

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2018 7:33 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Voting system reform in BC

Hello,

The current voting system First Past The Post is unacceptable and MUST be replaced. Whatever new voting system we choose will NEVER be perfect. We need to take action ASAP. All the parties agree that we need to focus only on making it BETTER.

The past two referendums on voting reform that were held in BC failed because there were too many details and too many options. As long as there are too many options available it will remain a NEVER-ENDUM

An all party committee needs to be established that will take care of the details and come up with one proposed voting system.

The mandate of the committee will be to propose a new voting system that 1. makes every vote count and 2. distributes the power and decision making more broadly 3. ensures the MLA's elected more accurately matches the actual vote count.

Any change to the voting system is a big deal. We need to keep it simple.

Option 1. I vote for keeping the current voting system, first past the post.

Option 2. I vote for the new proposed voting system

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]
Thursday, December 21, 2017 10:49 AM

To:

Subject:

[REDACTED]
Voting System Opinion

Dear [REDACTED]

After doing some research on the BC election reform systems, I have found the Single Transferable Vote system to be the most preferable. The ranking system creates more dimensions to reflect on the voters' opinions so that there is a more compromised representation for each constituency. There are also fewer votes wasted or overlooked in safe seats with the ranking system because the next candidate on the ranking choices also matter to obtain seats. Furthermore, this system usually leads to a majority government, which greatly benefits decision making. On the other hand, it has a fairer proportional representation than the first past the post system, because the candidate with the next highest votes can also fill in a seat, reflecting a more balanced demographic of party members, especially for smaller parties.

Thank you for your time,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2018 9:51 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: voting referendum

How much is this voting question exercise costing from beginning to end?

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2017 9:25 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Voting Referendum

To [REDACTED]

As recent controversy towards the way the citizens of B.C. I have decided to email you personally with my opinions towards the best and most effective way British Columbians should vote to help better benefit British Columbians. I personally feel like FPTP or the "winner takes all" Voting system is the best for the current state of our province and people. Although there is the ongoing situations of larger parties holding significantly more seats I feel like there is equilibrium with the smaller parties who are declared least favourites getting significantly more accurate votes as well as FPTP allows these parties and individuals to run and campaign as well so I personally believe all is fair game. FPTP is the best option because like I stated it not only allows smaller and single-member parties to have the opportunity to campaign on fair ground but it also; has a low cost to administer, one of the more simple ways to vote, the results can be declared quickly with this system which is what most citizens want, The single-party governments don't have to rely on support from other parties to pass legislation as it is fair, and some can argue that FPTP can discourage extremists point of view. Over all this is the most balanced and well thought out way to vote especially when taking our people and canadian citizens into consideration.

Sincerely [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2018 6:21 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: vote reform, I want my vote to count

Basically I want my vote to count.

Now I know there's other ideas out there. like proportional representation and it's offshoots.

I like none of these since if I pick a candidate and he loses , then my vote don't count.

I do not want to have the option of having a second choice since I only want one.

So my very rough idea is like this, please bear with me.

We have a system where in a riding with 100,000 electors there are five candidates.

A gets 20,000 votes

B gets 15,000 votes

C gets 25,000 votes

D gets 5,000 votes and

E gets 700 votes.

In our present corrupt system C gets in.

This is no good. They all should get to go to Ottawa.

Now I realize there should be some limits, so assume that no party who gets votes from less than 1% of the electorate will count.

So we sit with four parties who have over one percent.

I realize that this is a huge cost on the system therefore the ridings should become bigger, with the number of seats in the house remaining roughly the same.

Right now it is 308 seats and next week we're getting about 338.

So four parties get in, A, B, C, and D. Now they come to voting in the house.

They do not say Aye or Nay for one vote, no they vote with the total of votes they get.

A votes and gets 20,000 Ayes or Nays

B votes and gets 15,000 Ayes or Nays

C votes and gets 25,000 Ayes or Nays

D gets to vote with 5,000 Ayes or Nays

So all of a sudden my vote counts.

This will make a huge difference to the way we are governed and will be the fairest system that I can see.

ALL VOTES COUNT.

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]
Friday, February 9, 2018 9:27 AM

To:

[REDACTED]

I think the voting system should stay the same,first past the post is the best one, and has served the province well.

Your survey is pretty bad, hard to understand, totally biased, far too complex. People are not stupid, just ask do you want things to change or stay the same?

Everyone will have their own reasons for one or the other and do not need your rather iffy questions.

Yours truly,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, February 17, 2018 11:39 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Thank you for accepting this submission.

Thank you for accepting this submission.

BC needs Proportional Representation. Our First Past the Post electoral system has too often resulted in warring parties constantly criticizing each other over sometimes stupid or minor issues, whereas a better system would allow legislators to cooperate and work toward a common solution.

Our society is entering a difficult time where we need to look at what we have taken for granted. Our information revolution will require huge shifts in society. To combat global warming we need to reexamine our dependence on resource extraction. To allow all our citizens to go beyond earning only necessities, we need to reexamine our system of work.

But in order for the world to become a more just place for people and solve the problems facing us, we need a system of governing that represents us all.

With PR, you know that your views and other views will be represented, and that a more fair election system will allow truer representation and less disenchantment. When people see that their opinions are taken seriously, fewer will be turned off by politics, and the fascist demand for “stronger leadership” will be made less attractive. With better decision making we will be better prepared for the challenges ahead of us.

I am tired of over-thinking an election and having to vote for someone I find it hard to agree with. I just want to be able to vote for the man or woman I think best represents me. A PR voting system would give me confidence that I am being represented by someone who understands what I want.

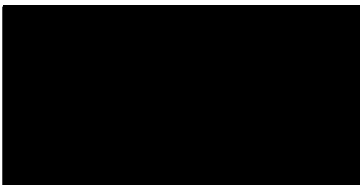
I keep hearing that under PR there would be reduced local representation. There is no reason for this—we need to adopt or create a system of PR that allows for what we think is important. A system of PR that works in BC would create fair representation in rural area, would retain our system of local representation, and with only a slight increase in the number of MLS's.

As to the fear of a series of having minority administrations unable to effectively govern, we need to look to examples of other countries who have adopted PR.

In BC, we share a likeness to New Zealand. With their MMP style of PR, either National (Liberals in BC) or Labour (the NDP in BC) can gain either majority or minority governments. John Keyes, the National leader, was in power in New Zealand for a decade, even though there are four or five parties (National, Labour, Maori, Green, New Zealand First) Then, in 2017, a labour government was elected.

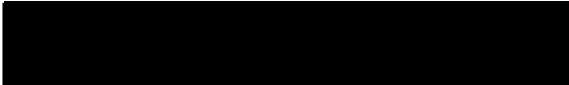
[REDACTED] and we were impressed with the involvement and interest New Zealanders took in their government (the daily radio broadcast from Parliament was widely listened to throughout New Zealand, and was widely commented upon). We need this degree of involvement here in BC.

Thank you for encouraging my comments, and I can only hope that the referendum will pass and that we will get a more democratic system.



November 25, 2017

Re: Referendum on how we vote.



When I filled out the on-line survey for a referendum on how we vote in BC, I was very disappointed. The survey makes mention of a ranked ballot vote only once and then it does not offer any chance to vote for it. Although, there is a place to vote for STV, which is a ranked vote, STV has a quasi-proportional aspect to it because of the split votes it entails, but it is not the same as a plain ranked ballot system. With a plain ranked ballot, any candidate who gets elected will win by at least 50% of votes cast, but there is no split votes or quasi-proportionality to it at all, such as STV does. STV would be nice, but it was already turned down because of its complexity, and it is doubtful to ever pass if put forward again, so it appears you are basically ONLY looking at first past the post, or a proportional type system, which I feel are both flawed, and you are not looking at any other voting systems. Two styles of voting have be left out of this survey for a referendum and they MUST be included; a multi-day run off vote; and a plain ranked ballot vote MUST both be included in this referendum, plus, this referendum itself should also be performed using a ranked ballot, so it is passed by at least 50% of the voting public. The public MUST have a chance to vote on all types of voting systems if we are to make ANY change to our voting system.

Please make changes, to reflect the above concerns, to your survey and to any referendums on how we vote.

Sincerely



Submission Regarding Proposed Electoral Change in British Columbia

This submission is based upon the foundation that proper democratic governance is vested upon the human being. To institutionalise or re-institutionalise along the bases of tribal identity is to regress from this standard.

Democratic governance begins when all human beings within a community take on the same responsibilities of self-government and in return receive equal rights. The interplay between responsibility and right is embodied both formally and informally in what is sometimes called the Rules of the Game which together transcend race, gender, sexual identity, treaty and history. Whether formal or informal these Rules comprise a nation's de jure and de facto organic law.

De facto, electoral systems are part of a nation's organic law wherein the foundation of self-government is laid out: in this case the manner in which citizens select, monitor and hold accountable their representatives. Electoral system change therefore, must be managed in the same manner as formal constitutional change. There must firstly be a clear broad consensus that change is necessary and secondly, a similar consensus regarding what direction any proposed change will take.

This two-stage process must be managed in such a way as to prevent capture, moral hazard and conflict of interest on the part of political entrepreneurs and elite.

Capture refers to the manner in which special interests may control or manipulate institutions including the legislature, executive, ministries, judiciary and electoral processes to promote their own limited interests at the expense of the greater encompassing interest. Presence of capture is demonstrated by institutional breakdown wherein government can no longer provide public goods, combat rent seeking behaviour or corruption and restrain violence. There will be an acute and sustained crisis demonstrating the inability of the existing system to address properly encompassing issues and govern peacefully conjoined with extreme levels of partisanship and highly personalised forms of leadership.

Combating capture and its attendant *les grands coups d'autorite* viz Montesquieu has been the subject of modern political discussion since the 18th century when the overbearing and authoritarian power of monarchical based governance was addressed. Monarchs are by and large gone in the 21st century but similar state capture by homogenous minority interests and the defences necessary against such capture remain.

We create government to provide public goods, combat rent seeking behaviour and restrain violence. There is no consensus in the literature as to which electoral system is the most effective in this regard and international indices comparing various aspects of governance mirror this lack of consensus showing both majoritarian and proportional forms of democracy in the upper deciles. The reason for this is tied to the presence of Total Factor Productivity (TFP) in the Cobb-Douglas Production Function. While capital and labour are the input factors driving economic

output, it is the residual TFP that drives the aforementioned two factors. TFP is a basket of inter-connected factors including technological innovation, satisficing, path dependency, culture, history and institutions including both the formal and informal. What all this means is that each country is different in its own way making cross-country comparisons subject to confounding variables and therefore useful in only so far as giving broad outlines.

Europe is the great natural experiment regarding differing forms of democracy with data as provided by the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation showing the lack of consensus as to which system is 'the best'. Therefore, arguments based upon listing other countries using a certain form of governance and which therefore all others should follow leads to conflation. Even among majoritarian and proportional systems, country by country comparisons show subtle and significant differences making such definitive statements a chancy exercise.

As demonstrated in the Logic of Collective Action, smaller homogenous groups tend to be more efficient in achieving capture than larger diverse groups. Upon the achievement of capture, such vested interest groups exercise moral hazard and resist peaceful encompassing change since they have externalised the costs of their limited behaviour upon the majority. Under majority rule, costs are internalised and there is therefore greater likelihood vested interests may be overcome in the pursuit of peaceful encompassing change.

Conflict of interest is demonstrated by the Principal-Agent Problem wherein the agent, hired by the principal seeks to manipulate the terms of engagement for greater job security, remuneration and benefits. In electoral systems, elected representatives are the agents and voters the principals. Representatives therefore, must neither be allowed to select their own voters, nor the manner in which selection occurs.

Political entrepreneurs have a number of options before them when selecting and collating their voters. There is the artificial geographic gerrymander wherein highly partisan supporters are collated in such a manner as to guarantee the entrepreneur a plurality win. There is the natural geographic gerrymander wherein due to assortative distribution partisan supporters already dominate within a delineated area - popularly called a 'safe seat'. There is finally the non-geographic approach wherein partisan voters are collated tribally by way of party lists or proportional representation.

Regardless of which direction is taken, collating voters by tribe has a number of negative effects upon the health of a democracy. These will include a greater incumbency advantage, institutionalisation of highly partisan or tribal behaviour and a redistribution of public resources in a limited rather than encompassing manner.

Incumbency Advantage refers to the likelihood an incumbent politician will be re-elected by voters. This metric is used in conjunction with Clarity of Responsibility. Before a voter can properly monitor, assess and hold governments to account for both the economy and

management of public services there must be an identifiable and cohesive incumbent. Federal systems of government, with their divided and at times shared jurisdictions have been termed 'institutionalised confusion' referring to the diminished capacity by voters to identify proper clarity of responsibility. Political entrepreneurs will sometimes deliberately further this confusion in their pursuit of political self-interest. When coalition governments are added to this mix, then clarity of responsibility and voters' ability to hold government to account is still further diminished.

