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HOUSE OF COMMONS
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CANADA

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Town Hall September 14, 2016

Headingley Community Centre

Input from Attendees

Electoral Reform

- Some questions posed by 1-2 attendees during the informational/educational presentation focussed on wanting more detail/better understanding of the different options/types of voting systems (despite several references by MP – and outlined clearly on the handout – that there were several online resources where this information is available)
- Referendum is not binding, the government still has to make the decision (after MP presentation pointed out that referendum can be considered “passing the buck” as opposed to taking responsibility for the legislation)
- Read about Great Britain vote, clear that millennials didn’t vote the way they could’ve, indicating that referendums are a thing of the past
- Confusion experienced by older demographic is common about different systems – most of the young people voted for liberals for marijuana. Am concerned with preferential ballot system – instead of the Libs winning 182, they would have won 224, the Conservatives would’ve had 61, NDP would’ve gone to 50
- Problem with 1st past post, proportionality is problem – move to preferential/ranked ballot – remove ballots from weakest candidate - increases proportionality and stronger/truer indicator of people’s choices
- Don’t have to talk about need for electoral reform – proportional rep has drawbacks (example of Belgium). Represented according to the parties – one direct election through first past the post filled according to vote
- Parliament is chosen through constituent assembly – saw it in Israel and Belgium. Our system works – no need to change it – if people want to vote they will, if they don’t, they won’t. We don’t need to do anything – status quo works.
- Encouraged to see government make move to move away from 1st past post – have 5 parties



now and proportional rep system is more desirable, will encourage more people to vote – create more minority governments, which is good – force MPs to work together

- Not being familiar with all the options, the current system is fine, but would be prepared to examine other options only through referendum – don't trust Lib government to make the decision, should not be mandatory to vote – too lazy to vote is their problem –online voting system will not work- eg. Male dominated household will force family members to vote his way; when talking about future of country a \$300M is nothing compared to 4B deficit to be spent in each of the next 4 yrs
- More info available on fairvote.ca
- There is no perfect solution – US has a proper bicameral system – don't have a properly rep Senate – need a proportional elected Senate; can have free and open votes on all issues and don't know why we don't do that. In favour of Mandatory voting.
- If it is so complicated to educate/understand people on issues of electoral reform, why the deadline of Dec1st – not enough time
- Voting is a privilege – the changes being looked at are huge. Referendums are ineffective. No problems with 1st past post – why change it – no problem
- Referendums “scare the shit out of me” – what happened in Britain was scary