms to happen toward the regular Upper House election in 2019.
2. An election system supports democracy as its important basis. In this regard, this legislative amendment is never good enough. Fundamental discussions must continue on the role of the bicameral legislature and that of the Upper House as well as on the disparity in the value of each vote. Then, far-reaching reforms of the Diet and the election system must be addressed from a bipartisan perspective. Now that the rationale of democracy is revisited, the election system must be reviewed with a third-party organization with experts.

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