Lower clarity of responsibility and higher incumbency advantage go hand in hand due to the higher transaction costs that accrue. A Transaction Cost is the cost incurred by a principal, in this case a voter, to negotiate, monitor and enforce a contract with an agent, in this case an elected politician. Voters as principals however, comprise numerous interests and desired outcomes. In cases of voter collation, these interests and desired outcomes become homogenised and behave as vested interests. Furthermore, highly partisan or tribal voters will raise transaction costs by bringing forward their aforementioned identity before assessment along the basis of individual merit when selecting or supporting their representative. As transaction costs rise, the ability to enforce a contract diminishes and the scope for opportunistic behaviour on the part of the agent widens - hence rent seeking and selling behaviour at the expense of public goods provision and in worst cases corruption.

The exercise of democracy requires tolerant and inclusive behaviour both on the part of its citizenry and its elected representatives. Different electoral systems place differing demands upon political entrepreneurs as they seek political success. In general, plurality systems demand upon the part of the political entrepreneur the empathy, tolerance and bridge-building skills necessary to cross community divisions and thereby build up the size of their winning coalition. Collating voters diminishes this requirement and red flags including arrogance, self-entitlement, limited empathic skills and the use of ideological or sub-group language will appear.

The insistence upon sub-group rather than encompassing language demonstrates that the speaker is addressing only the tribe rather than the community as a whole. Accruing will be limited empathy towards those outside the tribe including the provision of public goods and services, demonising the 'other' and a progressive abandonment of political conventions which reinforce social capital and equality amongst all citizens.

A recent example of such abandonment occurred after the 2015 federal election where each federal political leader save one thanked losing Prime Minister Stephen Harper for his public service. This convention of giving thanks is reinforced by the presence of non-partisan swing voters within what are popularly called 'big-tent' parties. In a plurality system, to achieve a winning coalition, political entrepreneurs must appeal beyond their core support. These will include the swing voters who will change their allegiance from one election to the next. Smaller homogenous parties encompass fewer swing voters witness their consistent inability to broaden their base of support. The political convention of giving thanks is therefore underlined by the common sense observation that one must never insult one's past, current and future voters whose

allegiance cannot be assumed. For smaller homogenous parties, this is a non-issue giving them leave to solidify their core support by reinforcing their own bias and demonising non-members.

In the United States (US) the diminishing presence of the swing voter due to voter collation and subsequent heightened partisanship has become an ever increasing topic of concern. Some estimates show swing voters accounting for less than five percent of the participating electorate. In the meantime incumbency rates among elected representatives have passed 95 percent. The Cook Partisan Voting Index is one metric being used to assess the competitiveness of US congressional districts.

Homogenous groups face a challenge when seeking political change. When faced with the inability to broaden their base of support they may recognise the falsity of their argument and dispose it. Sometimes this happens; sometimes the false argument will be kept in the face of such an inconvenient fact through rationalisations such as false consciousness, false claims of institutional failure, doublespeak and lack of fairness. False consciousness [REDACTED] is at its heart an *ad hominem* argument and was all too apparent in many submissions favouring electoral reform during the recent federal exercise. The term 'electoral reform' is a pejorative and begs the question that electoral change is necessary without having to prove the argument that there has been institutional failure thereby making change necessary. Following this line of self-evidentiary reasoning on the part of such advocates there were proposals to dispense entirely with referenda regarding electoral change or more disingenuously making such change 'temporarily' to be followed by a referendum.

The fairness argument dispenses with the notion that electoral systems and the governance that accrues must perform in an encompassing rather than limited manner. It is at heart a rent-seeker's promise that if a system is changed you will then receive what you want, rather than what is in the encompassing interest of society. Furthermore, if you do not receive what you want, then the exercise must not be fair. The psychology behind such self-centred reasoning is displayed in the [REDACTED] Further evidence of self-evidentiary and self-centred reasoning is present in several current BC submissions that include pejorative language such as 'modern' or 'modernising' the current electoral system. There are no such things as 'modern' or 'medieval' electoral systems. There are only electoral systems with varying degrees of efficiency and effectiveness.

All societies have within their midst intolerant individuals subject to high degrees of cognitive dissonance. Such individuals function poorly in diverse and inclusive societies since their stress levels will rise when confronted with information contrary to their ideals or 'facts'. Such people will engage in parallel conversations, denigrate those who do not comply with their mindset and apply *force majeure* to have their own way. It is to restrain such individuals or groups that all forms of governance hold a monopoly of power. In cases of properly functioning plurality systems, switching over to systems with lower thresholds of electoral success does not change the proportion of intolerant or tribal groups present, but it can empower them thereby making the exercise of achieving communal consensus more difficult.

Delivering public goods and governing in an encompassing manner does not require a necessary condition of a 50 percent plus one majority. Unless seeking to close an argument with a mass fist fight, this standard has little merit. What has merit is the benchmark for a sufficient condition where the incentive for political entrepreneurs shifts from the provision of rents to the provision of public goods. Where we have properly delineated single member districts there is simply too much diversity and too many people required for a winning threshold to bribe with economic rents which is what will occur when the size of the winning threshold is reduced and homogenisation of that threshold increased.

In 1960 CCF leader Tommy Douglas won the Saskatchewan provincial election with a 41 per cent plurality taking 37 out of 54 seats or an enhanced majority of 65 percent. Under the 50 plus one argument this government had neither the legitimacy nor the capacity to provide public goods, yet it was this government that initiated the creation of Canada's public health care system. Throughout Canada's federal and provincial political history we have had elections with less than 50 percent pluralities and enhanced majorities providing sound and encompassing governments. To argue that achieving a 50 percent plus one majority and equal distribution of seats based upon popular vote is a necessary condition for good government is contrary to the Canadian historical record. The enhanced majority gave Douglas the power to override vested interests. At the same time the enhanced majority enhanced accountability since only a small percentage shift in plurality support among swing voters could radically shift the balance of power.

In 1964 the CCF lost power due to a 7 per cent plurality shift in favour of the opposition Liberal party. Nineteen incumbents from among both parties lost their seats. The public health care system remained.

In general, Canadian electoral history points to a two-thirds/one-third rule guideline as a sufficient condition leading to a healthy democratic system: that is, there is consistently a greater than two thirds of eligible voter turnout resulting in a greater than one third plurality win. Anything less with either measure is an indication of possible voter apathy, institutional disfunction or perhaps failure. While this measure is a good indicator for the formulation of public policy and the provision of public goods that accrue, it does not apply regarding constitutional and electoral change. There has to be a clear consensus among a super majority comprising the significant political players that these will be the common rules, or organic laws under which all rational players will compete for the greater public good.

Due to the risks of capture, moral hazard and conflict of interest, it is not within the purview of any political party to include electoral change on its party platform. When one or more parties do so then it follows every party may do so with the attendant risk of electoral rules and organic laws changing every time one party gains hegemony over the other. The record if not the near record for such consequences is Thailand which since the 1930s has gone through a constitutional change about every five years. Since either directly or indirectly political parties

cannot be prevented from including electoral change on their platform, institutional defences must be put into place.

Recommendation 1)

Any proposal for electoral change must be first presented by way of a petition to hold a referendum. That petition must present a clear alternate choice to the current system. Furthermore the number of valid signatures on that petition must encompass the encompassing geographic reality of BC - in other words a miniature version of a super majority.

Recommendation 2)

Upon receipt of a valid petition a referendum must be held with a super majority being the sufficient condition for electoral change. Furthermore, the turnout for such a referendum along eligible voters must pass a minimum threshold.

This is a personal submission hence the very brief overview of what is a very large and complex topic encompassing psychological, economic and political science disciplines. Biographic references are available upon request.



BC Electoral Framework Association

Structuring the 2018 Electoral Reform Ballot

Authored by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

It is my conclusion that the purpose of the right to vote enshrined in s. 3 of the Charter is not equality of voting power per se, but the right to "effective representation". Ours is a representative democracy. Each citizen is entitled to be represented in government. Representation comprehends the idea of having a voice in the deliberations of government as well as the idea of the right to bring one's grievances and concerns to the attention of one's government representative; as noted in *Dixon v. B.C. (A.G.)*, [1989] 4 W.W.R. 393, at p. 413, elected representatives function in two roles -- legislative and what has been termed the "ombudsman role".

McLachlin J in *Reference re Prov. Electoral Boundaries (Sask.)*

The BC Government has committed to holding a referendum to re-evaluate British Columbia's electoral system in the fall of 2018 with a key focus on proportional representation. This discussion paper presents 3 alternative voting systems that increase proportional representation, as well as suggesting some supplementary changes to how the vote should be conducted. The goal of any referendum or voting change should recognize that effective representation is essential, as well as constitutionally mandated under the Charter. As such, any alternative voting system presented to the public must ensure that at its heart is the idea that effective representation must be maintained. Values such as relative voter parity are legally mandatory, while providing creating a clear link between representatives and citizens is also necessary to allow representatives to be an ear to grievances.

However, while courts have set broad values that must be reflected in a democratic system, the courts have also recognized that legislation will be required to balance potentially competing values. Voter parity and proportionality must be tempered to protect unique geographical distinctiveness of the province. A desire for broad representation by political parties will require tradeoffs on how many local representatives can be elected. This referendum is an extraordinary opportunity for the government to put to British Columbians multiple systems engaging various views. Its success will be best reflected in ensuring that a broad variety of values will be presented to voters, yet also ensuring that voters can express a clear preference as to which changes they wish to see.

Where possible, suggested maps of possible electoral systems should be put forward.

1. THE BALLOT QUESTION

To provide a clear answer, a three part question would present the ideal way to gain clear consensus from the BC electorate. The third part is optional, but recommended.

The ballot should look at both how we "vote" and how we "elect" politicians.

The first question should be a clear question about whether a proportional system should be adopted. Separation of this as a standalone question would allow voters who opine that effective representation is best achieved at the most local level will be given the option to clearly express that, while still recognizing that other values may inform a provincial system if factors other than geography are included.

The second question would be a choice of between no more than 3 options, decided using a ranked ballot to allow a consensus choice. Any voter, regardless of whether they support proportional representation or not in general, would be in a position to determine which version best reflects their values. While voters should be given the opportunity to rank all three systems, single votes should be counted as a first choice, and ballot counting rules should aim to be as broad as possible reflecting other marks.

The third question would ask voters if they wish to move to a ranked ballot for local seats in the event that proportional representation does not pass. This would ensure that if voters believe strongly in representation by geography, they will still have the option to ensure that vote splitting does not result in distorted local results. This system, known as the alternative vote, has been tried in British Columbia previously, but was discontinued prior to establishing a track record that we can judge it by. While not traditionally considered proportional representation, this system does ensure local winners are supported by a proportional majority, rather than a plurality of local votes.

Proposed Ballot:

A. Should BC adopt a proportional voting system? (Choose 1)

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

B. Which proportional system would you prefer? (Rank 1 - 2 - 3):

- ☐ Alternative Vote Plus
- ☐ Mixed Member Proportional
- ☐ Single Transfer Vote Light

C. If BC does not adopt a proportional representation system, should BC adopt ranked ballots for local seats? (Choose 1)

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

2. THE PROPORTIONAL SYSTEMS

Alternative Vote with Top-up

This is a variation of a system proposed in England by the Jenkins Commission (1998) in that all of the current ridings would be maintained, but a small number of seats would be allocated to parties that receive a substantial province wide vote and also serve to even out discrepancies in seat counts between major parties. All local seats would be decided by a ranked vote, with the first preference votes serving as a benchmark as to whether additional seats would be required,

Proportional threshold: 10% Provincial or 20% Local threshold.

Increased government: 15-20% additional top-up seats. (87 Local; 16-20 seats.) Additional seats would be allocated prior to the election to even out urban areas that may have a higher population density than rural ridings.

The map for now would involve the current 87 seats. The province would be divided into 8 regions of 9-14 seats. Suggested regions are included at the back. Seats would be first determined based on party vote using first choices, and would use a near winner scenario to allocate seats to strong second place candidates. Depending on population, some districts will be given 2, others 3 extra seats. Following an election all local seats would first be determined. The next step would be to determine whether any party that failed to win a seat received either 20% locally, or 10% in any geographical region. To ensure broad voices, any party that met either of thresholds would be granted at least one seat, in the region where they received the broadest support and to the candidate with the most support in that area. Additional seats would then be granted to parties based on any difference between popular vote and seat counts one region at a time favouring those parties whose seat and vote count differ. Each region would receive at least 2 extra seats, with up to 4 more awarded once total votes for regions have been calculated to advance regional population parity.

