

Electoral Reform Consultation Feedback

Office of TJ Harvey, Member of Parliament

Tobique-Mactaquac, NB

Engagement/Discussion Questions:

What do you think about the current system for electing Members of Parliament (benefits/flaws)? Do you feel that votes are fairly translated?

- Current system is better than some think at the moment
- Biggest benefit the current system provides is the attractiveness of a potential majority government
- Has the ability for parties to have a broad appeal vs. A more narrow appeal and monitoring is done easily
- Flaws: more flaws than positives. Numbers don't get out to the polls to vote.
- The proportion of people who vote, their voice isn't heard.
- System should be more balanced in that it should have more debate and ability to function within itself
- Change is necessary to get people back out to the system of voting – increased voter turn out
- Alternative voting system is a more appealing option than other suggested systems – others are harder to understand
- No to referendum
- Not for the present system – majority governments are elected through 40% voter turnout.
- Full proportional representation is the way to go
- Representation is important to ensure that the voters have their voices heard. Proportional vote needs to have a say.
- People would like to have a vote that “counts”
- Election day as a national holiday to increase voter turnout, potential incentive for votes received regardless of the electoral system
- Need for change to increase voter turnout – concerns that all the Canadian voices are being heard (e.g., accessibility of voting – more options are necessary – seniors/persons with a disability are limited).
- Want to see a focus on the public having their voices heard.
- There's a need for public education
- Mentality of old government (liberal vs. conservative)

- Need to encourage youth to get engaged in the process – youth in schools can actually encourage their parents to turnout to vote

Do you have a preferred alternative to the current system? What specific features are important to you in an electoral system (for example local representation, proportionality, simplicity, legitimacy etc.)?

- Current system has major flaws: Strategic voting (forced to vote for candidate to achieve federal outcome), costly to undo what the previous government did for legislation
- PR – parties focus on their narrow base
- Option to vote for party on first ballot and then rank their preferred order (second choice)
- Voters have no control over coalitions formed
- There are easier ways than doing Proportional Representation- achieve the main goal to increase voter turnout

Why do you think many Canadians choose not to engage in the democratic process? How would you encourage participation?

- Canadians feel their vote doesn't count so they choose not to vote at all
- Education is lacking
- Lack of understanding of the full system (healthcare, education, roads)
- Need to enhance the importance of voting to the younger population (classes in school, mock elections)
- Need to lower voting age to involve younger individuals – teaches increased responsibility (e.g., 16 years of age)
- Turnout isn't just a matter of age or understanding
- Worth looking into online voting – we bank online, why can we not vote online? (e.g., Elections Canada app to increase participation)
- National holiday as an option – some people don't do advance polls, work schedules, transportation
- In rural NB, transportation is a major barrier
- Carpooling, community transportation should be provided to coordinate rides
- Advance polls are a good thing and it allows increased flexibility
- Education and promotion of advance polls, opportunities to vote

Do you feel that it should it be mandatory to cast a ballot? (Can include spoiling a ballot.)

- Not in favour
- Informed votes are more important than just more votes
- The votes will be more uneducated
- How do you penalize someone who doesn't have the means to vote? (e.g., transportation)

Should Canadians be able to vote online? Would you prefer to maintain current voting practices? (i.e. presenting oneself at a polling station, vote secrecy etc.)

- Online voting would be beneficial in today's society
- Move with the times
- Will increase voter turnout
- A combination of online voting and traditional voting would be beneficial to increase turnout and address all ages/demographics
- Will help a certain demographic