

**Submission by Tony McQuail, Farmer, and former Ashfield, West and East Wawanosh School Board Trustee for 3 terms,**

**Summary - Our electoral system is dysfunctional - this is bad for a healthy democracy - I've voted in 22 federal and provincial elections and only once did my vote count toward representation - THIS IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH - We need a made in Canada proportional representative electoral process so that seats in Parliament reflect the popular vote received by the respective parties and all votes count toward representation.**

Key features of Democracy are that the majority governs AND the minorities are represented. For this to work votes need to count toward representation so that the distribution of seats in Parliament actually reflect the will of the voters - ie that seats are proportional to how voters voted. Voter eligibility must be broad so that everyone in society can contribute their vote.

Some benefits of democracy are that society can make changes without violent revolution or coup d'état. That government can tap the collective wisdom of society. That it can bring the views of many sectors of society to the table and can allow government to adapt as the societies values and beliefs change. That Government has legitimacy in the eyes of the Governed - that even those who aren't the majority feel that their views are represented and being heard.

I believe democracy is important and that our Canadian Democracy is in bad shape when frequently less than half the votes cast in federal elections earn any representation. We regularly end up with parliaments governed by phony majorities. Important political perspectives and parties are badly under represented. The first past the post system regularly gives us situations where important political voices end up with no or very small regional representation which means that either Government or Oppositions lack members from those regions.

I've voted in every Municipal, Provincial and Federal Election since I became eligible to vote. In most municipal elections my vote elects some representatives. In nearly 40 years of voting, of the 22 provincial and federal elections only once has my vote counted toward representation. I'm a slow learner so I keep being active politically and voting but many people give up on voting when they feel there is little hope of their vote counting. This is not healthy for democracy.

I have two daughters who both vote but many of their generation have given up on voting when their votes count toward nothing election night. I have a grandson who is six and a granddaughter who is four. I hope that that when my grandchildren are old enough to vote Canada will have an electoral system where their votes will count toward representation every election. I hope they will be rewarded for voting in elections by getting representation.

I believe we can have a made in Canada Proportionally Representative electoral process. I hope you will have the courage and the wisdom to put aside the short term partisan gains that some parties have received from our current first past the post system and work together to develop an effective PR system appropriate for our wonderful country and its people. I would like to have the confidence that

my vote will count toward representation in every federal election starting in 2019 and that my grand children will never have to despair that their vote doesn't count.

All the options proposed by Fair Vote Canada as alternatives to the current first past the post system would be preferable to it. My personal preferences would be either Mixed Member Proportional or Single Transferable Ballot Plus. I live in a large rural riding but would rather have a larger riding that included at least 1 MP that I actually voted for and with whom I could work with feeling confident that they actually shared my values and goals.

I urge the committee to develop an electoral system that will consistently provide Canadians with a Proportionally Representative Parliament after each election.

At this time you've received the broad public support for electoral reform in that 60% of Canadians voted for Parties calling for Electoral Reform in their 2015 campaign platforms and committing to "making every vote count". We have also already had commissions and citizen's assemblies (provincially) recommending electoral reform only to be stymied by government inaction or referendums where the threshold was set at 60% to accept the change. Enough is enough - Get on with developing a Canadian Proportional Representation electoral process. AND please don't try to cheat us with a bait and switch "electoral reform" proposal that would offer to replace First Past the Post with an equally un-proportional and inappropriate system of Alternative Vote/preferential ballot. This would be a betrayal of all voters who want votes to count equally and desire the opportunity to receive representation after each election.

Yours sincerely,

Tony McQuail