

Sunday, July 10, 2016

Dear Honorable Members of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform,

I would like to take this opportunity as a Canadian to share with you a few innovative and creative ideas on how we can take democracy forward into the twenty-first century with online voting, online polling, online MP to constituency feedback and online referendums when we need them.

In the old days of parliament, when an MP rode his horse into Ottawa to stand up in the house of commons to speak on behalf of his constituency, that MP knew he was "100%" representing those folks that voted him into office. Populations in Canadian towns were tiny back then and when an MP held a local meeting, the entire town could show up to have a listen and a say. After shaking every voter's hand at the end of the town meeting, that MP knew exactly what his constituents wanted and could truly represent their best interests in Ottawa.

Today, that tiny town has now become a city and that city's population is so large that it's impossible for our Members of Parliament to effectively engage, inspire and interact with all those folks. So it's now time "2016" for the members of the special committee on electoral reform to RETHINK how we can take parliament into the future by reconnecting Canadians digitally to democracy.



Building a stronger democracy is not as easy as flipping on a light switch and can take generations to implement properly as it all starts with the seeds of knowledge!

Stronger democracy is about empowering Canadians by educating them on how the electoral system works, why their votes count and then inspiring them to stay actively connected with the decision making process.



**If we can apply these  
building blocks  
to the equation, it will be easier to begin to build  
a better Canada for tomorrow!**

In the months ahead, as the special committee on electoral reform begins to rethink the system, I'd like to share with you the benefits of eVoting online through Canada Post's ePost Network.

Currently 90% of Canadians are now on the internet and by 2017, an additional 356 thousand more households will be online in rural and remote parts of Canada.

With this in mind, we need to invest in creating a new working partnership between Elections Canada and Canada Post's ePost division to provide online voting, online polling, online MP to constituency feedback and online referendums for all Canadians to access.





Address verification has become the backbone to our electoral process and Canada Post has all these address conformations in place, digitized, updated and ready to go! ePost currently handles millions of online transactions each day, such as bill payments and parcel tracking and does this with a state of the art computer network that's proven over the years to be safe and secure to use.

For Elections Canada to take on such a large project by themselves is just not practical as they'd have to build their own computer network from scratch the size of Canada Posts and then never really have the chance to be able to test it out in realtime for security prior to an election. Elections Canada would also only turn it on once every four years, so that would be one very expensive piece of hardware to sit idle and collect dust.



Canada Post is the perfect partner because as a crown corporation, they are already setup to offer Canadians secure electronic mail products, and with an additional touch of interactivity, that is essentially what online voting is all about!

Elections Canada

With the support and backing from the members of the special committee on electoral reform, these ideas will open up a new world of possibilities for all our MP's to reach out and interact with their constituency for: (1) Real Digital Poling that's non-biased and 100% accurate, (2) MP to constituent Q&A/feedback so MP's can stay connected to the people during their term and better serve those people more effectively by improved online communication, (3) to be able to vote in house on any major bills being passed and to stand up with confidence in knowing that you really did consult your entire constituency digitally, before casting your vote in the house. (5) to empower Canadians with a cost effective way to hold any digital referendums for 5 to 10 million dollars instead of the traditional 300 million dollars it would cost Elections Canada today.

## **A look at eVoting Benefits with ePost onboard**

eVoting is having the ability to vote in the language that we choose, which will provide more accurate voting results

eVoting is being able to watch a video explaining how the electoral system works before voting

eVoting is having instant access to statistical and biographical information for all the parties and candidates in the running

eVoting is about taking the time we need to cast our ballot in a familiar and comfortable setting, like at home or our place of work

eVoting is the secure and safe way to vote in Canada and provides voter anonymity through ePost

eVoting is programmed to eliminate the possibility of user input errors such as leaving a box blank or filling in more than one box

eVoting is the green way to go for 2016, good for the environment and cost effective to implement

eVoting is instant data once completed and requires no manual input into the computer system, resulting in better and faster election results

## **A Piece of Democracy for Everyone!**

I ask that the members of the special committee on electoral reform think of this as we are all in the kitchen together as one big happy family and about to bake a big Apple Pie.

If we can collectively afford to come up with the ingredients on a federal level, we can start the baking process and once that pie is ready, we can use it on a federal level and then divide it up again into smaller pieces and share our technology with the Provinces and Territories to use in their provincial elections and then share the pie once again for our cities to use in their municipal elections!

This is true democracy and this is about empowering all levels of government in Canada, as well as the private sector with the ability to vote online with confidence, knowing that the process is safe and secure.



# ***Stronger Democracy In Canada Starts With Education!***

History has proven that even though we teach our students about the importance of having the right to vote and the benefits of exercising those freedoms, once they leave secondary school, many tend to fall off the map and don't vote at all. For Elections Canada, this has become an ongoing dilemma.