This system substantially preserves local ridings and effective voices, while adding fresh voices and alternatives from regions that otherwise may be represented by a single party, making it less likely that entire regions would be shut out of government

Mixed Member Proportional

This system would be a variation of electoral systems found in Germany and other European countries. Under this system, approximately half of representatives will be from local ridings, with the rest representing broader geographical region. To simplify the seat distribution, BC would mirror Ontario and adopt the current federal ridings, cutting the local seats to 42. Each voter would have a local vote as well as a party vote.

Proportional threshold: 5% Provincial or 10% regional threshold.
The current seat level would be relatively maintained.

The map would adopt the 42 federal districts as local ridings and adopt 42 regional seats, with an additional 5 seats allocated to make the legislature an odd number. The regional seats would be divided into 5 regions reflecting the 5 distinct regions in this province (The Interior, Vancouver Island, Greater Vancouver, Fraser Delta, and Fraser Valley East) Any party with more than 10% in a region be guaranteed seats, as would a party that reached over 5% of the voters in a province. Each voter would have a local vote, and a second party vote. To qualify as a political party, a party would be required to run at least 3 local candidates in region. For instance, a party that only ran 3 candidates on Vancouver Island, would only be listed as a

party on the Vancouver Island ballot. This is to allow regional parties easier access to the ballot, but encouraging parties to run a large number of candidates in each riding, reducing the temptation for parties to not focus on local ridings.

Each party will submit a party list of candidates that would be made public in each region. However, in allocating seats, the highest 3 voters chosen candidates in a region would be given the priority over the party lists. An example would be Vancouver Island. There would be 7 local seats and 7 regional seats. A party that received 14% of the vote but no local seats on the Island would be given 2 regional seats, but these seats would be given to its 2 highest candidates. A party that received 35% of the vote and 3 local seats, would be given 2 regional seats from its list. The 5 additional provincial seats would be first allocated to any party that received over 5% of the provincial vote but no regional seats, but would subsequently used to further correct any other difference between popular vote and regional vote.

While this system creates two classes of MLAs, it ensures local and regional representation are each effective and smaller voices have a chance to be heard. Many provincial projects are regional projects and these concerns mirror many of these areas. Under this system, almost all regions would have representation from various political parties.

Single Transferable Vote Light

Voters previously rejected the boundary commissions larger 5-7 member STV ridings in the last election. Large district STV should not be an option on this ballot. However, a smaller more nimble system featuring districts with no more than 3 representatives would provide regional balance and opportunities for smaller parties running popular local candidates. These would deliver more, although a reduced level of proportionality. Smaller local regions would allow effective local representation, often mimicking the geography of larger towns, or smaller geographic areas with riding sizes similar to many federal ridings sizes.

STV Light would feature a small number of 2 seat ridings, and the remainder 3 seat districts based on amalgamating the current ridings. A suggested riding list is attached. While this system would not have any threshold or guarantee for a smaller party, parties with 25% support in a local level would allow multiple effective voices from each region. In reality, parties with as low as 15% may see themselves elected as a result of transfers from other candidates.

Because most regions would have 3 seats, it is likely that at least two parties, or an independent would be elected unless a party obtained over 75%. This would allow a relatively local MLA of different parties that local voters could turn to.

3. CONDUCT OF THE REFERENDUM

Smartphone Voting

Smartphone voting should be considered as a supplementary alternative to mail-in ballots in the referendum. Smartphones, like the iPhone or newer Android, are very unlikely to have malware or background capturing apps, and can be authenticated and confirmed by an SMS message. Outside sources will be prevented from unauthorized interference in the election. Norway and Estonia use this technology. Block chain, the technology behind bitcoin, can be used to securely and anonymously, transmit digital votes from a phone to a central server. On voting, an SMS reply would confirm voters that their votes counted.

Only one vote per smartphone would be allowed. However, Elections BC would be able to utilize iPads at kiosks to get more voters.

Smartphone voting should end about 10 days prior to the election. This would provides sufficient time to handle any problems that may arise.

Mailed in ballots would be matched against voting lists of those who voted online, and duplicates will be held for further investigation. Smartphone voting is more secure than a traditional mailing ballot, since ballots are less likely to be intercepted and the source of wrongfully cast ballots can be easier obtained.

Advertising and Campaign Funding

Information funding should be the priority in setting campaign funding. The government should ensure the digital divide does not leave any residents without full information. Rather than relying on third party groups to unevenly spend public funds, the province should send at least two flyers to each British Columbia. The first should be an informational book with neutral information. The second should include literature prepared by proponents of proportional system and the current first past the post, vetted by experts relying on available reference material to support claims. Limited public subsidies should be made available to assist with production.

In addition to the two main mail outs, Elections BC should maintain a similar site hosting informational videos as well as those by proponents of various systems.

Funds should also be available for booking community spaces that can be applied to by public groups wishing to host debates or discussions.

Other than centralized government funds, private individuals should be permitted to donate or spend on promoting or opposing the system. While the government has put in place lower donation limits for provincial elections, higher donation limits should be considered based on the small lead up to the election and provincial nature of the referendum. In addition, many of the justifications for lower donation limits that occur municipally and provincially, such as potential for influence buying do not exist in a referendum. As such, personal donation limits of \$10,000 should be considered. While corporate and union monetary donations should be curtailed, in-kind contributions of advocacy labour or services should be permitted so as to eliminate costly compliance issues.

4. APPENDIX: SUGGESTED VOTING REGIONS

Alternative Vote Plus

Parties with over 7% provincially or 15% in any region guaranteed at least one seat. 8 regions of between 9-13 seats would be used with limited 20% top-ups.

Burnaby (9)

Burnaby-Deer Lake

Burnaby-Edmonds

New Westminster

Burnaby-Lougheed

Coquitlam-Maillardville

Port Moody-Coquitlam

Coquitlam-Burke Mountain

Port Coquitlam

Burnaby North

North Interior (10)

Cariboo North

Cariboo-Chilcotin

North Coast

Skeena

Peace River North

Peace River South

Prince George-Mackenzie

Prince George-Valemount

Nechako Lakes

Stikine

Fraser Valley (10)

Abbotsford South

Abbotsford West

Abbotsford-Mission

Chilliwack

Chilliwack Kent

Fraser-Nicola

Langley East

Langley

Maple Ridge-Mission

Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows

Vancouver Island (14)

Nanaimo

Nanaimo-North Cowichan

Parksville-Qualicum

Courtenay-Comox

North Island

Mid Island-Pacific Rim

Saanich North and the Islands

Cowichan Valley

Saanich South

Oak Bay-Gordon Head

Victoria-Beacon Hill

Victoria-Swan Lake

Langford-Juan de Fuca

Esquimalt-Metchosin

Okanagan (13)

Kamloops-North Thompson

Kamloops-South Thompson

Shuswap

Kootenay West

Nelson-Creston

Boundary-Similkameen

Vernon-Monashee

Kelowna-Lake Country

Kelowna-Mission

Kelowna West

Penticton

Kootenay East

Columbia River-Revelstoke

Surrey Delta (11)

Delta North

Delta South

Surrey-Cloverdale

Surrey-Fleetwood

Surrey-Guildford

Surrey South

Surrey-Panorama

Surrey-White Rock

Surrey-Green Timbers

Surrey-Newton

Surrey-Whalley

Vancouver West (11)

North Vancouver-Lonsdale

North Vancouver-Seymour

West Vancouver-Capilano

Powell River-Sunshine Coast

West Vancouver-Sea to Sky

Vancouver-False Creek

Vancouver-West End

Vancouver-Point Grey

Vancouver-Quilchena

Vancouver-Fairview

South Vancouver Richmond (10)

Vancouver-Fraserview

Vancouver-Kensington

Vancouver-Mount Pleasant

Vancouver-Hastings

Vancouver-Kingsway

Vancouver-Langara

Richmond-Queensborough

Richmond North Centre

Richmond South Centre

Richmond-Steveston

Mixed member proportional - 42/42 with 5 top up seats.

Parties with over 5% provincially or 10% in any district would be given proportional representation, representing the 5 larger regions of British Columbia. Each voter would have a local and a party vote. Each party may run a public list of candidates, provided the top 3 members will be from local ridings. To qualify for a list in a region, a party will need to run at least 3 candidates in a district.

The list votes will be compensatory, and in addition to the local seats, an additional 5 seat will be awarded, one from each region if necessary.

Greater Vancouver

Burnaby North—Seymour

North Vancouver

Vancouver Centre

Vancouver East

Vancouver Granville

Vancouver Kingsway

Vancouver Quadra

Vancouver South

West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country

Fraser Delta

Burnaby South

Delta

Fleetwood—Port Kells

New Westminster—Burnaby

Richmond Centre

South Surrey—White Rock

Steveston—Richmond East

Surrey Centre

Surrey—Newton

Fraser Valley East

Abbotsford

Chilliwack—Hope

Cloverdale—Langley City

Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam

Langley—Aldergrove

Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon

Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge

Port Moody—Coquitlam

Island

Courtenay—Alberni

Cowichan—Malahat—Langford

Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke

Nanaimo—Ladysmith

North Island—Powell River

Saanich—Gulf Islands

Victoria

Interior

Cariboo—Prince George

Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola

Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo

Kelowna—Lake Country

Kootenay—Columbia

North Okanagan—Shuswap

Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies

Skeena—Bulkley Valley

South Okanagan—West Kootenay

STV Light

STV light carries on the proud tradition of the Citizen's Assembly, while recognizing that voters rejected the larger boundaries put forward in the last election. Current ridings would be merged into mainly 3 seat districts, with a limited number of 2 seat where geography is limited or ridings stretched.

North shore

North Vancouver-Lonsdale

North Vancouver-Seymour

West Vancouver-Capilano

Sunshine Coast Whistler

Powell River-Sunshine Coast

West Vancouver-Sea to Sky

Vancouver East

Vancouver-Fraserview

Vancouver-Kensington

Vancouver-Mount Pleasant

Vancouver Center

Vancouver-Fairview

Vancouver-False Creek

Vancouver-West End

Hasting

Burnaby North

Vancouver-Hastings

Vancouver-Kingsway

Vancouver West

Vancouver-Langara

Vancouver-Point Grey

Vancouver-Quilchena

Delta Queensborough

Delta North

Delta South

Richmond-Queensborough

Richmond

Richmond North Centre

Richmond South Centre

Richmond-Steveston

Surrey East

Surrey-Cloverdale

Surrey-Fleetwood

Surrey-Guildford

Surrey South

Surrey South

Surrey-Panorama

Surrey-White Rock

Surrey Central

Surrey-Green Timbers

Surrey-Newton

Surrey-Whalley

Kootenay West

Kootenay West

Nelson-Creston

Boundary

Boundary-Similkameen

Vernon-Monashee

Kelowna-Lake Country

Kelowna

Kelowna-Mission

Kelowna West

Penticton

Kootenany

Kootenay East

Columbia River-Revelstoke

Nanaimo Parksville

Nanaimo

Nanaimo-North Cowichan

Parksville-Qualicum

North Island

Courtenay-Comox

North Island

Mid Island-Pacific Rim

Saanich

Saanich North and the Islands

Cowichan Valley

Saanich South

Victoria

Oak Bay-Gordon Head

Victoria-Beacon Hill

Victoria-Swan Lake

South Island

Langford-Juan de Fuca

Esquimalt-Metchosin

Abbotsford

Abbotsford South

Abbotsford West

Abbotsford-Mission

Chilliwack Fraser

Chilliwack

Chilliwack Kent

Fraser-Nicola

Langley Maple Ridge

Langley East

Langley

Maple Ridge-Mission

Cariboo

Cariboo North

Cariboo-Chilcotin

North Coast

North Coast

Skeena

Peace River

Peace River North

Peace River South

Prince George

Prince George-Mackenzie

Prince George-Valemount

Stikine

Nechako Lakes

Stikine

Kamloops Shuswap

Kamloops-North Thompson

Kamloops-South Thompson

Shuswap

Burnaby New Westminster

Burnaby-Deer Lake

Burnaby-Edmonds

New Westminster

Lougheed

Burnaby-Lougheed

Coquitlam-Maillardville

Port Moody-Coquitlam

Tri-cities

Coquitlam-Burke Mountain

Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows

Port Coquitlam

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2017 8:00 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Submission on the 2018 referendum - Catalog of PR Systems
Attachments: Catalog-PR-Systems-BC_2017-10-04.pdf

Dear Citizen Engagement team,

Please find attached my written submission concerning the fall 2018 referendum.

