

SHERRY ROMANADO
LONGUEUIL-CHARLES-LEMOYNE

TOWN HALL REPORT
ON ELECTORAL REFORM
PUBLIC CONSULTATION



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

SHERRY ROMANADO
LONGUEUIL-CHARLES-LEMOYNE

RAPPORT SUR LES CONSULTATIONS
PUBLIQUES SUR LA RÉFORME
ÉLECTORALE

Regional consultation hosted by Sherry Romanado, Mark Holland and MPs Michel Picard (Montarville), Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay-Lacolle), Jean Rioux (Saint-Jean), Jean-Claude Poissant (La Prairie) and Alexandra Mendès (Brossard-St-Lambert)			
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)
Sept. 6, 2016	3.5 hours	La Croisée de Longueuil (1230 Green, Longueuil, Québec, J4K 4Z5)	60 attendees
Form: <input type="checkbox"/> Use of the Library of Parliament's visual presentation <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Audience was divide into 8 discussion groups each with an MP .			
SUBJECTS DISCUSSED (summary)			
Voting systems: <input type="checkbox"/>	Replacement of the current voting system: <input type="checkbox"/>	Voter turnout: <input type="checkbox"/>	Accessibility and inclusiveness: <input type="checkbox"/>
Mandatory voting: <input type="checkbox"/>	Online voting: <input type="checkbox"/>	Local representation: <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify and describe below) <input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think could be done to help more Canadians feel more interested and involved in democracy?

- *Mandatory voting; simplify the electoral process; sensitize the population of the importance of voting and the political process.*
- *Reform the political financing rules and change the voting system to a single-member system with two rounds.*
- *Call citizens and engage them.*
- *To actually see a party be true to their promises in full transparency; for Canadians to know they are being heard.*
- *Take the time to explain.*
- *For information to be less partisan-based; eliminate commercials bashing other parties that only give one side of the argument; we need more well-rounded information.*

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

- Start civic education earlier; each age group needs to feel represented and connected, for instance voting stations at seniors' residences, universities, etc.
- They have lost confidence in their politicians and feel powerless as individuals
- Canadians need to feel that their ideas are will be put into action in a reasonable timeframe.

2. Do you and/or the people you know vote in elections? Why or why not?

- Issues that are pertinent to the interest of the population.
- Voting is a civic duty and it is important to exercise your vote to clearly voice your political/policy preferences.
- Yes, we think each vote is important.
- It is about 50% participation; I do vote; most who do not feel it is a waste of time as no true change occurs – those who do feel it is their obligation.
- Yes we are lucky to be able to vote.
- Young people who feel do not feel represented don't vote because there is no "none of the above" option on the ballot.
- Yes, but many students forget to vote, find it too inconvenient or just do not feel like it is worth their while.
- Yes, we vote because we feel it is important.
- Yes, to convey our political opinions.

3. Have you/and or the people you know faced barriers or challenges when voting in the past?

- Long waits; difficulty in voting for those outside the country.
- Yes, we should have a photo of the candidate on the ballot.
- I want electronic voting
- Main Challenge is time = getting to the polls while juggling life, work, family, etc.
- No problems.
- Accessibility; scheduling, students who work part-time and go to school full-time don't always get time off school.
- Lack of time, more days and voting stations need to be offered, the long waits are a big deterrent.

a) If so, what were those barriers or challenges?

- Difficult to get to the poles.
- Abolish voter card in federal elections.

b) What do you think could be done to overcome barriers people might face when voting?

- Educate our youth.
- Help for those who don't speak English or French.
- Offer different ways to vote, make it easier to vote at other locations.
- Voting at school; in the provincial election it worked very well and it encouraged voting.
- Online voting.

4. Do you feel the House of Commons represents Canadians effectively? Why or why not?

- More trust; have a good understanding of the issues facing our population; public

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

consultation will help to better represent more Canadians.

- *No, the voting systems allows for elected officials with less than 50% of the votes.*
- *Huge lack of representation, some districts with dense population, have less say than places like PEI- Senate floor rule is ridiculous and gives over representation.*
- *There are many problems where the public is left out and individuals are subject to Party discipline.*
- *No, we have a good proximity to our MP.*
- *No, the process takes too long to submit projects.*

5. How do you think we can measure the health of Canada's democracy? What do you think we could use as indicators of its health?

- *The electoral participation rate is a good indicator.*
- *It can be measure by our voter turnout = poor turnout = poor health.*
- *% of citizens who vote.*

6. What are some leadership qualities that you want from your elected representative? Do you think that there are certain qualities and attributions that are overvalued/undervalued in our diverse society? If so, what?

- *Transparency and availability to their electorate.*
- *We overvalue the "Old boys club" of politics – time to re-evaluate the population needs and concerns as the diverse country we are.*
- *Listen to citizens' ideas.*
- *We underestimate the level of education in an increasingly complex and interconnected society.*
- *Over-evaluation of the competencies of ministers.*
- *Image is more important than ideas.*

7. What do you feel the relationship between an elected Member of Parliament and citizens in his or her electoral district should look like?

- *At a minimum, MP's should organize two annual meetings with their electorate to give them an update of the work in parliament and a follow-up of local issues.*
- *There should be regular contact throughout their term – not just during elections- they need to speak to the heart of their citizens' concerns.*
- *Policy development should bridge citizens' perspectives and their Parties.*
- *Be close.*
- *The MP needs to know the specific needs of his/her electorate and be accessible.*

8. Of the guiding principles for Canadian federal electoral reform (effectiveness and legitimacy, engagement, accessibility and inclusiveness, integrity and local representation):

A) What principle(s) are most important to you? Why?