But what if we could teach democracy in our classrooms, while at the same time getting our youth registered to vote with a valid "Student" eVoting ID, so that when they do turn legal voting age, they have their eVote registration already setup!

If the members of the special committee on electoral reform can support this idea, then we all would then be in a much better position to reach our youth electronically by email and text for their participation in the next federal election.

Just imagine a 20% increase in future voter turnout! That's the power of social media with new apps that connect Canadians and to accomplish this, we must be willing to meet our youth on their digital playing field.



The idea here is to allow the students to experience the democratic process within our electoral system by having each secondary school students eVote in their student council, community improvement projects, school referendums and even a school charity to raise funds for each year.

Canada Post and Elections Canada can provide a self service school template for each of the 3400 secondary schools to administer across the country.

This template is similar to a prebuilt website page, whereby the schools can customized their front page by uploading pictures, text and their unique voting questions and support docs for the student voters.

When a school's eVote is ready to commence, the school principle or admin official has the final approval with a password verification to launch their eVote. Emails and/or texts will then be automatically send out to each student so they can easily log onto the ePost website and eVote.

When a student signs up for eVoting, they need to include their provincial student ID number as part of the registration. Their application is then emailed to their home classroom teacher for verification.



In the future, the eVoting ID only needs to be verified once at the start of secondary school in grade 8 or grade 7 for Quebec. When any new student transfers into a school or any students transfer out, their eVoting ID is attached to their provincial student ID number, so where ever they go, including post secondary institutions, their ePost eVoting ID goes with them.

Once a student reaches the legal age to vote, their eVoter ID will then **automatically switch** from the student version to the legal Canadian eVoting version ID and they can continue to easily login and use their ID for the next federal election, provincial election or civil election.



We can also utilize this technology by engaging our youth on “We-Day” [www.weday.com](http://www.weday.com) to take part in an annual national eVote that brings Canadian Youth closer together as one voice to be heard by the government of Canada, from coast to coast to coast!



**Stronger democracy in Canada starts at an early age and if we can get our students registered to vote and excited and familiar with the voting system, then they will indeed exercise their right to vote when they reach the legal age to Vote!**



Once eVoting is in place for our secondary school students, it then presents an opportunity for those students to experience and participate in a real election and share their eVoting experiences with their fellow classmates, junior students and most importantly, their family members at home.

**eVoting will become a rite of passage for all Canadians!**



***Let's give Canada a RAISE in voter turnout!  
By LOWERING the voting age to sixteen!***

Today's youth are smarter than ever before and what they learn in high school now-a-days is comparable to what was taught in many universities years ago.

eVoting also presents a magical opportunity to acknowledge our New Canadian Voters on their birthday by mailing them out a Voter Certificate, signed by the Minister of Democratic Institutions and signed by the Honorable Prime Minister of Canada!

The Voter Certificate mail-outs can easily be handled by Canada Post as the data would already be in place for each student as they will have already signed up for eVoting on ePost during their first year in secondary school.

For 2016, we have an average of 419,800 youth turning **16** years old and **each day**, that works out to **1150 new potential voters for the Liberals, Conservatives, NDP, Green and the Bloc!**

So with numbers like this, I'm hoping that the members of the special committee on electoral reform will be in agreement that our youth are our most important asset in Canada and our youth deserve to be recognized and congratulated on being able to vote when they reach the age of 16!



**eVoting and Online Custom Polling will also have huge possibilities for: Universities, Parent teacher Associations, Unions, Advocate groups, Business Share Holders, Community Organizations and even Canadian businesses that want to engage their employees and their customers on what works and what doesn't.**



For Elections Canada, it's about doing what's right for Canadians and understanding that online technology is here to stay and that our younger generation will not be switching back to paper and pencil, so it's time to embrace the digital world and participate in creating this modern democracy.

For Canada Post, it's about growing their future online customer base as they need to now find new and innovative sources of revenue. So, by becoming the backbone to online democracy in Canada, Canada Post will be in a much better financial position to continue to meet their pension obligations and continue to be able to provide affordable postage rates to the middle class.



For the members of the special committee on electoral reform, It's about remembering what inspired you to one day become the Member of Parliament you are today. Chances are, you participated in a democratic process that made you feel special and that event inspired you enough that you chose to follow a path in life where by, you could help out folks in your community and change stuff for the better.

By taking democracy online for the twenty-first century in Canada, we can change a lot of stuff and that stuff doesn't necessary have to be about how we add up the votes with different electoral systems, but more about how we collect the votes so that more Canadians can feel empowered to participate in true democracy!

Your's Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stu Webster".

Stu Webster  
North Vancouver, BC

