

OFFICE OF ANITA VANDENBELD
M.P. FOR OTTAWA WEST-NEPEAN

ELECTORAL REFORM TOWN HALL

CONSULTING WITH CONSTITUENTS
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HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
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Introduction

The Government of Canada is seeking views and ideas from Canadians on how to address Electoral reform. The Office of Anita Vandenberg, Member of Parliament for Ottawa West-Nepean, consulted with constituents and stakeholders from across the riding on some of the important issues relating to Electoral reform. The Member's Office held a Town Hall on September 17th, 2016. Feedback forms were also supplied for paper submissions.

Town Hall Discussion:

Due to the expected large turnout the Town Hall on Electoral and Democratic Reform was three hours long. The first portion consisted of a brief presentation followed by constituents taking the floor to make their voices heard. In order to accommodate the large turnout each constituent was allotted two minutes to speak. The second half of the evening was also allowed for the constituents to take the floor but the topic was expanded to democratic reform as well as electoral.

Over 170 residents and stakeholders took part in a discussion on Electoral reform. Their views and suggestions are summarized below:

1. The candidate who wins the most votes has the right to take a seat in Parliament. We must not change the system that is in Canada or the Commonwealth. No one who is in this hall has the right to change the system.
2. Political parties do not exist in this country or in our constitution. Do not empower political parties because it removes power from the voters. People who have been voted for should have a say in the process even if they lost the vote.
3. Parliament doesn't work. 338 parliamentarians but there are only 4 voices in Parliament. Back door dealings have more weight than any single candidate. Parties should not be allowed on the ballot. Check New Zealand PR system.
4. FPTP must stay the same. If it needs to be changed then there should be a referendum.

5. Member must live a minimum of three years in the district to represent the district.
6. What is happening in the US should be a warning. Millions that are neither Democrat nor Republican are not getting representation. FPTP should not exist even if it creates too many parties.
7. Must be referendum to get the electoral system to change. Consulting the citizens is a must.
8. MMP. Everybody has the right to have their votes counted. Who voted for what party? No wasted votes or votes that don't count.
9. Countries with PR tend to have coalition and minority government.
10. Different systems have different advantage and disadvantages. FPTP loses a lot of votes, it's not proportional. PR does not make the members committed to the riding but to the party.
11. There is no mandate to change the system. Liberals do not have the right to change the voting system. Look at Switzerland for the best system.
12. Single Member Representation. Use preferential ballot. Remove the idea of a Whip in the party. Every member should vote for what his constituents want, not what the party wants.
13. PR makes things very complicated; FPTP is the most efficient form of government.
14. Parties should dictate to members how to vote. remove idea of the Whip in government
15. Reform must only be done under a referendum.
16. Open list model. Rural urban proportional. FPTP doesn't work because a lot of votes don't matter.
17. Every voter should elect a member that reflects their opinions. Changing the system to proportional is a must because it makes every vote matter.
18. The solution to fix the system is a referendum, any other way would not be representative of Canadians

19. PR is the best system because it allows every vote to matter. Every vote should matter as much as any other. FPTP doesn't allow this happen because votes get wasted.
20. Support PR. fundamental basis is 1 person 1 vote. Second fundamental is that a majority rules. PR takes into account that each vote counts for something.
21. Younger generation is not interested. We need to get more young people interested in elections.
22. FPTP cannot be acquainted with democracy. MMPR would be the best system.
23. Problem is not how we elect our representatives. It is how our representatives represent us.
24. A member should not vote against what their riding wants because the party says so.
25. Changes need to be made in Parliament; it is not how Parliament is elected.
26. Referendum must be held to change the voting system.
27. Strategic voting is becoming a norm, hence hurts democracy. PR has too many problems. There must be system that is a hybrid.
28. Electoral system can only be changed through a referendum.
29. PR is a better system because every vote counts. The party system by its own existence limits the power of voters and democracy. Reform the senate to promote democracy and voter counts. must have referendum
30. The number of MPs represents the percent of people voting for them. Minority and coalition govt. 39% of popular votes is not a majority.
31. FPTP system leads to strategic voting. Let us rank our candidates by our preference. Ranking candidates would allow my vote to matter.
32. The government does not have the right to change the system. Must be done by referendum so that every vote counts.
33. Young people believe that their vote doesn't count. Every vote does count under the FPTP because it shows support. I want to see a referendum on the issue.
34. Must be bottom fed system. Constituent tells Member who tells PMO, not the other way around.
35. PR is going to strengthen the parties.

36. We need members who represent us, not MPs who represent the party.
37. My issue is not being able to decide who to vote for because I can like the candidate not the party and vice versa.
38. I worry that PR would be too expensive and unmoving.
39. Parachuting candidates must be stopped.
40. Voting for people who reflect my concerns usually leads to me losing my votes because of FPTP.
41. PR would be a better system because every vote counts.
42. Representation. When we vote we are voting for someone that will represent us in local concerns. Parliament should represent a wide range of views across the country.
43. MMPR is best at making votes count because it is a hybrid between PR and FPTP
44. Our votes should count. PR is a better system that will allow each vote to count.
That is what democracy is all about
45. MPs should vote for their constituents rather than what the Party says.
46. PR makes every vote count.
47. Parties are too powerful, that is a frustration.
48. Members should have to live in the riding to be nominated in the riding.
49. Quarterly town halls must be set so more people can take part in the process.
50. Dissolve the power of the PMO.
51. There must be a referendum if they want the system to be changed.
52. Current system is not representative. Preferential ranked ballot would be the best system because it allows an express valve since it ranks the candidates.
53. MMPR is also a better representation of the voters.
54. Nominating system within parties should also be changed.
55. PR with limits should be considered with a minimum percentage required.
56. Democratic reform is important however it will need to be done by referendum.
57. An option on the ballot that says 'none of the above' which if it gets a lot of votes would lead to another vote.
58. PR should be used because I don't want to vote based on who I don't want.
59. Referendum is fine if a population is engaged and informed.

60. Introduce a recall system.
61. The party should not be listed on the ballot.
62. Strategic voting has become the norm and it is not right and is undemocratic.
63. Referendum is how we should decide.
64. FPTP got Canada to where we are right now and should not be changed. It gets rid of candidates who didn't try hard enough
65. Referendum is not the only way to have a vote. And one single referendum is not the only way it should be done.
66. Youth need to be more engaged.
67. Needs to be changes to the party system; however it needs to be done by referendum.
68. What we need to speak about is purpose and principle instead of procedure.
69. Quit making gender an issue. It's not about men or women, but more about the best person for the job.
70. There is a need for complimentary reforms; we can't change the electoral system without changing parliamentary system.
71. Gender should not matter; we should be looking at qualifications.
72. There should be more town halls; MP's should make it a habit.
73. Mix the MP's seating in the house so they're not just sitting within party lines.
74. MPs are acting based on reward system. Parliament is broken because party system is broken
75. Party system results in some sort of tribal politics.
76. The leader should be chosen by the MPs and not the party members.
77. Changing voting system is only part of the solution to changing parliamentary procedures.
78. Engage young voters so they can make it a habit.
79. Lower voting age to 16.
80. We need more parties in Canada to represent more people.
81. PR would force cooperation between different parties.