My main priority is to help MLAs choose one or more *technically sound* proportional voting systems for the referendum, regardless of whether these systems are forms of STV, MMP, or DMP (from the 2016 Prince Edward Island plebiscite). The eight concrete options in my submission have been carefully designed to avoid tactical voting incentives such as those that affect elections in Wales and Scotland. Any of the eight models in the submission will function well in BC.

Kindly let me know if I can provide any further information.

Best regards,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A Catalog of Proportional Systems for BC

Introduction

In choosing one or more proportional voting systems to appear opposite First Past the Post (FPTP) on the upcoming BC referendum on electoral reform, one must sooner or later consider concrete options. This document enumerates eight possible systems and provides a one-page description of each.

The eight selected systems are listed in the table below. Five are forms of Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) that would result in a two-tier legislature consisting of district MLAs and regional MLAs (Systems 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7); the other three maintain a single tier of local MLAs but associate them with multi-member districts. Six of the models use a single-vote ballot (Systems 1 to 6), one introduces a 2nd vote (System 7), and one employs a ranked ballot (System 8). Four of the options entail competition among candidates of the same party (Systems 5 to 8).

System	Name	Regions	Tiers	Ballot	Intra-Party Competition
1	Closed-List MMP <i>with FPTP ballot</i>	4 to 8	2	1-vote	no
2	List-Free MMP <i>with FPTP ballot</i>	4 to 8	2	1-vote	no
3	List-Free MMP <i>with secondary candidates</i>	4 to 8	2	1-vote	no
4	Dual Member Proportional	1 to 5	1	1-vote	no
5	List-Free MMP <i>with rankable candidates</i>	4 to 8	2	1-vote	yes
6	Dual Member Proportional <i>with rankable candidates</i>	1 to 5	1	1-vote	yes
7	Open-List MMP <i>with Bavarian metrics</i>	7 to 8	2	2-vote	yes
8	Single Transferable Vote	16 to 22	1	ranked	yes

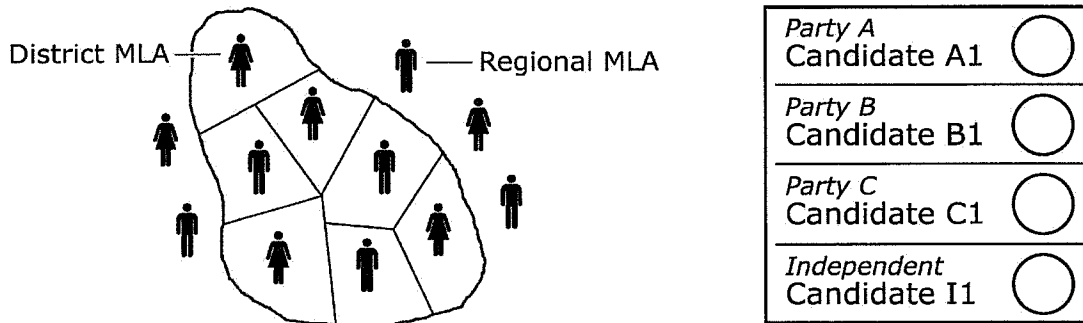
By submitting eight options for consideration, one of my objectives is to steer decision-makers away from inadvertently introducing ticket-splitting tactics into provincial elections. These tactics emerge under certain two-vote MMP models which exclude district votes from the calculations that allocate compensatory seats to parties. Under such systems, many British Columbians would have to endure appeals to give their district votes to a large party and their regional votes to a small party. These appeals would be based on the expectation that the small party could not win at the district level, whereas the large party may win so many district seats that it receives no regional seats. The eight selected systems minimize or avoid tactical considerations of this nature while collectively offering a diverse set of possibilities for voting and representation.

The system descriptions are followed by a discussion, a glossary, and recommended reading.

System 1: Closed-List MMP with FPTP ballot

Overview

In this simplest of MMP models, the province is divided into 4 to 8 regions, each with a fixed number of seats. Between 50% and 70% of each region's MLAs represent a single-member district within the region, whereas the other MLAs represent the region as a whole. Regional seats are filled by candidates from underrepresented parties according to regional lists prepared by parties prior to the election. The ballot remains the same as in FPTP. Voters mark one option.



Details

In each district, the candidate with the most votes (the plurality winner) is elected as an MLA representing that district. Regional seats are then allocated to parties in a compensatory manner, meaning that a party's overall share of the seats in the region (district seats plus regional seats) ends up as close as possible to its share of the regional popular vote. Each party's regional seats are assigned to the candidates nearest the top of its party list who have not been elected at the district level. Every district candidate must be given a place on their party's regional list, and must be ranked higher than any list-only candidate. This rule promotes equality between the two types of MLAs, and avoids strategic decisions as to whether the most prominent candidates should be nominated in districts or on the list. This system was outlined as an option for Québec by Louis Massicotte (*In Search of a Compensatory Mixed Electoral System for Québec, 2004*).

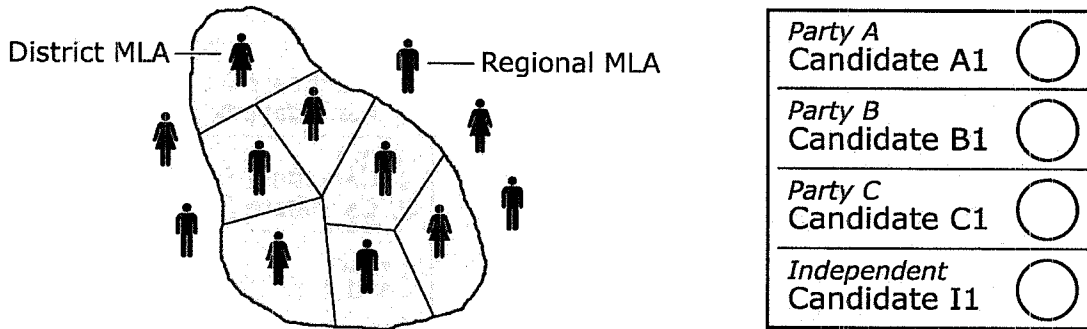
Opinion

I hesitate to recommend this system for the BC referendum, as the use of closed party lists will be vigorously criticized. Nevertheless, if closed regional lists are to be introduced, this single-vote system is best. The more widely employed two-vote closed-list MMP models produce the same tactical incentives for district votes as FPTP, while in many cases introducing additional incentives to restrict regional votes to parties expected to win few if any district seats. By retaining the FPTP ballot, this MMP model avoids sophisticated tactics while dramatically easing the implementation and use of the new system. I argue that one vote gives electors more power than two in this case, since it allows any party to be effectively promoted in either the district or the regional tier. Applying the model separately in each of 4 to 8 regions, instead of province-wide, makes party lists easier to scrutinize and ensures a more geographically balanced legislature.

System 2: List-Free MMP with FPTP ballot

Overview

This model is similar to System 1, except that it avoids party lists. Each party's regional seats are filled by their top-performing not-yet elected district candidates. As in System 1, there would be 4 to 8 regions represented by district MLAs and regional MLAs. The ballot remains the same as in FPTP.



Details

This variant of MMP can be understood by imagining a regional list consisting of all of a party's district candidates. The candidates on this imaginary "list" are ranked after the election strictly according to the percentage of votes they receive in their districts. Thus the best "near-winners" in each underrepresented party are elected as regional MLAs. A very similar system is used in the German state of Baden-Württemberg (see Massicotte 2004), except that in Baden-Württemberg the near-winners are ranked according to the total number of votes they receive instead of the percentage. Using vote shares (percentages) avoids favouring candidates in more heavily populated districts. A good resource for this system is a YouTube video titled [Near Winner Proportional](#).

One rarely discussed necessity is that parties must have the option of nominating an extra candidate in each district. The names of these reserve candidates are made public, and it could be required that they appear on the ballot. In the unlikely event a party wins more seats than the total number of districts in a region, reserve candidates are elected from the districts where the party had its strongest performances. This prevents the party from running out of candidates to fill the seats it is awarded.

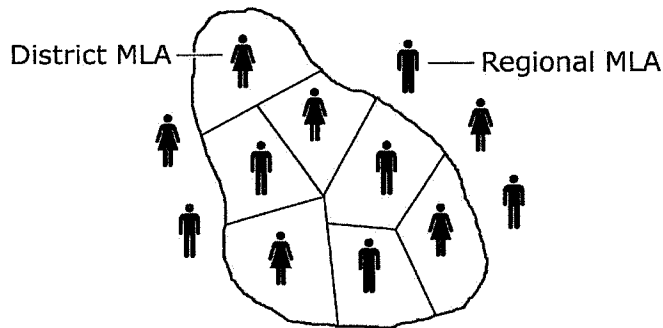
Opinion

This is a practical option for BC, requiring essentially no change in the exercise of voting, the task of vote counting, or the manner in which candidates are nominated. As with any MMP model, every voter ends up with one district representative (party-affiliated or independent), plus a number of party-affiliated regional representatives. Unfortunately, the regional MLAs will have a strong incentive to prioritize the district they expect to contest in the subsequent election. Moreover, districts featuring close races will tend to produce a greater number of regional MLAs than districts exhibiting overwhelming support for a single party. To some extent, all reasonable MMP models risk introducing a degree of geographic imbalance and a hint of ambiguity as to whether MLAs should be loyal to their districts or the region. These risks may be slightly accentuated with List-Free MMP.

System 3: List-Free MMP *with secondary candidates*

Overview

In this variant of List-Free MMP, the reserve candidates of System 2 are replaced by secondary candidates who will have a better chance of being elected. If a party chooses to nominate a secondary candidate in a district, that candidate appears on the ballot below the primary candidate. As in FPTP, voters still mark one option, but a single vote may support two candidates instead of one.



<i>Party A</i>	
1. Candidate A1	<input type="radio"/>
2. Candidate A2	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Party B</i>	
1. Candidate B1	<input type="radio"/>
2. Candidate B2	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Party C</i>	
Candidate C1	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Independent</i>	
Candidate I1	<input type="radio"/>

Details

With votes for two-person teams initially assigned to the primary candidates, all district seats are awarded to the plurality winners. If the winner of a district seat is a primary candidate, the secondary candidate is assigned 50% of the team's vote share and remains in the running. All other secondary candidates in the district are eliminated. The regional MLAs are then elected in the same manner as List-Free MMP (System 2), except that a party's regional seats are awarded to the candidates with the highest vote share regardless of whether they are primary or secondary candidates. It is possible for a regional seat to be assigned to a secondary candidate ahead of a primary candidate of the same party, provided the two competed in different districts.

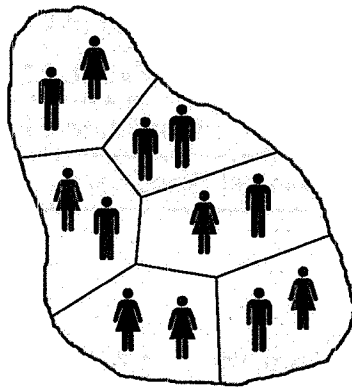
Opinion

This model improves over System 2 in a number of ways. First, districts exhibiting overwhelming support for a single party are somewhat less disadvantaged in the awarding of regional seats. Second, parties have the option of exhibiting diversity in their local nominations. For example, a party can nominate one man and one woman in every district if it so chooses. Third, the improved opportunity to elect both candidates gives local teams an incentive to compete for every vote, even if they have a commanding lead in the polls.

System 4: Dual Member Proportional

Overview

Dual Member Proportional (DMP) is a proportional system with 100% local candidates competing in two-member districts. The 1st MLA elected in every district is the candidate with the most votes, similar to FPTP. The 2nd MLA is determined such that the overall seat distribution closely matches the popular vote. Similar to List-Free MMP, DMP favours near-winners in awarding compensatory seats. The difference is that DMP elects exactly two MLAs in every district. The ballot is the same as in System 3, with a single vote supporting a primary candidate, and potentially a secondary candidate.



<i>Party A</i>	
1. Candidate A1	<input type="radio"/>
2. Candidate A2	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Party B</i>	
1. Candidate B1	<input type="radio"/>
2. Candidate B2	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Party C</i>	
Candidate C1	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Independent</i>	
Candidate I1	<input type="radio"/>

Details

With votes for two-person teams initially assigned to the primary candidates, the 1st seat in each district is awarded to the plurality winner. If the winner is a primary candidate, 50% of their team's vote share is transferred to the secondary candidate. All other secondary candidates are eliminated. Next, any independent who finishes 2nd is awarded their district's 2nd seat. Then the remaining seats are allocated to the parties in a compensatory manner. Finally, parties are awarded their allocated seats in the districts where their not-yet elected candidates (a) obtained the highest percentages of the local vote, and (b) are not surpassed by opponents in the same district who are themselves being awarded seats in this stage of the process. The end result is that two local candidates—in some cases from the same party—are elected to represent each district. DMP is described at dmpforcanada.com and in the full report available on the [How it Works](#) page of that site. It was one of five options on Prince Edward Island's 2016 plebiscite on democratic renewal.

