

FRANCIS DROUIN
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR
GLENGARRY-PRESCOTT-RUSSELL

TOWN HALL REPORT
ON ELECTORAL REFORM
PUBLIC CONSULTATION



FRANCIS DROUIN
DÉPUTÉ DE LA CIRCONSCRIPTION
DE
GLENGARRY-PRESCOTT-RUSSELL

RAPPORT SUR LES CONSULTATIONS
PUBLIQUES SUR LA RÉFORME
ÉLECTORALE

CONSULTATION(S)			
Date(s) of the Meeting(s)	Time and Length (start time and end time)	Location of Consultation	Total Number of People in Attendance (you may indicate the number of volunteers and employees who assisted with the meeting)
1. Aug. 9, 2016	6:30 pm to 8:00 pm	Microtel Inn & Suites, Casselman	30
2.			
3.			
4.			
Form: <input type="checkbox"/> Use of the Library of Parliament's visual presentation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presentation from the MP's office <input type="checkbox"/> Open microphone <input type="checkbox"/> Question and answer session <input type="checkbox"/> Guest speaker <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):			
SUBJECTS DISCUSSED (summary)			
Voting systems: x	Replacement of the current voting system: x	Voter turnout: x	Accessibility and inclusiveness: x
Mandatory voting: x	Online voting: x	Local representation: x	Other (please specify and describe below) <input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What did participants say about the current system for electing Members of Parliament (benefits/flaws)? Did participants feel that their votes are fairly translated? (suggested limit: 500 words)

The participants said that the current political system has advantages and disadvantages. They applaud the regional representation in electoral districts. The constituents feel well represented in Ottawa, where they know the member of Parliament for their riding. However, one of the biggest disadvantages with the first-past-the-post system is the potential to produce a majority government with a number of votes less than a majority. According to the participants, results such as that erode the confidence of the people in Canada's current electoral system. This decreased confidence sometimes results in low voter turnout on election day. The people must participate more in elections.

Please return to:

Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE)
 131, rue Queen Street, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
 Tel./tél.: 613-992-3150 Fax/télécopieur: 613-947-3089 ERRE@parl.gc.ca

Deadline: Friday, October 14, 2016

Which alternatives to the current system were discussed? Did participants identify specific features that are important to them in an electoral system (for example local representation, proportionality, simplicity, legitimacy etc.)? (suggested limit: 500 words)

The participants advocated some types of proportional voting systems, while they criticized other variations of this electoral system. Participants said that the mixed proportional system used in New Zealand would work in Canada because this system allows for proportional representation without eliminating regional representation, which participants felt was a crucially important component. Some even said that this electoral system allowed for greater civility among politicians. However, participants said they were concerned about the method of selecting candidates for the proportional system lists. Nonetheless, some participants were categorically opposed to the proportional electoral system, saying that this change would not take into account the regions or their representation in the federal government. Some participants said they were afraid that this reform would remove too much power from members of Parliament and would centralize power.

Did participants discuss why they feel many Canadians choose not to engage in the democratic process? Did they suggest ways to encourage participation? (suggested limit: 500 words)

The primary criticism of Canada's democratic process was the length of election campaigns. Participants emphasized the length of the 2015 election campaign and described this aspect as the main reason why voter turnout continues to be low. Waiting lines at polling stations were also criticized. A number of participants said that this case should be studied in order to be able to identify groups that are not likely to vote.

Some participants were concerned about the lack of participation of young adults. They said that if the election campaigns were shorter, young adults would participate more. A number of participants encouraged the introduction of online voting to make voting easier, without eliminating voting in person, which is popular with older people. Other participants explained that Elections Canada should increase the awareness of and educate people, starting in adolescence, to increase the voter turnout in elections. Elections Canada could use several types of media to place advertising promoting the civic duty aspect of voting to Canadians, starting at a young age. Several participants emphasized that this would increase public understanding of Canada's electoral systems and increase people's confidence in the political system.

A few participants explained that some politicians discouraged the public from voting when there was a lack of transparency or a lack of honesty.

Did participants feel that it should be mandatory to cast a ballot? (Can include spoiling a ballot.) (suggested limit: 500 words)

Participants had various opinions about mandatory voting. Some believe that if mandatory voting is managed in the same way as the Census, that it might be worthwhile. Conversely, some said the cost would be too high. However, a number of participants were completely opposed to the idea, explaining that the concept of mandatory voting was contrary to Canadian values.

Did participants discuss online voting? Did they express a desire to maintain current voting practices? (i.e. presenting themselves at a polling station, vote secrecy etc.) (suggested limit: 500 words)

Most of the participants agreed with the idea of electronic voting, provided security was not compromised. However, they explained that it was important not to eliminate voting in person because this would alienate many elderly people.

Please return to:

Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE)
131, rue Queen Street, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Tel./tél.: 613-992-3150 Fax/télécopieur: 613-947-3089 ERRE@parl.gc.ca

Deadline: Friday, October 14, 2016

Were any other major topics raised by the participants? (i.e. referendum, women/minority representation, accessibility, voter turnout etc.) (suggested limit: 500 words)	
Another topic that was raised was referendums. Most participants were opposed to referendums, explaining that the public did not easily understand referendums and citing the example of Ontario. They agreed with the Committee on Electoral Reform, explaining that public opinion was well represented	
SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS (suggested limit: 1000 words)	
Proportional representation Local representation Simplicity of the system	
Report submitted to Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE)	Date: October 14, 2016
MP's signature: <i>signed</i>	(Name) FRANCIS DROUIN

Reports must be submitted to the Clerks of the Committee no later than Friday, October 14, 2016 in both official languages.

Please note that this document is for illustrative purposes only and can be modified or adapted to your needs. The report will be published on the Committee's web site.

Please return to:

Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE)
131, rue Queen Street, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Tel./tél.: 613-992-3150 Fax/télécopieur: 613-947-3089 ERRE@parl.gc.ca

Deadline: Friday, October 14, 2016