

ADAM VAUGHAN, M.P.
SPADINA-FORT YORK

TOWN HALL REPORT
ON ELECTORAL REFORM
PUBLIC CONSULTATION



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

ADAM VAUGHAN, DÉPUTÉ
SPADINA-FORT YORK

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)
September 25, 2016	2:00 to 4:00 PM	City Council Chamber, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. West, Toronto, ON M5H 2N2	90 participants (approx.) 6 employees 15 volunteers
<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use of the Library of Parliament's visual presentation ✓ Presentation from the MP's office ✓ Open microphone ✓ Question and answer session ✓ Guest speakers: Mark Holland, M.P. and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Democratic Institutions; Kristyn Wong-Tam, Toronto City Councillor; Dave Meslin, founder of Toronto Ranked Ballot Initiative (RaBIT); Jane Hilderman, Executive Director of Samara Canada; Katelynn Northam, Lead Now representative. ✓ Other (please specify): participants broke out into small discussion groups after presentations where note takers collected input throughout the discussion. <p>Each participant received a ballot with a vision statement to be completed by the participant and 5 choices of voting system to rank: First Past the Post, Alternative Vote, List Proportional Representation, Mixed Member Proportional, Single Transferable Vote and Other.</p>			
SUBJECTS DISCUSSED (summary)			
Voting systems: ✓	Replacement of the current voting system: ✓	Voter turnout: ✓	Accessibility and inclusiveness: ✓
Mandatory voting: ✓	Online voting: ✓	Local representation: ✓	Other (please specify and describe below) ✓ - Voter education

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

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?

- Vast majority of participants do not support the current system.
- Participants point to fact that many M.P.s did not receive majority of the vote in their ridings, current system produces majority governments that do not have majority of the popular vote (false majorities). This was characterized as unfair by many participants.
- Participants generally felt the current system does a poor job of representing them.

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.)?

- Most of the discussion on alternatives systems focused on proportional representation (PR) and mixed member proportional (MMP).
- Alternative vote (AV) was discussed less, and single transferable vote (STV) was discussed by very few participants.
- Participants supported the following features of an alternative system:
 - Proportionality
 - Local representation
 - Simplicity
 - Promotes representation for smaller parties
 - Discourages strategic voting
 - Promotes diversity

Did participants discuss why they feel many Canadians choose not to engage in the democratic process? Did they suggest ways to encourage participation?

- Reasons cited for low participation and engagement:
 - Complicated voting process, even with relatively simple FPTP system.
 - Lack of education on voting and how government works
 - Lack of proportionality and translation of individual votes to national results discourages voting—electors don't feel voting is worthwhile.
- Many discussion groups covered mandatory voting and lower voting age.
- Supporters of mandatory voting believed that it would lead to more engagement. Opponents

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believed it was anti-democratic, could lead to ignorant / uninformed voting choices.

- Even proponents of mandatory voting had reservations: they believed it could distract from the primary goal of choosing an alternative voting system; some said they would support the initiative if it became a hot issue, but did not believe it was a concern to most Canadians.
- Opponents of mandatory voting suggested that all ballots should include a ‘Do Not Want to Vote’ option to allow people to participate without forcing spoiled ballots, strategic voting, or uninformed vote choices.
- Participants said simplicity was important for encouraging participation, voter education and overall engagement.
- Some groups discussed encouraging engagement at a younger age. Participants believed that lowering the voting age would encourage long-term voting. Others cited a need for quality education that begins in high school.
- Participants cited a need to make both educational resources and the voting system itself fully accessible (particular emphasis on ensuring visually impaired voters have the same opportunities to participate by making websites and other informational resources accessible).

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.)

- Online voting was discussed in most groups. Among those who discussed online voting, there was unanimous support for the practice as a supplement to current voting practices; however, there was also unanimous concern about individual privacy and integrity of the system in light of hacking.
- It was pointed out that the online voting would be great for young people, but it must be simple and accessible so that it can also benefit seniors and the disabled.

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

- A few groups discussed the possibility of a referendum. The overwhelming majority of participants opposed any referendum.
- A few participants who were in favour of a referendum tended to see it as a way to legitimize electoral reform and prevent a future government from undoing the changes made.

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SUMMARY OF BALLOT RESULTS AND COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

The following tables provide a summary of the results of a ranked ballot completed by participants at the conclusion of the town hall, as well as a summary of any additional comments made on the ballots. There were **72 ballots** in total.

Rank (1=most favourable, 5= least favourable)	1	2	3	4	5
First Past The Post	1	3	3	4	14
Alternative Vote	8	5	3	9	3
List Proportional Rep.	7	9	9	11	4
Mixed-Member Proportional Rep.	45	6	9	5	
Single Transferable Vote	13	14	7	3	2
* Rural-Urban Proportional	3	3			
* Jenkins	1				
* Two Round System	1				
* First 2 Past The Post	1				


***Not a Given Option**

Comment Topic	# of Mentions
Any form of proportional representation	25
No online voting	2
No gender/ethnic quotas	1
More access for independents	4
Yes to online voting	4
Alternative formats should be available (e.g. For blind people)	1
Should be more fair	3
Every vote must count	13
Must represent Canada's diversity	6
No referendum	3
Eliminate strategic voting	3
No more false majorities	5
Focus on issues, not parties	2
Lower voting age	4
Yes to Mandatory voting	3
No partisan polarizations	4
No mandatory voting	2
Better education for voters	2
Electoral reform will be a historic moment in Canada	1

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Report submitted to Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE)		Date: October 14, 2016
 MP's signature:	Adam Vaughan, M.P. Spadina-Fort York (Name)	

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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