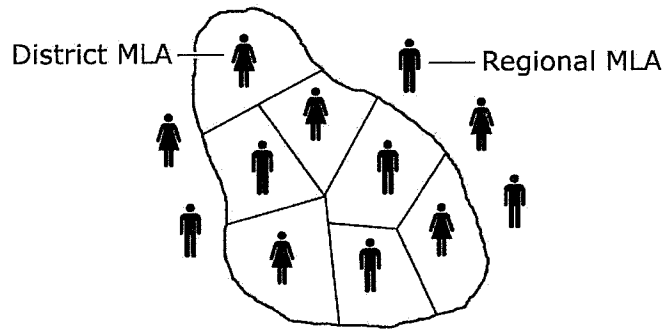
Opinion

DMP respects tradition by maintaining a simple ballot and keeping all MLAs local in the smallest possible multi-member districts. On the other hand, district-winning candidates are accompanied not necessarily by 2nd-place finishers, but sometimes by 3rd- or 4th-place finishers. It may be challenging to explain how it is that such outcomes are fair and in voters' best interests, but they are the means by which a truly proportional result is achieved. DMP should be applied in 1 to 5 large regions of no fewer than 14 MLAs. Using a single province-wide region would give equal weight to all votes, making it justifiable to add up to 13 seats in rural areas. This would limit the expansion of BC's largest districts.

System 5: List-Free MMP with rankable candidates

Overview

This model is essentially the same as System 3, but a district's voters decide which of a party's two nominees should be treated as the primary candidate. A voter still marks one 'X' on the ballot, but they may have to indicate a preference between two candidates of their chosen party.



Party A	Candidate A1	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate A2	<input type="radio"/>
Party B	Candidate B1	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate B2	<input type="radio"/>
Party C	Candidate C1	<input type="radio"/>
Independent	Candidate I1	<input type="radio"/>

Details

The first step in the calculations is to determine, for every team of two, which of the two candidates received more votes. This individual is treated as the primary candidate, and the other as the secondary candidate. The votes for both candidates are then combined, and the calculations proceed according to System 3.

Opinion

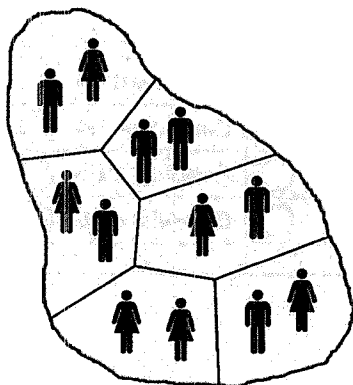
This model produces the same form of representation as System 3 while giving voters more control over the individuals elected to the legislature. One must acknowledge that the experience of voting would change substantially under this model. Some voters may dislike having to choose between candidates of the same party. Some voters may be concerned about vote-splitting between a party's candidates, even though the formula does avoid this problem.

An interesting aspect of this model is that the degree to which it introduces intra-party competition may be largely determined by voter demand. Most parties can choose to nominate only one candidate in the vast majority of districts, and face little risk of running out of individuals eligible for regional seats. By choosing to nominate lone candidates, a party would minimize the number of instances in which its candidates must compete against one another. Nevertheless, a party that runs two local candidates may be perceived as more democratic or more loyal to the district. If British Columbians decide with their votes that parties should let them choose between two nominees, then intra-party competition would become a prominent part of BC elections. Otherwise, most ballots would resemble FPTP ballots with one candidate per party.

System 6: Dual Member Proportional *with rankable candidates*

Overview

This model is essentially the same as System 4, except that, in the event a party that has nominated two candidates wins only one of the two district seats, it is the district voters who decide which of that party's two local candidates should be elected. The ballot is the same as in System 5.



Party A	Candidate A1	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate A2	<input type="radio"/>
Party B	Candidate B1	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate B2	<input type="radio"/>
Party C	Candidate C1	<input type="radio"/>
Independent	Candidate I1	<input type="radio"/>

Details

The first step in the calculations is to determine, for every team of two candidates, which of the two candidates received more votes. This individual is treated as the primary candidate, and the other as the secondary candidate. The votes for both candidates are then combined, and the calculations proceed according to System 4.

Opinion

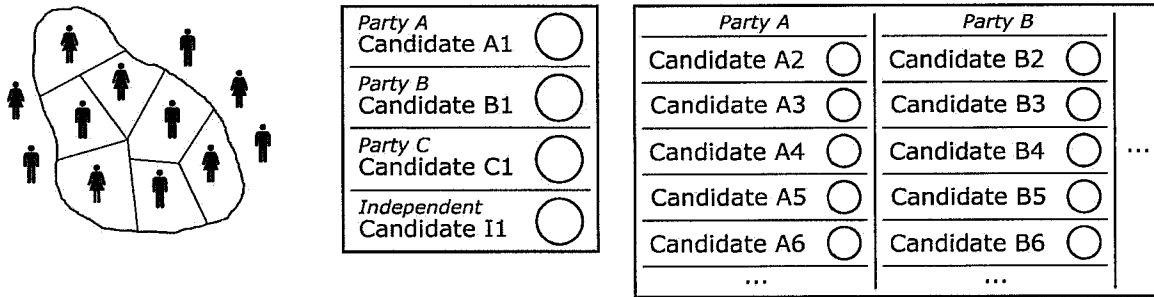
In the same way that System 5 introduces intra-party competition into List-Free MMP, this model introduces intra-party competition into DMP. However, the implications of rankable candidates are slightly different for DMP and List-Free MMP. In DMP, parties are strongly compelled to nominate two candidates. If a party nominates only one candidate in a district that it ends up winning, the party risks forfeiting a seat due to the absence of a not-yet elected candidate in that district. This risk of forfeiting a seat will compel parties to nominate two candidates in a greater number of districts, increasing the likelihood that intra-party competition becomes prominent in BC elections.

Part of the appeal of DMP (System 4) is its simple ballot with no more than one option for every party. I do worry about the voter confusion that may arise if DMP is introduced with the ability to choose between a party's candidates. My intuition is that it would be easier to adopt System 4 first, then transition to this variant at a future date if voters demand the ability to rank local candidates from the same party.

System 7: Open-List MMP *with Bavarian metrics*

Overview

Open-List MMP allows voters to directly choose a regional candidate. In this variant of Open-List MMP, the party popularity and candidate popularity metrics are borrowed from the system used in Bavaria. Voters select one option on each of two ballots. The district ballot is the same as in FPTP and Systems 1 and 2. On the regional ballot, the voter supports one candidate on one party's list.



Details

The district seats go to the local candidates with the most district votes (the plurality winners). The regional seats are first allocated to parties in a compensatory manner, then assigned to their most popular not-yet elected candidates. As in Bavaria, the popular vote used to allocate seats is calculated by adding each party's district and regional votes together. Including district votes in the calculation ensures that both types of votes are of value to large and small parties alike, dramatically reducing the risk of introducing ticket-splitting tactics. To determine who obtains their parties' regional seats, not-yet elected candidates are ranked according to the total number of votes—district votes plus regional votes—that they receive. A district candidate's name appears in the list section of all ballots in the region except those of their own district (since candidates' names already appear in the district section of home-district ballots). List-only candidates are permitted, as otherwise some parties may run out of candidates in certain regions. BC would be divided into 7 or 8 regions, keeping the lists short and alleviating the need for thresholds. Details can be found in the [January 8, 2016 post](#) of Wilfred Day's Blog, which describes the Bavarian model and proposes modifications suitable for elections in Canada.

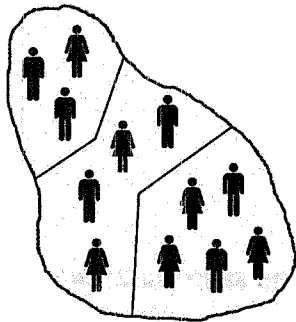
Opinion

Along with STV (System 8), Open-List MMP is a favourite among proportional representation advocates. However, the variant most often discussed excludes district votes from the calculation that allocates seats to parties. To discourage ticket-splitting tactics, it is important to learn from Bavaria's example and use both ballots to measure party popularity. Some voters may find it onerous to familiarize themselves with regional candidates, so it would be important to communicate that the purpose of the regional ballot is to avoid closed party lists. Open-List MMP would incentivize intra-party competition, particularly among candidates whose best chances of being elected lie at the regional level.

System 8: Single Transferable Vote

Overview

The Single Transferable Vote (STV) is the system recommended by the BC Citizens' Assembly and voted on in 2005 and 2009. Candidates compete within multi-member districts of 2 to 7 seats. Parties may nominate multiple candidates in a district. Voters would ideally rank as many candidates as desired, though if necessary a limit of 10 or so preferences could be imposed.



		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Party A	Candidate A1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate A2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate A3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Party B	Candidate B1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Candidate B2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Party C	Candidate C1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Independent	Candidate I1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Independent	Candidate I2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Details

STV is a flexible and well-tested system with many educational resources. First, a quota (a certain number of votes) is calculated based on the total number of valid ballots in a district and the number of district seats. If a candidate reaches the quota, they are elected and their "excess votes" (votes in excess of the quota) are transferred to their voters' next preferences. If no candidate reaches the quota, the least popular candidate is eliminated and their votes are transferred to their voters' next preferences. The process repeats until the district's seats are all filled.

Opinion

Despite its sophisticated formula and poor performance in the 2009 referendum, the endorsement of the Citizens' Assembly still lends credibility to this option. It is also helpful that there are a number of online videos which effectively explain the calculations. In BC, I suspect the multi-member districts of STV would be easier to design than the larger regions required by Open-List MMP (System 7). Although I regard the single-vote models (Systems 1 through 6) as offering a higher degree of voter equality, STV provides more voters with a local MLA they directly supported as one of their preferences.

Discussion

Different values and priorities lead to different rankings of the eight presented models. I personally favour systems that prioritize voter equality, maintain simplicity in the tasks of voting and ballot counting, and are likely to achieve widespread acceptance. This leads me to the following ranking of the systems, from most favourable to least:

- System 4: Dual Member Proportional
- System 3: List-Free MMP *with secondary candidates*
- System 8: Single Transferable Vote
- System 7: Open-List MMP *with Bavarian metrics*
- System 5: List-Free MMP *with rankable candidates*
- System 6: Dual Member Proportional *with rankable candidates*
- System 2: List-Free MMP *with FPTP ballot*
- System 1: Closed-List MMP *with FPTP ballot*

As indicated, I most strongly recommend Systems 4 and 3. Both models have the same ballot, where electors cast a single vote that may support a team of two pre-ranked party-affiliated candidates. I regard System 4 (DMP) as the model that creates the most desirable incentives for parties and politicians, and therefore serves voters best. Moreover, the option of ensuring equal vote weight with a province-sized region, and adding up to 13 MLAs in rural areas only, strikes me as a highly principled reform that is only practical with a model similar to DMP. That said, I suspect System 3 (List-Free MMP) to be perceived as less controversial, since the MLAs dedicated to districts are always district winners and never 3rd- or 4th-place finishers. Certainly DMP is the more ambitious option.

After the two models with pre-ranked local candidates, I prefer the two options with multiple votes. STV (System 8) is a well-established model that does, as the Citizens' Assembly concluded, seem well-suited to BC. Open-List MMP (System 7), in my understanding, is used nowhere other than Bavaria. If adopted, it is important to adhere to the Bavarian seat allocation and candidate ranking conventions. I strongly discourage modifications that would exclude district votes from the popular vote calculation, or allow a voter to support the same candidate on both the district and regional ballot.

Of the systems on the bottom half of my list, I feel the two models featuring a pair of rankable party-affiliated candidates deserve consideration. System 5 (List-Free MMP with rankable candidates) in particular seems to provide voters with the opportunity to make MLAs more loyal to constituents by favouring parties that choose to offer competing candidates. I am less enthusiastic about System 6 (DMP with rankable candidates), which would impose intra-party competition on the major parties. If System 4 is adopted first, then System 6 could be evaluated later based on public demand.

Although Systems 2 and 1 have the advantage of retaining the current ballot, they are my least favourite among the eight models. If implemented with a FPTP ballot, List-Free MMP would favour the districts within each region where support is split relatively evenly among two or three parties. Also, the model requires reserve candidates who almost never get elected even if their party performs exceptionally well in their district. I rank System 1 last since the use of closed lists will be perceived by many as giving more power to the parties. Yet in comparison with the status quo, all eight systems would benefit electors by incentivizing competition for every person's vote in every district.

