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# New amendments proposed to audiovisual media law

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Alfred Peza, deputy chairman of the Parliamentary Commission on Education and Public Information Means, has submitted a proposal for amending the law on audiovisual media. The proposed amendment consists in only two articles:

## Article 1

*Article 34 will be amended as follows:*

- 1. The Assembly within 10 days of entering into force of this law, starts procedures for the election of members and Chair of Audio-visual Media Authority (AMA), according to the provisions of articles 8,9, and 10 of this law.*
- 2. The Chair and the members of AMA stay into office until their replacement with new Chair/ members.*

## Article 2

*This law enters into force 15 days after publication in the Official Gazette.*

The proposal will be considered soon, when the conference of chairmen gathers, and then will proceed to the commission and finally the plenary session.

The amendment is aimed only at changing article 134 of the current law, which states: *“The NCRT Chair and members, appointed in accordance with the amended law no. 8410 dated 30.09.1998 on “Public and Private Radio and Television in the Republic of Albania,” amended, shall continue to hold their positions after this law enters into force, until the termination mandate set in their appointment. The term in office shall be*

*calculated from the first day of their appointment. Vacancies in AMA shall be completed according to the provisions of the articles 8 and 9 of this law.”*

This amendment was expected, as the current ruling majority agreed on all other articles regulating audiovisual media at the time of its discussion except for the ones related to election of regulatory authority and Steering Council of public broadcaster. Peza’s report attached to the proposed amendment reflects this position, by stating that the current setup of the regulatory authority, preserving mandates of former members and chair, elected with the previous law, while the new law imposes other criteria, cannot be implemented. In addition, he points out that AMA is currently unable to make decisions, claiming that only three of its members have regular mandates and that the current chair is acting without gaining a second term as a member, just prolonging her mandate as a chair.

Furthermore, the current composition of the Audiovisual Media Authority does not reflect the political balance created after June 23 elections. In the current council, both the chairwoman and her deputy belong now to the opposition, which the current ruling majority has deemed unacceptable. The deputy chair of AMA resigned from his post, while claiming he would still serve as a simple member, in order to find a solution to the lack of balance created by this situation. The issue is still pending, though, as the ruling majority claims that with this law, and the formula that the current opposition insisted to have on the books last year, the chair of the regulator should belong to the party that has most seats in parliament. The ruling majority claims that amending the law in a way that would allow for a new balance of the regulator would pave the way for a better and more balanced functioning of this body.

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