

MICHAEL MCLEOD
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

TOWN HALL REPORT
ON ELECTORAL REFORM
PUBLIC CONSULTATION



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

MICHAEL MCLEOD
TERRITOIRES DU NORD-OUEST
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. August 30	7 pm-8:30 pm	Prince of Wales Centre	70
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guest speaker: Minister Monsef <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):			
SUBJECTS DISCUSSED (summary)			
Voting systems: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Replacement of the current voting system: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Voter turnout: <input type="checkbox"/>	Accessibility and inclusiveness: <input type="checkbox"/>
Mandatory voting: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Online voting: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local representation: <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify and describe below) <input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
<p>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)</p> <p>A minority of participants supported keeping the current voting system, and felt that First Past the Post has served our country well since Confederation. They considered the potential risks of implementing a new methodology outweighed the potential benefits.</p> <p>However, the vast majority of participants were in favour of changing to a new system for voting. These people generally expressed that the current electoral system does not accurately represent the desires of the electorate and produces false majorities, both in terms of local and national victors.</p>
<p>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)</p>

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

In addition to discussing the current First Past the Post methodology, Four additional systems were mentioned: List Proportional Representation, Single Transferable Vote, Mixed Member Proportional, and Alternative Vote. These systems were all briefly explained, as due to time constraints the moderator could not elaborate deeply on the particular intricacies of each option. Some attendees expressed a desire for more information on each system due to their complexities.

At the end of the exercise, there was no clear preference from the room as to which alternative they preferred. Proportionality was a common theme amongst the attendees as to an element they felt was lacking in our current system that they would like to see implemented in the future. Additionally, the participants were also keenly interested in keeping at least the same level of local representation that we have today.

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 level of participation in Canada's electoral system was discussed at the town hall. Several participants felt that some of the provisions of the Fair Elections Act were discriminatory and prevented people from voting. In particular, the ID requirements implemented severely limit the ability for indigenous and remote Canadians to cast a ballot. One participant likened such difficult rules to a new form of colonialism, harkening back to the days when Indigenous Canadians did not have the ability to vote for members of parliament.

The room was supportive of greater engagement between elections authorities and indigenous/northern communities. Because these people have been historically marginalized, they feel that they want to be heard when they go to the polling station.

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

Participants were largely weary about supporting any measure that would force Canadians to go to the polls or to not have the freedom to express their displeasure for all candidates or parties on the ballot.

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)

Participants were also generally concerned about online voting due to the security risk it posed to both individuals and the legitimacy of the results. Even though in theory online voting would make voting simpler for remote northern communities, the lack of reliable internet services would provide a serious challenge. Some attendees believed that it could be introduced as an option for voters, but that it should not completely replace paper ballots, at least until security and integrity can be assured.

Were any other major topics raised by the participants? (i.e. referendum, women/minority representation, accessibility, voter turnout etc.) (suggested limit: 500 words)

N/A

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS (suggested limit: 1000 words)

To summarize, the attendees had varied opinions on each subject, and there was no clear consensus on how the government should move forward.

While some felt that the status quo was appropriate, most believed the First Past the Post system should be replaced with a better alternative.

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The participants were interested in the different potential replacements, but other than a desire for greater proportionality while maintaining local representation there was no single model that was favoured.

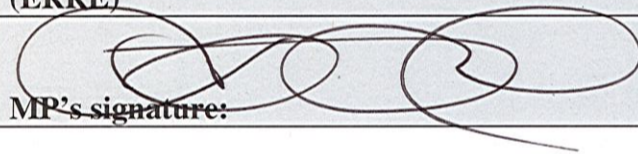
Due to the high percentage of indigenous and remote voters in the Northwest Territories, the room generally agreed that more should be done to reach out to these individuals and ensure they are being included in the democratic process.

Both online and mandatory voting were not popular with the participants, as they stated that the impacts of these changes would create unnecessary challenges for voters in the riding who already find voting difficult or undesirable.

Report submitted to Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE)

Date: October 14, 2016

MP's signature:



Michael McLeod

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.

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