Glossary

District

A geographic area within which all voters are given the same ballot options (i.e. the same parties and the same candidates). Districts are also known as “constituencies” or “ridings”. Each district elects one district MLA under First Past The Post and Mixed Member Proportional; two district MLAs under Dual Member Proportional; and two or more district MLAs under the Single Transferable Vote.

Dual Member Proportional (DMP)

A proportional voting system featuring two-member districts.

First Past the Post (FPTP)

The non-proportional, plurality voting system currently used for all Canadian federal and provincial elections. Each district elects the candidate with the most votes.

Intra-Party Competition

A feature of certain concrete voting systems whereby voters can choose from among multiple candidates of the same party. This creates an incentive for competition within each party.

Mixed Compensatory Electoral System

A category of voting systems whereby a First Past the Post element is combined with a proportional element, and where the proportional element compensates for underrepresentation caused by the FPTP element. The category includes Dual Member Proportional and Mixed Member Proportional.

Mixed Member Proportional (MMP)

A proportional voting system featuring one MLA dedicated to each district, plus regional MLAs. Closed-List MMP, List-Free MMP, and Open-List MMP differ in the way regional MLAs are elected.

Proportional Voting System (Proportional Representation)

A system that distributes seats to parties or candidates in proportion to the number of votes received.

Region

A geographic area encompassing one or more districts. Proportional voting systems are generally designed to produce proportional outcomes within each region. Larger regions tend to achieve higher degrees of proportionality. Under the Single Transferable Vote, regions and districts are equivalent.

Single Transferable Vote (STV)

A form of proportional representation featuring multi-member districts and a ranked ballot.

Ticket-Splitting

In two-vote MMP, supporting a different party in each tier. This is sometimes done for tactical reasons.

Tier

A set of non-overlapping geographic areas, where each area has one or more dedicated MLAs. First Past the Post, Dual Member Proportional, and the Single Transferable Vote all feature a single tier of districts. Mixed Member Proportional features one tier of districts and a second tier of regions.

Recommended Reading

Louis Massicotte's 2004 report, *In Search of a Compensatory Mixed Electoral System for Québec*, provides an in-depth examination of mixed compensatory systems of which Systems 1 to 7 are concrete examples. The report specifically discusses Closed-List MMP with a single vote (System 1), which is endorsed; Baden-Württemberg's List-Free MMP (similar to System 2), which is criticized; and Bavaria's Open-List MMP (System 7), which is regarded as overly complex (for Québec in 2004). Regarding the critique of List-Free MMP, I submit that the assignment of compensatory seats based on vote share (Systems 2, 3, and 5) and the introduction of secondary or rankable candidates (Systems 3 and 5) might address the concern that certain districts can be predicted to regularly contribute more MLAs to the legislature than others.

Sean Graham's report, *Dual-Member Mixed Proportional: A New Electoral System for Canada*, is the definitive reference for DMP (System 4). It is available on the [How it Works](#) page of the DMP website (dmpforcanada.com). The website itself is also a useful resource on the system.

Wilfred Day's blog (wilfday.blogspot.ca) features two posts that are particularly relevant to BC. The [January 8, 2016 post](#) provides a description of Bavaria's Open-List MMP model (System 7) along with recommendations on how it might be adapted for Canadian elections. The [May 13, 2017 post](#) presents a simulation of Open-List MMP in BC, complete with ideas on how to divide the province into 7 or 8 regions. However I note that this 2017 post suggests that regional votes count as votes for the party. With regions as small as those proposed, it is of the utmost importance that both regional votes and district votes for party-affiliated candidates count as votes for the party (as in the 2016 post).

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2018 7:26 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Single Member District Proportional Representation (SMDPR)
Attachments: BC Submission 2.docx; ATT00001.htm

Dear Sir/Ms

The attached submission sets out a new Canadian PR system which, unique in the world, provides a very high level of proportionality without changing the ballot, constituency boundaries or the role of MPs. It also references the recent submission to BC Votes by Fair Vote Canada.

Given its simplicity, power, versatility, and constitutionality, it is recommended that SMDPR be included as a specific PR modification of FPTP in Election BC's educational brochure accompanying the referendum ballot.

Respectfully yours
[REDACTED]

Submission to How We Vote British Columbia

The Problem

All Canadian citizens are guaranteed a vote, both federally and provincially, under Section 3 of the Constitution.

The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled,

“ ... the purpose of the right to vote enshrined in [Section] 3 of the Charter is ... the right to "effective representation". Ours is a representative democracy. Each citizen is entitled to be represented in government. Representation comprehends the idea of having a voice in the deliberations of government...” — (Carter 1991)

An earlier ruling stated,

“... the notion of equality is inherent in the Canadian concept of voting rights.” — (Dixon v. B.C. (A.G.) 1989)

Under the current First Past the Post (FPTP), electoral system the plurality rule holds that the person with the most votes in a riding becomes the representative for the people of that riding, even sometimes with thirty percent or less of the votes.

Because of FPTP's plurality rule, votes for candidates who lose, or surplus for candidates who win, do not provide the voter with an equal voice in the deliberations of government.

Therefore, FPTP fails to comply with the Constitution.

Since Confederation, seventy percent of votes cast federally have failed to provide voice in the deliberations of government.¹ The same is generally true of provincial elections. This is not a small problem, or one that can be fudged and ignored. FPTP is spectacularly undemocratic.

An equal vote is not remotely possible if the plurality rule silences seventy percent of the votes in an average riding. In order to keep Canada's system of local representation for ridings, the plurality rule must be relaxed. In other words, sometimes the plurality must not be the final word on who wins a riding.

No voice should silence other voices in Parliament, otherwise responsible democratic government is denied to the people. The majority rule is appropriate for deciding whose voice rules in Parliament, not for whose voice is heard there.

The Alternative

PR electoral systems strive to provide equal representation through an equal and effective vote. Some succeed more so than others.

Toward that end, most PR systems change the ballot. Some call for more than one MP per riding. Some provide another type of MP, not elected locally. Many amalgamate existing ridings into bigger ridings—some into truly huge ridings.

All systems, other than FPTP, relax or replace the plurality rule.

The Solution

Single Member District Proportional Representation (SMDPR) retains the current ballot, ridings, and one local Member of Parliament (MP). Voting, political parties, and running elections are unchanged from what they are now.

In addition, SMDPR:

- Relaxes the plurality rule the minimum amount possible
- Allows appropriate structural representation of minorities, over and above PR's general improvement
- Prevents regionalization of political parties
- Promotes cohesion of political parties
- Increases accountability of MPs
- Increases the power of MPs within their own parties
- Has no artificial thresholds
- Eliminates concerns about parity, as well as riding shape or size, and
- Being minimal change, is highly adaptable

SMDPR is as proportional a system as is constitutionally possible in Canada. It is also simple to explain.

Each party's most popular candidates, as determined solely by local votes, are matched to fill a party's proportionally allotted seats. After resolving any clashes of more than one candidate matched to a riding—again, solely on the basis of local popularity—all matched candidates are declared elected. That's it!

The current vote count is used three times under SMDPR:

- Once to proportionally allot seats to parties
- Once to rank candidates on the basis of local popularity, matching each party's top candidates to the party's allotted seats, and
- Once to decide any clashes between candidates matched to the same riding

As results come in on election night, computers can apply SMDPR's rules almost instantaneously.

SMDPR is therefore a highly proportional system that respects everything familiar and sound about the current system—the ballot, ridings and nature of MPs—all while causing minimal possible disruption of the plurality rule.

And there need be no change in the voter's experience.

In weighing up the distastefulness of a plurality not always winning, it is important to remember:

- An effective vote is a preferred constitutional right
- The plurality rule is a bad habit—an accident of history that predates democracy by a thousand years
- No vote should silence another vote

Recommendation

Fair Vote Canada's submission to *How We Vote* states,

“For example, hybrid models such as Local PR or Flexible District PR are in some ways more complicated than some other models. What they do well, however – what they are designed to do – is to build bridges between the system we know now and where voters might like to go in the future. As systems, they are flexible enough that they could fairly readily be adapted and improved upon in the future.”

Given its simplicity, power, versatility, and constitutionality, it is recommended that SMDPR be included as a specific PR modification of FPTP in Election BC's educational brochure accompanying the referendum ballot.

Works Cited

Dixon v. B.C. (A.G.). 248 (Supreme Court of British Columbia, Apr 18, 1989).
Reference Re Prov. Electoral Boundries (Sask.). 22345 (Supreme Court of Canada, June 6, 1991).

¹ A more detailed description of SMDPR is available at reformvote@eastlink.ca

A “Mensa Brief” to the BC Committee on Electoral Reform

(The author of this brief is a member of Mensa Canada and the term “Mensa Brief” is used to distinguish this brief from other briefs which the committee may receive. This does not signify support by Mensa Canada.)

1. Purpose:

- 1.1 Using the existing means of collecting and counting votes in a BC Provincial General Election, determine the number of seats in the BC Legislative Assembly to which each political party is entitled, proportional to the total number of votes cast for each political party in the election.
- 1.2 Determine which candidate will represent each of the electoral districts.
- 1.3 Using a protocol similar to existing protocols, determine the person who has the support of the majority of Members of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly, to nominate that person to the Lieutenant Governor for appointment as Premier of British Columbia.

2. Voting:

- 2.1 To enhance the acceptance of this electoral reform by the general public, this brief proposes that there be no changes to the existing electoral districts or to the existing procedures for casting, collecting and counting ballots.
- 2.2 It is proposed that Elections BC tally the total number of votes received from all sources for each political party and that it calculate each party’s percentage of the total votes. This percentage will then be used to calculate the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly to which each political party is entitled.
- 2.3 On page 2 is an example of a “Mensa Brief” proposal applied to the 2017 Provincial General Election. The “Leading in Ridings” column shows the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly which were “won” by the different political parties, using the “First-Past-The-Post” (FPTP) electoral system. The “Seat Entitlement” column shows the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly to which each party would be entitled, using the “Proportional Representation” (PR) electoral system.

3. Allocating Seats to Electoral Districts:

- 3.1 The BC Liberal party “won” (got a plurality) in 7 electoral districts, and the NDP in 6 electoral districts, more than their entitlement for seats in the Legislative Assembly. It is recommended that a non-partisan organization, such as Elections BC, select the 7 and 6 electoral districts, in which the “winning” Liberal and NDP candidates, in turn, have the lowest percentage of the electoral district votes. These candidates will be replaced by candidates of the parties which have entitlement. An alternative would be to have the leaders of the parties select which candidates will be replaced and which will be declared as Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Example of the “Mensa Brief” proposal applied to the 2017 Provincial General Election in May

Political Affiliation	Valid Votes	Percent of Total	Leading in Ridings (FPTP)	Seat Entitlement (PR)	Required Adjustment
4BC	58	0.00%			
BC Action Party	205	0.01%			
BC Cascadia Party	248	0.01%			
BC Citizens First Party	90	0.00%			
BC Conservative Party	10,420	0.56%	0	1	+1
BC First	543	0.03%			
BC Green Party	332,387	16.84%	3	15	+12
BC Liberal Party	796,772	40.36%	43	36	-7
BC NDP	795,106	40.28%	41	35	-6
BC Refed	463	0.02%			
BC Social Credit Party	896	0.05%			
Christian Heritage Party of BC	3,398	0.17%			
Communist Party of BC	802	0.04%			
Land Air Water – The L.A.W.	580	0.03%			
Libertarian	7,838	0.40%			
Republican Party	318	0.02%			
The Vancouver Island Party	646	0.03%			
Your Political Party of BC (YPP)	1,137	0.06%			
Independent / No affiliation	22,107	1.12%			
Totals	1,985,536	100.00%	87	87	0

4. Advantages of the “Mensa Brief” Proposal:

- 4.1 No changes or additions are required to the existing electoral districts.
- 4.2 From the perspectives of the voters, no changes or additions are required to the existing ballot forms or to the existing procedures for marking, counting and reporting ballots cast.
- 4.3 This proposal provides literal proportional representation, in which the number of seats to which each political party is entitled is directly proportional to the total number of votes cast for that party by the voters of British Columbia.
- 4.4 A candidate who has received a plurality of votes in their electoral district, but who is not entitled to a seat in the Legislative Assembly, is replaced by another candidate in the same electoral district, maintaining representation by a person known in the community.
- 4.5 When the Premier is selected by a majority of the sitting MLAs, the Lieutenant Governor is provided with a clear indication of the person who commands the confidence of the majority of the elected Legislative Assembly, to assist in his appointment of the Premier.

Citizens for Popular Representation Kamloops BC

Proportional Representation Through Weighted Legislative Votes

Submission on the Electoral Reform Process

January 8, 2018

Summary:

While efforts to bring about proportional representation tend to focus on the electoral voting system, it may be that simple changes to the legislative voting system could more easily provide the fairness which reformers seek.