- *Legitimacy is 50%+1 of votes cast; accessibility; at least two annual meetings with the public; efficiency and good management of public funds.*
- *All are important to me for many reason- mainly I am a firm believer that our government needs to be accountable to all citizens.*
- *Accessibility in the sense that it is easy to understand. Legitimacy in the sense of*

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

appropriate representation.

- *Accessibility and inclusiveness.*
- *Complete information about the various electoral systems.*

B) What principle(s) are least important to you? Why?

- *Mobilization using modern technology, it is much easier to reach the public with the internet.*
- *Local representation.*
- *Legitimacy.*
- *They are all important.*

C) Are there any principle(s) that you feel are missing? Why?

- *Accountability, we learned that Senate expenses are outside the Auditor General's reason.*
- *Transparency – we often hear promises of it, but we have yet to see full transparency.*
- *Transparency of ideas and the vision of the governing Party.*

9. Are there certain groups that you feel are excluded from the current electoral system?

- *Our youth have the lowest electoral participate rate.*
- *Yes our aboriginal and indigenous communities.*
- *Aboriginals – the fact that polling stations on reserves ran out of ballot forms is unacceptable.*
- *Aboriginals.*

A) If so, why do you feel that they are excluded?

- *Under representation of youth in the House of Commons*
- *There have never been efforts to include Aboriginals in decisions.*
- *People focus on the Aboriginals that live on reserves however a large majority of them do not live on them yet still identify.*
- *Lack of civic education; no interest.*

B) What do you think could be done to help make Canada's electoral system more inclusive?

- *Internet voting*
- *Civic education starting in primary school.*
- *Have regular opportunities for the people to provide input, online Q&A, surveys etc....*
Canadians need to be active in their government's decisions making.
- *Implement a quota for young candidates in winnable ridings.*

10. What do you think are some strengths of our current federal electoral system? What are some of the weaknesses?

- *Strong point: majority governments are stable.*
- *Weak point: political financing.*
- *One major weakness is that it allows for Parties that are not true, federal parties to run in federal elections i.e. Bloc Quebecois, communist parties, we should never see these in a*

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

democratic country.

- *On le connaît- sans représente les petits partis.*
- *We know about, but the current system doesn't have representatives from smaller parties.*
- *Strengths: strict party discipline knowing that when you vote for a MP they represent the Party.*
- *Weaknesses: allowing MPs to switch parties.*
- *We can't vote directly for the Prime Minister.*

11. Are there electoral systems other than our current federal electoral system that you have heard about?

- *Yes, the system being used in France, uninominal vote single-member system with two rounds.*
- *Several.*
- *All were discussed.*

A) If so, what have you heard?

- *It gives democratic legitimacy to elected officials who received 50%+1 of the votes.*
- *Too much to write (a lot of information was provided).*
- *Pros and cons of all systems; there is no perfect system.*
- *There are five main electoral systems.*

B) Are there things that you like about these alternatives? If so, what?

- *Better expression of % of votes and % of MPs in the House.*
- *No.*
- *Easy to understand and to implement without changing the electoral map.*
- *The Party that receives the highest % of votes is represented.*

C) Are there concerns you have about these alternatives? If so, what?

- *Reform the political financing rules in proportion to the votes received by the party.*
- *None are perfect, it would take time to adjust to these systems rather than perfect our own.*
- *A major change, just because if works for other countries doesn't mean it's best for our unique Canada.*
- *Too complex; do not increase the number of MPs.*
- *Yes, lack of information.*

12. How do you feel about electronic voting?

- *More efficient.*
- *Against it because too much risk.*
- *Makes me nervous compared to paper ballots.*
- *Yes but with secure processes and keep the current option of paper ballots for those who want to.*
- *Interesting but we lack the ability to properly and safely carry it out.*
- *No, too many risks of corruption, hacking, clicking the wrong thing by accident.*
- *It would be good as an alternative, some cannot adapt.*
- *I am against it. They tried it in municipal elections in Brossard in 2005 and there were problems.*

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

13. How do you feel about online voting? Why?

- *I am against it due to hacking risks; how could you proceed with a recount in the event of a contestation of results?*
- *As an alternative only, not main choice.*
- *No, again too many risks, also not knowing who the real person is who is voting.*
- *Yes, but keep the current paper ballot option as well.*
- *Security of the system, not ready, no longer sure who is voting.*
- *Probably more efficient and faster.*

14. How do you feel about mandatory voting? Why?

- *Can help increase political awareness of the population.*
- *No, it is my democratic right and therefore should not be forced.*
- *Important for the health of democracy.*
- *Unsure, works in Australia but it is not democratic.*
- *Australia, Belgium and Chili implemented it and the participation rate increased; I am in favour.*

15. What other changes, if any, to the methods and procedures we use to vote might you like to see? Why?

- *The legislation should be modified to justify the holding of a consultative referendum at the same time as an election.*
- *No MP should be allowed to switch parties once voted for; this does not represent their riding.*
- *Improve the responses in Question Period in the House; accept questions from citizens;*
- *Consult citizens in ridings where the MP is not part of the governing Party.*

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

Report submitted to Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE)

Date: October 14, 2016

MP's signature:



**Sherry Romanado – MP/Députée
LongueuilCharles-LeMoyne**

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

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