The current electoral voting system isn't perfect, but it does accurately and precisely measure the choices of citizens for their local representatives, and the parties to which they belong — in addition to providing representation for all regions of a vast province. The root of the problem lies in the legislative voting system, which fails to reflect accurately those electoral choices.

After going through the trouble of tallying and validating the electoral vote, we then proceed to deform the result by insisting on one unquestioned, unwavering and totally unnecessary premise: that one seat in the legislature must always and only count for one legislative vote.

It is in fact possible to achieve proportional representation under our current electoral system, but to do so legislative votes must be variable, permitting each party's share of the legislative vote to be matched to its share of the electoral vote. Legislative votes weighted to a party's share of the popular vote will deliver proportional representation without requiring any changes to the electoral system.

Popular Representation

Proportional Representation through Weighted Legislative Votes — BC Election 2017

Our parliamentary democracy incorporates two distinct voting systems: an electoral voting system which facilitates the selection of representatives by the citizenry at the ballot box, and a legislative voting system, where those representatives exercise their mandate. While efforts to bring about proportional representation tend to focus on the electoral voting system, it may be that simple changes to the legislative voting system could more easily provide the fairness which reformers seek.

The current electoral voting system isn't perfect, but it does accurately and precisely measure the choices of citizens for their local representatives, and the parties to which they belong — in addition to providing representation for all regions of a vast province. The root of the problem lies in the legislative voting system, which fails to reflect accurately those electoral choices.

After going through the trouble of tallying and validating the electoral vote, we then proceed to deform the result by insisting on one unquestioned, unwavering and totally unnecessary premise: that one seat in the legislature must always and only count for one legislative vote. **It is in fact possible to achieve proportional representation under our current electoral system, but to do so legislative votes must be variable, permitting each party's share of the legislative vote to be matched to its share of the electoral vote.**

In the last BC election, The Green Party, for example, received 16.8% of the electoral vote. Under a fair system, it would be entitled to 16.8% of the legislative votes. In the 87 seat BC Legislature, that would mean 14.7 votes. But as it now stands, the Green Party has only 3 votes, one vote for each of its elected members. How can we reconcile the Green Party's share of the electoral — or popular — vote to its actual seat count without changing our electoral system? This can be accomplished easily by weighting each party's seat total to its share of the popular vote.

What if each Green Party seat in the recently minted BC Legislature were worth 4.8 legislative votes instead of just one? With its 3 seats, the Green Party would hold 14.6 legislative votes out of 87, or 16.8% of the total — the same as its share of the popular vote.* **If we dispense with the premise that one legislative seat must always and only equal one legislative vote, then it becomes obvious that we can have direct, accurate and precise proportional representation within our current winner-take-all electoral system.** Refer to the chart below to see how, within our current system, each party's share of the electoral vote in the last BC election would directly translate to the same percentage of the legislative vote using a little simple math.**

Furthermore, under a weighted legislative vote system, a ballot cast for a party anywhere in the province during the provincial election would actually count in the legislature, regardless of which party won the riding where the vote was cast — provided that the party receiving the vote passed the threshold of electing at least one member in one riding somewhere in the province. **A system of weighted legislative votes would virtually eliminate the problem of wasted electoral votes.**

A simple administrative reform requiring each party's legislative vote share to be weighted to its share of the electoral vote would bring about proportional representation without any need to overhaul the way citizens vote at election time. This reform would produce fair election outcomes in the legislature while avoiding both the contentious debates around electoral reform and the need to have a new electoral system approved through referendum. Our current electoral voting system would remain essentially unchanged while the legislative voting system would correspond directly to the popular vote.

A system of weighted legislative votes would favour no single party, no special interest, no private agenda. It would consist of applying a simple correction mechanism once all the electoral ballots were counted to translate a party's share of the popular vote into its matching share of legislative votes. **To reflect accurately the election results in the legislature, the weight of any given MLA's vote would be variable while the vote of each citizen would be equal.**



2017 BC Election Results with Correction Mechanism for Popular Representation

Party	% Pop. vote	Seats	Vote weight per seat (correction factor**)	Legislative vote (out of 87 total*)	% Legislative votes
Green	16.84	3	4.88	14.65	16.84
NDP	40.28	41	.86	35.04	40.28
Liberal	40.36	43	.81	35.11	40.36

*Legislative Vote count for three parties does not equal 87 since the number of votes cast for parties which did not win seats is not represented. This can be addressed through other mechanisms which could be used to account for otherwise wasted votes in further stages of a weighted vote reform. Under the system proposed here, proportional representation only applies to parties that elect at least one member. The fact that numbers have been rounded for clarity accounts for any minor variances.

****Correction Factor for vote weight: $a \times b \div c$**
a — number of seats in legislature
b — party's percentage of popular (or electoral) vote
c — party seat total

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2018 4:17 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Quaestionairre very much framed to favor the Leftists...

Not impressed with how your "questionairre" has its questions very much framed to favor an outcome that would make the Left acheive more seats.

No way can your "questionairre" be considered as impartial and fair.

To you on the Left - it astounds me that you on the Left completly fail to understand that if you win, YOU will be amongst the first that your socialist colleagues will arrest and send off to the death camps.

This has been what has happened EVERY time socialism has been tried. Every time without exception.

The result of socialism is ALWAYS misery, suffering and the death of millions.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2018 4:25 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Questionnaire how we vote - picture on page
Attachments: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Change the picture please.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2018 8:16 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Electoral Reform Questionnaire

I made the assumption that a survey was an attempt to get information. If there is no answer possible that conveys my thoughts, what is the purpose of participating?

On Jan 31, 2018 1:51 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

Select 'Not applicable / Prefer not to answer.'

Best,

The Citizen Engagement Team

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 2:32 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: FW: Voting System Questionnaire

I will agree with one statement in your e-mail - there are no 100% effective safeguards against multiple or machine-generated responses.
However, you don't need to be 100% effective - just better than the 0% effective mechanism currently in place.

I have established that clearing the browser cache will allow multiple responses.

As far as "responses from outside the province" is concerned, I was able to complete the questionnaire using web proxies based in Toronto and Norway -it's possible the results were discarded when I came in from Norway but not specific messages was displayed and I was able to complete a full set of responses

The minor security provided by using SSL (https) creates nothing more than an illusion of privacy - it's not hard to write a script to handle the necessary key exchanges.

If the online "information" gathering process had significant implications (such as handling financial, medical or e-commerce data) there would be a high interest in subverting the process. Probably the best protection against biased data being submitted from "bots" in this case is that no one cares enough to write the script.

However, that does not excuse any attempt to use the data that is gathered by the online questionnaire as representing a random sample from the BC electorate.

Methods for improving the reliability of data submitted online have been common practice for many years. In a recent contest to award \$100,000 in playground funding to winning schools within BC, the BCAA set up a system that involved voters registering an account and using the login credentials for that account to vote. If you want to go a bit further, require an e-mail address at registration time and send a voting key to be used when submitting the questionnaire. Another technique (and I sure hope you are planning to do this) is matching the responses from individual ip addresses for similar content that may be an attempt to bias the responses. The following is a link to a web page that presents a useful perspective on the issues
<http://www.verstaresearch.com/blog/how-many-bots-took-your-survey/>

I'm sure someone will argue that requiring the respondents to register and provide an e-mail address infringes on their right to privacy. I would counter that with the comment that they are not forced to answer the questionnaire - they will get to vote anonymously in the Fall. Which is more important, having a handful of people complain that their right to privacy is being infringed or getting data that is representative and useful ?

[REDACTED]

On 2/6/2018 12:18 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

> Hi [REDACTED]
>
> The online questionnaire tool has a number of preventive measures to prevent repetitive surveys or identifying responses from outside of the province, as this was a challenge for the Federal Government when they ran their engagement on the topic. That said, there are no technical or other safeguards that are 100% effective. We have tried to find a balance between the accessibility of the survey to all British Columbians and preventing false completions.

> In addition, a representative online panel is being conducted to ensure that we have representation from all regions, gender and ages on this topic. We will use this data as well as the results of the questionnaire to ensure that we understand the views of British Columbians, not just people with subject matter expertise and or interest on the topic of electoral reform.

>

> Best,

>

> The Citizen Engagement Team

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: [REDACTED]

> Sent: Monday, February 5, 2018 4:01 PM

> To: [REDACTED]

> Cc: [REDACTED]

> Subject: RE: Voting System Questionnaire

>

> Thank you for your email. By copy I am sending to our Citizen Engagement team, who can provide further information about the security standards for this questionnaire.

>

> Please note that in addition to the online responses, government is also delivering the same questionnaire to a demographically balanced panel of British Columbians, which will serve as a check on the representativeness of the overall responses received.

>

> Regards,

>

>

>

>

>

>

>

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: [REDACTED]

> Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2018 7:43 PM

> To: [REDACTED]

> Subject: Voting System Questionnaire

>

> I have just completed the Questionnaire and, for the most part, was satisfied that the questions provided the options necessary for me to express my opinions relating to the current and proposed Electoral systems.

>

> As a Network Security Professional, I then explored the mechanisms in place to prevent multiple responses from a single individual and to ensure that there was no possibility of an automated system sending in hundreds or thousands of responses which would destroy the statistical value of any data gathered.

>

> To my surprise, the only "security" to prevent multiple responses appears to be a "cookie" registered in the browser being used. By clearing my "cookies" I was able to submit a second response to the questions. There are numerous ways to avoid this situation in online data gathering.

>

> Although there are many mechanisms available to validate that a human is interacting with a web site, none of these is used with your survey.

> Based on what I have seen, in a day or so I could write a script that could provide slightly different answers as many times as I wanted to run it. In short, I could completely bias the results.

>

> Consequently, there is no way that the data gathered will have any statistical significance. There is, of course, the possibility that the format of the ballot to be used in the Fall referendum has already been decided and that this "Questionnaire" is merely a method of making BC Residents feel that they have some "say" and that their opinions matter (how cynical am I ?).

>

> I will be keeping an eye on the media reports to see if any of the statistical "results" derived from the Questionnaire are cited.

>

>

>

>

>

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2018 11:03 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: How We Vote

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your question. Government has not made any decision at this time regarding whether any of the voting systems on the referendum ballot this Fall would require an increase in the number of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) or would result in greater costs to administer generally.

The reason for the current public engagement in advance of the referendum is to hear from B.C. voters about their values and preferences in regard to voting and representation in the Legislature. The online questionnaire provides voters with an opportunity to express their views on a range of questions, including whether the number of MLAs should increase or stay the same.

After the current public engagement ends on February 28th, the Attorney General will prepare a public report setting out his recommendations for the referendum, including which voting systems should be on the ballot. That report will go to the provincial cabinet for consideration and decision.

I encourage you to complete the questionnaire and submit your views to government on these questions.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2018 5:17 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: How We Vote

How many more representatives will this produce and how much more money are the tax payers going to have pay with all the options offered?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2018 10:08 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Not Fair!

You are probably going to have an under-represented number of responses from people my age (65+), because you are assuming an unreasonable knowledge of computers.

I had an IT background before I retired, and consider myself reasonably knowledgeable about the computers in our household, and I now understand what you are telling me. But, my guess is, that most would not.

So, I don't think that you've really thought this through well enough.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2018 9:16 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Not Fair!

Hi [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I have attached a hardcopy version of the survey you can fill it out and submit it either by scanning it and emailing it to citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca or mailing it to:

Attn: Citizen Engagement
Government Communications and Public Engagement
PO Box 9409 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9V1

Best,

The Citizen Engagement Team

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2018 7:14 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Not Fair!

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2018 1:31 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Not Fair!

Hi [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Citizen Engagement Team

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2018 12:57 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Not Fair!

[REDACTED] took the questionnaire, but when I tried to do the same, it said I had already done so.

I know you want to put something in place to stop people from doing more than one; but, my husband and I don't necessarily vote or think alike. AND, we do not have smart phones, which is what I think you are counting on to reduce duplication.

So, tell me how I can make my opinion heard please!!!

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 2, 2018 11:28 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Participatory Engagement

<https://www.fastcompany.com/1371803/want-improve-democracy-try-design-thinking>

[REDACTED]

On Thu, Feb 1, 2018 at 8:59 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:
Dear Electoral Reformers,

Thank you for the questionnaire you designed to "Help shape the referendum on How B.C. Votes." It's a great initiative.

When I telephoned the BC Attorney General's Office this afternoon to express some thoughts I had regarding the referendum process, I was advised to send them to this email address, as you are looking for input.

I wrote in the comment section in the questionnaire something like this:

Your government is in the process of initiating an "electoral system update" of our democracy. That's huge! It will be transformational. Therefore, the process must also be transformational so that we really 'get it.' Otherwise, the process will make us all feel yet once again like pawns and ping pong balls in a clatter of warring factions. It will feel the same way FPTP makes us feel, frustrated and powerless with politicians and those politically and financially invested in the outcome trying to convince and manipulate us to their advantage. And you will lose those people who don't want to play a part in the power struggle because it doesn't feel good, leaves a bad taste in our mouth and an ache in our heart. We all lose then!

Make the means/the process like the ends you hope to achieve, participatory and transformational, and not merely a rational/intellectual one, because the majority of the population are not intellectual!

Re-imagining a functional and fair voting system is far too important to be handled like a typical campaign! It will prove to be ineffectual to utilize the same old, same old political approach of promotion/marketing/politicking. Interviews,

articles, ads, media, social media, canvassing and telephone marketing, where rational explanations, arguments and debates fill the space and airwaves, and we then mimic them, taking stands and arguing in our personal and social conversations. You are striving to facilitate democracy's evolution.

Those are strategies and characteristics of the FPTP system, in which we fight to the death and "the winner takes all". Merely talking about what electoral reform will be like, will not give us a feel or an understanding of what it will be or feel like. I suggest that the process must be an interactive, "engaging," participatory, experiential process throughout, one that teaches us not only about electoral system options but also about what "participatory democracy" really feels and looks like by 'doing.' By participating and experiencing what the options are, possibly in an interactive, demonstration-like way, we will feel empowered, and that's what you want to link Electoral Reform to, "empowerment."

We're talking about participatory democracy, so provide us with an opportunity to actively participate in this critically important, game-changing decision-making process.

Engage us in a participatory democratic process. Workshop us. Create electoral system reform regional participatory conventions. Think outside the ballot box.

I was reminded of a project I coordinated, as Research Consultant for a Saskatchewan Council of Cultural Organizations in 1988 - 89. I organized eight, day-long regional workshops throughout the province, designed to ensure the inclusion of regional needs, concerns and perspectives in a province-wide study. In introducing the project, I explained: "This will be the beginning of a process whereby participants will also assist in the designing of questionnaires."

If I can be of further assistance or you have a role I can play in the process, please let me know. See attached.

[REDACTED]

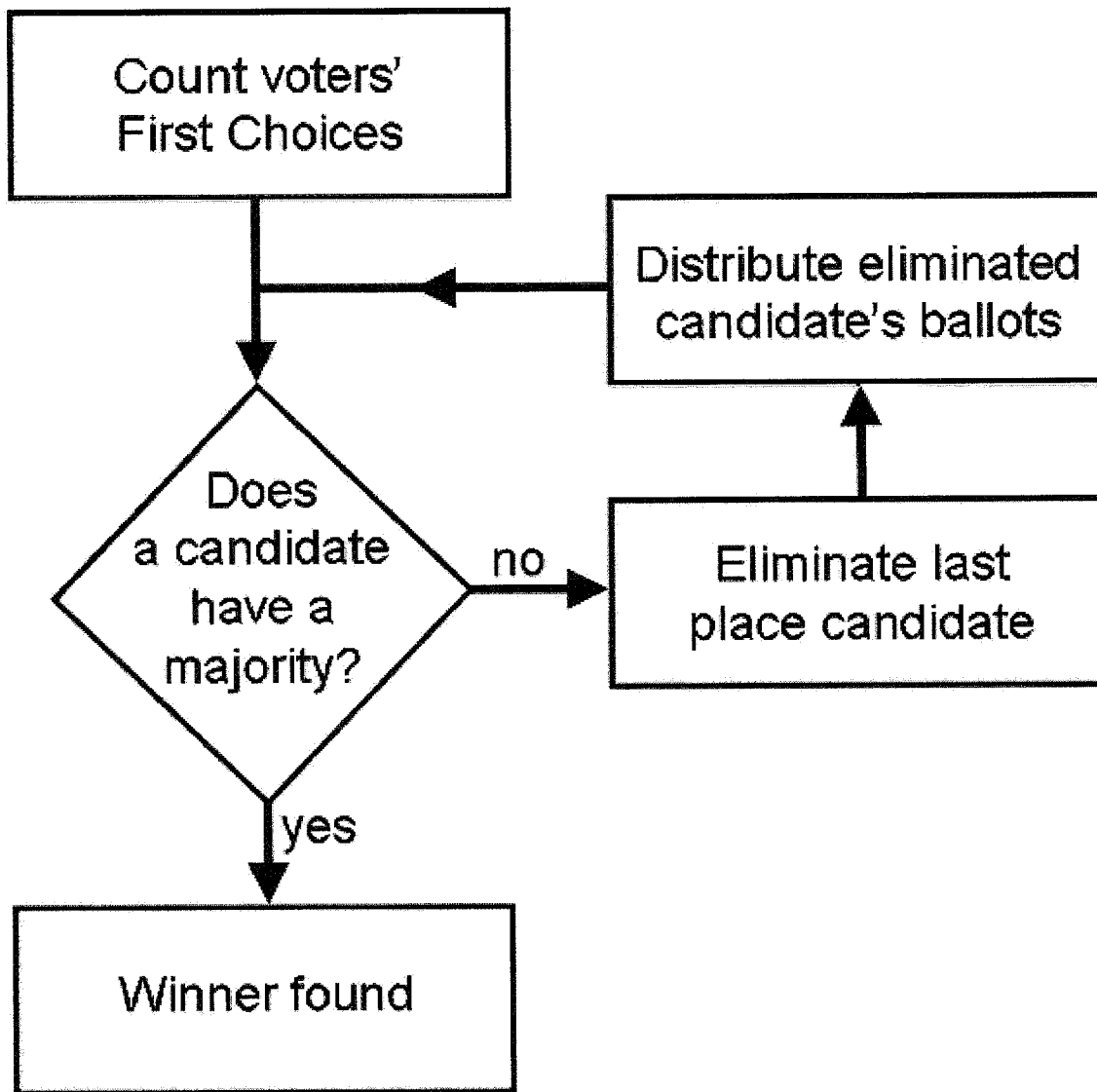
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 4:27 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Proportional Representation

This is great, wow did you write that?

On Wed, Jan 24, 2018 at 8:44 AM [REDACTED] wrote:
Good Day,

I would like to see ranked ballots in the form of instant-runoff voting for election of individual MLAs. I do not think that combining all votes from every voter and then assigning seats in the Legislature based on this is appropriate as it would unfairly bias the results towards the highest population density areas, and disadvantage voters from rural areas who have different needs. However, using a ranked ballot for each riding would ensure that voters could vote for the party that they desire, and not be pressured into strategic voting. This would uphold the fair values of using electoral districts, allow voters to choose their individual MLA, and ultimately foster increased diversity in government.

IRV counting flowchart



The current voting strategies listed on the BC Gov website seem complex, confusing, non-transparent and would require more than just a change to how we vote, they would also require significant changes to how we are represented in the Legislature.

List Proportional Representation (List PR)

Single Transferable Vote (STV)

Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP)

Mixed-Member Majoritarian (MMM) (also called Parallel)

Many of the options listed above seem to work only when there are multiple MLA's for an electoral district. This is a complete change from our current model. Further, MLA's should be responsible to their constituents. The models with party voting would eliminate this sense of personal responsibility by MLA's to best represent their riding, and appear to foster more 'Party Politics' rather than valuing the individual viewpoints of voters in specific ridings.

Even worse are any models where the MLA's are not elected, but chosen by the Party. I'm not entirely sure this could even be called democracy as they seem to go against basic democratic principles.

I sincerely hope that the BC Government will consider Instant-Runoff Voting. It is a valid, transparent, easy to understand method that will garner support from a majority of British Columbians.

Regards,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2018 5:10 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Stopped at Question 3

This is still a very leading question.

> On Feb 5, 2018, at 3:08 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

> Hi [REDACTED]

> Please select 'Not applicable / Prefer not to answer.'

> Best,

> The Citizen Engagement Team

> -----Original Message-----

> From: [REDACTED]
> Sent: Saturday, February 3, 2018 2:52 PM

> To: [REDACTED]
> Subject: Stopped at Question 3

> Hi, when filling out the questionnaire at Question 2, I stated that I voted all the time.

> At Question 3, which is mandatory, it asked why I didn't vote, which is not an appropriate question to ask someone who votes every time. As I could not choose one of the suggested answers, I could not complete the questionnaire.

> I feel that this questionnaire is slanted toward getting the "right answer" after the voters of BC rejected the last two referendums in 2005 and 2009.

> I will be expressing my frustration with this questionnaire to every news outlet available.

> Given the financial situation that the present day government states that the province finds itself in, I do believe that this is a complete waste of tax payer dollars.

> Sincerely

> [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 4:06 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Survey on Portional Representation - issues

Thank you for your prompt reply. I have no difficulty filling out the survey online but I will need to clear my "cookies" if my spouse wishes to participate. I wanted you to be aware of the issues related to the large number of people who would not have received the postal advertisement for the survey and the potential abuse of the online survey. Perhaps you should consider asking Canada Post what percentage of their customers do not receive "junk" mail in the areas the survey notice was sent. That percentage should be considered for the final report.

Regards.

[REDACTED]

On 7 February 2018 at 09:43, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello [REDACTED]

Thank you for taking the time to participate and help shape a referendum that will give the people of B.C. the power to decide how we vote.

To answer your questions [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

In addition, a representative online panel is being conducted to ensure that we have representation from all regions, gender and ages on this topic. We will use this data as well as the results of the questionnaire to ensure that we understand the views of British Columbians, not just people with subject matter expertise and or interest on the topic of electoral reform.

If you are not able to complete the survey online, we can mail or email you a copy of the questionnaire. You can fill it out and submit it either by scanning it and emailing it to citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca or mailing it to:

Attn: Citizen Engagement

Government Communications and Public Engagement

PO Box 9409 Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC V8W 9V1

For different people using the same computer, you can take the questionnaire again a number of ways. You can try one or more of the following:

- [REDACTED]
- We can email you a PDF of the questionnaire which you can print off, complete, scan and return by email; We can mail you a paper copy which you can complete and mail back to us.

Best,

The Citizen Engagement Team

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 7:01 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Survey on Portional Representation - issues

Hello,

I want to bring something to your attention which you may or may not be aware. I am not a "techie" but I was recently informed, during a meeting with a local group of retired folks trying to educate the public on the benefits Porportional Representation that the online survey has some disturbing issues:

1. The mail out flyer for the survey was not received by anyone with a Canada Post bulk mail box system and a sticker restricting "junk mail". I was one those people and we do not receive any unaddressed mail. Yesterday was the first time I saw the flyer.
2. The survey can be completed by one person more than once. All that is required is to delete the gov.bc.ca "cookie" from the computer. In addition some people have more than one computer and therefore can fill in the survey more than once.
3. On the other side of the "issues" some people do not have a computer or if they are blind their computers can not utilize the survey.
4. Where there is more than one adult household member but only one computer there is no option for the other household members to take the survey.

The disussion following included the strong assumption that anyone against the change in our voting sytem would have already discovered this flaw and be taking advantage of it. These issues must be considered when any report is completed based on these survey results.

Regards,



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2018 10:26 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: VOTING SYSTEM CHANGES

To Whom it may concern,

My name is [REDACTED] I am a voter.

I am submitting my input regarding the upcoming voting reform referendum campaign. I wish to make the following requests:

#1. I would like the Referendum to be designed to make sure that there are regulations in place to limit the influence of big money. I recommend a limit of \$1,000 per person or entity. This is done so that those with an abundance of money cannot have undue influence on people voting on the Referendum.

#2. So as not to confuse voters or glaze over the question, there should be a specific question requesting a public mandate to adopt proportional voting that is linked to a transparent public process to choose a specific proportional system

#3. The Referendum should not be scheduled too close to or overlap the fall municipal election campaigns. This Referendum is important and needs to be a stand alone event so the public can give it full attention.

Thank you for this opportunity to give my input. I reluctantly assume that your Government will deal with this matter in a fair and equitable way.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2018 3:41 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Referendum on Vote

I'm in favour of the existing voting procedure. Its worked for over 100 years. Don't spend any more time and money on the subject, put your efforts into governing for the prosperity of BC citizen if you hope for a second term.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2017 10:33 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Referendum Question

[REDACTED] Written Submission

I believe that the system that should be used in government today should be the First Past the Post system. First Past the Post should be used as if FPTP was being used we wouldn't have to worry about a clash of powers in government. If a system such as PR was being used there would be too many parties in power at once, and laws would take much longer to go through and be approved. FPTP also allows voters to choose between people rather than just parties. FPTP also is simple and easy to use and understand for voters.

